

# **Global Literacy: Workshops on Immigration and Trade for High School Students**

(DRAFT: January 2010)



A Project of the kNOw US AND THEM Program



PICA  
170 Park St.  
Bangor, ME 04401  
[www.pica.ws](http://www.pica.ws)  
[info@pica.ws](mailto:info@pica.ws)



# Contents

	<u>Page</u>
➤ Introduction .....	4
➤ Global Literacy teaching points .....	5
➤ Exercise 1: Immigration Human Board Game .....	6
➤ Exercise 2: The Immigration Timeline .....	9
➤ Exercise 3: “Free” Trade in “Five” Minutes .....	10
➤ Exercise 4: “Immigration Realities” Video .....	15
➤ Handout: “Myths and Realities of Immigration” .....	17
➤ Web resources on Immigration, Trade and Listening Projects.	19
➤ Appendix A: Human Board Game Materials .....	21

## ***Acknowledgements***

Many people have contributed to the development of this curriculum, which is still a work in process. The principal authors of the workshops detailed here are (alphabetically) Jonathan Falk, Rebekah Green, Jessie Newcomb, and Hannah Pennington. We have been assisted by thoughtful feedback, critiques, and suggestions from many PICA volunteers, educators and students.

Photo credits: Jessie Newcomb (p.5), Katie Greenman (p.8), Daphne Loring (p. 9), Sarah Bigney (p. 14)

Cover graphic by Jessie Newcomb

# Introduction

## ***Global Literacy: A Curriculum on Immigration and Trade***

Maine is being buffeted by international economic forces that extend far beyond our state's borders. In the years since the adoption in 1994 of NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, Maine has lost at least 30,000 manufacturing jobs. These same forces have contributed to a crisis in Mexico and Central America, where millions of small farmers have lost their livelihoods, and millions of men and women have headed north to the United States in search of a way to support themselves and their families.

The Global Literacy program looks at the hot issue of economic immigration from Mexico and Central America to the U.S. This curriculum is designed to help Maine high school students broaden their perspectives, get past biases and stereotypes, and learn how to connect with peers from diverse backgrounds on common challenges and concerns. Global Literacy's ultimate goal is to help young Mainers become citizens in a globalized world that may be very different from the rural, homogeneous communities in which they have grown up.

The exercises in this guide were created to be used in high schools, and can be delivered within standard 40-minute or 1-hour 15-minute blocks. They are also very effective when used in college classes, and with members of adult community and faith organizations.

These 4 exercises are intended to be presented in order, and can be delivered in 3 or 4 class sessions. It is also possible to use a single exercise or a combination of 2 or 3 of them – feel free to mix and match to meet the needs of the group or class you are working with. We encourage you to use and modify this curriculum for non-profit, educational use, provided that you don't charge others for these materials or for other materials you create based on them. But please let us know you are using them, and give us feedback about how presentations went for you, what worked, what didn't, and what changes you've made. We look forward to hearing from you!

### ***About PICA:***

For nearly 25 years PICA has been building grassroots community alliances to address global problems of economic justice, human and worker rights. Our work is grounded in careful listening, telling and sharing stories. Our goal is to transform both individuals and institutions.

PICA's 20-year old Sister City relationship with the community of Carasque, El Salvador provides us with inspiration and a lens to better understand how to work here in Maine for a more just global economy. Our "kNOw US AND THEM" program, of which this Global Literacy curriculum is a part, is helping Mainers to become informed and active citizens on the issues of immigration and trade policy, building understanding of the common experiences and concerns of Maine "natives" and immigrants from Latin America.

## Global Literacy Teaching Points

### Guidelines for presenters and workshop leaders

- People in Maine, Mexico, and Central America have a number of similar experiences, and have similar hopes and aspirations.
- We are affected by some of the same economic forces, which are bigger than any one country.
- Many people who come to this country, especially those who come illegally, come out of economic necessity – they are “Refugees of the global economy.” To talk about immigration we must place it in the larger global economic context.
- Some people are searching for the right/freedom to NOT migrate – Many people want to stay, not only for themselves but their communities. Emigration has impacted “sending” communities in many ways.
- There are winners and losers in each country in the global economy. Overwhelmingly, the rich win and the poor lose. Often the “losers” are pitted against one another.
- Anti-immigrant sentiment and myths only serve to divide and distract.
- Once we more clearly see how we are connected (as well as learn about our experiences that may be different), we can better work together for changes that benefits us all.

# The Immigration Human Board Game



A huge part of how we get our information is through storytelling. Statistics are wonderful to have, but it is through storytelling that we can truly understand the situations of our fellow human beings. Following this idea, PICA conducted a Listening Project, interviewing displaced factory workers in Maine, people in El Salvador who are suffering from current economic policies, and also recent immigrants to Maine. From these interviews we have created two different exercises: the Immigration Human Board Game, and Free Trade in Five Minutes (see the following section). In the Immigration Human Board Game

participants take the roles of characters who are trying to immigrate to the US. The trials that they face are based on real-life experiences, and the players are able to slip easily into their roles. It is a fast-paced exercise that is fun, gets people up and moving around, and spurs wonderful conversation afterwards. By creating a “safe space,” the exercise is a way to open up a real conversation about immigration. It is important to let the participants steer the conversation to a certain extent.

## ***Immigration Human Board Game***

### **Materials:**

- 11 Color-coded poster board pieces. 3 orange (journey to Mexican border), 1 blue (crossing the border), 3 red-orange (just over the border, journey within the U.S.), 4 white (living in/adjusting to the U.S.) These will be your spaces.
- 5 blue “character” cards with introductions to the players (See Appendix A for copies of the cards)
- Movement cards, sorted by color
- Pink “choice” cards
- Handouts with more information and resources on immigration and trade

### **Time Required:**

The game itself can take up to a half an hour. Sometimes it is better to let the game run a little longer so that some of your players can make it to the US, other times it seems like they made it there in no time at all! You can judge the interest level of the group. The discussion can take as long as you have, and often can last for a long time as there are so many areas to cover.

### **Teaching points:**

- A lot of people leave their homes to come to the U.S. because life in their home countries has become untenable
- Role of trade/global economy in immigration (the simple basics)
- The journey to the U.S. is often a very dangerous and long one and the challenges often don’t end once an undocumented immigrant has arrived safely in the U.S.
- Taking these risks is not a decision to be made lightly, there must be a reason people are risking their lives (and paying to do so!).

- Immigration is a hot topic in our country right now and it's important to dig deeper, to consider root causes, our connections to each other, and the human element when thinking about these issues.

### **Object(s):**

For the players, the object is to try to make it from their home country (either Mexico or El Salvador), across the border and to the last space in the game. They must also try to obtain as many "choice" cards as possible, as they symbolize greater opportunity, freedom of movement, and the ability to make choices about one's life.

For the facilitators and/or teachers, the object is to spark some dialogue about immigration as well as shed some light on issues such as why people come, the hardships that are faced by many immigrants on the journey and while in the U.S., as well as steer participants towards finding a connection to their own lives.

### **Instructions:**

#### **Pre-game:**

- Set up the 11 spaces in the room. Order: orange, blue, red-orange, white. If possible, you'll want to have a little room in between each space as well as to the sides to accommodate multiple people. Also leave enough room before the first space to allow for the players to stand before they make their first move.
- **Give the introduction to the activity and explain the game. This includes explaining the "choice" cards.** these may be a little strange, but if you read them I bet you'll figure it out. The "winner" is the person (or people) who ends the game in the U.S. with three or more "choice" cards. You'll ask them at the end of the game what they would choose to do. This could mean going back to their country, relocating in the U.S., maybe bringing a family member up, etc. They're more food for thought than anything, and because the goal of the game doesn't seem to be simply to stay in the U.S. and not get caught. It's more about freedom (not in the sense of the eagle and the American flag, but of choice, movement, etc.), which is something all people want and most undocumented immigrants don't have when they get here.
- Ask for 5 volunteers. These will be your main players. Hand each of them a blue "character" card. (There are 2 female characters and three males; this obviously doesn't mean the volunteers have to match that description. I asked them each if they wanted to be men or women.)
- 4 more volunteers will be the cardholders. One will stand at each section of the board and hand out the cards as their classmates need them.
- The people who aren't main characters or cardholders will be family members or traveling partners of the main characters. They should divide up among the main characters and help them read the cards as they move through the board.

**The game:**

- Ask all the players to stand in front of the first space. And the cardholders to the side of each colored section. Movement cards order: Orange, Orange-Yellow, Pink, Green.
- Call the players in order (#1-5) to read their character cards out loud.
- Have them take turns in order (#1-5) taking a card from the appropriate section, reading it out loud, and doing what the card tells them to. Have them hand their discards to you and if the piles get low you can shuffle them back in.
- Continue the game for about 20 to 25 minutes.

**Debrief Questions:**

- For “winners” – how did it feel? What would you choose to do in your characters situation?
- For “losers” – how did it feel?
- Did the game seem real/believable?
- Did you learn anything about immigrants or immigration?
- What would you say to someone who says \_\_\_\_\_? (Choose one or several)
  - ... immigrants only come here to get on welfare/use social services
  - ... immigrants come here to steal jobs
  - ... (insert whatever seems relevant, you get the idea...)
- Are the challenges over once a person makes it past the border?
- What was the point of the “choice” cards? Why isn’t the object of the game simply to get to the U.S. and not get deported?
- Do you see any similarities between the characters in this game and yourselves or people in your community? If so, what are they? If not, why not?

**Questions/clarifications/discussions about things that happen in the game:**

- What is a coyote? What do they do?
- How much does a coyote cost? How do people get the money to pay them?
  - \$7,000 from El Salvador
  - \$3,000 from Mexico (?)
  - People get money loaned to them, often in debt several thousands dollars with no promise of a job when they get here to be able to pay it back.
- How many people are immigrating like this? Where are they coming from?
  - 7 million unauthorized Mexicans
  - 570,000 unauthorized Salvadorans – 500 people per day
- What happens to you when you’re deported from the U.S?



## The Immigration Timeline

As part of our Global Literacy work, we frequently use an “Immigration Timeline” exercise created by the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. The exercise is “History of Immigration 101,” found in NNIRR’s BRIDGE (Building a Race and Immigration Dialogue in the Global Economy) curriculum.

In this exercise the participants write down their family’s information, including when they came to America, why, and from where, and place it on a timeline of significant events connected to immigration to our country. The exercise sparks conversations between students and their parents/grandparents. Wonderful stories often come out of these conversations, and students learn more about their family history than they had ever known before. The timeline also highlights important milestones in the United States’ history of immigration. It is evident through the timeline that immigration is not a new phenomenon and the attitudes towards immigrants are continually changing.



For more information on this exercise, contact:

National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
www.nnirr.org  
nnirr@nnnirr.org  
510-465-1984

## “Free” Trade in Five Minutes

One of PICA’s goals is to debunk misconceptions that immigrants and native-born U.S. residents have about each other. We hope that people who are suffering from the effects of current free trade models can begin to find ways to work together towards a better alternative.



each  
trade  
as  
This  
adult  
of  
free

“Free’ Trade in Five Minutes (also known “Corn and Shoes”) is one of the most flexible activities that PICA has created. role play has been very successful with and student populations alike. The goal Corn and Shoes play is to explain how the trade model works, and how it affects

people, businesses, and countries. Depending on the interests and background of the audience, the focus of the exercise can be shifted to make the most sense for your workshop. One of the most interesting aspects of the role play is always the relationship between Fred and Roberto. It is the connections between these two characters that make the commonalities between workers in Maine and workers abroad most clear.

### ***“Free” Trade in “Five” Minutes Role Play***

#### **Materials:**

- Name tags
- 2 large corn (1 Mexican, 1 American)
- 1 small corn (American before NAFTA)
- Money (for taxes and tariffs)
- Price tags (before and after NAFTA) – 2 of \$2, 2 of \$1
- Bag of fruit of some kind
- Pair of shoes
- Welcome to Wal-Mart sign

#### **Time Required:**

The role play itself takes about ten minutes. It can be more effective if slowed down to let participants speculate on what will happen next. The discussion afterward can take from 15-30 minutes.

#### **Teaching Points for Corn and Shoes:**

- Boil down the confusion of NAFTA and other trade agreements like it
- There are push and pull factors that bring people to this country
- NAFTA effects people/businesses in similarly negative ways here as it does abroad
- Make clear who NAFTA does benefit
- Bring a human face to each side of the story

## Characters:

- Roberto the Mexican farmer
- Maria Carmen, the Mexican fruit seller
- The Cargill company, a multinational agribusiness
- Fred, the Maine shoe worker
- Saucony Shoes, a Maine shoe company
- Mexican import tariff collector
- Narrator
- Wal-Mart (Note: The role of Wal-Mart can be changed to suit the interests and backgrounds of the audience, for instance to a construction site, a restaurant chain, etc.)

## The Role Play:

(Actions/directions are written in italics while the general explanation of what to tell the group is in non-italics.)

### --- BEFORE NAFTA ---

*Before starting, ask for volunteers for all the characters. If you previously played the immigration board game, ask who was **Roberto and Maria Carmen**, and have them continue in their roles. Have them stand to the far right (facing the group) and hand Roberto a large ear of corn.*

Roberto's a farmer in Mexico, he grows enough for his family to eat and sells some in the market.

*Hand him \$2 price tag for his corn*

He makes enough money to feed his family and has a little left over to buy school supplies for his kids, etc.

*Bring **Maria Carmen** up to the front and stand next to Roberto. Hand her the bag of fruit.*

Maria Carmen makes a living selling fruit in the markets next to Roberto. She probably uses some of the money she earns to buy corn from Roberto and Roberto buys fruit from her.

*Have **Cargill** stand towards the left of the room (facing the group).*

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of student), is the CEO of Cargill, which we're using as an example of U.S. Agribusiness. Cargill is a huge company with operations around the world. It buys grain from larger farmers, who can produce it cheaply, in part because they receive money from the U.S. government, called subsidies, to help produce his/her corn. Before NAFTA, Cargill was able to sell its corn in the Mexican market but there were restrictions put on how much could be brought in.

*Hand Cargill small ear of corn and \$1 bill.*

Cargill also had to pay taxes and tariffs to bring the corn into Mexico.

*Have the Mexican import duty collector stand between the 2 groups (the border). Have Cargill come across, hand the duty collector the \$1 bill, and go to stand next to Roberto and Maria Carmen in the market.*

Even though Cargill can buy subsidized corn cheaply, when it sells it in Mexico it has to raise the price to make up for the money paid to bring the product into the country. So, by the time the corn gets there, it's sold for the same price as Roberto's.

*Hand Cargill \$2 price tag to put on corn.*

*Identify **Fred, a Maine shoe worker** and the **CEO of Saucony** (like Cargill, Saucony is being used as an example of an industry – they used to have factories in Bangor and elsewhere in Maine). They should be standing to the far left (facing the group). Hand the worker the pair of shoes.*

The worker's been at the factory for years and makes a decent wage. The factory's one of the largest employers in the area and lots of family and friends work there too. The owner of the company's happy to be making money.

#### --- After NAFTA ---

In 1994, **NAFTA** – North American Free Trade Agreement goes into effect. Lifts barriers to trade between Canada, U.S. and Mexico. We're told it will benefit the economies and workers in all countries. We were even told that it would help slow immigration from Mexico because there would be more jobs there. **What happens?**

*Rest the stage: Bring **Cargill** back to "Maine".*

**Roberto's** still growing and selling his crop, making just enough to live on.

Meanwhile **Cargill** can now export a lot more corn.

*Trade the small ear of corn for the large one. Move Cargill across "border" (without paying tariff) and have her/him stand next to Roberto again.*

And now, those tariffs s/he used to pay have been lifted. The trade is free. So, s/he can sell her corn at a lower price than Roberto's in the market since she doesn't incur that cost when bringing her/his product into the country.

*Have tariff taker sit down. Give farmer \$1 price tag*

Which one are people going to buy? So Roberto doesn't have a choice but to lower his prices too...

*Change to \$1 price tag*

This process happened very quickly – within about 2 years, the price of corn in Mexico had dropped by half.

...Which means that little bit of extra he was making to cover his other expenses, now doesn't exist. In fact, it costs him more to grow his own corn than it does to buy the lowan farmer's.

Meanwhile, up in Maine, the shoe Company (Saucony) realizes it can make a bigger profit if they move factories to Mexico.

*Ask: Why?*

Now, not only is there cheap labor there and fewer labor and environmental standards, but now they can set up their factories there and they don't have to pay the taxes and tariffs to cross the shoes over the border like they would have had to do before. The trade is free. So, the company moves to Mexico and leaves Fred and lots of other folks without a job.

*Take the shoes from **Fred**, hand them to **CEO/company** and have them stand over the "border" in Mexico. Can pull up a chair and have Maine worker sit down in "Maine."*

The **shoe company** in Mexico pays \$1/hr without benefits. The days are long and there are hardly any breaks or health standards. **Maria Carmen** who can't make any money in the markets either, moves up to northern Mexico to work at the shoe factory.

*Hand her the shoes.*

The **shoe company** is happy to be making a bigger profit than they were in Maine, but the workers like **Maria Carmen** don't make enough to even buy a pair of the shoes they make.

*Give the Wal-Mart Volunteer the Wal-Mart sign. Wal-Mart is the largest employer in the US (outside of government), and is a key player in the global trading economy.*

**Fred** finds a job at Wal-Mart. It doesn't pay as well as the shoe factory and there aren't any benefits, but it's a job.

So what happens to **Roberto**? He's getting lower price for corn, price of fertilizer's going up... he decides to make the dangerous journey north to the U.S. to look for work – (like we saw in the game). Gets a loan to pay a coyote to get him across the border. Eventually, after months of travel, Roberto arrives in Maine and gets a job cleaning the floors at the same Wal-Mart.

*Leaves corn behind, moves to stand at "Wal-Mart"*

**Roberto, Maria Carmen, and Fred** are all displaced.

*Now everyone except the two at Wal-Mart can sit down, if they want. The discussion begins.*

**Debrief Questions:**

If dealing with a student population:

- Who won? Who lost?
- What sort of control did any of these characters have over their situation?
- What sort of a relationship would Fred and Roberto have?
- What are some things that unite them and what are some barriers to their becoming friends?
- Why is it so important to understand someone else's story?

## “Immigration Realities” Video



“Immigration Realities,” a wonderful video full of honest testimony and thought-provoking information, composed of selections of interviews with residents of the community of Carasque, El Salvador (Bangor, Maine’s Sister City), and with Carasqueños who have emigrated to the U.S. It can be hard to simply show a video and have a good discussion with students afterwards. We have found that dividing the class into groups, and assigning each group a particular character to focus on, can greatly improve the discussion afterwards. The video is about 29 minutes

long, but we have often cut out portions to fit the interests of the group we’re meeting with, and to reduce the overall length so the video with discussion will fit into a 40-minute class. (The video is available in DVD format from PICA, or can be viewed on-line or downloaded from PICA’s Web site at [www.pica.ws/programs/KnowUsAndThem/tools/](http://www.pica.ws/programs/KnowUsAndThem/tools/)).

### **Materials:**

- “Immigration Realities” DVD
- DVD player
- TV or projector and screen

### **Time Required:**

“Immigration Realities” is 29 minutes long. This combined with a debrief and a review can take up to 45 minutes or longer.

### **Teaching Points:**

- There are mixed feelings about immigration in El Salvador, but there is a definite need for more economic opportunities to keep people at home.
- Immigration affects various areas of individuals’ lives along with the community as a whole.
- Immigration is not a simple journey; it is difficult, dangerous, and expensive.
- The negative impacts in El Salvador are similar to the negative impacts in Maine and other parts of the United States.

### **Instructions:**

#### **Before the video:**

Divide students up into groups and assign them each a separate character (depending on version):

- Benigno, Mario, Vicenta, Maria Isabel, Fidelina, Juan, Abel, Francisco

Ask each group to keep in mind while they watch and then report back after class:

***How does your character feel about immigration?  
What do they want you to know?***

**After the video:**

1. *What do they want you to know?*

Some of the things the characters talked about:

Francisco – Free Trade Agreements, what will happen to El Salvador

Benigno – the problem of dependency. What do you think he would prefer?

Benigno – the root of why people come

Vicenta – development without people

Mario – remittances as a business

2. *What would you say to someone who said, “immigrants are here to take our jobs?”*

3. *Once again, are there winners and losers? (Many people win some things, but lose others.)*



# Myths and Realities of Immigration

## Compiled by PICA as part of the kNOw US and THEM Program

### **The U.S. is the primary destination for the world's refugees and immigrants.**

The U.S. accounts for less than 1% of the world's migrants, both legal and illegal. Undocumented immigrants make up just 30% of all foreign born people in the U.S. While many are Hispanic, they can come from almost anywhere. For instance, there are an estimated 50,000 Irish and 500,000 other undocumented European immigrants living and working in the U.S.

### **Undocumented immigrants don't pay taxes.**

Immigrants pay taxes in the form of property and sales taxes and other consumption taxes at the federal and state level. The majority of state and local costs of schooling and other services are funded by these taxes. The Social Security Administration estimates that three quarters of undocumented immigrants pay income taxes, and that they contribute \$6-7 billion in Social Security funds that they will never be able to claim. It's also estimated that these immigrants contribute nearly \$1.5 billion in Medicare taxes for programs they'll never be able to use.

### **Undocumented immigrants come here to take welfare and they use a disproportionate amount of government services.**

Undocumented immigrants come to the United States almost exclusively to work and they use government services at very low rates. The employment rate of undocumented immigrants is typically higher than that for U.S. citizens or legal immigrants. Moreover, undocumented immigrants are not eligible for welfare, food stamps, Medicaid, and most other public benefits. One study found that immigrants earn about \$240 billion a year, pay \$90 billion in taxes, and use about \$5 billion in community services. Despite their hard work, the average income for undocumented immigrants is 40% less than the average legal immigrant or U.S.-born American family.

### **Immigrants take jobs and opportunities away from Americans and lower wages for native-born workers.**

Studies show that overall, undocumented immigration either has no effect on U.S.-born workers or actually increases their labor market opportunities by boosting the industries that create new jobs. The National Academy of Sciences found that undocumented immigrants lower overall wages by less than 1%. But there is a connection between concentrations of undocumented workers and wages in some jobs. Approximately 96% of working age migrants employed in the U.S. work in sectors that most native-born workers now avoid. Most immigrant workers are concentrated in a limited number of industries such as agriculture, construction, the hospitality industry, and food preparation (the most dangerous and lowest paying jobs). Having a large group of workers with few legal rights, and with little ability to enforce those rights they do have, has helped some industries lower wages and working conditions to levels where only people who are desperate for work will fill the jobs.

### **Undocumented immigrants are breaking the law.**

Many immigration violations are civil offenses. There are many other common civil offenses. For instance, people who copy and share copyrighted music are committing civil offenses, and could face thousands of dollars in fines. Labeling immigrants as lawbreakers penalizes the individual rather than recognizing the larger economic and political forces at play. Each year, only 10,000 visas are available to low-skilled immigrant workers, while the market hires 450,000 low-skilled immigrant workers every year.

### **Undocumented immigrants raise crime rates in the United States.**

Immigrants appear to raise crime rates only when immigration violations are included in crime statistics. Most sentences being served by immigrants are short, indicating that their offenses are mostly not violent.

### **Migrants send the majority of their money home and therefore don't contribute to our economy.**

Although migrants from Mexico do send \$2 billion a year home in remittances, they also fuel economic growth here. Undocumented migrants from Mexico spend the vast majority of the \$122 billion they earn in the U.S.

### **Immigrants are taking over the United States and don't want to learn English.**

Only 4.3% of all workers in the United States are undocumented immigrants. The amount of immigration that we are seeing today is not unprecedented. Actually, the percentage of the U.S. population that is foreign-born now stands at less than 12%, compared to 15% in the early 20th century. Just like today, a century ago immigrants were often concentrated in homogenous neighborhoods, and spoke their native languages. Back at the turn of the 20th century, it was the Irish, Polish, and Italian immigrants (among others) who were called “drunk, lazy, and dissolute.” Now this xenophobic stereotype is applied to others. Non-Hispanic whites will remain the majority in this country for the foreseeable future.

While over 80% of immigrants don't speak English at home, more than 75% do speak English within 10 years of arrival. Most non-English speaking immigrants want to learn the language. In fact, demand among immigrants for adult English classes far exceeds the existing supply.

**There are acceptable channels for coming to the U.S. legally and immigrants should wait in line like so many of our parents and grandparents did.**

For most migrants and immigrants, especially those coming for economic reasons, there is simply no line to wait in. There are 4 main categories through which people may gain a lawful permanent resident status, or a green card, in the U.S.:

- through a close family member who is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident
- through an employer or special skill
- through a special lottery of extra visas
- through a special category for protected classes of people (i.e., refugees or political asylees)

If a person does fit in one of these categories and meets other eligibility requirements, they can begin the often very long process of obtaining a green card. Most who have this option do wait. For those who don't fit into one of these categories, there is essentially no line to wait in that will ever grant them legal status.

Prior to WWII, most immigrants entered the U.S. without documents, so if you were born in the United States, it's very possible that your family members were once undocumented immigrants themselves and would not have qualified for entry under the current laws.

**Undocumented migration has been tied to terrorism. Funding the militarization of our southern border keeps migrants out and keeps us safe.**

The 9-11 hijackers all entered legally and none of them came through the Mexican border. Moreover, there is no connection between the motives that guided the people behind the 9-11 attacks and those that propel undocumented, economically motivated immigrants from Latin America to enter the U.S.

The \$20 billion that has been spent on militarizing the border in the past decades has had no considerable effect on immigration levels. From 1986 to 1998 the Border Patrol's budget increased six-fold and the number of agents doubled. During that time, the number of undocumented immigrants also doubled. The fence along the border has done little more than push migrants into the desert causing the number of deaths to rise. No border enforcement strategy will be effective in keeping immigrants out unless it is combined with policies that address the push and pull factors that compel immigrants here.

**Sources:**

- Barnard, Alexander. “Myths and Realities of Illegal Immigration.” Center for Migration and Development. *Points of Migration*, June 25, 2007. <[http://cmd.princeton.edu/files/POM\\_june2007.pdf](http://cmd.princeton.edu/files/POM_june2007.pdf)>
- Capps, Randolph, Michael E. Fix. “Undocumented Immigrants Myths and Realities.” The Urban Institute. <<http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=900898>>
- Center for Participatory Change. “Myths and Realities of Immigration.” <<http://cpcwnc.org/Immigrantmythandreality.html>>
- Fix, Michael, Wendy Zimmerman, and Jeffrey S. Passel. 2001. “The Integration of Immigrant Families in the United States.” Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.
- Family Farm Defenders. “Family Farm Defenders: Farm Workers Rights/Immigration 101 – Myth vs Reality.” <<http://www.familyfarmdefenders.org/pmwiki.php/FarmWorkersRights/Immigration101-MythVsReality>>
- Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights. “The Facts: How to Immigrate to the U.S.?” <[http://my.lulac.org/site/DocServer/How\\_to\\_Immigrate\\_to\\_the\\_U.S.\\_Final.doc?docID=682](http://my.lulac.org/site/DocServer/How_to_Immigrate_to_the_U.S._Final.doc?docID=682)>
- Passel, Jeffrey S., Randy Capps, and Michael Fix. 2004. “Undocumented Immigrants: Facts and Figures.” Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.
- PBS: The City/La Ciudad. “Myths and Realities.” <<http://www.pbs.org/itvs/thecity/immigration1.html>>
- Porter, Eduardo. 2005. “Illegal Immigrants Are Bolstering Social Security with Billions.” New York Times, April 5.

## Web Resources on Immigration, Trade, and Listening Projects

- **David Bacon**, (<http://dbacon.igc.org/>) Stories and Photographs – David is a photojournalist and former labor organizer who focuses on immigrants, workers, and the labor movement. He will be coming to Maine in April 2010 as part of the kNOw US AND THEM program.
- **Trade Stories Project** (<http://www.tradestories.org/>)– a national effort to compile and share the stories of workers, migrants, farmers and small business owners affected by free trade. PICA and the Maine Fair Trade Campaign (<http://mainefairtrade.org/>) are part of the project.
- **Citizens Trade Campaign** (<http://www.citizenstrade.org/>)– Information and resources on trade issues and agreements. Includes activist resources.
- **Reform Immigration for America** (<http://reformimmigrationforamerica.org/>)– A national coalition of labor, immigrant and religious groups that is helping lead the campaign for comprehensive immigration reform legislation.
- **Global Trade Watch** (<http://www.citizen.org/trade/>) - Includes a section on immigration - link on the left sidebar.
- **United for a Fair Economy** (<http://www.faireconomy.org/>)
- **Fair Immigration Reform Movement - FIRM** (<http://standing-firm.com/>)
- **National Immigration Forum** (<http://www.immigrationforum.org/>)
- **National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR)** (<http://www.nnirr.org/>)
- **Global Exchange** (<http://www.globalexchange.org/>)– Lots of great resources on a variety of topics. Check out the Global Economy section as well as “Fair Trade” and “Mexico, Trade and Migration” in the War, Peace and Democracy section.
- **Advocates for Human Rights – Online Immigration Resource Center** (<http://www.energyofanation.org/>)– Based in Minnesota, this site has lots of resources including fact sheets and other tools for educators, students, policy makers and advocates, faith leaders, and new Americans.
- **The Solidarity Center** (<http://www.solidaritycenter.org/>)– The AFL-CIO’s American Center for International Labor Solidarity.
- **American Friends Service Committee’s “Trade Matters” page** (<http://www.afsc.org/TradeMatters/>)– includes free activist toolkit.
- **American Friends Service Committee’s Immigration page** (<http://www.afsc.org/ImmigrantsRights/>)
- **Immigration Timeline from Frontline/World** (<http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/mexico704/history/timeline.html>)- A look at U.S. policy toward immigration and border security with Mexico over the past 60 years.
- **New America Media** (<http://new.newamericamedia.org/>)- The country's first and largest national collaboration and advocate of 2000 ethnic news organizations.
- **America’s Voice** (<http://www.americasvoiceonline.org/>) - America's Voice conducts cutting edge public opinion research, undertakes public education and provides comprehensive media analysis on the current state of the immigration debate.
- **Choices Curriculum** (<http://www.choices.edu/resources/>) – Education initiative based at Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies. Offers both an immigration module and an international trade module for teachers to use in their classrooms.
- **School of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE) – The Immigration Debate in the Classroom 2006** ([http://score.rims.k12.ca.us/score\\_lessons/immigration\\_debate/](http://score.rims.k12.ca.us/score_lessons/immigration_debate/))- Links to more resources for teaching immigration issues in the classroom, ways of teaching controversial issues, etc.

- **The Change Agent** (<http://www.nelrc.org/changeagent/>)– An adult education newspaper for social justice – You can subscribe electronically or for the paper version on a sliding scale. Check out September 2006, “What if Immigration’s not the Issue?”
- **UC Berkeley Interdisciplinary Immigration Workshop** (<http://www.irle.berkeley.edu/immigration/>) – Resources for researchers, graduate students, teachers, and community. Sample syllabi and a list of immigration related films.

## **Local Resources**

- El Centro Latino de Maine ([www.elcentrolatinome.org](http://www.elcentrolatinome.org))
- Maine Fair Trade Campaign ([www.maineairtrade.org](http://www.maineairtrade.org))
- Mano en Mano/Hand in Hand ([www.manoenmanocenter.org](http://www.manoenmanocenter.org))
- Maine Migrant Health Program ( [www.mainemigrant.org](http://www.mainemigrant.org))
- US - EL Salvador Sister Cities ([www.elsalvadorsolidarity.org](http://www.elsalvadorsolidarity.org))
- Sweatfree Communities ([www.sweatfree.org](http://www.sweatfree.org))

## Appendix A: Materials for Human Board Game

### *Character Cards*

#### *Player #1*

**Read aloud:**

“My name is Gloria and I’m from the Mexican state of Michoacán. A year ago, my husband died and left me to raise our four kids. I worked in a factory making jeans for a U.S.-owned company, but they hardly paid anything - not enough to support a family. I’ve thought about it long and hard and I’ve decided to go to the United States so that my kids can have food and continue their education. Maybe I can save up enough to come back and start my own little business someday. My sister has agreed to take care of two of my children and my aunt will take care of the other two. It’s going to be hard not to watch them grow up, but I’m trying to what’s best for them.”

**Go ahead 4 spaces and wait to cross the border.**

#### *Player #2*

**Read aloud:**

“My name is Marco and I am from a small village in El Salvador. I’m a leader in my community and I’ve worked hard with others in my village and throughout the country to make things better for the people of El Salvador, especially the poor people like us. I value community very much and I want to see ours succeed. This is one reason why it’s so hard to be leaving for the U.S. to look for work, but there’s not enough money for my family to live on. I hope that when I’m there I can help my own family and also my community as a whole.”

**Stay where you are, you’re about to begin your trip through Guatemala and Mexico.**

#### *Player #3*

**Read aloud:**

“My name is Maria Carmen and I’m from a small town in the state of Guanajuato in Central Mexico. For a long time I’ve made a living by selling fruit, vegetables, and odd and ends in the markets. Over the past few years, big stores with cheaper imports have moved into the area and a lot of people who used to buy from us in the local markets, now buy from these large stores, like the supermarket chains and a U.S. company called Wal-Mart. I’ve decided to go to the U.S. to find work. I’ve heard that the journey is very dangerous, especially for women, but I feel like I have no choice. I hope my 3 children will be ok with my mother.”

**Go ahead 4 spaces and wait to cross the border.**

### ***Player #4***

**Read aloud:**

“My name is Roberto and I’m a farmer from southern Mexico. I used to grow enough corn for my family and a little extra to sell at the market to make money to buy school uniforms for my kids and a few things we needed. For the past several years, there has been low quality, funny colored corn from the U.S. being sold so cheaply that nobody will buy mine. At the same time the price of fertilizers keeps going up. I can't afford to grow my own corn anymore, not even just for us to eat. Even though I love farming and I'll miss my family, I've decided to go north to look for work so that I can provide for them.”

**Go ahead 4 spaces and wait to cross the border.**

### ***Player #5***

**Read aloud:**

“My name is Luis and I am from a small village in El Salvador. I’m 15 years old and I’m about to start my journey north to the U.S. to live with my uncle and look for work. There are hardly any jobs here, even if I were to stay in school and graduate from high school. My parents are really scared about me going, and several people who have left from my town keep telling me that it’s really tough up there, but I’m ready to go. My trip will cost \$7,000 and I’ll have to cross 3 borders. I hope I can find a job right away so I can pay back the people I borrowed from.”

*Stay where you are, you’re about to begin your trip through Guatemala and Mexico.*

## *Cards for Board Game*

<p>Your coyote does not come. You must find a cozy place on the side of the road to rest for the night. <b>Stay put!</b></p>	<p>You have been caught in Mexico with no documentation. The authorities deported you. <b>Back to country.</b></p>
<p>Where in the world is Carmen San Diego – you don't know, you can hardly find yourself in Mexico. <b>Back 1.</b></p>	<p>You meet your coyote as planned. You ride in a truck to the border. <b>To border.</b></p>
<p>Even after seeing someone loose a leg, you attempt to hitch a ride on a moving freight train. You are successful and make it to the border. <b>To border.</b></p>	<p>You sit with eight others in the luggage compartment under a bus headed north. Some people are having trouble breathing. You make progress in your journey, hot, thirsty, and cramped. <b>Forward 1.</b></p>
<p>You've heard stories about the U.S. border, about people drowning and the hundreds of unmarked crosses in the desert for the people who have died trying to cross. You know you have many obstacles still ahead of you but you think of your family and keep going. <b>Forward 1.</b></p>	<p>You keep hoping your luck will hold – that no one on the bus will notice you are an undocumented Salvadoran. You are a little closer to the border. <b>Forward 1.</b></p>

Fortune is on your side! A good Samaritan drove you a little further north. **Forward 1.**

Your coyote hasn't arrived yet. You know that some people spend months on the journey north. You must quietly wait and hope that your coyote comes. **Stay put!**

You crossed the border safely and found a few water stations on the other side set up by humanitarian groups. You hope to make it to the end of the desert. **Forward 2.**

With only a few minor scares and very sore feet, you cross the border undetected and prepare yourself to walk two more days in the desert. **Forward 1.**

Your coyote meets you at the border. You've never met this person, but your life is in his hands. Luckily, he leads you safely across. **Forward 1.**

You are detected when attempting to cross the border. (Mexicans stay put) **Back 1.**

You are detected near the border and deported back to your country. (Mexicans stay put, Salvadorans move back 4) **Back to country.**



<p>Minutemen see you and call immigration authorities. They also yell at you and harass you, so you run quickly back into Mexico. (Mexicans stay put) <b>Back 1.</b></p>	<p>Despite the odds you somehow make it safely across the border. However, you know this is just the beginning of your journey. <b>Forward 1.</b></p>
<p>You are found, one day's walk into the desert. Immigration authorities deport you back to Mexico, where you know you'll make another attempt to cross. <b>To border.</b></p>	<p>Your coyote abandons you after you pay him/her. You are left alone with no money. Try forming new plans – good luck! <b>Stay put!</b></p>
<p>A few days into the desert, you've run out of supplies. Drained of energy, you must rest for a day. You wish you had a blanket; the desert is cold at night. <b>Stay put!</b></p>	<p>You are hot, tired, and with too many others to count – but you are (relatively safely) spending a night in a hotel before the next leg of the journey. <b>Forward 1.</b></p>
<p>A good Samaritan group, seeking out undocumented immigrants, finds you and provides you with some water, food, a ride, or a bus ticket. <b>Forward 1.</b></p>	<p>You meet a few others attempting the long journey. Supported by new friends, you are uplifted. <b>Forward 1.</b></p> <p><b><i>Bonus! Gain 1 Choice Card</i></b></p>

You manage to find a phone. Upon talking to your family, you remember why you are making this tough journey and move forward with spirits uplifted. **Forward 1.**

You are able to rest for a night in safety before starting the next leg of your journey. **Forward 1.**

After being properly paid, your coyote is able to buy you a plane ticket. Looking at the patchwork that is the Midwest, you wonder what you'll do once in some generic city. **Forward 3.**

***Bonus! Gain 1 Choice Card***

You safely get on a bus. Buses are so much faster than legs and feet! **Forward 2.**

***Bonus! Gain 1 Choice Card***

You receive a sad phone call: your father has died. The journey is too dangerous to travel back for the funeral. You mourn by yourself. **Stay put!**

The money you have been sending home has helped your family start a taxi business. It is running quite smoothly so far. **Forward 2.**

***Bonus! Gain 1 Choice Card***

An amnesty law was just passed! You can now visit your family, apply for visas, apply to school, and live without fear of being deported! **Forward 2.**

***Bonus! Gain 2 Choice Cards***

<p>You are taking free English classes after work. Your improvement in English is making such tasks as finding a new job, ordering food, talking with your boss, and making friends significantly easier. <b>Forward 1.</b></p> <p><b>Bonus! Gain 1 Choice Card</b></p>	<p>You meet other immigrants in the area as well as a few local community leaders. Together you start organizing for a change in immigration legislation and a solution for undocumented workers. <b>Forward 1.</b></p> <p><b>Bonus! Gain 1 Choice Card</b></p>
<p>You find seasonal work as a blueberry raker and construction worker. It doesn't pay much, but it is enough to live by and send home. <b>Forward 1.</b></p>	<p>You meet some others in the area with whom you become friends. Your new support network helps relieve some of the loneliness of being somewhere so new. <b>Forward 1.</b></p> <p><b>Bonus! Gain 1 Choice Card</b></p>
<p>Locals have been giving you dirty looks ever since you arrived. One day someone made a racist comment under her/his breath. The next day rocks were thrown through your windows. <b>Back 1.</b></p>	<p>You lose your job. <b>Back 1.</b></p>
<p>Someone in your family is very sick. You must send more money back home. And that means working more so <i>you</i> still have food to put on the table. <b>Back 1.</b></p>	<p>You have sent home enough money for your sister to make the journey north. You wish her all the best and wait anxiously for her arrival. <b>Stay put!</b></p>

It was a usual day at the factory, until the place was raided and you were deported for being an undocumented worker, unless you are lucky enough to have received amnesty. **Back to country.**

You have found full time work at a factory. And, wonder of wonders, you've found housing with some other workers, all of whom speak Spanish. **Forward 2.**

***Bonus! Gain 1 Choice Card***

### ***Choice Cards:***

**Choice Card!** Through luck or hard work, you have gained this choice card. As an undocumented immigrant, you have limited rights and limited freedom of movement. This card, which may represent a significant gain in your income, good news about your family's livelihood, or community, is a step forward in gaining more rights and more opportunity.