

## **Cuban and Haitian Immigration**

### **Key Issues and Essential Questions**

1. What factors shape an immigrants experience? What factors shape an immigrant's chances of success in a new country?
2. What role does race and class play in U.S. immigration policy?
3. What is the difference between an economic migrant and a political refugee?
4. Does the Cuban and Haitian immigration experience fit the 'Ellis island' model of immigrant experience?
5. What is the significance of the 'status of exile' in the Cuban-American experience?
6. Should Haitian migrants be considered economic migrants or political refugees?

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### **Learning Activities**

1. **News Article Analysis** – In this learning activity, the students will examine various news articles relevant to Cuban and Haitian Immigration. The students will be able to analyze and examine the importance of race, economics, and political and social forces upon the different immigrant experiences. The analysis will include group and classroom discussion of the news articles and instruction on how the news report reflects former or current trends in U.S. policy and immigrant relations.
2. **Comparing Primary Documents** – For this learning activity, the students would be given several primary source documents to compare, such as personal immigrant interviews or stories. The students will explore the differences in home experience, arrival to the United States, and the unique settlement experiences of the new arrivals. The analysis and comparison of different primary source documents will allow students to gain an insightful perspective into immigrant cultural, travel, and life from one nation to the United States.
3. **Elian Gonzalez** – Another consideration in regards to different learning activities in the classroom would be to use the events surrounding the arrival, legal battles, and deportation of Elian Gonzalez as a resource for understanding the complexities of Cuban immigration. The students will examine the events surrounding Elian Gonzalez and then in a group format discuss the case. Then the students will examine the case using a different historical timeframe such as prior to the Cuban revolution or the students could discuss the case imagining Elian as a different race.
4. **Web Hunt** – For this learning activity, the students will be able to search the internet for relevant and meaningful websites related to the Cuban or Haitian immigrant experience. The websites chosen should reflect thoughtful consideration of the relevance of the website for research, analysis, and insight into the varied immigrant experiences of the Cubans and Haitians.
5. **Create a Cartoon History** – For this activity, the students will create a cartoon history of either the Cuban or Haitian immigrant experience. The students will research the immigrant experience of their selected immigrant group and utilize the information to make a cartoon that reflects the information. The students will select a specific historical event to highlight in their cartoon and make use of satire and commentary to inform the reader of the nature of immigrant life and history for their specific ethnic group.

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### **Annotated Bibliography**

Castro, Max J., ed. Free Markets, Open Societies, Closed Borders?: Trends in International Migration and Immigration Policy in the Americas. Miami: North-South Center P, 1999.

Max Castro developed a collection of articles to explore the social, political, and economic forces behind immigration throughout the Americas in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Castro's thinking behind his choices lie in the fundamental contradiction of United States policy in the 1990's, a time when the US both "turned toward stemming immigration and securing its borders just as a major regional trade integration treaty" (NAFTA) was enacted (3). The US was 'opening markets' while 'tightening borders'. Of particular interest was the article written by Lisandro Perez, who teaches about Cuban migration at Florida International University in Miami. Perez argues that the open door policy for Cuban immigrants to the U.S. that had been in effect since the pre-1959 revolution, has since closed following the end of US Cold War policies and fall of the Soviet Union. He uses the example of the 1994 Rafter Crisis and the change in US' policy to these Cuban rafters to make his point. He contends, "in an era in which the post-Cold War coincided with a surge in the anti-immigration undercurrent, it became difficult to justify preferential treatment for Cubans based upon international political considerations" (204). Although this is a well argued piece, the article was written over 10

years ago and the preferential Cuban Adjustment Act, a relic of the Cold War, remains US immigration law. In some cases since the article was written, such as the Elian Gonzalez case of 2000, Perez would perhaps argue that the US federal government's reaction proves his point that the open door policy of the Cold War is truly closing. On the other hand, there are cases that still point to a preferential treatment of Cuban migrants to the US. For example, the 2006 case of 46 illegal immigrants that washed up on the South Florida shoreline. Supporting the argument that Cubans remain a special case was the fact that the only immigrant that was not sent home happened to be a Cuban.

Fagg, John Edwin. Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. Englewood, New Jersey:

Prentice Hall, 1965.

An excellent historical survey of the three Caribbean nations or Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic; John Fagg's, *Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic*, is an easily readable introduction to the origins and events of these countries. Beginning with the first interaction between European colonial powers and the native inhabitants of the three nations, Fagg rightly identifies the honest and brutal legacy of colonial expansion, territorial genocide, and eventual exploitation of the islands by the Spanish, British, and French. The book continues the historical survey up to 1965. The author describes the impact of colonialism on the three nations and makes a point to discuss the deep economic and social legacy of the imperial

occupations by the French, British, and Spanish. When considering the immigration histories of Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican, this book provides a basic but useful introduction to the origins of racial and social injustice on the islands. The drawback to this charming history is the publication date of 1965, however, it does give insight to U.S. policy and reaction to both of the dictators in Haiti and Cuba.

Konczal, Lisa, and Alex Stepick. "Haiti." The New Americans: A Guide to Immigration

Since 1965. Ed. Mary Waters and Reed Ueda. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 2007. 445-57.

This source describes the historical background to the relationship between Haiti and the United States. The section's main objective is to examine trends in Haitian immigration into the United States. The section utilizes charts and statistics that make demographic shifts easy to track over time. Detailed analysis is provided to explain some of the factors leading to the difficulties experienced by Haitians immigrating to the United States.

Martin, Phillip, Elizabeth Midgley, and Michael S. Teitelbaum. "Migration and Development:

Whither the Dominican Republic and Haiti?" International Migration Review 36, no. 2. (Summer 2002): 570-592. JSTOR. [www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org)

In this journal article by Phillip Martin, Elizabeth Midgley, and Michael S. Teitelbaum, the three authors discuss the long standing hostile relationship between the people of the

Dominican Republic and the nation of Haiti. The authors provide a brief survey of the two nations, including a comparison of the economic hardships of both nations, the differences in colonial attitudes during the development of both nations, and the treatment of both nations in regards to their immigration experiences in the United States. The article provides an excellent critique of how race and colonialism may have played a major role in the current distrust and violence that exists between both nations. The article allows the reader to consider questions of race outside of the context of the United States. For example, how may colonialism have created the structure for violence and exclusion between the countries of Haiti and the Dominican? What legacy has the economic choices of the U.S. contributed to the discrepancies in the distribution of wealth between Haiti and the Dominican?

Mozingo, Joe. "In Haiti slums, a culture of death." Miami Herald 12 Mar. 2004. General OneFile. Gale. Fitchburg State College. 3 July 2009.

This article helps to explain the desperate conditions that give rise to Haitians risking their lives to enter the United States. The author describes an endemic indifference to life in the poorest sections of Haiti. Bodies left on the roadside to rot are not only denied proper burial, but also represent crimes that will never be investigated. The author describes portions of the slums that the police and aid workers refuse to enter due to safety concerns. Underlying these problems appears to be a government either too corrupt or incompetent to act. Considering these conditions, crossing the open ocean on a less than seaworthy craft begins to look a lot more sensible that it might otherwise appear.

Skop, Emily. Immigrants Outside Megalopolis: Ethnic Transformation in the Heartland. Ed.

Richard C. Jones. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008.

Skop's work is part of a larger anthology which traces immigrant experiences in various American cities and towns. The anthology looks to highlight communities outside of major cities and the more traditional destinations for various immigrant groups. Each chapter provides the reader with a brief overview of the history of the chosen group and describes the process of its members coming to the United States. The focus then switches to a particular community where there is a high concentration of the immigrants (i.e. Cubans in Phoenix, Arizona as opposed to Miami) and discusses both the immigrants' effects on the area and how their new environment has impacted the group socially, politically, and culturally.

The anthology is useful in providing a wider view on how well various immigrant groups have either assimilated into American culture or how well they have managed to retain their original culture and ethnicity. It could be a valuable resource for upper-level classes where students are doing more in-depth research and for teachers who would like to give some supplementary reading to students of immigration.

Stepick, Alex. Pride Against Prejudice: Haitians in the United States. Ed. Nancy Foner. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1998.

Alex Stepick's research on Haitian immigrants to the United States is an ethnographic case study, part of a larger in depth series on 'New Immigrants' to the United States focusing on the waves of Caribbean, Asian, and Latin American migrants on the move in the last quarter of

the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Stepick, director of the Immigration and Ethnicity Institute at Florida International University in Miami, focuses his book on original research into the Haitian community in South Florida during the 1990's. He describes a deep tension within Haitians in America. On the one hand, they embody pride for their language, culture and Haitian identity. Yet in order to survive in America, Haitians often masked their ethnicities and assimilate as they struggle against the American based prejudices targeted at them for being 'black' and mostly 'undocumented immigrants'. The support for his work comes directly from field-research within the Haitian communities in South Florida in that he cites several examples of Haitian experience that expose "the magnitude of racial prejudice in contemporary American society", a society that often "characterizes all immigrant groups...by general stereotypes" but rejects empirical evidence (116). The book is well-written and researched and provides an often hidden voice in the U.S. immigration debate; the voice of the immigrant. In addition, Stepick's book provides a comparison between Cuban immigrants and Haitian immigrants to America, asking the question why one group might be considered political refugees while the other is labeled 'immigrant', helping to reveal the complexity and inherent contradictions within U.S. immigration policy.

Stepick, Alex, and Alejandro Portes. "Flight into Despair: A Profile of Recent Haitian Refugees in South Florida." International Migration Review 20, no. 2. (Summer 1986): 329-350.

JSTOR. [www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org)

In this journal article by Alex Stepick and Alejandro Portes, the two authors discuss the results of a thorough research survey on the sociological makeup of Haitian immigrants entering the United States in south Florida. The information provided in the article includes the economic

makeup of the refugees, employment status, language proficiency, marital status, and settlement location. For any research on the impact of colonialism and racial injustice on the islands, the use of good data and statistical information will assist the student in drawing solid conclusions and making well balanced and insightful analysis. The article by Stepick and Portes provides the information with useful tables and charts as well as good explanations for the data collected. The information is analyzed along with the current treatment of the Haitian refugees in light of U.S. immigration policy. The factors of race and economic status weigh heavily on the study and enlighten the reader as to the patterns of settlement in the immigrant community. Where are new immigrants likely to settle? Why do they settle within the established communities? How does this choice of settlement impact future success and assimilation?

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## Annotated Websites

Central Intelligence Agency: The World Factbook.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>

The CIA World Factbook is a resource of information provided by the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States on 266 countries and entities around the globe. Information is provided about each nation including their history, geography, type of government, exports and imports, and even statistics regarding birth rates, death rates, religious affiliation, and types of technology. The CIA World Factbook is presented in an easy to use format with drop down menus and convenient maps, flags, and linked photos. Although the website is information only, it provides the basic facts necessary when beginning any research.

*Haiti & the U.S.A.: Neighbors Linked by History and Community.* Trinity College Haiti Program, 2003. Web. 6 July 2009. <<http://www.haiti-usa.org/index.php>>.

*Haiti and the U.S.A.* is an academic website published by the Haiti Program at Trinity College, a small women's college in Washington DC. The initial purpose of the website was to celebrate Haiti's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its independence. In addition, the site provides educational materials that have been developed alongside five Haitian American organizations in five US cities including Delray Beach, Detroit, Boston, Washington DC, and Atlanta. The site is divided into four major sections: an historical overview of Haiti-US relations that begin with Haitian independence, a section of Haitian communities in America, a special features selection highlighting major figures in Haiti's history, and basic facts section of Haiti that includes a timeline.

For the study of Haitian immigration to the US, this site is a valuable teacher's resource as well as an appropriate site for students to mine. Of particular interest is the section that highlights five American cities where Haitians have settled. The site describes each section as a 'snapshot' into the community. In some, the Haitian community is currently emerging such as in Detroit. While in Boston, Haitians have already developed a strong settlement. Students and teacher will be able to explore the 'origin and evolution' of each community, view city maps of the exact 'location of the community', analyze contemporary 'issues within the community', and research specific institutions and members of each community.

The site's major flaw is that it hasn't been kept up to date. A quick browse through its material and one discovers that most contemporary data ends in 2002 following a June 2002 symposium that Trinity College held on Haitian immigration to the US, the event that appears to have been a major catalyst for the site.

"Haitian Immigration: 20<sup>th</sup> Century." In Motion The African-American Migration Experience. 6 July 2009

<<http://www.inmotionaame.org/migrations/landing.cfm?migration=12>>.

This site is connected to the Schaumberg Center for Research in Black Culture – a division of the New York Public Library. The site's content includes maps, articles, lesson plans, and pictures all related to Haitian immigration into the U.S. The site takes on the tough issues relative to the unequal treatment of Haitian immigrants when compared with other immigrant groups entering the U.S. It also provides great background information about Haitian culture. In addition, the site offers two lesson plans designed for grades 9-12 on Haitian immigration. The

site's size and easy navigation make it an ideal place for teachers or students to start research into the many issues related to Haitian immigration.

Haiti The First Black Republic in the World. 2004. Sponsored by the City of Miami.

6 July 2009. <<http://www.ci.miami.fl.us/haiti2004/index.htm>>.

This city of Miami sponsored site divides its content into two major categories: History and Little Haiti. The History section runs through major events from 1492 through Haiti's independence. Some figures are also profiled such as Francois Dominique Toussaint Louverture. The section on Little Haiti provides insight into recent attempts by Haitian immigrants to shape the landscape of an ethnic enclave in the U.S. This is not a stand alone resource, but its information on Little Haiti provides valuable information about how the Haitian immigration experience continues to evolve.

“Puerto Rican/ Cuban Immigration” (Part of the American Memory Series). Library of Congress.

22 April 2004. <<http://memory.loc.gov/learn//features/immig/cuban.html>>

This Library of Congress collection is part of a larger series on immigration in the United States as a whole. The presentation first introduces both teachers and students to the topic of immigration, using a variety of formats including vocabulary activities, interviews, and a section on native foods. For the purposes of obtaining information on Cuba, there is an interesting area of the site that discusses Cuban and Puerto Rican immigration side by side. In analyzing movement from the Caribbean, Puerto Rico may also provide contrast for students as they seek to understand the island's relationship with the United States, why it evolved in this way, and the experiences of the Puerto Rican “immigrants”.

The website has put together a variety of resources for teachers that could be used in planning lessons for the classroom or in assembling a web scavenger hunt for students. It contains a vast amount of primary sources, though it should be noted that they represent a number of selected immigrant groups, not only Cuba and Haiti is noticeably absent on the site.

"American Experience | Fidel Castro." PBS. 06 July 2009  
<<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/castro/index.html>>

This PBS companion site for the 'American Experience: Fidel Castro' film provides in depth access into the life of the communist Cuban leader. The website attempts to portray Fidel Castro with minimal ideological bias, posing the question of whether he signifies a 'hero or villain' in the Latin American political landscape. Its main purpose is to explore the roots of his anti-American animosities, the birth of his revolutionary ideas, and to weigh the benefits and costs of the Castro revolution. The site provides a modest amount of material on key figures in Cuban history, including Che Guevara and Fulgencia Batista, outlines the nation's recent historical chronology, and briefly analyzes the Cuban exile community, its' majority living today in the United States.

As a classroom resource in the study of Cuban immigration, it provides excellent material for high school students; well organized, short in length, and arranged topically. The site can be accessed in both English and Spanish, as well. Teachers may need to provide some additional Cold War context and vocabulary instruction prior to sending students to the site, but the readings would make strong supplemental readings to understand the Cuban Americans' status as political refugees in the US.

The United States Department of State. <<http://www.state.gov/>>

At first, one might think that the website of the U.S. Department of State would be static and boring without any useful information or in depth analysis of United States policy.

However, the website is full of useful and insightful publications, articles, and information useful to the researcher in reading and researching any topic in U.S. history that involves U.S. policy, especially foreign policy. The website has a database that includes formal congressional reports, committee interviews and policy statements, and congressional research reports. The search function can be by date, author, country, or topic.

“Saving Elian: examining how a little boy became a metaphor for the passionate 40-year struggle over Cuba.” [PBS.org](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/elian/). 2001. 6 July 2009

<<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/elian/>>.

This site serves as a companion to the *Frontline* documentary on the Elian Gonzalez saga. Elian’s case displays the hard line U.S. approach to Cuban immigration starting in the 1990s. The site’s content is divided into four categories: views and analysis, interviews, discussion, and timeline. Besides Elian’s story, the site also provides an interesting profile of Miami’s Cuban community.

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### **Annotated Primary Sources**

Brush, Peter. "The Sad Politics of Elian." *CBSNews.com*. April 14, 2000.  
<[http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2000/04/14/politics/main184085.shtml?source=search\\_story](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2000/04/14/politics/main184085.shtml?source=search_story)>

This news article is from April of 2000 reporting on the aftermath of the Elian Gonzalez incident. Elian was a migrant from the nation of Cuba who had arrived by boat after a tragic journey across the ocean. Having lost his mother on the journey, Elian was held in the United States with relatives while his father, still in Cuba, desired to be reunited with his son. The Clinton administration ordered the child returned to communist Cuba. The custody of Elian Gonzalez by U.S. agents occurred at gunpoint and became an international scandal. Attorney General Janet Reno took responsibility for the brunt of the political and international fallout. This article highlights the different standards that exist in relation to federal policy on immigration. By sending Elian Gonzales back to Cuba, many Americans felt that the policy dealing with political refugees had been ignored. On the other hand, how could the United States withhold a child from his parent? In examining the issues associated with Cuban immigration, this article allows for a deeper discussion about the choices the United States makes in its policy and standards. The article also raises questions about the role of race and ethnicity in decisions about entrance to the United States. What if Elian had been Haitian, Russian, or from China? Would the decision have been to return him to his home country if his race were different?

"Elian Gonzalez Joins the Communist Party." *CBSNews.com*. June 17, 2008.  
<<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/06/17/world/main4185799.shtml>>

This news article appeared on the CBS News website due to the public attention given in 2000 to the story of Elian Gonzalez. The article highlights the induction of Elian Gonzalez into

the communist party of Cuba. The article portrays Elian as a propaganda tool of the Castro regime used to agitate the United States and its decision to return Elian rather than keep him from his father in Cuba. The article is useful in highlighting the strained relationship of the United States and Cuba. Years after the original incident, Elian as a member of the Cuban communist party brings back the question of race and ethnicity in immigration decisions. How might Elian's life have been different had he stayed in the United States? Should the immigration policy of the United States have anything to do with the political leanings of the migrant's home country? By making choices about people's lives according to their political background, do we as a nation betray our fundamental values? This story, in concert with the previous news article, opens up many avenues for research and discussion.

Haas, Brian, and Macollvie Jean Francois. "46 Immigrants Caught in Upscale Florida Town." *Los Angeles Times*. April 8, 2006. <<http://articles.latimes.com/2006/apr/08/nation/nahaitians8>>

This news article tells the story of a group of immigrants captured in south Florida after arrival from the Caribbean. The migrants arrived from three different countries and although the Haitians and the Jamaican were returned to their home countries, the Cuban was given asylum in the United States. The article could be used to highlight the choices made in U.S. immigration policy and why certain groups are preferred or denied based on race, ethnicity, or political opportunity. The members of immigrant group captured along the coast were all returned except for the Cuban. Does this have to do with nationality, economics, or race? The opportunity for the United States in this situation, allowed for a better result and a choice more in line with our best values and beliefs. The article provides the student researcher an opportunity for deeper exploration into the issues of immigration. How may race have played a role in the return of the Haitian immigrants? Would the Cuban have stayed In the U.S. without the refugee status?

Fournier, Frank. Dechoukaj. Haitian Immigration: 20th Century. *In Motion: The African-American Migration Experience*. The Schaumburg Center for Research in Black Culture. 8 July 2009

<<http://www.inmotionaame.org/gallery/detail.cfm?migration=12&topic=99&id=540000&page=3&type=image>>.

This photograph is a scene in Haiti after the *dechoukaj* or ‘uprooting’ of the Duvalier government in 1986. On the concrete wall that the young Haitian girl stands next to is graffiti reading the following words translated from Haitian Creole: “29 years of misery-Papa crap”. The graffiti refers to ‘Papa Doc’ Duvalier, the Haitian dictator that ruled and repressed the Haitian people, along with his son ‘Baby Doc’ for almost thirty years. Throughout the 1960’s, 70’s and 80’s, Haitians left in large numbers migrating to the Dominican Republic, France, as well as the United States to escape the political oppression of their government. The setting of the photograph reveals the signs of heavy poverty, directly connected to the Duvalier rule: corrugated tin roof house in the background, young Haitians in hand-me-down fashions from the developed world, and the hard scabbled road at their feet. The graffiti indicates a new beginning, but the future appears uncertain in this photograph.

Following the end of the Duvalier government in Haiti, a continuation of violence marked the small nation’s history until that glimpse of hope arrived in 1991 with the election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the first democratically elected leader in Haitian history. His government lived a short eight months before another military coup created more political upheaval in Haiti and began another wave of Haitian migrants towards the United States. Although empirical evidence of both political persecution and economic hardship appears in the photographs from Haiti, in the voices from migrants, as well as in the instability of its history, Haitians were classified for the purpose of immigration status as economic migrants only, and not as political refugees which receive preference in US immigration law. Questions to consider:

What is the mood in the faces of the image? What does the graffiti suggest about Haiti's political past? Does 29 years seem like a long time to rule politically in a country? What about this image might suggest Haitians' economic problems and/or political problems?

French, Howard W. "U.S. Starts to Return Haitians Who Fled Nation After Coup." *New*

*York Times* 19 Nov. 1991. *Nytimes.com*. 8 July 2009

<<http://www.nytimes.com/1991/11/19/world/us-starts-to-return-haitians-who-fled-nation-after-coup.html>>.

This newspaper article from the New York Times in 1991 reports on the United States reaction to Haitian migrant boatpeople attempting to leave their country following its latest military coup, the ousting of the then democratically elected leader, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The article makes clear the current U.S. State Department's point of view that "economic conditions were the main reason most of the refugees left Haiti", therefore justifying the repatriation policy of Haitians found at sea by the US Navy. In addition to the US policy covered in this article, it also reports on US critics of the policy that indicate an inherent racial and/or ethnic prejudice seeped into the policy. For example, NY Democrat Charles Rengal is quoted as saying, "This would not have happened if the refugees were Europeans." Questions to consider: How do the opinions of the US State Department compare with the opinions of the members of Congress and immigrant rights groups? Based on the article, what is the main reason for the Haitian migrants leaving their nation?

Navarro, Mireya. "Flight From Cuba: The Voyage -- U.S. Scrambling to Cope With the Rising Tide of Cuban Refugees; Straits of Florida Hide the Unknown Toll of a Rush to Freedom." *New York Times* 24 Aug. 1994. *New York Times*. 8 July 2009  
<<http://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/24/us/flight-cuba-voyage-us-scrambling-cope-with-rising-tide-cuban-refugee-straits.html?scp=1&sq=Flight%20from%20Cuba:%20the%20voyage&st=cse>>.

This newspaper article from the New York Times in 1994 reports on the wave of Cuban migration known as the ‘rafters’, named that because of the “foam boxes, inner tubes, and packing crates that pass for rafts” that the migrants used to journey the 90 miles from Cuba to the U.S. The previous three plus decades, the United States had an open door policy to Cuban migrants that wanted to come to the United States as political refugees escaping the communist Fidel Castro government. During the 1990’s, increasing amounts of Cubans were taking to the seas to complete a daunting journey while at the same time American policy to these migrants and the door slightly swung the other direction. The article illustrates this change, explaining the Coast Guard policy to pick up rafters at sea and to detain them at Guantanamo Bay. In contrast with a similar incident in the 1980’s, Cuban boat people known as ‘Marielitos’ named after the Cuban port they departed from, were allowed for the most part to come to the United States. U.S. government even gave permission for Cuban Americans to travel by ship to find these Marielitos floating at sea. The majority of the article expresses the difficulty and danger associated to crossing towards Florida in a raft. Questions to consider: What made the journey so dangerous? What might it say about a migrant’s life in their own country to start a voyage like the ones described? What changes in America might have triggered the adjustment in policy since the Marielitos arrival in 1980?

“A Cuban Flees to the United States, 1979.” *Major Problems in American Immigration and Ethnic History*. Ed. Jon Gjerde. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998.

In this account, a Cuban immigrant describes his motivations for leaving Cuba along with his experience escaping the island. The author describes Cuba as a place suffering from oppressive government control coupled with racial inequalities. He concludes that the U.S. will provide the freedom and opportunity that Castro’s Cuba would not. This reasoning falls more in line with the traditional assimilation model. A number of questions could be asked in reference to this document. How does the author suggest race factors into the Cuban government’s treatment of people? How might the author’s view of America change after spending some time in the country?

Ceptus, Barbara. “Growing up Haitian, growing up black: being black and immigrant means that I cannot separate those two identities.” *Colorlines Magazine* 22 September 2005. General OneFile. Gale. Fitchburg State College. 6 July 2009  
<<http://www.fsc.edu:2068/ips/start.do?prodid=IPS>>.

This account from Barbara Ceptus, a first generation Haitian immigrant, touches on the topics of race, identity, language, culture, and generational change. Some of the article’s most powerful insights have to do with identity. Even though her parents and grandmother consider themselves immigrants only, Ceptus identifies as both black and immigrant. Ceptus’ observations suggest a far more complicated picture of the immigrant experience than that put forward by the standard assimilation model. A number of questions could be asked in reference to this document. Why factors might contribute to the generational differences in immigrant experiences? What role does language play in defining ethnic identity?