

## Waves of Immigration

### 1. "Old Immigrants": First Wave 1800- 1880

Place of Origin: Northern & Western Europe

England

Scotland

Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden, Denmark)

Germany

France

Ireland

Physical Characteristics:

- In general, they had light skin, light eyes, light hair
- Most people - from NW Europe had easy time blending in

Description:

- Most spoke English
- Most were Protestant (except Irish who were Catholic)
- Asians from China and Japan
- Slaves - Involuntary immigrants from Africa

Reasons:

- Immigrants came for economic opportunities - money and jobs
- Most had money and could buy land - so they settled in the Midwest - started businesses and farms
- Potato Famine - 1840's - Irish became maids, worked on railroads
- Gold Rush - gold discovered in California
- Built transcontinental railroad - Irish immigrants worked on eastern part. Chinese immigrants worked on the western part.

## 2. "New Immigrants" - Second Wave 1880 - 1950

Place of origin: Southern and Eastern Europe

Italy	Turkey
Greece	Romania
Russia	Bulgaria
Poland	Czechoslovakia
Yugoslavia	

Physical characteristics:

- In general, they had darker skin, darker eyes, darker hair
- Most people from Southern and Eastern Europe had a hard time blending in

Description:

- Poor, unskilled, uneducated
- Settled in big cities along the East Coast of the U.S. where factories were located
- Took lowest jobs (manual labor, factories...)
- Catholic, Jewish
- Did not speak English

Reasons:

- Religious persecution (being punished for one's beliefs)
- Poverty
- Economic opportunities (no jobs at home, plenty of factory jobs in U.S.)
- War (in one's home country)

### 3. Today's Immigrants 1950 - present

#### Place of origin:

#### Latin America (Central and South America)

Mexico	Guatemala
Nicaragua	Haiti
El Salvador	Cuba
Costa Rica	Dominican Republic

#### Asia

Korea  
Vietnam  
India  
China

#### Physical Characteristics:

- Darker skin, darker eyes, darker hair
- Different physical characteristics

#### Description:

- Different religions (Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Christian...)
- Some are wealthy and some are poor
- Some are skilled and some unskilled
- Many became successful business owners
- Difficult time blending in

#### Reasons:

- War - Korea, Vietnam, El Salvador
- Communism (when the government controls most aspects of society)  
Cuba, China, Vietnam, Nicaragua
- Poverty - Mexico, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, India
- Overpopulation - China, India

**ASSIMILATION** = Blending in and becoming Americanized

"Old" immigrants blended in the best. They were more like the original settlers in looks, language, economic situation and religion.

"New" immigrants were seen as strange looking and sounding. They were mostly Catholic or Jewish and were seen as "different".

Asians had the hardest time blending in. They looked and sounded different.

Factory owners wanted immigrants to come because they were a source of cheap labor

Many immigrants experienced prejudice and discrimination.

Melting pot- A melting pot is a metaphor for a society made up of  
people from different backgrounds.  
America is often called a **melting pot**.