

New to the United States and III

Unit duration: 4-5 Days

Grade level: 11-12

Content: Psychology

Objectives: To understand the etiology and impact of mental illness among immigrant and refugee groups

Essential Questions:

1. Who are immigrants and refugees?
2. What is the psychological experience of immigration?
3. What mental illnesses are immigrants and refugees at risk for and why?
4. What additional problems do immigrants face (moving to a new culture) that may affect their illness?
5. What are the common barriers to treatment faced by immigrants?

Colorado Standards: There are no set Colorado standards for the IB curriculum. There are curriculum guidelines to follow and this lesson fits under the *Abnormal Psychology* Unit.

Lesson Plans:

1. Introduction: (20-30 minutes)

- a. Show students the picture of the group of people on the boat.



- b. Ask them the following questions to write down individually. Allow about 5-10 minutes. Have students share out their thoughts in a class discussion format.

- i. What do you see?
- ii. What do you think?
- iii. What do you wonder?

- c. After discussion tell them (if they did not figure it out) what the picture is of. (Cuban refugees or immigrants)

d. Inform the students that we will be looking at these unique groups of people (refugees and immigrants) and investigating why these groups are at risk for certain mental illnesses, what causes them and what barriers exist that make it more challenging to treat these groups.

e. The last part of the introduction will be to define immigrants and refugees to understand the similarities and differences between the two groups. Students will look up these different terms, we will discuss as class and then try to determine if the group of people, from the picture are refugees or immigrants (or do we need more information?)

2. What is the psychological experience of immigration: (1 ½ hrs) For students to understand this, they will be defining, explaining and applying key concepts and terms that explain what the psychological experience of immigration is. (see what is the psychological experience of immigration activity)

3. Causes and risk factors of mental illnesses: (40 minutes) To address what the causes of mental illnesses among immigrants and refugees are, students will spend time reading personal stories about these individuals to understand their background. (see immigrant and refugee stories activity)

4. What additional problems do immigrants face (moving to a new culture) that may affect their illness? (30 minutes) Students will identify these additional problems and discuss the challenges with them. (see additional problems and barriers activity)

5. What are the common barriers to treatment faced by immigrants? (20 minutes) The final piece to understanding why immigrants and refugees are at a higher risk of developing a mental illness, will be to look at the common barriers faced by immigrants. (see additional problems and barriers activity)

6. Final Assessment: For the assessment, I will have students watch a video about a new mental illness identified in refugees called resignation syndrome. They will have to identify and apply the different concepts and terms from the lesson to show their understanding of mental illness with immigrants and refugees. (see final assessment)

What is the psychological experience of immigration? (Activity)

For this activity, please go to: apa.org

At this website you will search: psychology of immigration 101

Click on psychology of immigration 101 and look for the section titled “**What is the psychological experience of immigration**”

Part I: In order to understand what the psychological experience of immigration is, you need to read through the section and explain/define the following concepts and terms.

A. Social context of reception

- socioecological model

- assimilation vs multiculturalism

- xenophobia and discrimination

- neighborhoods and communities

B. Acculturation and adaptation

- acculturation and mental health

- acculturation gaps

- social trust and civic engagement

- Allow (20-30 minutes) After this is completed, I will pair students up to work with each other and assign them one of the key concepts or terms they just defined. I then give them the following assignment.

Part II: Pair/Group Instructions:

1. Working with your partner, you have been given a key concept or term that is associated with the psychological experience of immigration. Your goal is to find a picture that best represents your concept

or term(s). Make sure your picture is unique enough that it cannot be easily confused with representing another concept or term. You have 30 minutes to discuss this with your partner(s), find and print your picture.

2. Bring your picture to me and I will assign you a number. You will then post the picture with the number in the designated area of the hallway.
3. There are a total of 7 pictures that represent a key concept or term associated with the psychological experience of immigration. You and your partner(s) will go around to each picture and determine which picture represents which concept or term. On paper you will include the following:
 - a. #number associated with picture
 - b. concept or term(s) you believe are represented by the picture
 - c. explanation of your choice

**After students complete Part II, I will collect the pictures and as a class we will go through each one and discuss their answers. Looking for agreement, consistency with answers, reasoning for varying answers, etc. This activity will enable students to understand, identify and apply the key concepts and terms with this topic.*

MY STORY: (activity)

For the following activity please use the following websites for information:

1. myimmigrationstory.com (for immigration stories)
2. weforum.org (for refugee stories)

Activity:

Part I:

1. You will go to the first website listed above. Here you will find many short stories about immigrants coming into the United States.
2. Pick any 4 short stories and read them. As you read them, think about any information the story provides that may help you identify possible reasons that may put that person at risk for developing a mental illness
3. *Give students about 15 minutes to complete Part I. Have a class discussion highlighting 4-5 of the stories. Have students share their answers. They should have come up with things like stress, trauma, lack of support, isolation, racism, acculturation, etc.

Part II:

1. You will go to the second website listed above. Here you will do a search for refugee stories. That will take you to a choice of different readings. Click on “3 real stories from refugees”.
2. Each group will be assigned a personal story to read. After you have read the story, as a group, please discuss specific causes your individual is at risk for developing a mental illness. Please be ready to share out with the class.
3. *Give students about 15 minutes to complete the above assignment and then spend time having each group present their story and answers. Have students identify common causes from each of the stories.

After Activity I and II have been completed, students should have a good idea what puts immigrants and refugees at risk for developing a mental illness

Additional problems and barriers (activity)

What additional problems do immigrants face (moving to a new culture) that may affect their illness?

For this activity, I will have created a large outline of the United States that will have been posted on a large wall. Students will complete the following task:

1. Return to the apa.org website (psychology of immigration 101) and click on the section titled: Information for clinicians/service providers.
2. In this section, you will find 3 areas (A,B,C) that will help explain what additional problems immigrants face that may affect their illness. Please read through the 3 areas and be ready to discuss with your group. You have 10 minutes to complete this.
3. With your group, please discuss each of the problems. You will then create a list of 5 of the most important problems (in your opinion) that immigrants face in regards to illness. You have 15 minutes to complete this.
4. Please go to the United States map and write your 5 problems within the outline.

*After students have completed this, we will have a class discussion over what the groups wrote on the United States. Were the answers similar, different? Why?

What are the common barriers to treatment faced by immigrants?

For this activity, students will continue to use the United States map as well as information from the apa.org website.

1. You will stay in this section and find the part where barriers to treatment are discussed. Please read through this.
2. Once you have read through the barriers, on your own, please write down the most significant barriers (3-5) impacting immigrants (in your opinion) and list these on the outside of the outline of the United States.

*After students have completed this, we will repeat what we did above, and have a class discussion over what they wrote. Were their choices similar, different? Why?

3. In groups, they will be assigned one of the barriers that was just discussed and will have to come up with viable ways on how to overcome that barrier. They will have 15 minutes to problem solve and then will share out with the class.

Final Assessment:

Depending on time, will determine which video we watch

Option 1: you tube video titled: "*Swedish child refugees are suffering from a rare psychological illness*" (11:12)

Option 2: Netflix documentary titled "Life overtakes me" (40 minutes)

The following assessment will be used with either of the videos:

Students: Please answer the following questions as you watch the video about resignation syndrome.

1. What is resignation syndrome and what are the common symptoms?
2. What is believed to be the causes of this syndrome?
3. Why is this unique to immigrants and refugees and not the general population?
4. How does the psychological experience play a role? (be specific with identifying concepts and/or terms that apply here)
5. What additional problems were faced by the families when they immigrated to a new country?
6. What barriers can you assume are causing additional challenges to the family?

