

Name: _____

Push-Pull Factors

When people migrate, they don't just leave one place and magically arrive somewhere else. Usually something pushes them away from their native country and pulls them toward a new place.

This idea is called the **push-pull factor**.

Push factors are the circumstances that make a person want to leave. Don't have a job? Treated badly by your government? Lose all of your crops in a drought? These kinds of problems can cause people to look for a better life somewhere else.

Pull factors are the advantages a country has that make a person want to come and live there. America has huge pull factors for many people around the world who live with unstable governments, few job opportunities, and no reliable security.

WORKSHEET: IMMIGRATION - PUSH AND PULL FACTORS

Directions: Read the following excerpt from an interview with an Irish immigrant woman who arrived in the United States around 1900. Answer the questions.

“...There were 12 of us in our family. The oldest died and the other one went to Australia with my uncle. I was about 5 when she went. So there were ten of us, you might say, in our family. We had to pay every cent we made to taxes. Every war England had she made us pay for the cost of having the war, even though we had nothing. The English owned Ireland then.

My mother kept house and my father had no work except to work the small piece of land that we had. But everything we made or produced went to England . They got the best that we made, the cream of the crop, and if the crop was bad, we suffered on that.

The Irish lived under awful stress. I saw a family thrown out of their home once. I recall that distinctly because we took them into our barn. They had no place for their bed, for anything. I saw a little child, this is the God's truth, I'll never forget this, if was just about a year and a half old, put out in its cradle. I saw their pots thrown out and even the coals for cooking, everything they had, put out in the yard. And if they were caught in that yard, they might have been shot or somethin'. . . England did this."

Source: Revised from June Namias, *First Generation: In the Words of Twentieth Century American Immigrants*. Beacon Press, 1978.

1. Based on this document name two reasons why many Irish citizens immigrated to the United States in the 1900's.

- _____
- _____

2. Were these push factors or pull factors?

Why? _____

WORKSHEET: PUSH AND PULL FACTORS – IMMIGRATION

Directions: Read the following excerpt from an interview with a Greek immigrant man who arrived in the United States around 1969. Answer the questions.

“...Work over there was very bad. In those days (1967), a worker in Greece made about five dollars a day, when a workers pay in the United States was about thirty dollars a day. But the reason I came to the United States was because the situation in Greece was bad. And I was concerned about the education of my kids. Greece in those days had only one university, and if you had kids who wanted to go to the university it was very hard to get the chance.”

Source: Gladys Nadler Rips, *Coming to America : Immigrants from Southern Europe* , Delacorte Press

1. Based on this document, name one push factor that led this Greek immigrant to move to the United States .

2. Based on this document, name one pull factor that led this Greek immigrant to move to the United States.

3. Based on this document, what seems more important to this immigrant: Making higher wages or educating his children?

4. Why do you think the answer to number 3 was more important to him.
