

WORLD CULTURE TOUR GUIDE #1

(Time Middle)

"Consider Moving to My Country Because . . ." Persuading with Facts

Lesson Sketch

Skills: Students *read* texts—both articles and charts—on countries around the world; *select key facts* from readings to *appeal to a particular audience*; *compose* short articles to persuade their readers to move to their chosen countries; *anticipate* reader objections and *offer counterarguments*; *present* their arguments to classmates; and *reflect* in writing about which countries around the world they would consider moving to themselves, and why.

Grades: 10

Time: Two 90-minute classes

Featured Resources: AtoZWorldCulture.com or AtoZtheWorld.com articles Country Snapshot, Cultural Overview, Maps, Climate and Geography, Cuisine, Points of Interest, The People, Demographics, Education, Government, Women in Culture, and Human Rights Report

Inspirations

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one's lifetime." ~Mark Twain

"Voyagers discover that the world can never be larger than the person that is in the world; but it is impossible to foresee this, it is impossible to be warned." ~James Baldwin

Lesson Overview

In the US, immigration conversations often revolve around keeping immigration numbers down. Yet some countries, such as Canada, actively recruit skilled workers and professionals--especially those who work in certain fields--from around the world to relocate. With this approach in mind, students choose a country of interest, and imagine they are playing the recruiter's role for that nation. Students review text articles and statistical data regarding the country's economic and demographic profile, then imagine what sort of person would find relocation to the country appealing. With this readership in mind, students select key facts about the country, and compose a short recruitment article, anticipating and addressing reader objections with solid counterarguments. Students verbally present their cases to their classmates, then reflect in writing regarding which countries they would consider moving to, and why.

Lesson Steps

Students make a list of countries they are curious about. Students briefly skim articles on those countries to narrow down the list and choose one country to focus on. Students read a series of articles about a country of interest, and identify what sort of person—in terms of profession and personality factors—might be interested in relocating to this country. Students compose a tightly

crafted three-paragraph essay with a hook, introduction, body text presenting evidence for the introduction's claims, and then wrap up the article with a strong call to action. Students develop their short articles into presentations to their classmates—using notes as necessary, but not merely reading from the page. After viewing all presentations, students reflect in writing about which countries they would consider moving to, and which factors influence that decision, whether culture, cuisine, safety, scenery, economic growth, or other.

Standards Met

- 1. Common Core State Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: College and Career Readiness Anchors for Reading**
 - a. Key Ideas and Details 1, 2
 - b. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7
 - c. Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity 10
- 2. Common Core State Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: College and Career Readiness Anchors for Writing**
 - a. Text Types and Purposes 1, 2, 3
 - b. Production and Distribution of Writing 4, 5, 6
 - c. Research to Build and Present Knowledge 7,8,9
 - d. Range of Writing 10
- 3. Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts: College and Career Readiness Anchors for Reading**
 - a. Key Ideas and Details 1, 2
 - b. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7
 - c. Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity 10
- 4. Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts: College and Career Readiness Anchors for Writing**
 - a. Text Types and Purposes 1, 2, 3
 - b. Production and Distribution of Writing 4, 5, 6
 - c. Research to Build and Present Knowledge 7,8,9
 - d. Range of Writing 10
- 5. Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts: College and Career Readiness Anchors for Speaking and Listening**
 - a. Comprehension and Collaboration 1, 2
 - b. Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas 4, 5, 6
- 6. Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts: College and Career Readiness Anchors for Language**
 - a. Conventions of Standard English 1, 2
 - b. Knowledge of Language 3
 - c. Vocabulary Acquisition and Use 4, 6
- 7. National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Standards for the English Language Arts:**
 - a. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
- 8. National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies:**
 - a. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Supplies

- Access to AtoZWorldCulture.com or AtoZtheWorld.com.
- Dictionaries
- Notebooks, pens, pencils, etc.
- Index cards for presentation flashcard notes
- Access to Microsoft Word and printer

Instructional Plan

Student Objectives

Students will:

- Improve reading comprehension, research skills, writing skills, and speaking skills.
- Select and synthesize facts from multiple sources, in both print and chart form, into coherent prose arguments.
- Increase awareness of global issues by learning about countries around the world.
- Increase awareness of rhetorical strategy through composing an argument for a specific audience.
- Become more sophisticated global citizens.

Session One

Teacher Introduction

- Introduce students to the idea of persuading with facts via selecting facts to impress a particular audience.
- Let students know that small class activities will culminate in a presentation and final writing assignment—those who participate in small preparatory steps along the way will find the culminating assignments much easier.
- Establish expectations for prewriting and preparatory steps toward final assignments: prewriting is to be taken seriously as a time to generate ideas, but it is not the time to agonize over perfect word choice or perfect spelling. Prewriting is a time to generate, not revise.
- Direct students to move to computer work stations.

Student Directions

Which country would you like to visit? Select a country

- Go to AtoZWorldCulture.com or AtoZtheWorld.com.
- Peruse list of countries.
- Identify three countries you are curious about. Skim materials for these countries: get a quick sense of where the country is, who lives there, and whether you are curious about the place.
- Choose one country to mentally visit for this exercise.

Learn about your chosen country: Read & take preliminary notes

- Go to Maps—understand where country is.
- Read Maps, Country Snapshot, Cultural Overview, Climate and Geography, Cuisine, The People, Demographics, Points of Interest, Education, Government (read the top few sections—just enough to get a sense of the type of government—and skim the rest if you like), Women in Culture, and Human Rights Report (Introduction).
- As you read, take notes regarding possible key points for recruitment. Questions your notes should address include:
 - Where is this country?
 - What sorts of people live there? (in terms of ethnicities, ages, religion/s, language/s)
 - What languages do people speak? Do people speak different languages in different parts of the country? What other nations/groups in the world speak these same languages?
 - What are the country's major regions? Are those regions defined by landscape differences, or cultural differences, both, or by other factors?
 - What kinds of religions do people practice? Do the different religious groups intermingle, or live mostly separately?
 - What is the life expectancy in the country?
 - What is the country's per-capita GDP?
 - What is your impression of the prosperity level of the country overall? And how is wealth distributed in the country?
 - Is public education free? How many years of schooling do most citizens have access to?
 - What is the literacy rate in the country? Does access to literacy differ for men and women?
 - What are the largest and smallest sectors of the labor force?
 - What sorts of industries are growing in this country, and what industries are struggling?
 - What do you think that people in this country think is important?
 - What kinds of things do people do for work? Are people's occupations different region by region?
 - What do people eat? Does the cuisine vary by region? Do elements of the cuisine seem familiar from cuisines you've encountered in the US?
 - What is your overall impression of the country's stability level? Does it seem more likely or less likely that this country would experience a revolution, or otherwise see regime change and social/economic change on a massive scale, any time soon?
 - In what ways do people in this country have it made?
 - What are their struggles?

Teacher Introduction

- Direct students to form groups of 4.
- Remind students that during discussion, they should be taking notes—these notes form the basis of presentations and writing.
- Monitor groups' progress and try to keep groups moving roughly on pace so that students transition from discussion to reflective writing at roughly the same time.

Student Directions

Gaining Perspective: Compare Notes with a Group

- Form groups of 4.
 - Each group member shares the highlights of his/her country choice so far.
 - What similarities and differences do you notice between the countries? Make notes on items such as:
 - Large differences in per-capita GDP
 - Large differences in life expectancy
 - Large differences in literacy rates
 - Large differences in largest and smallest parts of the labor force
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Character sketch notes: Who is your audience?

It's time to figure out what sort of person would be most likely to be interested in moving to your chosen country. These people will be the readers of your recruitment piece, and you need to figure out what they will find appealing. You don't know everything about this country yet, but you've probably developed a feel for it. So make some notes about your ideal readers in terms of:

Demographics

Age: What age are those that move to your country likely to be? If your country especially needs experienced engineers in its technology sector, for example, then you'll be writing to people at least in their thirties. If the cost of living in the country is high, then look to mid-career professionals in their forties and fifties to take an interest, because younger workers are unlikely to be able to afford to live there. Countries with low costs of living, on the other hand, could be very appealing to younger readers. Alternately, a low cost of living could appeal to readers approaching retirement age—especially if the country's healthcare system is good.

Ethnicity/Ethnicities: If your country is very ethnically diverse, then you can recruit people from anywhere. On the other hand, if your country is very ethnically homogeneous, then you are likely to have success with a) people who belong to the country's predominant ethnic group, or b) adventurous souls who don't mind standing out in a crowd.

Language/s Spoken: What languages are spoken in your country? Where else can you find people who speak those languages?

Religion/s: People might be more comfortable moving to a country where their own religion is the predominant one. Alternately, sometimes nonreligious people are curious about living within a culture different from their own. What leads does the country's religious landscape give you regarding whom to recruit?

Family Status: If you are recruiting for a country with a great education system, this could appeal to families with children. On the other hand, if the major city's nightlife is famous, you might be recruiting young single people. Look over the country's statistics, and consider: Is this a more appealing move for: Singles? Couples? People with kids? People without kids?

Gender: You are unlikely to recruit a single woman to move by herself to a country where women are not safe outdoors unless escorted by male relatives—obviously, that's an untenable situation if she moves there by herself. You'll also have a hard time recruiting straight married men to such countries, especially men who live in more gender-equitable societies, especially men who are fathers of daughters; they may not find the idea appealing in the first place, or if they do, their wives are likely to respond to the idea of the move with remarks that translate roughly to "Over my dead body." Thus, you are likely looking to recruit married men and their families who come from similarly restrictive societies, or single men who are open to living in a culture very different from their own.

Sexual Orientation: You are less likely to recruit same-sex couples to move to countries in which they will not be physically safe or protected under the nation's laws. You are more likely to recruit same-sex couples to countries where they will have more safety and equity than they do in their countries of origin.

Education Level: Is this a nation where immigrants of relatively little formal education could do well for themselves and enjoy life? Or is this only a good bet for immigrants with graduate degrees?

Income Level: To people of what income levels is life in this country accessible? Appealing?

Interests

If your country is famed for its cuisine, consider recruiting foodies. If its mountain scenery is the country's claim to fame, recruit backpackers. And so on. Based on what you know about your country so far, what sorts of hobbyists and interest groups might you appeal to?

Personalities

Are the people who move to this country likelier to be:

- Extroverts or introverts? (Is your country more crowded or spacious? Is the culture more sociable or reserved? Are most places loud or quiet?)
- Daredevils or Play-it-safes? (Does your country have isolated rural areas that are hard to navigate, plus natural wonders, a combination appealing to active daredevils? Or is it a country that's easy to navigate, plus cultural attractions, thus appealing to more cautious souls?)

Character sketch: Who is your audience?

In one paragraph, describe your ideal reader.

End of Session One and Homework

Teacher Introduction

- Review the article prompt and assignment together.
- Remind students that they can and should draw on their notes and prewriting from prior classes for drafting their articles. If students get stuck, they should refer to their own prior notes.

Student Directions

Compose Your Pitch

Write a three-paragraph article for readers considering moving to your country. *Somewhere within the article, remember to anticipate a reader concern about or objection to your article, and address that concern.* For example, readers might worry about the crime rate in your country, and you might let them know that crime rates have recently dropped significantly.

Article structure:

Paragraph One

Hook: Catch the reader's attention with something distinct and intriguing about your country. Your hook is probably the first sentence or two of your article. For example: "Where can you eat Indian curry while speaking Dutch and listening to Afro-Caribbean music on the beach? The beautiful South American nation of Suriname."

Introduction: Lay out the purpose of your article and the basics of your case. Answer the questions: Who should relocate to your country? What are the benefits of doing so? (For example, if highly educated, middle-income, art loving, Buddhism-friendly families will enjoy life in Cambodia because of its Buddhist culture, prominent public art, and modest cost of living, say so.)

Paragraph Two

Body of Evidence: Your second paragraph is your opportunity to back up the claims you made in your introduction. Now you can explain in more detail what you outlined in the introduction: what is so great about your country, and who will most enjoy it. Your notes should direct you to the appropriate places in the country articles. Support your introduction's claims with facts and statistics: share the country's high per-capita GDP, long life expectancy, free high-quality schooling, low population density, unusual degree of linguistic diversity, or other facts as appropriate.

Paragraph Three

Big Finish: Your conclusion should do more than summarize what you've already said. Your conclusion should bring the previous paragraphs to a sense of closure, but should also share one final appealing fact and a strong call to action: "After all, Fiji's national flower, tagimaucia, is known as the 'flower of love'—don't wait to claim your share of South Pacific romance!"

S e s s i o n T w o

Teacher Introduction

- Set expectations for presentations in terms of content, time, and methods.
- Remind students to lean on their notes and their articles if they get stuck.

Student Directions

Prepare Your Presentation

Convert your three-paragraph article into a verbal presentation. Imagine that your classmates are a group of people from around the world who are considering relocating. Your goal is a presentation that is well prepared and polished, yet conversational. In other words, you must ask yourself: How can I convey all that is in my short article without simply reading it from the page? (Boring!) Using

index cards—or other materials, if you prefer—make yourself notes from which to speak to the class.

Teacher Introduction

- Remind students to take notes during presentations—they'll need those notes for the final reflective writing exercise.
- Students should keep track of where they would and would not be willing to move, and why.

Student Directions

Present

Students take it in turn to present their countries to the class.

E n d o f S e s s i o n T w o a n d H o m e w o r k

Reflect

Now that you have heard everyone's presentation, where, if anywhere that you heard about, would you be willing to move? And why? What have you learned along the way about your personal priorities for places to live? Do you value safety, prosperity, affordability, adventure, religious tolerance, scenery, access to healthcare, cuisine?