

RESOURCE LIBRARY
ACTIVITY : 50 MINS

Exploring Modern Human Migrations

Students research the causes of several modern migrations, and create a map showing these migration routes.

GRADES

9 - 12+

SUBJECTS

Anthropology, Geography, Human Geography, Social Studies, World History

CONTENTS

5 PDFs, 1 Link

OVERVIEW

Students research the causes of several modern migrations, and create a map showing these migration routes.

For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/exploring-modern-human-migrations/>

Program



DIRECTIONS

1. Introduce the topic of modern human migrations.

Review some of the causes of ancient human migrations. Ask: *Are humans still migrating today? What are some examples of migrations that took place in the last few hundred years?* Record students' ideas on the board. Ask: *Do you think these modern migrations differ from ancient migrations? How?* Discuss and list possible differences such as cause, distance, duration, and method of travel.

2. Assign research topics.

Divide students into small groups of four or five. Assign each group a modern migration to research, use the handouts provided in this activity. Select from the following modern human migrations:

- Migrations of the Romani people since the 1400s
- Migration of African Americans after World War II (the Second Great Migration)
- Migration of Jews to Palestine in the 20th Century
- Migration of the "boat people" out of Vietnam after the end of the Vietnam War in 1975
- Migration of Afghans after the Soviet invasion in 1979

3. Have students research and trace modern migration routes on a map.

Distribute the readings for assigned migrations to each small group. Ask students to read about the modern migration assigned to their group and take notes on the following questions:

- When did the migration occur?
- Where did it start and end?
- What were the reasons for the migration? Were there push factors or pull factors?
- What challenges did humans face on the migration?

Distribute dry erase markers and one World Physical Tabletop Map to each group. Tell students to use the map to trace the migration route(s).

4. Have students discuss their findings.

Have each group display their map and give a brief report on their findings. Ask students to use green pushpins to denote the starting point of each migration, and red pushpins to indicate the end. As each group reports, make a list on the board of reasons for the migrations, and a list of challenges humans faced during the course of their migrations.

5. Relate the findings to the Genographic Project.

Point out that some humans on these modern migrations probably carried genetic markers with them, just as humans on ancient migrations did. They may have left genetic signposts that scientists of the future could use to track their journeys—even without history books.

Informal Assessment

Compare and contrast the causes and characteristics of ancient and modern migrations.

Extending the Learning

Have students research other modern human migrations:

- Migrations caused by environmental factors; for example as Hurricane Katrina victims, who migrated from New Orleans to Houston
- Migrations caused by economic factors; for example, Indian technology workers who migrate to Silicon Valley, California

OBJECTIVES

Subjects & Disciplines

Anthropology

Geography

- Human Geography

Social Studies

- World History

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- compare and contrast modern and ancient human migrations
- identify and explain causes of modern human migrations
- trace modern human migration routes on a map

Teaching Approach

- Learning-for-use

Teaching Methods

- Brainstorming
- Discussions
- Hands-on learning
- Reading
- Research

Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- Critical Thinking Skills
 - Applying
 - Understanding
- Geographic Skills
 - Acquiring Geographic Information
 - Analyzing Geographic Information
 - Answering Geographic Questions
 - Organizing Geographic Information

National Standards, Principles, and Practices

IRA/NCTE STANDARDS FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- **Standard 7:**

Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and nonprint texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM STANDARDS

- **Theme 3:**

People, Places, and Environments

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS

- **Standard 3:**

How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth's surface

- **Standard 9:**

The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface

Preparation

What You'll Need

MATERIALS YOU PROVIDE

- Dry erase markers
- Paper
- Pencils
- Push pins
- World Physical Tabletop Map

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

- Internet Access: Required
- Tech Setup: 1 computer per classroom

PHYSICAL SPACE

- Classroom

GROUPING

- Large-group instruction
- Small-group instruction

BACKGROUND & VOCABULARY

Background Information

The Genographic Project studies where our early human ancestors came from and how humans came to populate the entire planet. It relies on the identification of genetic markers—occasional mutations to DNA that are passed on through generations. Following the markers through past human generations enables scientists to determine the pattern of routes by which humans migrated around the world. Researching recent human migrations enables students to see migration as a dynamic process and to compare the causes of past and present migrations.

Prior Knowledge

["genes","DNA","genetic","mutations","genetic marker","human migrations","push factor","pull factor"]

Recommended Prior Activities

- None

Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
ancestor	<i>noun</i>	organism from whom one is descended.
DNA	<i>noun</i>	(deoxyribonucleic acid) molecule in every living organism that contains specific genetic information on that organism.
genetic marker	<i>noun</i>	gene that is located on a specific place on a chromosome.

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
genetic mutation	noun	change to the genetic structure of an organism.
genetics	noun	the study of heredity, or how characteristics are passed down from one generation to the next.
Genographic Project	noun	National Geographic project that uses genealogy to trace the migratory history of the human species.
human migration	noun	the movement of people from one place to another.
pull factor	noun	force that draws people to immigrate to a place.
push factor	noun	force that drives people away from a place.

For Further Exploration

Articles & Profiles

- [National Geographic Explorers: Spencer Wells, Geneticist](#)

Books

- [Wells, Spencer. *Deep Ancestry: Inside The Genographic Project*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2006. Print.](#)
- [Wells, Spencer. *The Journey of Man: A Genetic Odyssey*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002. Print.](#)

Websites

- [National Geographic: The Genographic Project](#)

FUNDER

