German Village
Immigration and the National Road

Historical Context and Overview

Construction of the National Road began at Cumberland, Maryland in 1811. Establishing a gateway to the West for thousands of settlers, the National Road extended across Ohio from 1825-1838. The National Road reached Columbus in 1833. Entering Columbus along East Main Street, the National Road turned right on High Street and left on West Broad Street. The National Road facilitated a population boom in Columbus. By 1834, the population of Columbus was 5,000 people, officially elevating it to "city" status.

The factors that lead people to migrate are called push factors and pull factors. Push factors are conditions that cause people to leave their country, such as famine, religious persecution, or political conflict. Pull factors are conditions that draw people to a new place, such as religious freedom, economic opportunities, and cultural ties. Between 1820 and 1920, more than 30 million Europeans immigrated to the United States in search of a better life. German immigrants to Columbus established a community by purchasing cheap land to the south of the city limits, creating "Die Alte Sud Ende" (the Old South End). German immigrants were successful in the brewing industry. By 1865, one-third of Columbus's population was German.

Standards Alignment

Ohio's New Learning Standards: K-12 Social Studies

Grade 3, Content Statement 3: Local communities change over time.
Grade 3, Content Statement 7: Systems of transportation and communication move people, products and ideas from place to place.
Grade 3, Content Statement 8: Communities may include diverse cultural groups.
Grade 3, Content Statement 14: Line graphs are used to show changes in data over time.
HS American History, Content Statement 12: Immigration, internal migration and urbanization transformed American life.

Learning Objectives

- Compare the characteristics of the German Village area in the past to the area today.
- Analyze the transportation systems that led immigrants to settle in Columbus.
- Compare population growth in Columbus with state and national timeline events.
- Discuss German influences on the city of Columbus.
- Analyze push and pull and factors that contributed to immigration in 19th century America.
- Discuss some factors that drew German immigrants to Columbus.

Discussion Questions

1. How did German immigration contribute to the culture of Columbus? What German influences can be observed in Columbus to this day?

2. How did transportation systems and expansion contribute to the population growth of Columbus?

3. What were some of the reasons immigrants settled in Columbus, especially the present-day German Village area?

4. How do the immigration patterns in Columbus reflect broader national trends in immigration?

5. How does the phrase "Money grows on trees in America" relate to immigration?

Extension Activity

Using the population information below, have students either create a line graph using the population data provided or generate one together using Google Graph Maker, ChartGo, or another online graph maker tool. Have students identify when large growth spurts occurred in the city's population. Then have them discuss in groups possible causes for the sudden growth, based upon state, national, or other events/developments/etc. using information from the video, classroom timelines or other sources.

Population Information for the City of Columbus

Year	Population
1815	700
1832	2,400
1834	5,000
1840	6,048
1850	17,882
1860	18,554
1870	31,274
1880	51,647
1890	88,150
1900	125,560
1910	181,511
1920	237,031
1930	290,564
1940	306,087
1950	375,901
1960	471,316
1970	539,677
1980	564,871
1990	632,910
2000	711,470
2010	787,033

Have students use current photographs or drawings of neighborhoods around Columbus to discuss how the characteristics of those buildings in German Village compare with buildings around the city. Another point to discuss would be the names of streets and businesses in the area.

Additional Resources

Teaching Columbus: German Village –

teachingcolumbus.omeka.net/items/show/123