Lesson Plan: The Irish Immigrant: His Place in the U.S. from 1820-1860  
By Merrill Bell

National Curriculum for Social Studies Thematic Strands Covered:

**Culture:** What various aspects of Irish culture, especially their belief system and religious faith, did the Irish immigrant transfer to the United States? How did the Irish adapt from a primarily agrarian culture to an urban one? How were the Irish perceived by the majority Anglo-Protestant culture of the antebellum United States?

**Time, Continuity & Change:** Why did the Irish move to the United States? How did the Irish immigrant’s life change in the U.S.? What types of institutions did the Irish establish to cope with their new American environment?

**People, Places & Environments:** What factors in Ireland and what factors in the United States made immigration to the United States a desirable option for the Irish people?

**Individuals, Groups & Institutions:** What religious, social, and political institutions did the Irish create to help them cope with their new life in the United States?

**Power, Authority, & Governance:** How did the Irish preserve and protect their group and religious rights within the majority Protestant culture? What conflicts developed between the Irish-American and the majority culture?

**Science, Technology & Society:** How did the U.S. Transportation and Industrial Revolutions provide impetus for the Irish to immigrate and find work in the United States? What conflicts did Irish workers in the emerging economy experience with native craftsmen in textiles, guns, and shoes, etc. who were victims of the Industrial Revolution?

**Global Connections:** What British policies towards Ireland affected Irish immigration to the U.S.? How did Irish-American connections to their homeland affect their relationship to the majority U.S. culture?

**Civic Ideals and Practice:** How did Irish-Americans become involved in local, state, and national politics? Why did many people (Know-Nothings) see the Irish in conflict with democratic ideals?

North Carolina Course of Study Standards to be Explored:

**AH1.H.2.2** Evaluate key turning points from colonization through Reconstruction in terms of their lasting impact (e.g., conflicts, legislation, elections, innovations, leadership, movements, Supreme Court decisions, etc.).

**AH1.H.3.2** Explain how environmental, cultural and economic factors influenced the patterns of migration and settlement within the U.S. before the Civil War (e.g., economic diversity of regions, mercantilism, cash crops, triangular trade, ethnic diversity, American Indian beliefs about land ownership, Lewis & Clark expedition, farming, Industrial Revolution, etc.).

**AH1.H.4.1** Analyze the political issues and conflicts that impacted the United States through Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted (e.g., American Revolution, Constitutional Convention, Bill of Rights, development of political parties, nullification, slavery, states’ rights, Civil War).
AH1.H.4.2 Analyze the economic issues and conflicts that impacted the United States through Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted (e.g., mercantilism, Revolutionary Era taxation, National Bank, taxes, tariffs, territorial expansion, economic “Panics”, Civil War).

AH1.H.4.3 Analyze the social and religious conflicts, movements and reforms that affected the United States from colonization through Reconstruction in terms of participants, strategies, opposition, and results (e.g., Second Great Awakening, Transcendentalism, abolition, temperance, mental illness, prisons, education, etc.).

AH1.H.4.4 Analyze the cultural conflicts that impacted the United States through Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted (e.g., displacement of American Indians, manifest destiny, slavery, assimilation, nativism).

AH1.H.8.1 Analyze the relationship between innovation, economic development, progress and various perceptions of the “American Dream” through Reconstruction (e.g., inventions, Industrial Revolution, American System, etc.).

AH1.H.8.3 Evaluate the extent to which a variety of groups and individuals have had opportunity to attain their perception of the “American Dream” through Reconstruction.

**Topic Theme:** This lesson plan will tie together the Transportation and Industrial Revolutions in the antebellum U.S. and its need for workers with Irish immigration to the U.S., forced by English injustice and starvation due to the potato blight. Nativist sentiment and discrimination against the Irish will be discussed as well as the Irish response.

**Essential Questions:**

What is “progress”?  
What are the rewards of progress and what are its costs?  
When is the “cost” of progress too high a price to pay?  
How should we remember the people who paid the cost of “progress”?
Day 1: The Transportation and Industrial Revolutions

Objectives:
- I can describe the technological developments that led to the Transportation and Industrial Revolutions of the antebellum U.S.
- I can explain how the transportation revolution strengthened the economic bonds between the North and Midwestern States.
- I can analyze how the Industrial Revolution changed the character of work in the U.S. and how that created social resentments among certain groups in the United States.
- I can begin to apply my understanding of the Southern economy to understand how industrialization increased friction between the South and the rest of the United States.

Materials Required:
- One computer for every 3-4 students
- 1st Industrial Revolution PowerPoint Notes (See Appendix Ia)
- Transportation Worksheet (See Appendix Ib)
- Projector, BrightLinks, etc. for 1st Industrial Revolution PowerPoint (See Appendix Ia)

Agenda:
- Bellringer: Think about your parents’ life and activities and then think of your own life. List at least five differences in your life with that of your parents as adolescents. What technological changes have affected your teenage years? (15-20 minutes)
- Class Discussion of Bellringer Responses (15 minutes)
- PowerPoint Lecture with Student Notes: See Agenda Ia. Discussion & Question interspersed within lecture (25 minutes)
- Group Activity: In groups of 3-4 students, using computer, complete 1st Industrial Revolution Worksheet, using the Annenberg Learner website A Biography of America: (Unit 7) The Rise of Capitalism
  https://www.learner.org/series/biographyofamerica/prog07/index.html
- Ticket Out: Answer the following question in one or two sentences: “How did improvements in technology change life in the United States from 1800 – 1860?”

Additional Activities (for extra credit):
- Create a diagram of how a steam engine (internal combustion) works
- Discuss the challenges in creating a practical steam engine (internal combustion).
- Research the specific steam engine that James Watt invented.
Day 2: Irish Immigration To the United States From 1820 – 1860

Objectives:

I can analyze how increased Irish immigration provided workers for the transportation and industrial revolutions taking place in the U.S., and how they sometimes displaced free black workers in the North.

I can explain why the Irish moved to the United States?
I can describe how did the Irish immigrant’s life changed in the U.S.?
I can evaluate the factors in Ireland and the factors in the United States that made immigration to the United States a desirable option for the Irish people?

Materials Needed:

PowerPoint on Irish Immigration and Notes (See Appendix IIa)
Paddy Works on the Railway Lyrics and worksheet (See Appendix IIb)
Computer
Speakers
Pencil & Paper
Projector, Brightlinks, etc.

Agenda

Bellringer: Throughout America’s history up to this point, what did the United States lack most? In the past and present, what means have they used to supply that need. How did immigration supply that need in the northeastern and Midwestern states during the Industrial Revolution?

Discussion of Bellringer

PowerPoint Lecture with Notes on “Irish Immigration to U.S.” with questions & discussion

Play “Paddy Works on the Railway” Students will follow along and complete questions on worksheet.

Review Questions

Work on Homework Assignment: Create a song, poem, or rap that describes an important aspect or activity of your life
Day 3: The Rise of Nativism against the Irish

Objectives:
I can analyze how the Irish were in conflict socially, culturally, politically, and religiously with the majority of Americans in antebellum United States.
I can understand how the economic destitution of many Irish immigrants increased urbanization and industrialization in the U.S.
I can evaluate how the Second Great Awakening created opposition to and fed animosity against the Irish Catholic immigrant.
I can explain the economic competition for jobs between free blacks and Irish immigrants.
I can apply the same threads of nativist sentiment against the Irish in the 1800’s to nativist trends against certain groups today

Materials Needed:
Nativist Pictures on Cardboard for Picture Gallery (See Appendix III)
Stands or Tape to display pictures
Pencil
Paper
Picture Gallery Description Worksheet (See Appendix III)

Agenda:
Bellringer: How are recent immigrants (for example, Muslims and Latinos) to the United States portrayed by certain individuals who oppose their entry into this country? What fears do these individuals express about these immigrants?
Discussion of Bellringer Responses
Picture Gallery: Students move around the room to view nativist cartoons about the Irish, record their responses next to the picture, and answer the questions on their worksheet.
Class Discussion about Nativist Pictures with application to today’s issues

Additional Activity (Extra credit):
Compare the experiences of African-Americans with Irish-Americans.

Assessment
Answer the Essential Questions, using facts from the last three lessons to provide supporting details for your answers:

What is “progress”?
What are the rewards of progress and what are its costs?
When is the “cost” of progress too high a price to pay?
How should we remember the people who paid the cost of “progress”?
### Rubric for Assessment

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<tr>
<td><strong>Completeness</strong></td>
<td>All four questions answered completely and thoughtfully</td>
<td>All four questions answered but without specific detail or clarity of language</td>
<td>Questions answered, but answers incomplete or vague</td>
<td>Not all Questions answered or answers do not reflect a degree of intellectual effort</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Details from lesson are used to support statements</strong></td>
<td>Ten or more details from the lessons are used to support opinions</td>
<td>Seven or more details from the lessons are used to support opinions</td>
<td>Fewer than five details from the lessons are used to support opinions</td>
<td>Opinions are unsupported by facts</td>
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<td><strong>Definitions</strong></td>
<td>Word choice is careful and expresses accurately the opinions of the writer</td>
<td>Word choice somewhat imprecise but expresses writer’s thoughts accurately</td>
<td>Word choice is somewhat limited and imprecise but adequate for understanding</td>
<td>Word choice is limited and does not express the writer’s thoughts clearly</td>
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<td><strong>Reflection</strong></td>
<td>Evidence of considerable intellectual thought</td>
<td>Reflects evidence of a logical thought process</td>
<td>Opinion is vague. but can be followed; answers seem rushed</td>
<td>Answers are incomprehensible</td>
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<td><strong>Grammar &amp; Spelling</strong></td>
<td>Fewer than two grammatical or spelling errors</td>
<td>Fewer than four grammatical or spelling errors</td>
<td>Fewer than eight grammatical or spelling errors</td>
<td>Writing demonstrates no evidence of proofreading</td>
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