

# GERMANS IN AMERICA

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## LESSONS FOR PROGRAM 2 OF 4: *THE PRICE OF FREEDOM*

FOR SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATORS

GRADES 6 - 12

ROBERT JERVIS  
JOANN PREWITT

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TRANSATLANTIC OUTREACH PROGRAM  
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# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

## **Robert V. Jervis**

Bob Jervis currently teaches the social studies methods courses in the Master of Arts Program at Goucher College in Baltimore, Maryland. He is the former Coordinator of Social Studies, K-12, for the Anne Arundel County, Maryland Public Schools and has worked extensively with the Maryland State Department of Education to develop the social studies component of the Maryland State Performance Assessment Program and with the Division for Leadership Development to improve student achievement in low performing schools. He also works as a national consultant with schools systems and other agencies to develop units which demonstrate the link between instruction and assessment.

## **Joann Farrish Prewitt**

Joann Prewitt is the Education Associate for Social Studies Assessment at the Delaware Department of Education. She is the former Coordinator of Social Studies, K – 12, for the Maryland Department of Education and the Mississippi Department of Education. In her work in Delaware, she leads the development of a state assessment in four grades in the social studies and in four content areas of civics, economics, geography, and history. Her work also includes consultation with national agencies and school districts in various states in the creation of standards based units/assessments.

# INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT MATERIAL

## Teaching to the National Standards

National Standards define the big ideas in social studies. They focus on what every student should know in social studies by the time they leave a particular grade level. Essential questions are derived from the standards and are used to focus instruction in the classroom on the national standards

It is important to review these national standards and the essential questions with students prior to viewing the video program. Explain to them that this video program will give them a better understanding of these important concepts and ideas in social studies:

### ***National Geography Standards Standard 9: Human Systems***

- ▶ *Explain the characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on the earth's surface.*
- ▶ *Explain migration streams over time: 1) Identify the causes and effects of migration. 2) Identify and explain how physical and other barriers can impede immigration and cite ways in which people have overcome such barriers.*

## Instructional Strategies

There are three essential questions for each program. Each essential question constitutes a lesson.

Discussion questions support each of the essential questions. The scaffolding of the discussion questions promotes higher order thinking – moving students from the gathering of information, to extending and refining knowledge, to applying the knowledge in a new setting.

These questions should be put on the board, viewed on a transparency, or displayed on chart paper prior to showing the video. They should be used as the basis for discussions following the viewing of the video program.

Each lesson consists of three strategies. Scaffolding is also used for the instructional strategies to enhance student thinking.

- ▶ **Strategy one** focuses on the content of the video program. Students are learning content and gathering information.
- ▶ **Strategy two** has students thinking about what they have learned by using the content to extend and refine their thinking.
- ▶ **Strategy three** helps the students demonstrate understanding by applying this information in a meaningful way or in a new setting.

At the end of the third lesson is information about aligning formative and summative assessments to the lesson. A sample assessment is provided for each strategy of the third lesson.

# INTRODUCTION

**The successful application of the following lessons depends on teachers and students viewing *Germans in America, Program 2: The Price of Freedom***

**The embedded video clips are designed to focus lesson-specific strategies and in no way serve as a substitute for viewing the video program in its entirety.**

**The DVD for this program is available for purchase online at [www.etvstore.org](http://www.etvstore.org)**

## PROGRAM SYNOPSIS:

Full of hope, families crossed the Atlantic to develop a massive settlement in the Texas hill country, only to learn that they has been swindled. Learn about the struggles and battles these heroic people overcame.

# INTRODUCTION



## **“THE PRICE OF FREEDOM”**

Texas, 1846

Lured by the promises of speculators, thousands of German immigrants crossed the Atlantic Ocean and landed in Galveston, Texas. It was a gigantic swindle. About half of them died as they struggled to make their way toward Austin.

However, despite the hardships and false promises, the German settlements took hold and eventually flourished. The settlers overcame incredible hardships including an environment that was totally unlike what the Germans were used to back home. They faced hostile Indians and as the Civil War burst upon them, the hostility of their own neighbors who were sympathetic to the Southern cause.

Today the descendants of those survivors live on in the hill country beyond Austin. And there, still today, their culture and language continue to thrive in the lively festivals of New Braunfels and Fredericksburg.



# The Price of Freedom

## **Lesson 1**



### **? ESSENTIAL QUESTION:**

*Why are people willing to struggle to overcome difficult obstacles in order to migrate?*

- ⚡ What were the “push” factors in Germany that forced people to emigrate?
- ⚡ What were the “pull” factors that enticed Germans to emigrate?
- ⚡ Who was Friedrich Ernst and why was he called the “The Father of German Immigration to Texas”?
- ⚡ What obstacles had to be overcome by those willing to leave Germany to come to Texas?
- ⚡ What support were the immigrants promised to entice them to immigrate to Texas?
- ⚡ Why were people willing to believe the promises of their national leaders and the enticements of people writing letters from Texas about this “new land of opportunity”?
- ⚡ Why was the German government willing to participate in the campaign to entice people to immigrate to Texas?
- ⚡ How did the German dream of democracy and freedom differ from the reality of the life as a settler in Texas?
- ⚡ Evaluate the experiences of the German immigrants and decide if you would have traded life in “autocratic” Germany for life in “democratic” America? Why or why not?

# The Price of Freedom

## Lesson 1

### Strategy 1

#### **STRATEGY ONE: GATHERING INFORMATION THE ADVANCE ORGANIZER**

The advance organizer has two critical purposes – activating prior knowledge and previewing the information students are about to learn. Advance organizers are at a higher level of generality and abstraction than the material to be learned. It is important that students understand that what they are about to learn about German immigration is related to the bigger ideas inherent in the social sciences.

*Review the standards/essential questions with the students. Provide a copy of the standards/essential questions/focus questions to each student. Tell them that the video program they are about to see will help them to better understand these big ideas in social studies.*

*Have the students go the following web site or print out the information for them:*

**[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_Braunfels,\\_Texas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Braunfels,_Texas)**

*Have them read the section on the “history” of New Braunfels. Tell them all communities have “roots” – they can trace the history of their communities back to the first people that settled there.*

*Pose the following questions for class discussion:*

- ▶ Does your town have a history of immigration? If so, what nationalities are represented?
- ▶ Were you aware that when Germans immigrated to the United States that many of them went to Texas? What city do we usually associate with German immigration?
- ▶ Do tourists often go to places that have a large ethnic population to participate in the culture? What kinds of things would New Braunfels have to offer to help people better understand German culture?



## **Lesson 1**

### Strategy 1



*Tell the students that the video program they are about to see will help them better understand how communities like New Braunfels and Fredericksburg got started. Provide them with the following purpose question as they view the video:*

- ▶ Why do these German communities still hold on to some of the customs and traditions of their former homeland?
- ▶ What sacrifices did they make to adapt to their new homeland while still holding on to traditional values and customs that were important to them?

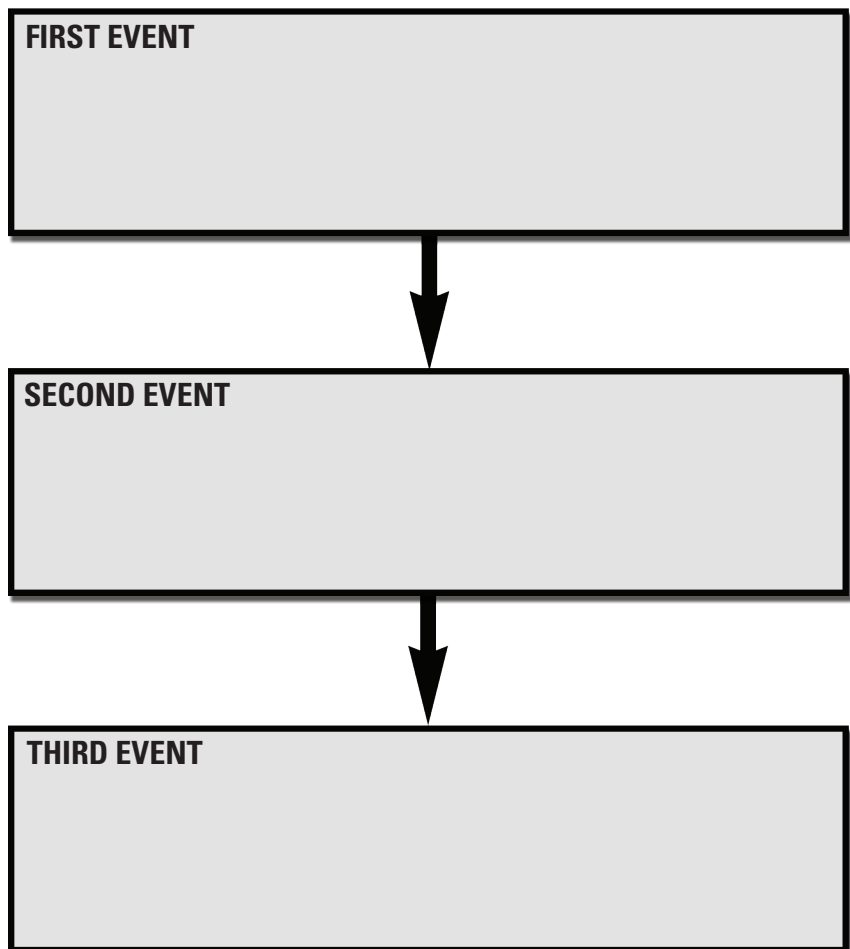
# The Price of Freedom

## **Lesson 1**

### Strategy 2

### **STRATEGY TWO: EXTENDING & REFINING INFORMATION CHAIN OF EVENTS**

A chain of events is used to help students organize and think about the information they have just learned. Students are encouraged to think about how one event leads to another.



# The Price of Freedom

## **Lesson 1**

### Strategy 2



*Have students work in groups to list the major events described in the video program. Their list should include such as events as:*

- ▶ The Revolution of 1848
- ▶ The dangerous sea crossing
- ▶ The Treaty with the Comanche
- ▶ The Civil War

*Have the groups list the events in order. Have the groups share their list and then create a master list on the board or on a transparency to be used in the class discussion.*

*Talk about the events using the following thought questions:*

- ▶ How does each event lead to the event that follows it?
- ▶ What details from the video support your conclusion?

Click the photo to play the video clip: The major events.  
(Approximate duration: 8 minutes. The WMV video will open in a new window.)



# The Price of Freedom

## Lesson 1

### Strategy 3

#### **STRATEGY THREE: APPLICATION EVALUATING THE RESULTS OF A DECISION**

This activity requires students to not only understand the sequence of events that led to the German migration, but to demonstrate understanding of these events by evaluating the results of their decisions. Students must apply what they have learned. They are asked to consider the role of key figures and organizations in this mass migration. They are asked to reflect on the key actions they took and the motivations for these actions. Finally, they are asked to decide if the decision to emigrate was worth it.

*Review the essential question with the students:*

**? Why are people willing to struggle to overcome difficult obstacles in order to migrate?**

*Remind the students that this was one of the big ideas in social studies that we wanted to learn more about by viewing the video. Tell them that we are now going to evaluate whether this struggle was worth it.*

*Have the students work in small groups to begin this evaluation process. Pose the following questions for each group:*

- ▶ What events in your chain of events were crucial decision-making events?
- ▶ Is the event part of a larger issue?
- ▶ How accurate is my information about the event? Do I have to go online to investigate it further?
- ▶ Who are the people involved in the decision? What are their motivations? Did their opinions differ or conflict?
- ▶ What were alternative actions that could have been taken?
- ▶ What was the key action taken? In your opinion was this the best decision? Why or why?

**Note: Remind students of the long term benefits of the decision. Sometimes students get lost in the moment.**

## **Lesson 1**

### Strategy 3



Click the photo to play the video clip: German culture in two contemporary Texas towns. (Approximate duration: 5 minutes. The WMV video will open in a new window.)

# The Price of Freedom

## Lesson 2



### ? ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

*How do migrants change the environment and impact the culture of a place?*

- ✎ What kind of environment did the new arrivals encounter in Texas?
- ✎ How did the Comanche and the Germans interact to help each other?
- ✎ Did the Germans and Southern sympathizers during the Civil War share the same values? Explain.
- ✎ How did the Meusebach-Comanche Treaty demonstrate that the Native Americans and new settlers could successfully live together?
- ✎ Do you think this model for interaction could have proved successful in other areas of the United States? Why or why not?
- ✎ What were the consequences for the Germans of not adapting to the Southern mentality toward slavery? Do you think you would have been able to hold on to your values in the face of such hostility?



# The Price of Freedom

## Lesson 2

### Strategy 1

#### **STRATEGY ONE: GATHERING INFORMATION** **3-2-1 STRATEGY**

This strategy gives students a chance to summarize key ideas and to focus on ideas that were of special interest to them. When the ideas and areas and interests are shared in class and recorded on the board, most of the key ideas and events of the video are highlighted and discussed. This strategy is also more motivational for students as they focus on the ideas of importance and interest to them. They are eager to share them with the rest of the class.

*Review the essential question and the focus questions with the class. They should remain on the board or on chart paper for the whole time you are viewing this video program.*

*Have the student work in small groups. Give them a piece of chart paper and have them create a 3-2-1 chart.*

3 = **Three** key ideas about the interaction of the newly arrived settlers with their new environment. Have them summarize the key ideas in two or three sentences.

2 = **Two** events of interest to them.

1 = **One** question you have about the DVD that you would like the class to discuss.

*Remind the students that this time they are looking for ideas and events specifically related to the discussion questions.*

*If needed, view the video on page 5 one more time so that students can look for ideas and event specifically related to this essential question and the discussion questions.*



# The Price of Freedom

## **Lesson 2**

### Strategy 2

#### **STRATEGY TWO: EXTENDING & REFINING INFORMATION FISHBOWL**

*Arrange the chairs so that the group presenting their key ideas is at that center of the room. Arrange the chairs so that a group of observers is sitting in an outer ring.*

*Put the essential question on the board and review the discussion questions with the entire class.*

*Have the inner circle address the essential question for this lesson by talking about the three key ideas on their "3-2-1 chart" and by relating their ideas specifically to the discussion questions.*

*Have the observer group comment on the discussion and add any additional information.*

*Debrief with the entire class:*

- ▶ What were the key ideas discussed by both the inner circle and the outer circle?
- ▶ Were there some key points not discussed at all?
- ▶ Were there any inaccuracies or misconceptions?
- ▶ Were the discussion questions fully addressed by the groups?



# The Price of Freedom

## Lesson 2

### Strategy 3

### STRATEGY THREE: APPLICATION DISCUSSION WEB

This strategy is excellent for helping students respond to a question with no clear answer. It helps students look at both sides of the question weighing opposing viewpoints and critically evaluating the arguments and then drawing their own conclusions.

In this video program, there is an interesting question of whether the strategies worked out by both sides – the Comanche and German settlers – would have been a model for other Native American groups as they encountered settlers moving west.

- ▶ *Have the students do some additional research on the **MEUSEBACH-COMANCHE TREATY** (click the “i” at left).*

*This site is a good starting point for additional research. Have them list the main points of the treaty and list these on the board.*

Click the photo to play the video clip: The treaty with the Comanche Indians. (Approximate duration: 7 minutes. The WMV video will open in a new window. )



# The Price of Freedom

## Lesson 2

### Strategy 3



*Have the students discuss the way the treaty was negotiated and some reasons why the negotiations were successful.*

*Talk about the way Native Americans and the settlers interacted in other parts of the United States.*

*Now pose the following question to the class:*

- ▶ Do you think the Meusebach-Comanche Treaty could have served as a model for negotiating with Native American tribes in other areas of the West?

*Use the **Discussion Web** like the one below to help students come to a conclusion:*

QUESTION: \_\_\_\_\_

REASONS FOR:

REASONS AGAINST:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CONCLUSION: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Price of Freedom

## Lesson 3

### Strategy 1



### ? ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

*How do societies change while maintaining elements of distinctive cultures?*

- ✦ What was life like in New Braunfels and Fredericksburg in the 1800's
- ✦ What is life like in New Braunfels and Fredericksburg today?
- ✦ What factors made it necessary for the settlers to adapt to a new way of life? Why was it impossible for them to do things just the way they did them in Germany?
- ✦ How were the German descendants of the original settlers able to hold on to some of the customs and traditions of their old life in Germany?
- ✦ What values did the German settlers bring with them from Germany that enabled them to adapt to the customs of their new home while holding on the values so important to them?
- ✦ Can you identify some customs and traditions that settlers from other parts of the world have brought to your community?

# The Price of Freedom

## Lesson 3

### Strategy 1



### STRATEGY ONE: GATHERING INFORMATION COMPUTER RESEARCH

*Have the students go online to research life in New Braunsfels and Fredericksburg today:*

- ▶ <http://www.newbraunfels-tx.net/>
- ▶ <http://www.fbgtx.org/>

*Pose the following purpose questions for their research:*

- ▶ What customs and traditions have been handed down from generation to generation?
- ▶ What changes have occurred in both of these towns reflecting the need to adapt to their environment and to the changing times?

**Note: If time permits, have them write to the Chambers of Commerce in these towns requesting additional information about German customs and traditions still in evidence in these towns.**

# The Price of Freedom

## **Lesson 3**

### Strategy 2

#### **STRATEGY TWO: EXTENDING & REFINING INFORMATION EXPLAIN (WHY)**

Explaining can be both a strategy for gathering information and a strategy for encouraging higher level thinking. When used as a thinking strategy, the element of “explaining why” becomes the focus of the strategy.

*Have the students reflect on the German customs and traditions that are still in evidence in both of these towns.*

- ▶ Why it is important for a people to hold on to certain customs and traditions as they adapt to a new way of life?
- ▶ Why it is important for a people to adapt to changing circumstances?



# The Price of Freedom

## **Lesson 3**

### Strategy 3

### **STRATEGY THREE: APPLICATION OBSERVATION / INTERVIEWS**

*Have the students do online research or research at the library on the history of their own community. Have them note traditions and customs that have been maintained over time and changes that have occurred to keep up with the times.*

*Have them conduct interviews with older people in the community to explore the various ethnic backgrounds that make up their community. What are the major nationalities represented in their community?*

*Is there a German culture represented in your community? What evidence supports this?*

*Pose the following question as a culminating activity:*

- ▶ How do communities change while still retaining some of the elements of distinctive cultures?





# The Price of Freedom

Scaffolding the discussion questions and scaffolding the strategies for this video program is important for helping students develop higher order thinking skills. Therefore, the assessment samples demonstrate “assessment for learning” by scaffolding the assessments and allowing the students to demonstrate both knowledge of content and understanding of the essential/discussion question.

Scaffolding assessments means that the depth of knowledge of the questions will align with the depth of knowledge level of the strategy.

**Strategy One** is gathering information. Therefore, Level One assessments deal with the recall of information.

**Strategy Two** is extending and refining information. Therefore, Level Two assessments involve the processing and organizing of information. For example, items might deal with:

- ▶ Cause and effect
- ▶ Similarities and differences
- ▶ Comparing data on charts and graphs
- ▶ Determining reasons
- ▶ Collecting and charting information from maps

**Strategy Three** is application. Therefore, Level Three assessments demonstrate understanding through application and use. Assessments at level three determine if students can apply understanding and might include:

- ▶ Analysis of change
- ▶ Application of concept in different contexts
- ▶ Drawing conclusions
- ▶ Proposing and evaluating solutions

**Note: There are a variety of ways of posing formative assessments. Selected response items are used here for convenience. Three examples are given to illustrate the scaffolding of the questions. Teachers may want to develop additional questions on their own.**

# The Price of Freedom



## **Formative Assessments (Examples):**

### Level One

Which town in Texas was an early German settlement and still maintains its German heritage?

- A. Van Vlech
- B. New Braunfels
- C. Fort Worth
- D. St. Augustine

### Level Two

Which evidence of German culture and traditions would most likely be a part of **non-German** families in New Braunfels, Texas?

- A. Learning and speaking the German language
- B. Eating German food at home and in restaurants
- C. Singing German songs in worship services
- D. Performing at festivals in German costumes

### Level Three

## **SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT**

The summative assessment provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate understanding of the essential question.

**? Essential Question: How do societies change while maintaining elements of distinctive cultures?**

Now that you have seen how German immigrants endured hardships and overcame obstacles to find a new life in the United States, you are ready to draw some conclusions about why people are willing to make these sacrifices.

# The Price of Freedom



Currently thousands of immigrants from Mexico are fleeing their homeland to come to the United States. They too are being encouraged to come to the United States by promises of a better life and increased economic opportunity. However, they are encountering the reality of adjusting to a new environment and the hostility of those who resent their intrusion into American society.

You are an advisor to the President of the United States. You understand that this new wave of immigration is nothing new. America has experienced waves of immigration in the past, including a mass immigration of Germans in the 1800's.

Provide a summary for the President of how we can utilize lessons learned in the past to help address our current immigration crisis. In your summary, be sure to address the following points:

- ▶ Explain the hardships that both the German-Americans and the Mexicans were willing to face to find a new way of life in the United States?
- ▶ Explain how the Germans-American were able to adapt and become an important part of the American society.
- ▶ Decide if you think the Mexican immigrants will be able to do the same and make a recommendation to the President about what she/he should do. Use the German-America experience to support your recommendation.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

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**Dimensions of Learning (R. Marzano)**  
**Backward Design (J. McTighe & G. Wiggins).**