

“Guest Workers” Unit Plan - Southwest Asia

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Ideally, this lesson would be taught after a comprehensive unit on South Asia, allowing students to understand what are the various push factors from that region and subsequently, grasping the pull factors of the region of Southwest Asia/Middle East. Furthermore, this lesson would be preceded by a geographic and economic analysis of Southwest Asia.

Course: World Geography

Objective: The purpose of this unit is to engage students in a critical reading and writing endeavor in order to enhance their understanding and perspective of word choice to describe various phenomena that drive our world. Students will be asked to analyze the term “guest worker” through the description of a school issued textbook and juxtaposing it against various charts, images, video clips and a news article. Through this study, students will be able to compose their own definition and meaning of “guest worker” in the context of the Middle East and in particular, the United Arab Emirates as a case study.

TEKS:

(2A) Describe the human and physical characteristics of the same regions at different periods of time to evaluate relationships between past events and current conditions.

(5A) Analyze how the character of a place is related to its political, economic, social, and cultural elements.

(6B) Explain the processes that have caused changes in settlement patterns, including urbanization, transportation, access to and availability of resources, and economic activities.

(7A) Construct and analyze population pyramids and use other data, graphics, and maps to describe the population characteristics of different societies and to predict future population trends.

(7B) Explain how political, economic, social, and environmental push and pull factors and physical geography affect the routes and flows of human migration.

Duration: Approximately two to three, ninety minute periods - activities can be divided based off of time and implementation of extension and suggested activities.

Lesson 1

Hook/Bell Ringer:

- Using the document titled “Word Circle,” have students define the term “guest worker” in the first innermost ring using one type of ink color, noting what sort of connotation does such a word have. Have students consider - who is and is not included by this term (age, sex, nationality), globally where this term is possibly used the most in and in what context, and what does the term look like in practice.
- Write the term “guest worker” on the board for students to see and ask for student responses. Add student comments around the term, creating a web of student generated ideas. If a document camera is available, project and complete a “Word Circle” as students provide responses throughout the lesson.

Body:

- Display a map of Southwest Asia, pointing out Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, two countries which this unit will focus on in particular
- Display images of Dubai and Doha, showing the growth of these cities
 - Have students conjecture what was at the heart of this growth based off of their knowledge of resources that dominate Southwest Asia

Activity 1 - Textbook Analysis

- Using the textbook *World Geography* (Texas Edition) by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, read pages 525-526 beginning where it states “New Industry Requires More Workers” and stopping at “Political Refugees Face Challenges.” Have students add to their Word Circle words, phrases and concepts that relate to the term “guest workers,” entering the information into the second innermost ring.
 - Discuss as a class how the textbook defines “guest workers” and how this differs from students’ initial interpretation of the term.
 - That by “culturally or economically unacceptable,” this refers to maids, nannies, construction - buildings/roads/sewers, cab drivers, restaurant industry
 - For whom are these positions unacceptable?
 - Engage students in a Think.Pair.Share. activity:
 - The textbook reads “...some fear the immigrants could weaken their country’s sense of national identity.” Ask students, what does this (emphasis on national identity) mean in relation to the “guest workers”?
 - Ask students - Would a textbook from the 1850s have read the same as it does today? -Why or why not?

- Students should be able to identify that a textbook from the 1850s would not read the same as it does today because the discovery of oil and the subsequent economic growth and development within the area (requiring labor) did not take place until the early to mid 1900s.

Activity 2 - Video Analysis

Before playing the first video, inform students about the World Cup to be held in Qatar in 2022. Ask students what is needed in order to construct such a stadium (display images of the progress of construction within Qatar).

After watching each video, debrief as a class - taking notes on the board of student responses.

- When watching the video “Nepalese migrant worker shares story of labour abuses in Qatar,” have students make a bulleted list in the third innermost circle of the Word Circle answering: The speaker states, “In looking for life, we got so close to death.” Find examples through the videos that support this claim.
- When watching the video “Domestic Workers Trapped, Exploited and Abused in the UAE,” have students write down push and pull factors for work in the UAE. What factors push individuals to leave their home countries and migrate to Southwest Asia and what factors pull individuals towards countries like the UAE.
- When watching the video “Qatar World Cup: the migrant workers forced to work for no pay,” have students take a moment to reflect on what was just watched/shown. Ask students to write down any emotions, feelings and any other thoughts that may have been generated after having watched the videos. Allow students to even express themselves through an art form. Have students complete this reflection piece in five to ten minutes

****Note, students may become very emotional upon watching these videos. Be sure to warn and ensure students of a safe and inviting space and allow students to leave the room if they need to****

Closing:

Check the pulse of the classroom - the emotional state and well-being of students. Have students engage in a breathing exercise if emotions are high. Allow time for students to share with their partner what their thoughts are after having watched the videos. After about five minutes, open the discussion to the level of whole class.

Have students retain their Word Circle document or collect them from students for the next lesson.

Suggested Activity: Assign students the reading file and questions titled “Far From Home” to complete for homework. (Note: this reading has been modified from its original)

This activity encourages students to think through a first hand account of push and pull factors which will enhance discussion in the next day’s activities.

Lesson 2

Hook/Bell Ringer:

Image Analysis

- Project Image 1, Image 2, Image 3 (or provide printed handouts to students) and have students document in the fourth innermost circle of the Word Circle, in a list form - What are the working and living conditions of “guest workers”?
- Debrief and discuss as a class, taking notes on the board of student responses. Questions to ask students:
 - What are your answers to this question?
 - What in the images led you to identifying these conditions?
 - How are the two spaces (living and working) of “guest workers” the same and different?
 - What do you notice about gender representation within the images?
 - Why do you think this may be the case?

Body:

- Describe the Kafala system to students, addressing how this is one of the mechanisms underlying the conditions and situations of “guest workers” that were viewed in the previous day’s video clips, the “Far From Home” article and the day’s set of images.
 - Address that this system is practiced in various levels of intensity in Southwest Asian countries and that some countries (including the UAE) have made strides in banning/altering the system.
 - <https://www.migrant-rights.org/2015/03/understanding-kafala-an-archaic-law-at-cross-purposes-with-modern-development/>
 - <http://internationalrelations.org/kafala-system/>
- Pass out a class set of “Guest Worker Population” - one document per student.
 - Have students answer the provided questions on a sheet of notebook paper, in complete sentences.
 - Monitor student progress and questions that may arise.

Suggested Activity:

After addressing the Kafala system, have students read and analyze correspondence between Human Rights Watch and the Ministry of Labor of the UAE and UAE Permanent Representative to the United Nations. Found here:

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2006/11/11/building-towers-cheating-workers/exploitation-migrant-construction-workers-united>

Closing:

Debrief as a class what students have learned in the day’s lesson and any misconceptions. As a whole class, answer commonly missed or challenging questions from the worksheet.

Lesson 3:

Hook/Bell Ringer:

In their journals, have students reflect on how their definition and conception of the term “guest worker” has changed over the course of Lesson 1 and Lesson 2. Require students to utilize their Word Circle in order to reflect.

Discuss student responses as a whole class.

Body:

Ask students whether the term “guest worker” is an appropriate term for the movement of peoples into the Middle East/Southwest Asia for work?

Assign the document titled “Guest Worker Essay Outline” to students.

This assignment can be completed or engaged with in various ways, below are some suggestions:

1. Students complete the worksheet independently, using their Word Circle for assistance
2. Students complete the worksheet independently and use the worksheet in order to compose an essay
 - a. Students can address the UAE alone within the essay as a case study, utilizing Human Rights Watch’s report:
<https://www.hrw.org/report/2006/11/11/building-towers-cheating-workers/exploitation-migrant-construction-workers-united>
3. Teacher provides half the class a position to begin with (for the term “guest worker”) while the other half of the class would have the opposite (against the term “guest worker”)
 - a. After information has been collected, students would engage in a debate. Students would be paired - one student per position
 - i. This debate could be at the level of whole class instead of in pairs.

Closing:

Engage in a discussion with students on the appropriateness of the term “guest worker” and what leads to these opinions. Ask students what are other terms that could be used in order to describe the movement of peoples into the Middle East/Southwest Asia for work and what leads to these thoughts.

Students may describe this phenomenon as “modern day slavery.” If so, work with students to define the term slavery and how “guest workers” could or could not resemble the word “slavery.”

Extension Activities:

Students may become very motivated and impassioned to embark on social activism, wanting to give back or change the situation of “guest workers.” Discuss with students why it may be the case that the conditions of the “guest workers” continue to exist today when political officials, media etc. are aware of the situations taking place. Acknowledge that for change to take place or for individuals like our students to make a difference, it starts at the local level. The following are suggested activities that students may engage in to serve as agents of change!

- Assess what information is missing from the state issued class textbooks on the topic of “guest workers” and have students write letters to State Board of Education members, illustrating what information is missing from the narrative within the textbooks
- Write letters to political officials - local senators and congressmen and women
- Create a visual (video or graphic) or other tool to help inform others about this topic
- Identify agencies and organizations that work towards improving the lives of “guest workers” and contact these agencies to understand what projects are being implemented, what needs to be done and how students can help

Credit to Where Credit is Due: Some of the strategies embedded within this lesson plan originate from trainings and teachings by Tracey Hurst.

Image 1:



Image 2:



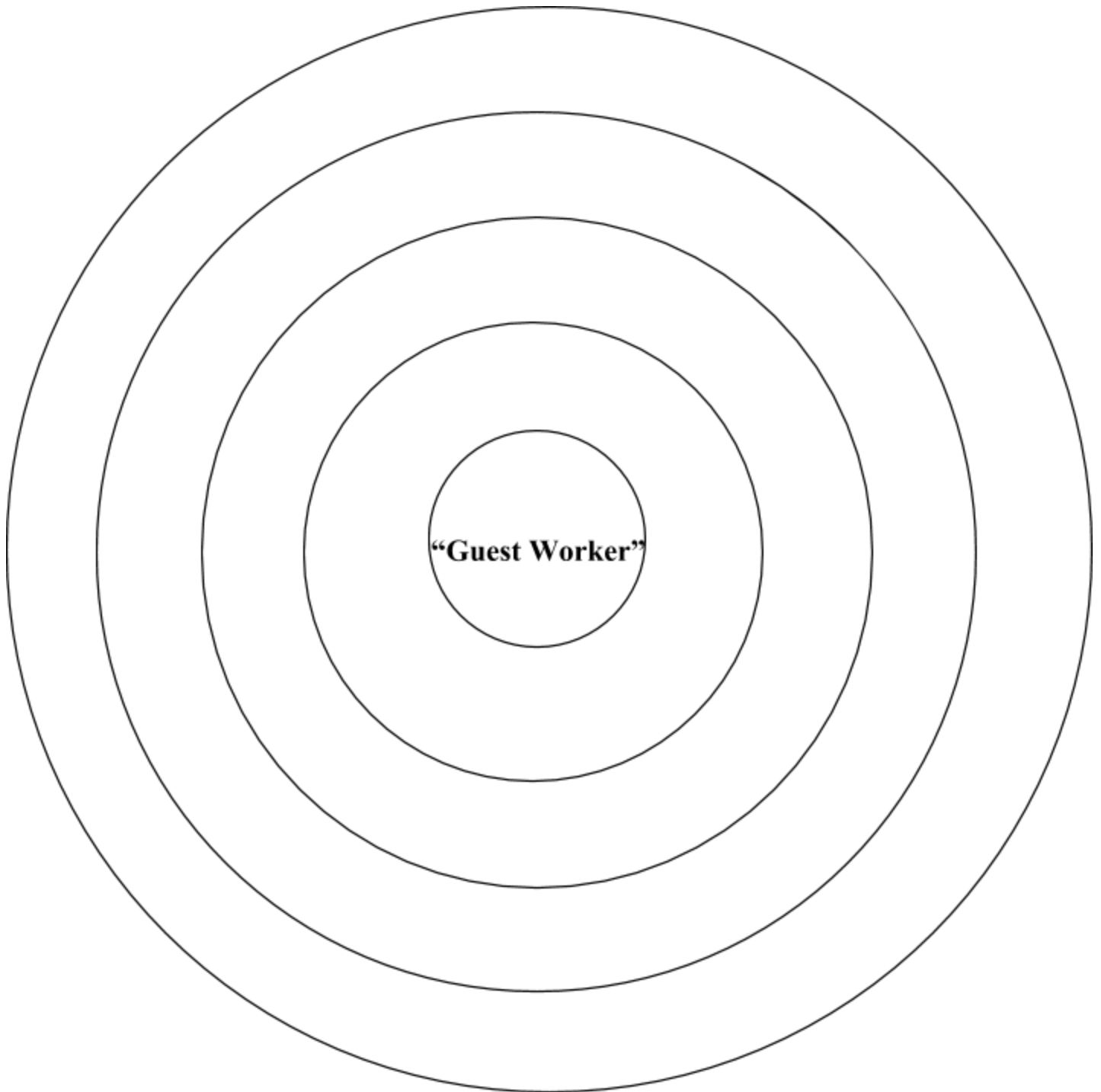
Image 3:



Name: _____

Class Period: _____

Word Circle





Population Relocation

What kind of population movement is taking place in Southwest Asia?

525



TEKS 7A, 7B, 14A, 14C

A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE In the 1980s, Kurds living in Turkey were attacked by the Turkish military. The parents of 10-year-old Garbi Yildirim feared for their son's safety. Reluctantly they sent him from Turkey to live with relatives in Germany. When Garbi reached his 18th birthday, he was notified by the German government that he would have to return to Turkey. Upon his return, he knew that he would have to serve in the Turkish military. This meant he would have to use weapons against his own people—the Kurds. He refused to return to Turkey and was placed in a deportation prison to await the recommendation of a German court on the case. Garbi's case is an example of the problems some ethnic groups face in Southwest Asia.

New Industry Requires More Workers

Life in Southwest Asia in 1900 seemed only slightly different from life there in 1100. Some people lived in villages or cities while others moved livestock from one source of water to another.

Then, in the early years of the 20th century, everything changed. Geologists discovered huge deposits of petroleum and natural gas under the sands and seas of Southwest Asia. Western oil companies quickly leased land in the region and supplied the technology and the workers to pump the fuel from the ground.

Many countries in Southwest Asia grew enormously wealthy from oil profits. The oil boom set off decades of rapid urbanization. Extensive road construction made cities and towns more accessible. Many thousands of people migrated to the cities in search of jobs and a chance to share in the region's newfound riches. So many jobs were available that some were left unfilled.

FOREIGN WORKERS To fill the job openings, companies recruited people, mostly from South and East Asia. These "**guest workers**" are largely unskilled laborers. They fill jobs that the region's native peoples find culturally or economically unacceptable. In parts of the Arabian Peninsula, the immigrant workers actually outnumber the native workers. For example, in 2005, about 90 percent of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) work force was made up of foreigners.

Main Ideas

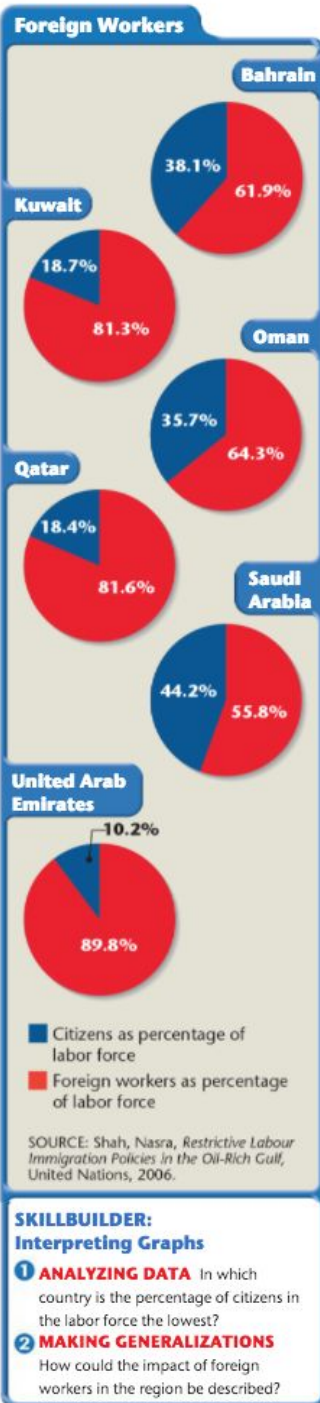
- Economic growth brings foreign workers to the region.
- Political factors have shifted the region's population.

Places & Terms

guest workers
 stateless nation
 Palestinians
 West Bank
 Gaza Strip

PLACE Great wealth makes this United Arab Emirates golf club possible. In the middle of the desert, it features green fairways, a pool, and a freshwater lake. Guest workers fill jobs at sites like this.





PROBLEMS OF GUEST WORKERS The presence of so many guest workers has led to problems. Cultural differences often exist between the guest workers and their employers. Misunderstandings over certain customs can result in severe penalties. For example, a Filipino man was given six months in jail and expelled from the UAE for brushing past a woman on a bus. Arabs viewed his behavior as insulting to the woman.

Sometimes the workers must live in special districts apart from the Arab population. Some workers have been abandoned. Others receive no wages for months at a time. Many immigrants find themselves unemployed and without money to get back home.

The large number of guest workers is a concern to the governments of Southwest Asia. Some government officials worry that depending on these workers will prevent their nation's own workers from developing their skills. Others worry about the intolerance and even violence that these workers face. And, finally, some fear the immigrants could weaken their country's sense of national identity. Solving the cultural and economic issues over guest workers will be a challenge to the governments of the region. ➤

Political Refugees Face Challenges

Rapidly changing economic conditions have caused population shifts in Southwest Asia. Political conflict in the region has also caused relocation.

STATELESS NATION One of the longest conflicts has been over the ethnic group known as the Kurds. After World War I, the Allies recommended creating a national state for the group. Instead, the land intended for the Kurds became part of Turkey, Iraq, and Syria. The Kurds became a **stateless nation**—a nation of people without a land to legally occupy. Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria tried to absorb the Kurds into their populations but were not successful. The Kurds resisted control in each of the countries. Governments forcibly moved thousands of Kurds in an attempt to control them.

In Iraq, this forced migration ruined Kurdish homes, settlements, and farms. As you read in Chapter 22, the Iraqi government used deadly chemical weapons on settlements of Kurds to kill them or force them to leave the area. In the year 2000, as many as 70,000 Kurds had been displaced from areas they called home. Many of the Kurds have been forced to live in crowded relocation camps.



Seeing Patterns

4 How did changes in the economy of the region change the make-up of the population?

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