

Discover: West Michigan's Newcomers (Grades 4-8)

Program Description:

Grand Rapids encountered a dramatic change in terms of landscape, population, and diversity beginning in the early to mid 1800's. West Michigan's Newcomers focuses on the people who made West Michigan their home, highlighting their stories and contributions which shaped our community. Learners will explore GRPM's *Newcomers: The People of this Place* exhibit, engaging in artifact discovery and exhibit interpretation. Programming will share the story of where immigrants traveled from and why they moved; from there, students will uncover the major contributions and traditions that newcomers brought with them which allowed Grand Rapids to develop into the city it is today.

What content standards align with this program?

Michigan Social Studies Standards: H1 The World in Temporal Terms: Historical Habits of Mind, H2 Living and Working Together in Families and Communities, Now and Long Ago, H3 The History of Michigan and the Great Lakes Region, H5 The History of Peoples from Many Cultures from Around the World, G1 The World in Spatial Terms: Geographical Habits of Mind, G2 Places and Regions, G4 Human Systems, P1 Reading and Communication, P2 Inquiry Research and Analysis

ELA Common Core Standards for Reading: Informational Text

Museum Program Strand:

- Cultivate a community of empathetic contributors who value diversity
- Help learners tell, interpret, create, and share compelling stories so no history is ignored or untold

This program is aligned with the following Museum Learner Outcomes:

Holders of Foundational Knowledge	Masters of Fundamental Literacies	Original Thinkers for an Uncertain World	Generous Collaborators for Tough Problems	Learners For Life	
X	X	X	X	X	

What will students know and be able to do after completing this program?

- Students will be able to explain why families left their homes to move to West Michigan and the obstacles they faced when they arrived.
- Students will be able to provide examples of cultural elements Newcomers contributed to Grand Rapids, making connections with cultural elements that are still present today.

What questions will students answer?

- Who were the Newcomers of Grand Rapids' history? Where did they emigrate from?
- Why did Newcomers immigrate to Grand Rapids?
- How did the Newcomers establish themselves in West Michigan?
- What are some challenges/obstacles Newcomers faced when they came to Grand Rapids?
- How did Newcomers impact industry in Grand Rapids/West Michigan?
- What are some of the cultural traditions Newcomers brought to Grand Rapids? Do we still see any of these cultural elements today?
- What are the benefits of a diverse population?

Key Vocabulary and Content

Newcomer
Immigration

Push and Pull Factors

Erie Canal

John Ball

Economics

Artifact

English as a Second Language (ESL), English Language Learner (ELL)

Community

Culture

Tradition

Discrimination

Materials List and Setup:

West Michigan's Newcomers Artifact Trunk

Student worksheet

Program Activities: 60 minutes

1. Introduction at entrance of Newcomers and Heritage Gallery
 - a. Timeline of Grand Rapids settlement and significance of Erie Canal
 - i. John Ball settles in Grand Rapids
 - b. Push and pull factors
 - c. What did newcomers bring with them?
 - d. Heritage gallery exploration: Examine objects and documents newcomers throughout history have brought with them to Grand Rapids.
2. Newcomers Artifact Trunk Investigation
 - a. Small group investigation: Hands on investigation around the following question:
 - i. What is this artifact and why would a newcomer bring it with them?
3. Exhibit Exploration
 - a. ESL Classroom
 - i. Overview: language can be a difficult barrier to overcome.
 - b. Newspaper Display
 - i. Overview: what can you pick up or learn from a newspaper without being able to read the language?
 - c. A Tasty Stew
 - i. Overview: food connects people to their culture and to one another.
 - d. Polish Hall
 - i. Overview: importance of neighborhood gathering places, safe spaces.
 - e. Baldacchino / Street Shrine from Our Lady of Sorrows
 - i. Overview: when people transplant themselves and their customs to a new place, both are transformed in the process.
 - f. Celebrating Change, Rites of Passage
 - i. Overview: visit Quinceanera bedroom; have you ever had to make a tough decision that might upset your family or a family tradition?
 - g. Neighborhoods in Grand Rapids
 - i. Overview: Roger Wilkins racial discrimination anecdote.
4. "I Have a Connection" Activity
 - a. Newcomers exhibit exploration: find an artifact that you connect with
 - b. Whole group shares connections with exhibit and how they connect with each other
5. Wrap up and final discussion of takeaways