

“Dallas County was enriched by foreign born immigrants.”

– Gottlieb Schoellkopf

Summary

The above quote comes from a Dallas County immigrant in the 19th century, Gottlieb Schoellkopf. He and his family came from Germany and built a successful saddlery business.

Immigration policy and reform have been an important topic of debate for decades. It is a top priority for every U.S. president coming into office. The issue is complicated and so is the law concerning people who wish to immigrate to the United States. People from all over the world still see America as a land of opportunity for their families and will risk much to come here.

Today there is a divisive debate over immigration to the United States. Does the country still welcome those who wish to immigrate? How many people should be allowed to immigrate? How should they legally be able to obtain jobs and pay taxes? How do we manage those who have lived here for decades without documentation?

The following news releases reflect different recent opinions on immigration policy; what works and what should happen. They were chosen because they have opposite ideas. Below are several opportunities to learn and practice open debate and respectful sharing of ideas.



Activity

Teacher Notes:

This activity is designed to be a supplement to the study of immigration in the United States. It is intended to expose students to two different opinions being discussed currently and encourage a civil conversation after reading and discussing the opinions. It will be better understood after studying immigration to the United States in the 19th and 20th centuries.

For more detailed information on the history of immigration in the United States see the following:

<https://immigrationhistory.org/>

This resource gives a timeline, description of major Supreme Court cases involving immigration and additional information to help understand the complexity of the immigration issue.

Divide students into two groups and assign each a press release from below. One is by Laura Collins of the Bush Institute in Dallas, Texas. The other is from the federal Department of Homeland Security. Give each group time to read and discuss the article. Use the questions below to examine each article. Have each group write down the answers for use in the whole class discussion.

Questions for small group consideration:

1. What is the central theme of the article?
2. What are three main points the author uses as evidence for their point of view?
3. Notice the tone and word choice in each article. Does it strengthen their argument?
4. Does the author have a moral or an economic view of immigration? Does it include both?
5. What are the authors' solutions to the current immigration issue?

Conduct a whole group discussion:

Have each group choose a representative to present their findings. Each group should take turns sharing their answers to the questions above. Once both groups understand the intent of both articles, ask the following questions and allow the representative for each group to respond. Allow others in the group to respond, with teacher permission.

1. The two opinions are very different. Name several ideas from each article.
2. Which opinion best expresses a solution to the immigration issue? What is the solution?
3. Can you think of any other solutions to improve immigration to the United States?

Something to think about:

The Statue of Liberty, pictured on the first page, sits in New York Harbor. It has long been a symbol of hope and prosperity to those entering our country. There is a poem called *The New Colossus* written by Emma Lazarus on the pedestal. The last lines read,

"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

What are some possible meanings for the words of the poem? Are they still true today?

Optional Independent Student Writing Response:

From your group discussion over your assigned article, form a response to the author's opinion. You can agree or disagree with the author. Did the author have a well-formed argument? Be sure to state specific details from the article and adequately explain your reasons.

Plan your written response to be at least five paragraphs and use examples from your chosen article as details for your response. Write an outline, draft and final copy.

Article 1

 **READ** June 25, 2025

America thrives when immigration works

ESSAY BY



Laura Collins

Director, Bush Institute-SMU Economic
Growth Initiative
George W. Bush Institute

This Immigrant Heritage Month, Laura Collins, Director of the Bush Institute-SMU Economic Growth Initiative at the Bush Institute, shares how immigration benefits America's economy, culture, military, and society.

America benefits from immigration, and we should keep immigrants' role in society in mind as we debate what a reformed future immigration system should be.

Immigrants are a vital part of our economy. They pick our crops, teach our children, and care for our elderly. They are doctors, nurses, and dentists. They own Main Street businesses and found Fortune 500 companies. Some run iconic American brands.

Immigrants positively impact our culture. They've contributed to the rich variety of dishes that can be called American. Immigrants create the art and music and fashion we consume. Some of the athletes on our favorite teams are immigrants, as Dallas Mavericks fans know better than most. Immigrants proudly defend our country as members of our military.

America is blessed with these contributions no matter what path an immigrant took to get here. Whether they arrive with a job offer in hand, sponsored by a family member, or as a refugee who left everything behind, immigrants add to America.

Article 1 (continued)

But America deserves better than the outdated immigration system we have. The United States can maximize the economic benefits of immigration by reforming our system to bring in more immigrants whose education and skills match our open jobs.

We can respond with generosity to the undocumented workers who give their talents to the United States with little hope of ever becoming an American citizen. We can show our allies what it means to be the world's beacon of freedom and opportunity by continuing to welcome and resettle refugees.

We can welcome immigrants while also maintaining our security and working with our regional allies to ensure that migration is managed and orderly rather than a crisis.

The United States needs an immigration system that will meet the needs of its 21st century economy and ensures our future prosperity, vitality, and security. Reform can make it more likely that immigrants will have a chance to contribute to America's future.

Article 1 (continued)

 **READ** September 12, 2025

Immigration made clear with fact based answers

FEATURING



Laura Collins
Director, Bush Institute-SMU Economic
Growth Initiative
George W. Bush Institute

Q: How does immigration benefit the economy?

A: America benefits from immigration because foreign born workers fill open jobs at all skill levels and supplement the native-born workforce to ensure our future prosperity, vitality, and security. If the U.S. is not producing enough workers with the requisite knowledge, skills, and education, businesses will need find other ways to fill that gap in the labor force. They can automate, outsource, or import labor. Each of these options offers tradeoffs, and none of them will be the perfect solution. Importing labor via immigration offers short to medium term relief, getting American businesses the workers they need.

Q: Do immigrants displace American workers?

A: Immigrants complement American workers, and studies show that immigration increases the wages and employment of native-born workers. Immigrants don't just show up to work –they also consume goods and services, just like native-born Americans, increasing demand and helping expand the economy.

Q: Do immigrants take more in government benefits than they pay in taxes?

A: Immigrants typically pay more in taxes than they receive in benefits at the federal level. Most immigrants are barred from federal entitlement benefits by law; legal permanent residents may access some means-tested benefits after they have lived in the U.S. and paid taxes for 5 years. Studies show that immigrants sustain programs available to U.S. citizens, like Medicare and Social Security, because they pay into the programs through payroll taxes but have limited access to them.

Article 1 (continued)**Q: What role does immigration play in addressing population decline or aging demographics?**

A: Immigration is vitally important to American population growth. The U.S. total fertility rate is well below the number necessary for new babies to replace people who pass away each year. Our population has not yet shrunk, but that could happen in the near future. By 2040, immigrants are expected to account for all U.S. population growth. To sustain a population that can continue to power our economy, immigration must be part of the solution.

Q: What responsibilities do free countries have in accepting refugees and asylum seekers?

A: Americans are safer when the world is safer and more secure. The forced migration of refugees and asylum seekers is often a result of instability, despair, injustice, and oppression –the same ingredients that can breed extremism. The United States is uniquely positioned through its political and economic might to address the conditions that foster displacement and extremism, and lead humanitarian efforts to combat them. Beyond that, Washington can serve as a moral example to encourage democratic allies wrestling with their own challenges to do the same.

Q: What does effective border policy look like?

A: The U.S. can be a secure nation and a welcoming one at the same time. Effective border policy requires an “all of the above” approach that balances migration, security, trade, and travel. Smart border policy considers regional dynamics, working with our allies to coordinate enforcement against smugglers and humanitarian relief for asylum seekers. Robust enforcement must be combined with robust legal migration options, ensuring that those who qualify to contribute to our economy have a defined process for doing so.

Article 2



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

DHS Strengthens Integrity in Nation's Immigration System, Returns to Commonsense Legal Immigration Levels

Release Date : 11/13/2025

WASHINGTON — Under the leadership of President Donald J. Trump, Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem, and Director Joseph Edlow, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has taken critical steps to restore sanity and integrity to our immigration system. Since Jan. 20, 2025, USCIS has closed loopholes and implemented critically needed changes to better protect American communities and workers.

"The distinction between legal and illegal immigration becomes meaningless when both can destroy a country at its foundation," said USCIS Spokesman Matthew Tragesser. "Unchecked mass migration floods the American labor market, depressing wages and taking jobs away from hardworking Americans, while straining healthcare, education, and housing systems. The Trump administration continues to execute policies to ensure legal immigration advances American interests first and only the most deserving attain the privilege of U.S. citizenship."

USCIS is ending exploitation through categorical parole and the abuse of Temporary Protected Status. USCIS is returning to a faithful application of the law by ensuring the grant of parole and Temporary Protected Status are as Congress intended. TPS is now truly temporary, and USCIS terminated categorical parole programs like the Cuban, Haitian, Nicaraguan, and Venezuelan parole program. We now consider parole requests strictly on a case-by-case basis.

Secretary Noem ended TPS for Afghanistan, Cameroon, Nepal, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Venezuela (2023 extension and 2021 designation), Syria, and South Sudan. Hundreds of thousands of aliens without authorization to remain in the country have been encouraged to use the U.S. Customs and Border Protection CBP Home app to depart from the United States.

USCIS is implementing rigorous screening and vetting protocols and actively assisting ICE and other law enforcement partners to enforce immigration law and protect public safety. Since Jan. 20, 2025, USCIS has referred almost 3,200 individuals with orders of removal, active warrants/warrants and other criminal indicators to ICE and other law enforcement entities, resulting in the apprehension of almost 2,000 criminal and illegal aliens at USCIS facilities since Jan. 20, 2025. In addition, since Jan. 20, 2025, USCIS has made 13,225 referrals to ICE for fraud, public safety and national security concerns, including 320 for confirmed or suspected Foreign Terrorist Organization gang members. Press releases highlighting USCIS involvement in arrests and convictions can be found in the [USCIS Newsroom](#).

Article 2 (continued)

USCIS spearheaded the **largest fraud investigation in agency history**, Operation Twin Shield, a **targeted enforcement operation** in the Minneapolis area that uncovered marriage fraud, abuse of H-1B and student visas, and an alien with terrorist ties in September. Also in September, USCIS teamed with the Department of Justice, the FBI, and agencies across DHS to help take down a **multi-million-dollar asylum fraud, human trafficking, and money laundering conspiracy**.

USCIS is **reviewing aliens' use of social media and other statements for anti-American ideologies** to determine whether an alien endorses, espouses, promotes, or supports anti-American activity and considering it as a negative factor in any USCIS discretionary analysis when adjudicating immigration benefit requests. In FY25, USCIS completed 12,502 individual social media checks.

USCIS is **recruiting Homeland Defenders and implementing new law enforcement authorities to restore integrity to the immigration system**. USCIS initiated a largescale hiring campaign on Sept. 30, and has received nearly 35,000 applications—the most for any position in agency history. These dedicated patriots will execute the agency's critical mission to administer the nation's lawful immigration system while safeguarding the country from fraud and national security or public safety threats. USCIS also received law enforcement authorities delegated from the Secretary of Homeland Security. With these new authorities, USCIS special agents will be further empowered to investigate, arrest, and present for prosecution those who violate America's immigration laws under a **final rule** that published in September 2025.

USCIS is **restoring integrity in the naturalization process** by ensuring that only those who truly deserve it are granted the most sacred status we can bestow, that of United States citizen. USCIS is committed to fully vetting every alien and making the process one that the American people are confident in. We launched a revised civics test with more questions in October to ensure that naturalization applicants have a full understanding of American history and government before they can become U.S. citizens. USCIS also refocused the way we consider the good moral character of potential citizens, looking for positive contributions to our communities rather than merely the absence of bad behavior. We restored the practice of conducting neighborhood investigations of potential new citizens to verify their claims and ensure we get a full picture of their character.

USCIS has returned to a **commonsense policy for issuing Notices to Appear (NTA)**, and since February 2025 has issued more than 172,000 NTAs to restore integrity and ensure the security of our nation's immigration system. The agency is committed to using its NTA authorities against removable aliens and will no longer exempt specific classes or categories from potential enforcement.

DHS announced an **interim final rule ending the practice of automatically extending employment authorization documents** for aliens filing renewal applications in certain employment authorization categories. With this rule, DHS prioritizes the proper screening and vetting of aliens before extending the validity of their employment authorizations.

USCIS is **helping to secure the Nation's electoral process** with an overhaul of the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) in partnership with the Social Security Administration to ensure a single, reliable source for verifying immigration status and U.S. citizenship nationwide. State and local authorities can now input full Social Security numbers or just the last four digits to help verify U.S. citizenship and prevent aliens from voting in

Article 2 (continued)

American elections. We also eliminated fees for participating state, local, territorial, and tribal government users; streamlined mass alien status checks; and integrated criminal records, immigration timelines, and addresses into results. Since making these changes, SAVE has processed more than 46 million voter verification queries.

USCIS is **ensuring aliens do not become a burden on the government** and issued a policy memo affirming that USCIS officers can once again be fully empowered to exercise their authority to exclude any alien who is likely at any time to become a public charge. USCIS is committed to the core principle of U.S. immigration law after years of neglect. The guidance reminds aliens that they have the burden of proof in demonstrating that they are not likely at any time to become primarily dependent on the government for subsistence.

USCIS is doing its part to **protect American workers** by implementing the President's Proclamation, Restriction on Entry of Certain Nonimmigrant Workers, an important initial step to reform the H-1B nonimmigrant visa program. Under the Proclamation, as of Sept. 21, H-1B petitions must be accompanied by an additional \$100,000 payment as a condition of eligibility.

For more information on USCIS and its programs, please visit uscis.gov or follow us on X (formerly Twitter) [@uscis](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

Last Reviewed/Updated: 11/13/2025

TEKS

SOCIAL STUDIES

United States History Since 1877 – 113.41 (d)

- (6) (A) History, immigration
- (21) (A,B) Citizenship
- (25) (A,B,C) Culture
- (28) (A,D,E) Social Studies skills
- (29) (C) Social Studies skills, civil discourse

World History Studies – 113.42 (d)

- (28) (B,C) Social Studies skills

World Geography Studies – 113.43 (d)

- (15) (A,B) Citizenship
- (18) (A) Culture
- (21) (A,E,F) Social Studies skills

United States Government – 113.44 (d)

- (16) (A,B) Culture
- (19) (A-F) Social Studies skills
- (21) (B) Social Studies skills, problem solving

ELAR

English 1 – 110.36 (c)

- (1) (A-D) Developing Language skills
- (4) (A-I) Comprehension skills
- (5) (A-J) Response skills
- (8) (A-D) Author's purpose
- (9) (A-D) Composition
- (10) (C) Compose argumentative texts
- (11) (A-F) Inquiry and Research

English 2 – 110.37 (c)

- (1) (A-D) Developing Language skills
- (4) (A-H) Comprehension skills
- (5) (A-J) Response skills
- (9) (A-D) Composition skills
- (10) (C) Composition-argumentative
- (11) (A-I) Inquiry and research

English 3 – 110.38 (c)

- (1) (A,B,D) Developing Language skills
- (4) (A-I) Comprehension skills
- (5) (B-J) Response skills
- (8) (A-D) Author's Purpose
- (9) (A-D) Composition-writing process
- (10) (C, F) Composition-argumentative, rhetorical
- (11) (A-I) Inquiry and research

English 4 – 110.39 (c)

- (1) (A-D) Developing Language skills
- (4) (A-I) Comprehension skills
- (5) (A-I) Response skills
- (8) (A-G) Author's Purpose
- (9) (A-D) Composition, writing process
- (10) (C,F) Composition, genres
- (11) (A-I) Inquiry and research

Research and Technical Writing – 110.53 (b)

- (1) (A-D) Writes for variety of purposes
- (2) (A-I) Writing Processes
- (3) (A,B) Investigative Skills
- (4) (A-E) Language Conventions
- (5) (A-C) Evaluates Writing

Debate I, II – 110.60 (b)

- (1) (A-C) Role in Society
- (2) (A-D) Analysis of Issues
- (4) (A-D) Propositions of Policy
- (5) (A-C) Logic