

Educator's guide: The arrival of Swiss immigrants

BY PAULINE S. JOHNSON

The article “The Arrival of Swiss Immigrants¹” discusses the factors related to Swiss immigration to Carolina in the 18th century. The following teaching suggestions may help your students synthesize the information in the article.

Understanding motives

Have the students put themselves in the places of the people or groups in the following questions. Some of these questions are knowledge questions designed simply to ensure careful reading, others require higher levels of thinking and interpretation.

1. **Why did the Swiss view emigration of their population as a crime?** (*knowledge*)
Loss of labor and soldiers
2. **Why was the one exception made to allow Swiss immigration to America?** (*knowledge*)
To get rid of undesirables: poor and religious dissenters
3. **Why did the British want to encourage foreign immigration?** (*knowledge*)
Labor and alliances
4. **According to John Lawson, why did he say that there was a real need for the Swiss and others to settle in America?** (*critical thinking*)
He believed the colony needed a warlike people who could protect the borders, particularly from the natives and other European nations that had settlers in America.
5. **How would the Swiss and other foreigners be “of more security and advantage to the Crown and subjects of Great Britain” by settling on the frontier?** (*critical thinking*)
If either unfriendly Indians or Europeans attacked the colony, they would hit the new Swiss settlers first — this was more of the “border people” program that was practiced by the English in both Scotland and Ireland.
6. **Why did the Kochertal writings so impress the Swiss?** (*knowledge about the basics — good soil, large meadows, etc. Students may need to think critically to see the importance of that.*)
There was good soil and wide areas of available land that would make good farm land

and good pasture land; some students may not recognize that the lure of land was what brought so many to America.

7. **Why did the Swiss allow children without fathers, divorced women, and widows to leave?** (*knowledge — although the students may not understand “burden on the community” and would then have to think it through*)

The community could have had to support these people, and letting them go to America would remove that burden.

Class discussion

Conduct a class discussion around this question: **Which of the measures that were put into place by the Swiss would have been the most effective in preventing their inhabitants from leaving the country? Why?**

Answers will vary as students think through the consequences of the different measures.

Push/pull factors

The lesson plan “British Migration to Roanoke: Push and Pull Factors²” helps students examine the push/pull factors that led British settlers to attempt to settle Roanoke Island in the 1580s. If you haven’t used that lesson plan in your study of pre-Colonial Carolina, you could adapt it for use with this article — or use it in its entirety — to talk about push/pull factors for Swiss settlers in the 18th century.

On the web

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Notes

1. See <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-colonial/2.3>.
2. See <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-twoworlds-lessons/4.1>.

About the author

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