**Sample DBQ for Immigration**

From the end of the Civil War to the Beginning of World War One nearly 25 million Europeans immigrated to the United States. Many left because of religious persecution, famine or land shortage. Yet some left for the simple draw of the American dream- the idea that in the United States they could escape the confines of social classes and make something of yourself through sheer hard work and determination. Millions of Asian immigrants also flocked to the shores of the west coast for similar reasons, however when both Asians and European immigrants got to the United States they didn’t get the instant gratification they were hoping for. Immigrants faced many hardships when they finally reached America including horrid living conditions, an extreme sense of nativism and having to assimilate into a culture that was much different from their own. Despite all these challenges immigrants handled their situation with a courageous sense of perseverance.

One of the toughest challenges for immigrants was the awful living conditions they were often forced to endure when they arrived in the United States. More often than not immigrants took low paying factory jobs or servant jobs that did not leave them with enough income to live in a nice setting. With so little income tenement housing, overcrowded run down slums, became the norm for most. A photograph from the time period illustrates the situation very well with no lighting, numerous clothes lines hanging in an attic apartment and just an overall filthy atmosphere (Document 3). Unfortunately there were many immigrants who could not even acquire this low level housing upon arrival. As the 20th century continued it was clear that something needed to be done to help many of these immigrants. A reformer named Jane Addams answered the call. Addams started the Hull House in Chicago to help address many of the problems that immigrants were facing. An article by Grace Abbott from 1917 titled “The Education of the Immigrant” explained the services she provided, “daily use are the nursery , the kindergarten the playground, the penny provident bank, an employment bureau , a sub-station of the Chicago post office. A trained nurse reports to the house every morning and noon, to take charge of the sick-calls for the neighborhood.”(document 2) It is clear that the Hull House is addressing many of the issues that immigrants faced when they got to the United States including unemployment, education, and health issues, however it is important to remember that the only reason why the Hull House was due to the immense struggles that Immigrants went through at the time period. If the struggle for housing was not enough, the extreme nativism that immigrants faced made the process that much more difficult.

An additional challenge that Immigrants had to deal with was the discrimination they felt from many people already in America. Asians, Eastern Europeans, Jews, Catholics and even Irish all felt some sort of nativism at one time or another in the United States. They would often be refused jobs or housing because of being immigrants. The attitude that many Americans felt toward immigrants is reflected in a political cartoon published in *Puck Magazine* in January 11, 1893. The cartoon shows five wealthy business men holding their hands up towards an immigrant to stop and go back, not entering the United States. However it casts their shadows as immigrants who at one time had to come to the United States. (Document 4) This shows that many Americans felt immigrants shouldn’t come to the US however they were at one time had to immigrate to the United States. The attitude of American’s wasn’t enough to totally keep immigrants away so American law makers went to work to try to combat the problem. In 1882 the United States passed the Chinese Exclusion Act that barred Chinese immigration to the United States for ten years. This law showed us several details about immigrant struggles. First off it showed how Americans were so determined to keep immigrants out that they actually passed a law. A poster shows how happy Americans were with the law because it says “Hip! Hurrah! Chinese Excluded!” (Document 6) On top of the law barring Chinese immigration, Senator Ellison DuRant Smith made the “Shut the Door Speech” in 1924 claiming that we should completely stop immigration because immigrants are draining our natural resources. He claims we should Americanize the immigrants we have and let natural population increase take over. (Document 5). Having a United States Senator make these claims shows the large extend of determination that Americans had to fight this issue. This extreme discrimination made it very hard for immigrants to get a fair shot in the United States leading to many hardships. Still through all of this immigrants attempted to adapt to American culture through the assimilation process, although it was very difficult.

Once immigrants arrived in the United States, one of the challenging aspects of life was assimilating to American culture. For immigrants after 1890, typically from eastern and southern Europe this process proved to be more difficult that for immigrants from western and northern Europe. This was partly due to the drastic culture differences between eastern and southern Europe and the United States. Upon arrival many immigrants attempted to change their customs in order to fit in the United States. Aside from learning the language and customs many immigrants had to change their entire businesses. A cartoon from 1921 shows the situations very clearly. A German shop keeper had to change the names of many of his products so they would fit in with the culture rather than remain similar to that of Germany. (Document 1) This process was often difficult and strictly resulted the attitudes that Americans had toward Immigrants.

Immigrants were clearly fighting an uphill battle with their housing situation, extreme discrimination and the difficulties of the assimilation process. Still Immigrants met the challenge with persistence and have contributed immensely to American culture. Without the Chinese the transcontinental railroad would have taken years longer to complete, and the many other culture infusions from immigrants have led to the United States being one of the most diverse places in the world.