

## **LESSON #1: Chinese Immigrants to the Pacific Northwest (elementary - senior high grade levels)**

**Lesson Objectives:** Students will be able to:

1. List two reasons people leave their homeland for another country.
2. Use a map to trace the route most Chinese traveled from China to Lewiston.
3. Name and describe three occupations Chinese immigrants worked at.
4. Name and locate on a map at least three place names indicating the presence of Chinese people in the Pacific Northwest.

**Background:** By the early 1860s war, famine, and revolution in the southern China provinces caused many Chinese people to migrate to other parts of the world. The discovery of gold in 1848 in California led to an increase in the number of Chinese immigrating to the United States. By 1865, many of the Chinese were hired by the railroad companies. The Chinese proved to be excellent workers in railroad building. But as the mines in California played out and the railroads in the southwestern United States were completed, many Chinese moved on to the gold strikes in the Pacific Northwest.

During the 20th century, political upheaval in China once again increased immigration from China to the United States. As in the 1860s most Chinese, like many of today's immigrants from other countries, spoke no English when they arrived in the United States.

### **Procedure:**

Review background materials with the students.

Read the articles from the *Lewiston Morning Tribune* (see Resources).

Show "Chapter One" (00:00 – 16:12) of the documentary *Good Neighbors: A History of Chinese People in Lewiston, Idaho (1860s - 1970s)*.

### **Elementary Activities:**

Whole-class activity: The teacher will put the word "immigration" on the board and define it with examples. Students will be asked what they know about their own family's or other people's desire to immigrate.

Small-group activity: As directed by the teacher, different groups of students will:

1. Research Chinese geographic place names in the Pacific Northwest, and place them on a map.
2. Describe three different types of jobs Chinese immigrants worked at and compare those to current occupations in their hometown.
3. Write a story or poem or draw a picture describing how they would help a new immigrant who speaks no English to understand a game on the playground.

Individual activity: Draw a map of your neighborhood, including big trees, fences, schools, shops, etc. Add one interesting place to take your best friend and a recent immigrant who are both your age. Describe the place for your classmates.

### Junior/Senior High Activities:

#### A. Individual or small-group projects on anti-Chinese legislation:

1. The Chinese Exclusion Act was approved on May 6, 1882. It was the first significant law restricting immigration into the United States. Research the history of the law's enactment, referring to web site <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/chinese-immigration>. What prompted the legislation? Who sponsored the bill?
2. Research the Idaho Territory's "China Tax." How did this affect the miners with limited income? What affect would this have on a person's way of life?

#### B. Individual or small-group project on current immigration issues:

1. Students research current problems encountered by immigrants in the United States. They will list the problems and solutions countries are working on. Students could also develop their own ideas for solving problems.
2. Students select a country experiencing large numbers of refugees. On a map find the refugees' country of origin and the country they are moving to. Write a factual report on the situation and possible solutions to problems refugees encounter.

#### C. Discussion and small group project:

*Good Neighbors: A History of Chinese People in Lewiston, Idaho (1860s to 1970s)* is the title of the documentary film. The teacher will lead a discussion of the students' understanding of the attributes of a "good neighbor" in the students' immediate neighborhood and then their town and state. Extend the discussion to a writing project or in small groups create a skit about either being a "good neighbor" or the possible consequences of someone not being a "good neighbor."

#### D. Discussion and individual or small-group project:

1. After viewing the "Chinese Massacre" chapter in the movie *Good Neighbors: A History of Chinese People in Lewiston, Idaho (1860s - 1970s)*, discuss the event.
2. Following a class discussion, students will research the Noble Peace Prize Center in Oslo, Norway. See [www.nobelpeacecenter.org/](http://www.nobelpeacecenter.org/). They will choose one of the peace prize recipients whose work seems especially important; then they will draw, write, or use another creative medium to demonstrate why that person's work is so important.
3. As an extension of project #2, students can create, using a medium of their choice, a "memorial" for a recent local, national, or international event or person that typifies the winners of the Nobel Peace Prize.

### Resources:

Documentary video: *Good Neighbors: A History of Chinese People in Lewiston, Idaho (1860s - 1970s)*.

Archival photographs (included below)

Two *Lewiston Morning Tribune* articles accessible through Google News Archives:

(1) *LMT* 8/22/76 p. 1. Section C "The Elders: George Eng"

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=BtfE7wd9KvMC&dat=19760822&printsec=frontpage&hl=en> Section C page 23

(2) *LMT* 11/26/78 p. 11 Section D "The Elders: Eng Ko Ho"

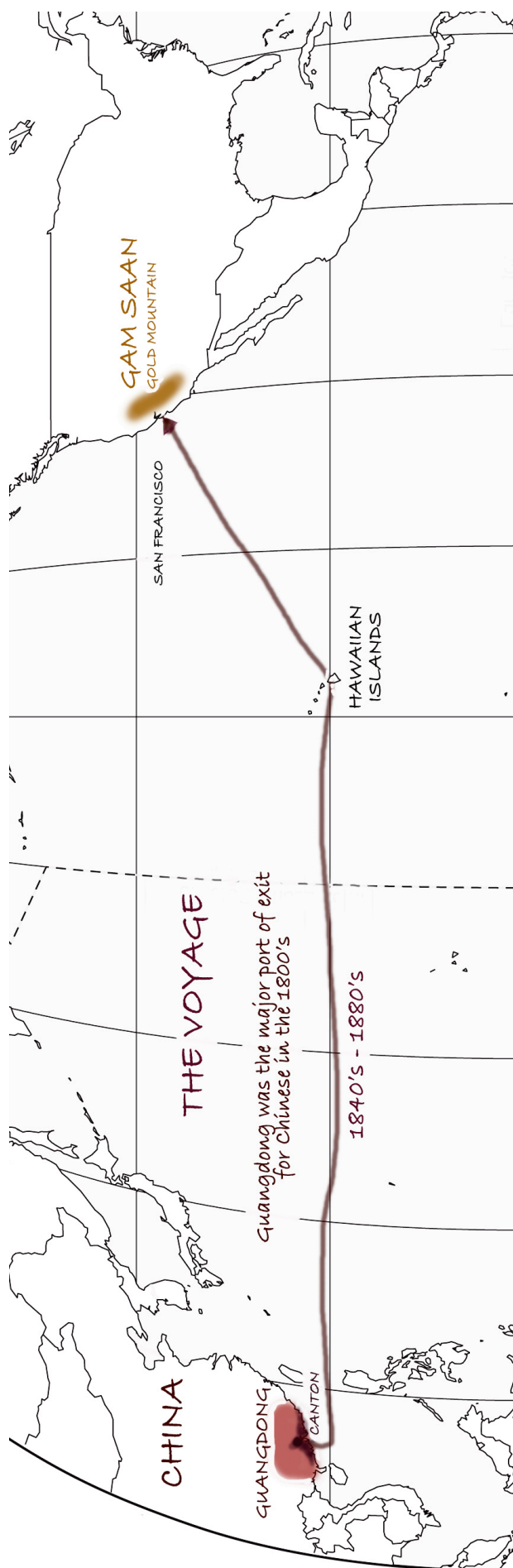
<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=BtfE7wd9KvMC&dat=19781126&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>

The photograph below shows some of the stark conditions in China due to famines, which led many people to leave China.





Route of voyage from China  
to the United States  
(1840s - 1880s)



Western United States Territories and  
route of Chinese to Lewiston, Idaho Territory



Pockwoy, gardener in area near Lewiston



Hong Shing Laundry, Lewiston



Kitchen at George's Restaurant, North Lewiston  
1950s

