

Visual Analysis and Interpretation

Grades 4–12

Objective

Students will build their visual analysis skills by comparing and contrasting works of art from around one hundred years ago that depict the immigration experience. Through close looking and by using background knowledge, students will develop their analysis and interpretation skills.

Materials — [Worksheets available on Google Slides](#)

- Whiteboard
- Dry erase markers
- Image of *The Wanderers* painting by Peter Krasnow
- Image of the *Food Will Win the War* poster by Charles Edward Chambers
- Comparison chart

Optional: [Honor Memory](#) lesson. Use Reva’s story, a first-person narrative, and compare/contrast it with the immigration experience reflected in both works of art used in this lesson. Follow prompts from Compare and Contrast sheets below.

Class Activity

1. Warmup to help students develop/strengthen empathy and put their own emotions into context (Optional):
 - a. As a class, ask students to think of and/or demonstrate facial expressions, gestures, and movements to reveal emotions and describe a situation. Select the situation from a book or story that you read together. Students may act out and/or mime emotions that might be used when telling a story.
 - b. Play the game “Mirror My Emotion,” in which the first person names and pantomimes an emotion and the rest of the class in turn mimics the emotion (sad, happy, disgusted, glad, disappointed, terrified, etc.). Continue the activity with the next student and encourage them to choose a different emotion.
 - c. After completing this activity, discuss with students how emotions impact the way we tell or listen to stories.
 - d. As a follow-up, consider creating an “Emotions” word wall to help with high-frequency words, with building phonics and spelling skills, and expanding vocabulary related to emotions which can help with naming emotions accurately and self-regulating.

2. Begin with a brainstorm about the meaning of the term “immigration” and write students’ responses on the whiteboard. If needed, use the prompts below or add your own:

What does it mean to “immigrate?”

What reasons do people have for immigrating to the United States?

What feelings might people experience when leaving their homes?

3. Divide students into small groups. Each group will assign a notetaker and a reporter.
4. Display the image of *The Wanderers* by Peter Krasnow. Hand out the comparison chart to each group and ask students to discuss and note responses to each question in the left column.
5. Display the image of *Food Will Win the War* by Charles Edward Chambers. Ask students to discuss the same questions and note their answers in the right column of the comparison chart.
6. Ask groups to share their findings with the whole class. After the share-out, go back to the board with the brainstorm activity and ask students to add any new responses. Use a different colored marker to reflect new information learned about immigration and immigrants’ motivations and emotions during the process.
7. Following the discussion, have each student select one figure in either image to focus on. Each student will write a one-page, first-person account from the point of view of the selected figure. Encourage students to write about what that person might be seeing, hearing, or feeling at that moment in time.

Curriculum Connections

California Common Core State Standards, English Language Arts: RL.5.2, RL.5.3, SL.5.1

California Arts Standards: 5.VA:Re7.1, 5.VA:Re8

Resources

[Facing History and Ourselves](#)–Free history and civics-based curriculum for educators.

[Institute for Curriculum Services \(ICS\)](#)–Gain tools to teach about Jewish culture, history and religion.

[Define American](#)–First-hand video accounts by undocumented Americans.

[Dear America: Young Readers' Edition](#)–Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist and undocumented immigrant Jose Antonio Vargas shares his story in this young readers' adaptation of his memoir *Dear America*.

[Holocaust Museum LA](#)–Educational tools and resources to teach the Holocaust in your classroom.

Connect with Us

Our educators are here to help! If you have questions about this curriculum or would like to share your students' writing or artwork with us, please email education@skirball.org.

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Credits

The Wanderers by Peter Krasnow, 1927, oil on canvas, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Krasnow, SCC 41.289

Food Will Win the War by Charles Edward Chambers, c. 1917, Museum purchase with funds provided by the Lee Kalsman Project Americana Acquisition Fund, SCC 66.2769



The Wanderers by Peter Krasnow, 1927

Painter and sculptor Peter Krasnow was born in 1887 in Ukraine, which was then part of Russia. During this time, Jewish families were victims of *pogroms*, which were organized attacks against Jews. Many Jewish people were killed, their businesses ruined, and their homes vandalized. Others, like Peter's own family, were forced to leave. Unlike most immigrants from Russia who settled on the East Coast of the United States, Peter's family decided to settle in Los Angeles, where the Jewish community was very small. His paintings from this period reflected subjects from the Hebrew Bible and depictions of Jewish life in Eastern Europe. After immigrating to the United States, Peter Krasnow painted this scene of himself and his wife, Rose, leaving their homeland.



FOOD WILL WIN THE WAR

You came here seeking Freedom
You must now help to preserve it

WHEAT is needed for the allies
Waste nothing



UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION

Food Will Win the War by Charles Edward Chambers, ca. 1917

Making a new life in America was very difficult. Immigrants had to find places to live, get a job, and learn a new language and new customs. Charles Edward Chambers, an illustrator and painter, created this image for a series of posters displayed during World War I (1914-1918). This particular poster encouraged immigrants to participate in the war effort by not wasting food. The posters were placed in immigrant neighborhoods and published in several languages, including English, Yiddish, and Italian, so that immigrants could read them.

Group Members: _____

Compare and Contrast Chart

The Wanderers
by Peter Krasnow

Food Will Win the War
by Charles Edward Chambers

Look closely. What is the first thing you notice about this image?

What is happening in the image? What is the story? What do you see that makes you say that?

What colors do you see? How would you describe the mood of this image?

What do you think the people in the image are feeling? What do you see that makes you say that?

What might you think/feel/say if you were a character in this image?