



**Who Am I?**  
***Teacher's Resource Packet***

For use in conjunction with the Who Am I? program at the Public Museum of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and State of Michigan curriculum standards.

## Who Am I?

### ***Teacher's Resource Packet Contents***

Who we are and who we become depends on the choices we make in life. *Who we are* depends on what we value and partly from where we come. *Who we become* depends on the influences we have in various aspects of our lives, the places we visit, the observations we make, the experiences we have both in our personal and professional lives. We are influenced by our families, traditions and other cultural elements.

This comprehensive teacher's packet contains several resources the teacher can use to enhance classroom learning of the overall immigration or ethnic history themes. It is also designed to complement the Public Museum's guided tour for this grade level.

#### ***Pre-Visit Materials***

- Michigan Department of Education Curriculum Links
- *Newcomer's* Exhibit Description
- Vocabulary List
- "Who Am I?" Book List
- Highlighted Personal Stories from the Exhibit

#### ***Post-Visit Materials***

- *Family History* Individual Activity
- *Who Am I? What Are My Choices?* Individual Activity

These materials cannot be reproduced for use beyond the classroom without the written consent of the Public Museum of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

### **Curriculum Links**

The *Who Am I?* program is designed to fit with the Curriculum standards of the Michigan Department of Education. The specific links covered are listed below.

#### **History**

- **6 – H1.2.5 & 7 – H1.2.6** Identify the role of the individual in history and the significance of one person's ideas.
- **6 – H1.4.1** Describe and use cultural institutions to study an era and a region (political, economic, religion/ belief, science/technology, written language, education, family).
- **7 – H1.4.3** Use historical perspectives to analyze global issues faced by humans long ago and today.

#### **Geography**

- **6 – G2.2.1 & 7 – G2.2.1** Describe the human characteristics of the region under study (including languages, religion, economic system, governmental system, cultural traditions).

- **6 – G4.1.1** Identify and explain examples of cultural diffusion within the Americas (e.g., baseball, soccer, music, architecture, television, languages, health care, Internet, consumer brands, currency, restaurants, international migration).
- **6 – G4.4.1** Identify factors that contribute to conflict and cooperation between and among cultural groups (control/use of natural resources, power, wealth, and cultural diversity).

### **U6.1 America in the Last Half of the 19th Century**

- **8 – U6.1.1** America at Century's End – Compare and contrast the United States in 1800 with the United States in 1898 focusing on similarities and differences in population, including immigration, reactions to immigrants, and the changing demographic structure of rural and urban America

### **Language Arts**

- **R.CM.06.01 & R.CM.08.01** connect personal knowledge, experiences, and understanding of the world to themes and perspectives in text through oral and written responses.
- **W.GN.06.02** write a personal, persuasive, or comparative essay that includes organizational patterns supporting key ideas.
- **R.IT.07.01** analyze the structure, elements, features, style, and purpose of informational genre including persuasive essay, research report, brochure, personal correspondence, autobiography and biography.
- **R.CM.07.01** connect personal knowledge, experiences, and understanding of the world to themes and perspectives in text through oral and written responses.
- **W.GN.08.02** write an historical expository piece such as a journal, biography, or simulated memoir that includes appropriate organization, illustrations, marginal notes and/or annotations.
- **R.NT.08.01** investigate various examples of distortion and stereotypes such as those associated with gender, race, culture, age, class, religion, and other individual differences through classic, multicultural, and contemporary literature recognized for quality and literary merit.

#### **Newcomers Exhibit Description**

The Newcomers exhibit educates students about the personal journeys, struggles and accomplishments of the immigrants who have settled in West Michigan throughout its history. Artifacts and personal narratives help to bring the exhibit to life for students.

The exhibit is organized thematically around universal human experiences. These themes serve as the framework for the stories of representative individuals from different ethnic groups and racial backgrounds.

- The "**Introduction**" launches the major themes of the exhibit. It explains that ethnicity is subject to constant change and gives an overview of the various groups and ethnicities that have made their homes in West Michigan over time.

- “**Leaving Home**” explains the push and pull factors which lead people to leave home and experience an often-difficult journey towards a new place. It also captures the difficult decisions people must make about what they can bring with them and what they must leave behind.
- “**Coming to This Place**” illustrates why people choose to come to Grand Rapids and what happens after they first arrive in West Michigan.
- “**Settling In**” depicts how each group adjusts to its new environment and impacts the community it has joined.
- “**Making a Living**” focuses on the importance of work. It explores employment options available to different groups once they settle in Grand Rapids.
- “**Building a Family**” emphasizes how family is usually the most important purveyor of ethnic traditions in the U.S. It shows the tension many families face between holding on to traditions and losing language and customs after years or decades away from their homeland.
- “**Creating Community**” demonstrates how newcomers, when first arriving in a new place, often seek out people who speak the same language, practice the same religion and hold to the same customs. This section illustrates how different groups recreate institutions that strengthen the ties between members and help create a shared identity.
- “**Realizing Identity**” investigates how all people are influenced and ultimately changed by where they live. This section explores the ideas that a diverse and ever-changing community influences those who live within it.
- “**A New Place**” summarizes the complex and dynamic exchanges that occur when groups of people are negotiating and re-negotiating community and identity. All the people shown in this exhibit went through universal experiences that ultimately helped them create the particular community and traditions of *this* place—Grand Rapids.

## Who Am I? Vocabulary

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
1. assimilation	The process whereby a minority group gradually adopts the customs and attitudes of the prevailing culture.
2. bias	An unfair act or policy stemming from prejudice
3. citizen	A person owing allegiance to a nation or state and entitled to its protection. Granted by birth or naturalization.
4. culture	The customary beliefs, social forms and physical traits of a racial, religious or social group.
5. discrimination	Unfair treatment of a person or group on the basis of prejudice.
6. diversity	The presence in one population of a wide variety of cultures, opinions, ethnic groups and socio-economic backgrounds.
7. ethnicity	The set of cultural characteristics that connect a particular group or groups of people to each other.
8 immigration	To enter and settle in a country or region to which one is not native.
9. integration	The action of incorporating an ethnic, racial or religious group into a community.
10 minority	A group of people who differ ethnically, racially, politically or because of religion from a larger group of which it is a part.
11. prejudice	Irrational suspicion or hatred of a particular group, race or religion.
12. rites of passage	A ritual or ceremony signifying an event in a person's life indicative of a transition from one stage to another, as from adolescence to adulthood.

## Who Am I? Book List

These are some recommended books for you to use to help supplement your classroom instruction as you prepare for your field trip.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Title</b>
Rosen, Michael	<i>Elijah's Angel</i>
Bunting, Eve	<i>How Many Days to America?</i>
Say, Allen	<i>Grandfather's Journey</i>
Adler, David	<i>The Number on My Grandfather's Arm</i>
Mochizuki, Ken	<i>Baseball Saved Us</i>
Yashima, Taro	<i>Crow Boy</i>
Estes, Eleanor	<i>Hundred Dresses</i>
Bierman, Carol	<i>Journey to Ellis Island: How my Father Came to America</i>
Stein, Conrad R.	<i>Cornerstones of Freedom: Ellis Island</i>
Schanzer, Rosalyn	<i>Escaping to America</i>
Ellis, Deborah	<i>The Breadwinner</i>

### **Highlighted Stories**

*These stories can be used for reading aloud in class prior to the museum visit.*

### **Kuldip Bagga**

Kuldip Bagga was an Indian-born immigrant who arrived in Grand Rapids in 1979. Once here, his experience differed greatly from that of other newcomers because of his superior education, his fluency in English, and his financial well being. These advantages meant that he and his Indian wife had no need to settle with other Asian Indians. In fact, they could settle almost anywhere they chose, and they chose the upper-middle-class suburb of Cascade.

At the time the Baggas settled here, about 20 other Asian Indian families lived in West Michigan. But they were all scattered throughout the region among other non-Indian communities. Since there was no “Little India” in West Michigan, the Asian Indians had to find other ways to connect. In 1994, Kuldip Bagga helped establish *India Link*, an organization that connects Asian Indians through a journal and website.

From the start, the Baggas embraced both American and Indian Cultures. Juggling the two was not always easy, especially after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Kuldip Bagga, who wears a traditional Sikh turban and beard, found himself having to explain repeatedly to his American neighbors that Sikhs were not terrorists.

### **David Bishow**

David Bishow was not planning to be a migrant, but when he was about six years old, his Southern Sudanese village was attacked by Northern Sudanese rebels, and he had to flee. What followed was a very traumatic journey. Fleeing with his brother and uncle, David hid in the bush, crossed the Nile River, walked across the desert, and nearly starved before arriving at a refugee camp in Ethiopia. But war was a relentless stalker. In time, it followed him to Ethiopia, forcing him to return to Sudan and then, a year later, to flee to Kakuma, Kenya.

David lived in a United Nations refugee camp in Kakuma for eight years. Finally, he was allowed to emigrate, and in 1999 he arrived in Grand Rapids under the auspices of Bethany Christian Services. Though far from the death and destruction of his childhood, he now faced new challenges.

Michigan winters were an immediate shock. David had never seen snow, and he had no winter coat. As a result, one of the first items he acquired here was a winter coat from Meijer. But he found American customs even more confusing. In the agrarian countries of Sudan and Kenya, time is measured in days, not in hours as it is in the United States. When David first arrived in Grand Rapids, he could not understand why others were upset with him when he was not ready at a designated time of the day. He had to purchase a clock for the first time in his life and learn to measure time in a new way. The idea of a birthday was also unknown to David. But American culture requires a birth-date, so immigration officials assigned him January 15, sometimes referred to as a “U.N. Birthday.” They also guessed his birth-year to be 1983. No one could dispute that David had lived a lifetime already. The same year David arrived in Michigan, his brother was still in the camp in Kakuma. When he left, David did not know if his parents were alive.

David Bishow graduated from Unity Christian High School and enrolled in Grand Rapids Community College in 2004. He hopes to study medicine so he could help his people. Seen below are picture of David and friends enjoy both Michigan summers and winters.

## **Le Duc Su**

Le Duc Su (Su Le) worked for the US Army in South Vietnam for nearly twenty years, but when Saigon fell to the Communists in 1975, he faced a difficult choice: should he remain in Vietnam where he was born, or should he migrate to the United States where he could enjoy the democracy he'd been fighting for? Like hundreds of thousands of other American allies, Su Le decided to migrate, hoping to be airlifted out with the Army. When that hope was dashed, Su Le spent four agonizing years getting his family to the U.S. by other means.

Su Le's first challenge was escaping from Communist Vietnam, a problem that was solved in 1978 by using forged papers that identified him as "Chinese-Vietnamese." At the time, the Vietnamese government was encouraging the exodus of Chinese citizens as a means of ethnic cleansing in the homeland.

Then Su Le's true journey began. He and his family boarded a small fishing boat with 200 other refugees and, beating the odds, crossed the South China Sea in three days. (Some refugee crossings took 10 days with half the passengers dying en route). Once in Malaysia, however, they were prevented from landing by hostile people on shore. In desperation they scuttled their boat and waded ashore. Su Le carried several people to safety on his back only to be met by the Malaysian police, who transported everyone to the nearby island of Pulau Bidong. Here, the "Boat People" faced new hardships, including little food, little water, and little hope of escape.

Fortunately, Su Le had a friend in Grand Rapids. This friend contacted the Rev. Howard Schipper, Director of the Freedom Flight Refugee Center, and put Su Le's name on a refugee list. When Rev. Schipper visited the Pulau Bidong camp in 1979, he arranged for Su Le and his family to migrate to Grand Rapids.

The family arrived on August 9, 1979. Thanks to Schipper, a bell taken from a Vietnamese fishing boat that carried refugees from Vietnam to Malaysia was already in place at the Freedom Flight Refugee Center. It rang to welcome Su Le and his family. It has sounded many times since to welcome other refugees and their sponsors.

## Family History

- **Objective:** Students will be able to delve into their own family history to help discover more about themselves.
- **Materials:** Equipment necessary for presentations.

## Procedure

1. Ask the students to produce a history of immigration to Grand Rapids. Students can choose to write about themselves, a relative or someone from the cultural group they are studying.
2. The history would outline the journey to Grand Rapids
3. The project may be in one of the following forms:
  - A written report
  - Story
  - Illustration
  - Timeline and explanation
  - Drama or role play
  - PowerPoint Presentation
  - Video
  - Collage
  - Song

## Who Am I? What Are My Choices?

- **Objective:** Students will critically think about different element about their lives and how they have an impact on their future.
- **Materials:** Worksheets.

## Procedure

1. As learners respond to the questions “Who Am I?” and “What are My Choices?” help them to think about the various elements of culture:

Clothing	Food	Houses
Government/Rules	Jobs	Tools
Religion	Arts	Recreation
Language	Transportation	History
Values	Customs	Traditions
Contributions of the Culture		

2. Guide students to use the self-reflection worksheet to explore and discover who they are, what choices they have made in the past and what choices they might make in the future.

3. Ask the students to fill out the personal profile. Have students include a picture of himself/herself in the space provided.
4. Personal profiles can be hung around the classroom and students can learn about each other.

Who am I? What are my Choices?

**Self-Reflection Worksheet**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Please complete the worksheet. Complete it from the following perspectives: *What you are like today and how you see yourself in the future.*

Present	Future
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Clothes

Food

Government/Rules

Jobs

Tools

Religion

Arts

Recreation

Language

Transportation

History

Values

Customs

Traditions

Knowledge

Skills

Beliefs

**Who am I? What are my Choices?**  
*Personal Profile*

*Put Your Picture Here*

**Who Am I?**

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**What Are My Choices?**

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