

THE NEW AMERICANS

Series Guide and
Activity Book



THE NEW AMERICANS



community connections project



Series Guide and
Activity Book

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I. Introduction

This guide is designed to support discussion and exploration of the complex issues facing immigrants and refugees who enter the United States today as seen through the stories that unfold in *THE NEW AMERICANS*. The guide offers structured activities that prompt viewers to look at the commonalities and differences among immigrant transitions to life in the United States and to use this examination to reflect on their own beliefs and experiences. The guide is intended for use in community college, vocational training, adult basic education and community contexts, where immigrant and U.S.-born viewers can share their hopes, fears and views of immigration and what it means to be an American. For professionals in education, health and public safety, the guide also invites discussion of challenges and strategies for working effectively with racially and ethnically diverse populations.

The stories presented in *THE NEW AMERICANS* are stories of individuals, not stories put together from bits and pieces in order to broadly represent specific groups or cultures. These stories allow us to observe the lives of diverse immigrants and refugees in different parts of the United States. They also prompt us to examine patterns across those experiences—how the social constructs of race, class and gender impact the individual options and experiences.

The Making of THE NEW AMERICANS, Kartemquin Educational Films



A. Filmmaker's Statement

We started production of *THE NEW AMERICANS* series in 1997, before our subjects may have even considered migrating to the United States. What has transpired in the last 6 years is an amazing journey - not only for the people in the film, but for all of us involved in telling their stories.

We selected subjects who reflect the diverse range of today's mostly non-European influx - in terms of race and ethnicity, economics and education, reasons for coming to America, and geography in both the countries of origin and where they settled here in the United States. Collectively, these unfolding stories of contemporary immigrants contain within them both America's long and complicated history of immigration and its equally complicated and compelling present reality. However, we recognize that there are other stories to be told and important viewpoints to be expressed. No single story or group of stories can ever hope to encompass the entire immigrant or refugee experience. And some viewers will crave the bigger picture.

That's exactly what we want—viewers craving more background information, history, politics, and cultural experiences of these and other immigrants and refugee groups in America. We also want viewers to think of their own role in the history of immigration, and their role today as neighbors and peers to others from different lands. To answer and encourage that response, we are thrilled that our partners are launching such a wide-ranging and ambitious outreach and civic engagement campaign. As we near completion on the series, we are thrilled that the outreach will take *THE NEW AMERICANS* to places the film itself could never reach on its own.

B. Series Overview

Episode 1: In the first two-hour episode, we introduce three of the five stories. These stories begin in Palestine, Nigeria and the Dominican Republic, focusing on the forces that bring three different groups of people to America—marriage and pursuit of a new life for a Palestinian woman; safety from political violence for members of the Nigerian Ogoni tribe; and economic opportunity for two Dominican baseball prospects. This episode establishes the sense of national identity within these people before they find themselves transformed into "immigrants."

Episode 2: This two-hour episode focuses on the immigrants' separation from their homelands and their arrival in the United States—specifically, Chicago and Montana. As the immigrants establish new lives, the major themes are work, language and culture shock. A new family from Guanajuato, Mexico, is also introduced, led by Pedro Flores, a Mexican meatpacker living seasonally in Kansas.

Episode 3: The final three-hour episode introduces a computer programmer as he prepares to leave a lucrative job in Bangalore, India, to pursue exciting new opportunities in the Silicon Valley. This episode also explores the critical next phase for all of the characters as they continue their quest for success. Will these new Americans find better jobs, happily reunite their families and make lasting homes in their new land?

(Extended episode summaries written by the filmmakers are available at www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans/episodes.html)

C. How to Use This Guide

Although this guide supports many ways of viewing THE NEW AMERICANS, the greatest insights come to those who see the entire series. It is over the course of the multiple episodes that stories unfold, themes surface, dreams change and issues become clear. Dynamics that might go unnoticed in one segment stand out boldly over time.

The guide supports discussion of individual episodes, the entire series or specific scenes. Audiences may be community groups, immigrant students or professionals in training. For each situation, there are structured opportunities for viewers to analyze, compare and evaluate their perceptions and to strategize ways to take action.

Additional sections of the guide support further research (on issues raised in the program), taking action (individual and community), awareness-building (for professionals working with immigrants and refugees) and English language and civics instruction.

Summary of the Guide

Preparing to Facilitate

This section prepares facilitators to guide a community or classroom discussion of THE NEW AMERICANS. It includes a set of reminders about what you need to do to prepare for and facilitate an open, respectful, thought-provoking dialogue among diverse participants.

Viewing and Discussion Activities

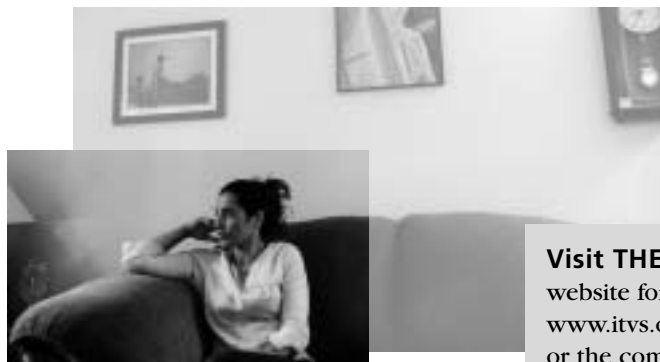
This section outlines a guided process for viewing and discussing THE NEW AMERICANS series. It provides activities to prepare community audiences for viewing, discussion questions for each episode and an array of follow-up activities that range from individual reflection to community action.

Activities for English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Settings

This section outlines activities a teacher can use to prepare ESOL students to understand and engage with specific scenes and issues from the film.

Professional Development for Educators and Health Care and Mental Health Care Providers

The professional development section draws upon key scenes to use as prompts for analyzing the challenges of providing effective services cross-culturally. The activities invite the three professional groups to evaluate the interactions in the film and to strategize alternatives with the intention of addressing their own cultural competency.



Visit THE NEW AMERICANS

website for additional information at www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans/ or the companion website at www.pbs.org/newamericans for interactive activities and complimentary content.

Appendices

Throughout the guide, we will reference activities that are in the appendices at the end of the guide. Each of the activities can be adapted for a variety of settings, including an ESOL classroom, a community forum or professional development training.

Resources for Further Research

Students, community organizations, and education and health professionals can find additional resources and references on relevant topics and web links to related organizations for further exploration into issues arising from THE NEW AMERICANS at www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans/guide

Evaluation

Users of THE NEW AMERICANS Series Guide and participants in the community engagement and educational outreach activities have an opportunity to give feedback and measure outcomes.

www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans/guide

II. Preparing to Facilitate

Effective facilitation looks easy when done well, yet requires the coordinated use of several skills at the same time—active listening, thinking ahead, paying attention to the needs of individuals while moving the whole group forward and monitoring ground rules, to name a few. It becomes much easier, however, when you are well-prepared and have thought ahead of time about the event and the audience. The reminders below can help facilitators thoroughly prepare to guide a thoughtful and engaging discussion of *THE NEW AMERICANS*.



A. Preparing for the Viewing Session

- Work with a co-facilitator and create a diverse facilitation team (immigrant/nonimmigrant/refugee) to reflect the diversity of the participants and to model cross-cultural collaboration.
- Learn what you can about your audience before the viewing: Who will be there? How many will be there? What is your audience's level of awareness and activism on immigration issues? What are their goals and objectives for viewing *THE NEW AMERICANS*? (See "Introductory Activities" in Section III for ways to learn about the participants at the beginning of the session.)
- View the series and read the guide's discussion questions beforehand so that you are not processing your own reactions at the same time that you are trying to facilitate a discussion.
- Prioritize the discussion questions you want to use in advance, taking into account your audience.
- Visit the viewing space to survey the seating arrangement and the technical setup.
- Prepare the agenda, materials and handouts in advance. Have a newsprint pad, magic markers and masking tape available for activities.

B. Creating an Inclusive and Welcoming Environment

- Let people know the purpose and time frame for the session, including the length of the segment they will be viewing. End the session on time unless you've negotiated a change with the group.
- Set ground rules as a group to establish shared ownership of the process and a shared understanding of the expectations. The ground rules should be written on newsprint and put on the wall where everyone can refer to them during the discussion. Some useful ground rules to suggest are:
 - Listen actively, with full attention.
 - Work to understand others' perspectives.
 - Avoid generalizations; speak from personal experience.
 - Respect our limited time; try not to repeat what has already been said.
 - Respect confidentiality.
 - Encourage and invite participants who haven't had a chance to contribute to the discussion.
 - Beware of turning the discussion into a dialogue between you and each speaker.
- Let people know that the issues up for discussion may evoke challenging emotions and assure them that they can choose not to participate in any activity.
- Allow participants to talk in pairs or small groups before whole-group discussions. This gives them a chance to refine their ideas before sharing them more publicly.
- In mixed groups, immigrants and nonimmigrants may respond to different issues in the program (or respond differently to the same issues) and may like to have some time to process their reactions separately. Consider splitting the group—by male/female, immigrant/U.S.-born, or other categories that might help people feel more comfortable—for part of the discussion time.

C. Facilitating the Discussion

- Let the interests of the group guide the discussion topics.
- Appreciate that silences might be necessary thinking time—avoid jumping in to fill them.
- Model a spirit of inquiry and seek to truly understand each person's views.

D. Working with Video

- Test your setup to see that it is in good working order and connected properly and that you are comfortable with the equipment. Cue tape to the correct starting point and use the counter on the VCR in case you want to return to a particular point on the tape.
- Take into consideration that the program is multilingual and includes English subtitles. Make sure that the screen is large enough to accommodate subtitles and that the audio is clear enough for the audience to be able to discern a variety of accents.

III. Viewing and Discussion Activities

This section is the facilitator's guide to community and classroom viewing and discussion of THE NEW AMERICANS series. The objectives of this section are to

- create a solid foundation for viewing by sharing our purposes, questions, knowledge and experiences.
- support an open exchange of ideas and perspectives through guided discussion.
- encourage reflection on our own beliefs, attitudes and experiences.
- consider ways in which we can use what we learn to take individual and community action.



A. Introductory Activities

Whether meeting once or over several sessions, it's important to build a sense of community before discussing the program. Start by providing an opportunity for people to introduce themselves, especially if you're working with a multi-cultural or multilingual group or bringing together two groups. Thank people for coming and invite them to introduce themselves by saying their names and where they are from or where their parents or grandparents are from.

1. Clarifying Goals and Purposes

- Invite participants—working first in pairs, then as a whole group—to talk about why they're interested in seeing THE NEW AMERICANS. What brought them to this screening? Write responses on newsprint.
- Share the host organization's goals for bringing people together for this viewing.
- Note where the host and audience goals overlap—these are the priority goals.

2. Getting to Know Each Other

Taking into consideration the available time, select one of the activities below to continue developing the group connections that will support open inquiry and dialogue. Suggest a time limit for each introduction.

- Have the participants break into small groups, then hand out world maps, affix a large map to a wall or set one in the middle of a table. Ask people to introduce themselves to their group and indicate on the map where they're from. Allow each person to decide what to talk about—ancestry, life journey, future plans and so on.
- (Model this activity first.) Within their small groups, ask individuals to choose an object they have with them and use it to describe something about U.S. culture or their home culture. For example, keys might represent U.S. culture to a Canadian immigrant who never locked her doors back home.

3. Drawing Out Knowledge

- Explain that the video explores the journeys of several immigrant and refugee families and tell where they are from (Mexico, Palestine, India, the Dominican Republic and Nigeria). Without revealing who went where, also tell the participants where the immigrants settled in the United States (primarily Chicago, Kansas, the Silicon Valley and Montana). Ask them to partner with someone they don't know and predict which family went where and to explain their prediction. As they compare answers in the large group, use the opportunity to draw out the group's knowledge about where immigrants and refugees are settling in the United States. Fill in knowledge gaps by providing information (immigration statistics, by state and by country, can be found at www.gcir.org).
- Ask viewers what they already know about the countries represented in THE NEW AMERICANS and why they think people might be leaving them. What are the factors pushing and pulling immigrants and refugees from these countries?
- Continue the discussion by asking viewers, "What issues do you think these immigrants and refugees will face as they make a life in the United States?" Document this brainstormed list to see how well the participants predicted the issues in the program.

See related activities: Appendix C: Cultural Comparisons Worksheet; Appendix D: Experience Charts; and Appendix E: Telling Our Stories.

4. Prepare to View

- Discuss the title of the program. What makes someone American? What's the difference between coming to America and becoming American?
- Present some background information about the series/episode. After the first viewing, start each viewing by having the group recap what came before and predict what will happen to the families in the episode they're about to view.
- Discuss and clarify the difference between immigrant, nonimmigrant and refugee.

(See Appendix A: Glossary.)

Extended episode summaries and a list of scenes are available at

www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans/guide



B. Viewing and Discussion Process

Depending on the context and purpose for viewing THE NEW AMERICANS, participants may be watching a single episode, the entire series or selected scenes from the series. In any context, however, the activities described below can enrich the experience by helping viewers remember what they've seen, make connections to their own experience, reflect on their assumptions and expectations, consider diverse perspectives, and take action.

1. Preparing to View

Prepare people for viewing by introducing the segment, recapping what has come before it and building interest in the upcoming scenes. You can build interest by inviting viewers to ask questions or make predictions about what they're going to see. Eliciting people's own experiences and helping them articulate their own beliefs before they watch the program also helps them reflect on how their beliefs are being affirmed—or challenged—by the program. This guide includes previewing questions for each episode.

2. Viewing a Scene or an Episode

In almost all cases, the seven hours of THE NEW AMERICANS will be viewed in parts, either episodes, hours or individual scenes. Audiences watching over several sessions need an opportunity at the beginning of each sitting to "get back into it," to recall the situation of each individual and the developments in each story.

A story chart (see Appendix B: A Story Chart) can be helpful here as a way to remind viewers of where they are in the stories and of the key themes that have been raised.

In settings such as classrooms, where viewers are watching excerpted scenes, the facilitator needs to thoroughly set the context by introducing the subjects of the series and their backgrounds, filling in pertinent information about what has come before and clarifying why the scene has been chosen for viewing. Since everything will be new to these viewers, the clip probably will need to be shown more than once in order for them to capture all that's going on.

3. Post-Viewing Discussion Activity

After viewing, allow for a minute or two of quiet reflection or writing. You can prompt this by saying, "Before we start talking about the program, take a few minutes to think about or write about your strongest impressions of the program—which scenes stood out for you? Or make some additional notes in your story chart." You might also have people discuss their thoughts in pairs before the whole-group discussion begins. After a few minutes, ask if anyone has any reactions they'd like to share before you discuss their charts. Ask that others listen without responding until everyone has had a chance to share their first reflections. Then invite open discussion.

Review what people have written in their story charts, using their notes to build a shared understanding and a shared recollection of what happened in the program and to touch on aspects of the episode that were not noted in the initial reactions (this might include unmentioned storylines, positive developments unnoticed amidst the challenges, opportunities not seen and so on).

Finally, to supplement the conversation, refer to the list of discussion questions provided for each episode.

(See related activities in Appendix B: A Story Chart; Appendix C: Cultural Comparisons Worksheet; Appendix D: Experience Charts; Appendix E: Telling Our Own Stories; and Appendix F: Learning About the Community.)

C. Community Activity Options

After discussion of the program, viewers may want to continue thinking, learning and acting on the issues that feel most important to them. The activities below offer some possible directions for individual or group follow-up. They move from introspection to dialogue to action. Community groups can discuss and select the level of activity that best suits them.



1. Individual Reflection

It is useful to reflect on one's own beliefs and behaviors before thinking about taking action. This helps us appreciate our strengths and brings to the surface whatever attitudes may get in the way of effective collaboration.

- Review the immigrants' stories in your mind and think about the personal interactions the immigrants had with U.S.-born people. Which interactions did you like? Which made you uncomfortable? What would have improved these interactions?
- What did you observe about U.S. culture and values as you watched the series? How did you feel about them?
- Which of your perceptions about immigrant experiences were confirmed? Challenged?
- With which characters did you most identify? Which experience feels closest to your own?
- If you are U.S.-born, what privileges do you experience from this status?
- If you are foreign-born, note the settings in which you cross paths with those born in the United States and the ways that you do or do not interact with them. If you are U.S.-born, note the settings in which you cross paths with immigrants and the ways that you do or do not interact with them. Reflect on your observations.
- Think about your own workplace or community. What is done to make people of diverse backgrounds feel welcome? Not welcome?

Imagine that you are one of the people in the film. Pay attention to your interactions with people out in the world. How do you think your experience would be different? If you are white (whether immigrant or U.S.-born), try this exercise imagining that you are Israel or Ngozi.

2. Examining Our Beliefs

This activity is designed to allow all participants to express their views without engaging in debate. When they don't have to "defend" a position, they become better able to listen to one another and are often more open to revising their own opinions. The sample statements below are deliberate generalizations, intended to prompt participants to articulate more specific views and rationales. In this way, the group can explore the complexities of each issue.

For this activity, post signs reading "Agree," "Not Sure" and "Disagree" along one wall. Explain that after hearing a statement read, participants should stand near the sign that best describes their views. Volunteers representing each position are invited to state the reason for their choice, but participants are not allowed to respond to each other. As views are shared, participants are encouraged to move if they've been persuaded by someone else's opinion.

Begin with the statements below. Then invite participants to contribute statements that they would like the group to "discuss."

- Immigrants should only be able to work in the United States if they intend to stay here.
- It is the responsibility of our public institutions to accommodate all people, whether or not they speak fluent English.
- Immigrants use more of our resources than they contribute.
- The United States should limit the kinds and numbers of people who immigrate here based on what contributions they can make to U.S. society.
- The United States should be the world leader in accepting refugees.

3. Building Cross-Group Dialogue

Dialogue between U.S.-born and immigrant groups and among immigrant groups that live in distinct communities offers a powerful opportunity to identify common values, priorities and concerns; correct misperceptions; and hear and be heard. It's an opportunity to learn from each other, make human connections and place a human face on societal policies. However, open and constructive dialogue requires a level of trust and respect that may need to be built between the two participating groups.

Develop mutual trust between the groups by (1) asking participants to speak their intention to listen and be open to each other and (2) placing the focus on understanding varied perspectives rather than negotiating a common perspective. It's also important in the planning of a cross-group dialogue that the purpose of the meeting be clear to everyone. Why are the groups interested in talking? What do they hope to get out of it? Review Section II, "Preparing to Facilitate."



Use some of the activities outlined in Introductory Activities (part A of this section) to help people get to know each other. If the participants are from organized groups (faith-based groups, community groups, and so on), ask someone from each group to describe the group's work and concerns. Choose from among the activities below to structure your meeting.

a. Dialogue About the Program

With the participants in small mixed groups, ask them to

- share the impact the program had on them.
- share the questions that the program raised in their minds.

As a facilitator, try to keep them focused on their feelings and questions. They will have an opportunity for further discussion and analysis of issues afterward.

Reconvene as a large group. Ask for at least one volunteer from each small group to comment on what they learned as they listened in their group. Then invite further discussion by encouraging participants to add points about their own community's experience, to comment on issues raised in the program and so on.

b. Dialogue About Life Experience

Invite further conversations that compare experiences. Use topics from this list or topics suggested by participants.

- Being an outsider/not understanding
- Leaving home/moving
- Being in a group that gets labeled ("those ___ people")
- Finding support from allies
- Working
- Going to school or otherwise getting an education
- Dreams for and worries about offspring
- Family's migration (voluntary or forced)
- Being discriminated against

4. Listening First

Invite a panel of immigrants or refugees to talk about their experiences, or to speak in general about questions such as: "What drives people out from their countries, and what drives them to the United States in particular?" "What are the needs of immigrants and refugees once they get here?" "How can others be allies to your group?" "What do you never want to hear from others again about your group?"

First allow time for audience questions and discussion. Then allow time for immigrants and nonimmigrants to meet separately to debrief.

Nonimmigrants might discuss

- their reactions to what they've heard.
- their encounters and relationships with immigrants.

Immigrants might discuss

- their reactions to what they've heard.
- what it's like to talk about their experiences with nonimmigrants.

5. Taking Action

Action can take many forms, from developing educational materials to organizing events. All actions, however, begin by doing the homework of investigating community issues and building relationships.

a. Becoming Informed

i. Identify what you already know about

- the immigrant and refugee groups that live, work or study in your community.
- how the ethnic makeup of your community has changed over the last several years, what caused that change and how you feel about it.
- community organizations that are addressing immigrants' concerns or building community dialogue.
- past efforts related to immigrants' rights and social justice.
- local and state legislation impacting immigrants and refugees.

ii. Identify what you need to do to get further information. Who do you need to talk to find out more or gather diverse perspectives about these topics?

- **Community Research:** Call and visit community organizations in order to collect this information. Meet with a variety of community leaders.
- **Workshops:** Attend workshops, discussions and presentations on immigration policies and immigrant issues/rights. Bring in a guest speaker to answer the questions of your group.
- **Community Newspapers:** Read publications that serve diverse local communities (available at libraries). Explore the local concerns of various communities.



b. Planning for Action

- i. There are many things to consider when planning for action. Here are a few.

- Who are we? (Who do we represent? Not represent?)
- What is motivating us to take action?
- Which of the issues we've discussed do we believe affect our community? What other issues are present? Which are the most important to us and why?
- What do we want to communicate and to whom?
- What outcome are we looking for?
- How will we know if we've been effective?

- ii. Based on your action goals, develop a list of actions you will need to take. Consider, also, these possibilities for group action.

- Organize events that build dialogue across communities and create a sense of shared community.
- Challenge misinformation about immigrants.
- Consider and list those state and local community services and resources that make immigrants feel welcome and help them participate (translators, bilingual informational materials, bilingual education and so on).
- Develop and disseminate resource information to immigrant communities.
- Coordinate ongoing trainings and educational activities between immigrants/refugees, U.S.-born community members and service providers.
- Support the integration of immigrants and refugees in positions as service providers, board members and other change agents within institutions.
- Educate elected officials and other decision makers about the needs of immigrant/refugee communities.

Here are some actions that immigrant/refugee groups can take.

- Link up with other groups that represent immigrants or advocate for immigrant rights.
- Organize events that build a sense of community among immigrants and educate other immigrants about resources.
- Organize events to create public dialogue with decision makers about issues that your community cares about.
- Organize ongoing trainings related to current issues facing your communities.
- Investigate ways in which you can best use your skills to volunteer in the community.
- Build relationships with U.S.-born co-workers and neighbors.



Here are some actions that U.S.-born groups can take.

- Educate your community about immigrant issues (bring in speakers, share articles and so on) and how they connect to your community.
- Build relationships with immigrant co-workers and neighbors.
- Organize your community to work in solidarity with immigrant and refugee-serving organizations.
- Form an alliance organization with a local or state immigrant and refugee-serving organization.
- Learn about legislation that impacts immigrants and refugees.
- Investigate ways in which you can best use your skills to volunteer in the community.

Resources for Further Research

Students, community organizations, and education and health professionals can find additional research topics and references for further research into issues arising from the series at www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans/guide

Episode 2: The Reality Sets In

(2 hours running time)

Summary

This two-hour episode focuses on the immigrants' separation from their homelands and arrival in the United States—specifically, Chicago and Montana. As the immigrants establish new lives, the major themes are work, language and culture shock. A new family from Guanajuato, Mexico, is also introduced, led by Pedro Flores, a Mexican meatpacker living seasonally in Kansas.

Hour 3 Discussion Questions

Before Viewing

Think of a time when you were aware of being part of a majority group, then of a time when you were aware of being part of a minority group. How does it feel different to be part of one or the other? What are the motivations to integrate? To stay with one's own group? Which did you do and why?

After Viewing

- In what ways do you see the characters being welcomed by the majority community? Not welcomed?
- What adjustments to the United States do you see individuals making? What difficulties are they having?

The **NIGERIAN** Story

- A co-worker of Israel makes a joke about starvation in Africa. What do you think it means to Israel? What do you think it means to Israel's other co-workers?
- Israel doesn't feel welcomed by his co-workers, so he eats with the foreman. What do you think this means to his co-workers? What does it mean for Israel?
- Israel and Qui, a Vietnamese co-worker, form a bond. Why do you think this happens? What do you think it means to their co-workers?
- What made Israel feel uncomfortable at the DMV on Chicago's North Side? What makes him feel more comfortable in the South Side office?
- Israel was shocked by the police harassment. Why? Where do immigrants get their expectations of what the police will be like?
- Barine says that she hides her knowledge and experience because "if you prove to them that you know too much, you'll be out." When black co-workers ask her if Africans wear clothes, she responds, "This is what white people want you to believe." What does she mean?
- Barine and her daughters experience strains in their relationships as they each adjust differently to American life. What does Barine want? What do her daughters want? How are Barine and her daughters expressing the stress that they feel in their new American lives?

The DOMINICAN Story

- Ramon is arrested for sexual assault of an American woman at a party. Who believes Ramon and who doesn't? What sentiments surface? How do things change for the Dominican players?
- In what ways do the Montana host family and their church welcome the Dominican players? How is this helpful to them? What other support might they need?
- Jose's and Ricardo's host mother in Montana says that communication is a problem, and she comments that "we just make believe we understand what each other is saying." What are the pros and cons of this strategy? Have you ever hidden your lack of understanding in this way?

The PALESTINIAN Story

- Hatem and Naima think differently about the possibility of peace in the Middle East and about their role in the struggle. What might explain their different perspectives?
- What aspects of being Palestinian seem most important to Naima? What aspects seem most important to Hatem? How do Hatem and Naima each relate to the strong Palestinian community in Chicago?

Hour 4 Discussion Questions**Before Viewing**

Think of a time when you were separated from your family. What was difficult? What was better? What were your family's reactions?

After Viewing**The NIGERIAN Story**

- Watching the video that Israel and Ngozi send home to Nigeria is a big event for their families. In what ways does it help to maintain their connection? In what ways does it illustrate a loosening connection?
- At the doctor's office, Israel and the doctor (who is also an immigrant) have different perceptions of the United States. What are they? What might explain their different perceptions?
- When the doctor insists on the greatness of America, Israel agrees despite his many grievances. Why do you think he does this?

The MEXICAN Story

- How has Pedro's being away in the United States for many years affected the family roles?
- What is forcing farmers out of Mexico? What role does the United States play in this phenomenon?
- Pedro says that Americans don't want to do the kind of hard, dirty work that immigrants do in the meatpacking plant. Do you think this is true? If so, why? How does this work both for and against immigrants?

Episode 3: Identity—Who Am I in the United States?

(3 hours running time)

Summary

The final three-hour episode introduces a computer programmer as he prepares to leave a lucrative job in Bangalore, India, to pursue exciting new opportunities in the Silicon Valley. This episode also explores the critical next phase for all of the immigrants and refugees as they continue their quest for success. Will these new Americans find better jobs, happily reunite their families and make lasting homes in their new land?



Hour 5 Discussion Questions

Before Viewing

Think of a time when you joined a new community where no one knew you (for example, a new job or a new neighborhood). What parts of your old identity did you bring along? Leave behind? In what ways did you become a different person? What assumptions do you think the new community made about who you would be?

After Viewing

The **DOMINICAN** Story

- Jose has been baptized Mormon at the request of his girlfriend and struggles in the Rookie League; Ricardo's career is taking off as he plays in the Minor League All-Star game; and Ramon, despite being innocent of the sexual assault charge, is dropped by the team and deported. What guidance and support were provided to these teenagers to help them understand and deal with the expectations and prejudices of a new culture?

The **MEXICAN** Story

- The Kansas school district shown in the film has seen a great influx of immigrants, reflected in a demographic jump from 10 percent to more than 50 percent of the student population. What supports does Kansas provide newcomers? Is this kind of support offered in your state or community? Why or why not?
- Do you think that schools should offer bilingual education in diverse communities? Why or why not?
- How do the various members of the Flores family feel about their migration? Who is most ambivalent? Why?

The INDIAN Story

- Anjan finds a bride through the Internet in India. What are their expectations of each other? What might be the challenges for them in the United States?
- Anjan's father describes the "brain drain" of educated workers leaving India for Europe and the United States. He is dismayed at "all the rich cream they are taking." What does he mean? Do you agree?
- In what ways does Anjan's education level make his immigrant experience different from the experience of others? In what ways is it the same?
- Anjan's father also critiques American notions of freedom. In what ways does he believe Americans are not free? What do you think of this critique?

The PALESTINIAN Story

- Hatem is not an immigrant himself; he was born in the United States to immigrant parents. What differences do you see between his attitudes and opinions and those of Naima toward the events happening in Palestine? Toward life in the United States?

Hour 6 Discussion Questions**Before Viewing**

As an adult, what factors have you considered in deciding where to live?

After Viewing

- How have the relationships between the men and women in these stories changed since you met them? In coming to the United States, what have the women given up? Gained? What have the men given up and gained?

The PALESTINIAN Story

- When Hatem tries to hang a poster of a crying woman, how does Naima respond? What does the poster of a crying Palestinian represent for each of them?

The MEXICAN Story

- What is the Flores family giving up by moving to California? What drives their decision? How does their decision-making when choosing where to live compare with yours?

The INDIAN Story

- In the tension between Anjan's materialist self and spiritual self, which do you think is dominant? Why? What makes it difficult to maintain balance between these two selves in this culture?

Hour 7 Discussion Questions

Before Viewing

In this episode, we see Anjan continue to struggle between the desire to lead a virtuous life and the yearning for material wealth. Based on your own experience, how would you advise him?



After Viewing

- How have these people's dreams changed since you first met them? In the final analysis, what adjectives would you use to describe the people you have been following?
- In this episode, we see one way that September 11 impacted the Arab American community. In what other ways have immigrants been affected by that event?

The **PALESTINIAN** Story

- In this segment, Hatem says, "I realized that for our marriage to work, the most important thing is that my wife accept who I am and I accept who she is." In what ways have we seen Hatem and Naima accept each other? How do they expect each other to change?
- Although Naima has taken many steps to establish a life here—going to school, getting a job, settling into a new house—she continues to talk about wanting to go home. Why do you think this is?
- Naima's family has suffered greatly in war-torn Palestine, where one brother died in an Israeli prison. Given this history, why do you think she takes and keeps a job in a Jewish daycare center?

The **MEXICAN** Story

- The Flores family is moving to California, where they will be doing arduous and potentially unsafe fieldwork alongside undocumented workers. The undocumented are the most vulnerable immigrants because their illegal status makes them hesitant to defend their rights or speak up against abuses. How does the plight of undocumented immigrant workers make all immigrants more vulnerable? All workers?

The **INDIAN** Story

- In Hour 6, Anjan said, "They think I'm going to become an American, but I'm not going to become one." In this hour he says, "Eventually, you become an American." What has changed for him? How is he becoming an American?
- Anjan says that he wants to "make both the base Anjan and the idealistic Anjan comfortable." Is this possible? How do we see his conflict played out in his family?

Learn more about what has happened to the families at www.pbs.org/thenewamericans.

Resources for Further Research

Students, community organizations, and education and health professionals can find additional resources and references on relevant topics and web links to related organizations for further exploration into issues arising from THE NEW AMERICANS at www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans/guide

Visit THE NEW AMERICANS outreach website

www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans/, for additional information or the companion website at www.pbs.org/thenewamericans for interactive activities and complimentary content.

Evaluation

Users of THE NEW AMERICANS Series Guide and participants in the community engagement and educational outreach activities have an opportunity to give feedback and measure outcomes at www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans/guide

Acknowledgements and Credits

THE NEW AMERICANS is produced by Kartemquin Films in association with the Independent Television Service (ITVS) with funds provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Additional funding was provided by The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and PBS. THE NEW AMERICANS is a presentation of ITVS in association with Latino Public Broadcasting (LPB) and Asian Women United/National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA).

To purchase the film: Home Vision Entertainment, 888/572-8918

A Special Broadcast of PBS's acclaimed *Independent Lens* series on March 29, 30 & 31 2004 at 9:00 PM on PBS. Check local listings at www.itvs.org.

Visit the companion website at www.pbs.org/thenewamericans.

Community outreach and educational resources and interactive activity map available at www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans.

ITVS's COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PROJECT

ITVS's Community Connections Project (CCP) is a public education and outreach project that transforms timely social issue independent films and public television broadcasts into tools that engage communities, convene public dialogues and support ongoing positive action—both locally and nationally.

For more than a decade, ITVS has provided independently produced programs to public television that take creative risks, advance issues and represent points of view not usually seen on television. In addition to funding, ITVS-CCP develops engaging national outreach campaigns to support a community's interest in educational development and to assure that these programs have lasting social impact.

For more information about ITVS's Community Connections Project, contact outreach@itvs.org or www.itvs.org/outreach.

Guide Credits

Guide writer: Andy Nash, New England Literacy Resource Center.
Mental Health content provided by Aviva Wasserman, PhD, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Psychology and Human Development, Peabody College of Vanderbilt University.

Additional content and review provided by:

Andre S. Gleaton, WNET
Ellen Howard, Harborview Medical Center
Tahir Hussain, Nashville Kurdish Forum
Donna Moss, Center for Applied Linguistics
Claire Oliveras, Portland Community College
Calib Paull, Ed.D. Technology and Outreach Coordinator, Metropolitan Institute for Teaching and Learning, Roosevelt University
Greg Smith, Florida Literacy Council
Peter Sommers, St. Viator High School
Blanca Torres, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Jee Yeun Lee, Director of Community Education and Organizing
Korean American Community Services

National Outreach Development:

Jim Sommers, ITVS National Outreach Manager
Ana Fletes, ITVS National Outreach Coordinator
Susan Latton, NEW AMERICANS Outreach Consultant

Design: Brad Bunkers

Photos: Joseph Rodriguez and Kartemquin Films