

Student Workbook
For



Our Voices

Refugee and Immigrant Women Tell Their Stories

A new exhibit at the State Museum of Pennsylvania
Created By

*The Institute for Cultural Partnerships
Pennsylvania Immigrant and Refugee Women's Network
and
The State Museum of Pennsylvania*



“If you have an education, rather than people choosing you, you’ll get to choose others. I did not want to be chosen by someone else. I wanted to have more options. I knew that, if I did not have an education, I would be limited in terms of where I can go, where I can work.”

- Senel

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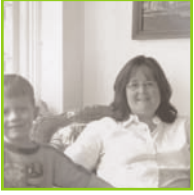


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Me in a Box

“This rock (affectionately nicknamed “The Third Eye”) is one our family found one day beachcombing at Paradise Point in Karachi, Pakistan and it is significant to me because it reminds me of the wonderful days spent as a family on holiday from boarding school. It also reminds me of the strength my parents gave my family...”
Carolyn, born in Sri Lanka - Our Voices Object Display

Discussion Questions:

What is a group?
Do you belong to any groups?
What does it mean to belong to a group?
If you had to fill a box with things that symbolize you, what would you choose?



Vocabulary:

folk group - a group of people who regularly meet together and share at least one thing in common, such as ethnicity, language, occupation, age, family, gender, region or religion. Examples include: Scouts, choir, cousins, gangs, groups of friends, sports team, Sunday school class and a local union. (Source: Pennsylvania Standards for Folk Life Education)

symbol - something that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention, or accidental resemblance; especially a visible sign of something invisible. Ex: the lion is a symbol of courage. (Source: Merriam Webster Unabridged Dictionary)

assemblage - an artistic composition made from scraps, junk, and odds and ends, as of paper, cloth, wood, stone, or metal. (Source: Merriam Webster Unabridged Dictionary)

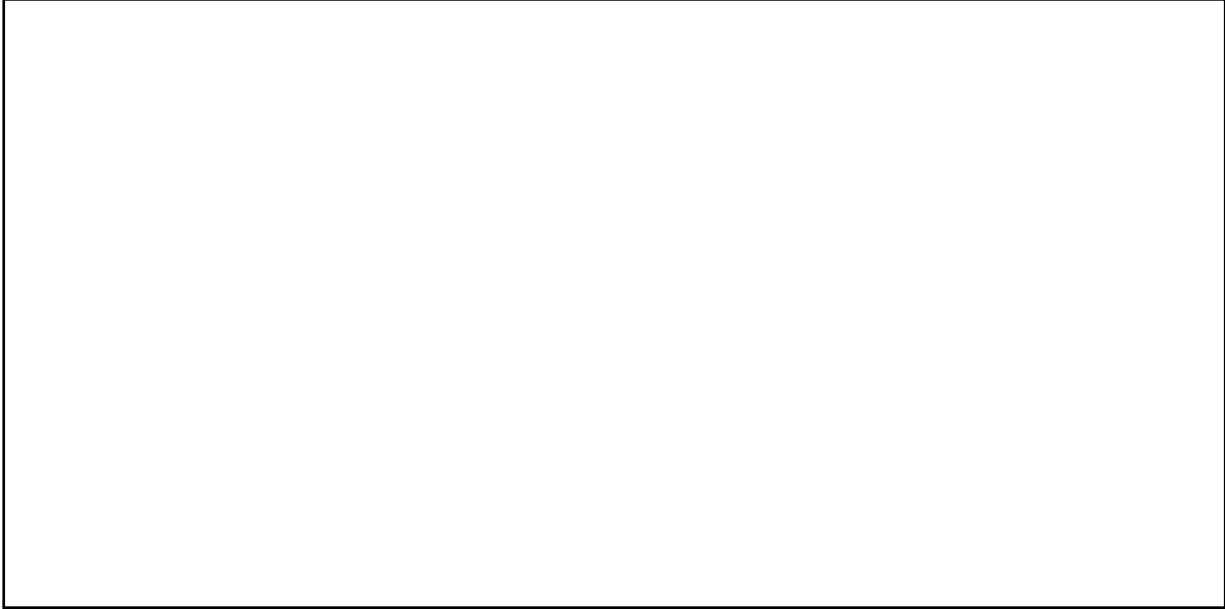
Background:

We all belong to many groups. We live, work and play with groups of people who spend time together doing the same types of activities; such as a family, a class at school, a group of friends. These groups are called folk groups; groups of folks who do things together or have things in common. The people within a folk group also share a common set of understandings; or familiar ideas and ways to behave. For example, if you belong to a Scout troop, you will learn the Scout customs, traditions and ways of doing things. Whenever you go to a Scout meeting you will know that you can expect to see and do the same types of things. Learning the customs, traditions and ways that your Scout troupe does things, helps you feel comfortable and a part of the group. We feel like we belong to a group when we understand how to behave and what might happen when we are together. In fact, one way of thinking about who we are, is to think about the groups of people we feel comfortable with. In this lesson we will be exploring the idea of folk groups and symbols that help us understand who we are as we learn about each other by thinking about the folk groups to which each person belongs.

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Folk Group Worksheet

A folk group is a group of people who meet together on a regular basis and share at least one thing in common. Your class at school is an example of a folk group. Your Scout troop is an example of a folk group. Most people belong to many different folk groups. What folk groups do you belong to? Brainstorm all of the folk groups you belong to, and write them in the box below:



A symbol is something that stands for something else. Sometimes people choose objects to symbolize or stand for something that is familiar or important to them. For example, the American flag symbolizes our country. If you had to fill a box with things that symbolize, or stand for you, what would you choose? Look at the list of folk groups you made. Use this list to help you think about what kinds of things you want to put in your box.

Next fill a shoebox with at least five objects that symbolize you. Bring the box to school and be ready to explain why you chose each item in front of the class. Look at the Oral Presentation Chart (pg. 14) and practice your explanation at home first. Be prepared to use complete sentences and a loud, clear voice when you explain your “Me in a Box”. Use the checklist below to help you:

- I have chosen a sturdy box with a lid such as a shoe box or other box of this size.
- I have chosen at least five objects.
- I can clearly explain how each object symbolizes a folk group that I belong to; a part of who I am.
- I have read the *Oral Presentation Chart* (pg. 14) and practiced my presentation with a friend or someone at home to share with the class.

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What's In Your Cupboard?

*"Always try to show what you are like in your culture in a gentle way. The food you serve, the music."
- Alawia, born in Sudan - Our Voices oral history*



Discussion Questions:

What foods do you eat at your house to celebrate special occasions or holidays?
What foods can you think of that are special to your family?

Vocabulary:

culture - the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought typical of a population or community at a given time. (Source: Merriam Webster Unabridged Dictionary)

ethnography - the study and description of individual cultures base on interviews and documentation. (Source: Standards for Folk Life Education)

folk arts - traditional forms of cultural expression that reflect the group's sense of beauty, identity and values. Examples include: Appalachian Jack tales, Mennonite quilting patterns, African kente cloth patterns. (Source: New York State Council on the Arts)

Background:

Food is a very important part of folk groups and cultures. The foods we prepare and serve on holidays and special occasions are an important clue to who we are. The women of the Our Voices exhibit have kept their own cultures alive by preparing authentic recipes from their homeland. Sometimes they had to work very hard to find the correct ingredients. In this lesson you will think about the foods you eat and the culture they represent. Then you will be asked to interview a parent, grandparent or other relative and collect a favorite recipe. Along with this recipe, ask them to tell you why they enjoy this food and if it brings back any special memories for them. When you interview your families and friends, be sure to take careful notes.

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Recipe Collection Worksheet

To complete this assignment you will interview a family member and ask them to share a favorite recipe with you. While you are collecting the recipe, you will also ask about the memories connected with that particular food. Then when you are done, you will write a final draft of your recipe in the class recipe book. Since food and culture are so connected, make a note of the country or culture that this food represents and find an image of a piece of art from that culture to illustrate it.

How do the foods you eat at your house reflect your culture? Perhaps your family has lived here many years. What foods special to this place do you enjoy? Perhaps your family has recently moved to this country. What foods special to your old home do you enjoy? All of the favorite recipes together tell us about all of the different cultures in our classroom.

When you ask someone to share a recipe and a memory for you to write down, you are using interviewing skills. Remember to be respectful and polite when you carry out the interview. Remember to respect privacy when memories are shared with you. Record the recipe and the memories connected with it on plain paper. You will use this to create your final copy. Follow the three steps below to make your final copy for the classroom cookbook.

Step One: Explain to a family member or guardian that you are collecting recipes for a class cookbook. If necessary, ask them to fill out a permission slip provided by your teacher. Ask them to choose a recipe that is special to their family's history or culture - perhaps one from a grandparent or something that is made for special occasions. Write the recipe down on a separate sheet of paper exactly as they dictate it.

Step Two: Next ask them to share a memory with you. When have they made this food? What memories are connected to sharing this food with others? You will need to take careful notes on a separate sheet of paper so that you can remember all that they say. Be sure to tell them that you will be writing down what they say and including it in a class cookbook.

Step Three: After you have completed your interview read over your notes and summarize them. Choose one or two sentences that your family member or guardian said to create an interesting quote about the recipe. Be sure you quote exactly what they said, use quotation marks and give credit to the person you are quoting.

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Everybody Comes from Somewhere

*"I remember my first morning... (in Pennsylvania). My house was non-smoking and my father went outside to smoke. It was eight o'clock in the morning and he came into the house and said "Alma, Alma, wake up. Come here to see something!" ... And I went outside the house and he said, "Look there's a squirrel!" I mean in Bosnia you can't see a squirrel. They live in the mountains and you cannot see them everyday... here they are domestic pets. It was so funny!.. I thought "Even a squirrel can walk safely here."
- Alma, Bosnian Refugee - Our Voices oral histories*

Discussion Questions:

Why do you think America is often called a nation of immigrants?
What is the difference between an immigrant and a refugee?
Who belongs here?

Vocabulary:

census - a formal count of a country's population taken periodically.
(the United States census has been taken every ten years since 1790)

immigrant - a person who moves from his or her country of birth to become a permanent resident of another country.

refugee - a person who, owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or belonging to a particular social group is forced to leave the country of his or her nationality.
(Source: United Nations High Commission on Refugees)

tableau - a group of people frozen in a pose together meant to simulate stop action - as if a picture were just snapped of a moment from real life - a freeze frame.

image theatre - a creative dramatics technique that asks the actors to set up several tableaux to create a complete story in frozen pictures.

Background:

This is an exciting time to live in America. America is currently welcoming people from all over the world who are helping to make our country strong. There have not been so many newcomers to our country since the late 1800's. Just as in those days, new immigrants coming to America are settling in to work, building businesses and contributing to their communities. However, new immigrants and refugees (people who were forced to leave their country to protect themselves) also face challenges along the way. Some people laugh at new immigrants or treat them unkindly because they do not speak English. In this lesson we will learn about what it is like to be a new immigrant or a refugee. We will collect stories from our friends and relatives and each other. Some of you may have just moved to this country yourself. You will become the class experts who can share first hand experiences.



Our Voices Student Workbook

Oral History Interview

Everyone has a story to tell. When a student or a researcher asks someone to tell their story and then writes down that story and saves it in a book, a museum, an archive or a project for school: we say that the student or researcher has conducted an oral history interview.

Most often the person being interviewed is recorded, using a tape recorder or video tape recorder; however, it is possible to take down an oral history in writing if you take very good notes.

For this assignment you will find someone to interview who was not born in the United States. It might be a neighbor, a friend, a student in your class or a relative. Arrange a time when you can interview them. Explain what you want to know and why. Get your parent or guardian's permission and be sure to ask the person you are interviewing to fill in a release form. Make up some interesting questions that would encourage the person to talk and share.

Remember that you will be asking to hear personal details about someone's life. You must be well behaved and respectful at all times. You must respect the other person's privacy when you make the final copy of the oral history for all to see.

Here are some sample interview questions. Choose two or three of these or make up your own. Write each question on the top of a blank piece of paper that you can take with you to the interview for recording their answers or making notes. You will want to take notes even if you are recording the interview with a video camera or tape recorder. You can use the Interview Checklist to be sure you remember everything you need. Sample questions:

Where were you born?

Why did you move to the United States?

What was the first thing you noticed when you arrived here?

Do you remember your first day of school? What was it like?

What has been your favorite thing about the United States so far?

What has been your least favorite thing about the United States so far?

How did you celebrate your birthday back in your homeland?

What was your favorite holiday in your homeland?

If you go back home to visit, do you feel any differently now that you have lived here?

What is the hardest thing about moving to a new country?

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Samples from the Oral Histories of Our Voices

Read the following excerpts from oral histories of immigrants and refugees who have settled in Pennsylvania. (Source: *Our Voices Exhibit*) Think about these questions as you read: Why do you think immigrants come to the United States? What difficulties do you think they might face? How do you think a refugee is different from an immigrant?

“I arrived. I never forget... New York was my port of entrance. It was around six in the morning when we were just arriving... The sun was coming up shining all over. And I saw the Statue of Liberty and I knew that I was in the United States. It was with all my ambitions but most of my ambitions was to study, to learn English. I liked English a lot I didn't know why... And I remember clearly my ambitions to study and going back to Ecuador and doing so much for my country.” - **Belgica** (*Belgica immigrated to the United States in 1979 from Ecuador*)

“I think the bravest thing I ever had to do in my life was to come from that culture and decide to make a home in America, a culture that's totally different from everything I know. Sometimes I feel like I'm a person who is living almost two parallel lives... I think this is some of the struggle also immigrant families go through. We come from a different culture. We try to accommodate another culture - become this person of a third culture.” - **Alawia** (*Alawia is a Doctor from Sudan. She came to the United States in the 1970's to join her husband who was studying at Indiana University*)

“My first two years (in America) were spent in military housing watching TV. There were no people who could speak my language... I had a daughter after five years of marriage... my mother in law said “Don't speak that other language to our grand-daughter, because we don't know what she is saying.” ...So my daughter ended up going to Finland at the age of twelve and not being able to speak the language. My family was terribly shocked and disappointed. My fear is that I'm going to be in some American nursing home speaking Finnish and they don't know what I'm saying.” - **Sirkka-Liisa** (*Sirkka-Liisa was born in Finland and immigrated to the United States in the early 1970's*)

“The gate to the harbor was closed by barbed wire and guarded by the military. It was chaos. We were standing in front of the gate trying to think of how we would cross the line. In my right hand, I held my twelve year old brother. I picked up my little brother who was four years old, put him on my back and told my sister... to take care of my other sisters. I then stepped on the barbed wired line so that all my sisters could run through. We ran as fast as we could to the harbor and tried to get on the boat. The boat was full and so many people kept trying to get on... We did not know where we were going and whether we were safe. We were on the ocean for one week with very little food and water until we got help from a US Navy boat. ...My life changed in front of my eyes.

- **Ho-Thanh** (*Ho-Thanh left Vietnam when Saigon fell at the end of the Vietnam War and came to the US as a refugee in the late 1970's*)

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TITLE: Mexicans entering the United States. United States immigration station, El Paso, Texas - Dorothea Lange, photographer - June 1938. SOURCE: Library of Congress.

Directions:

Look at the people in this photograph. This is a picture of new immigrants to the United States waiting at the border to be allowed entry. You are going to become the characters in the picture. Try to copy the poses of these people and the expressions on their faces. Put your bodies in exactly the same positions and freeze the picture - just like pause on a VCR. Think what these people might be feeling. Imagine that you are waiting nervously to hear if you can be allowed to move to America. Perhaps you have dreamed and planned for this for years. Perhaps you have a relative waiting anxiously to meet you - not knowing if you will be accepted or refused entry. Perhaps you don't speak English and you don't understand what the border patrol is saying to you. Be prepared to bring your picture to life and say what your character might be thinking.

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Parent Letter

(Source: *Standards for Folklife Education*)

Date _____

Dear Parent or Guardian:

We are beginning a unit of study on new immigrants to the United States. Some of the topics we will study will include:

- Traditional foods
- Memories associated with foods and holidays
- Memories of persons who are new to the United States

Your child may be asking you for information on some of these topics, or may be talking with other family members or friends. The purpose of this project is to help your child better understand his/her own heritage and to appreciate the heritage and culture of others.

As part of this unit your child will be learning research and documentation skills, including interviewing skills. Respecting people's right to privacy is an important part of this research and we will be working with your child to develop respectful ways to interview while respecting people's rights. I hope that you will support your child as he/she works on these assignments. You are welcome to call me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Interview Release Form

For student researchers

(Source: *Standards for Folklife Education*)

I hereby give and grant to _____
(name of student conducting the interview)

of _____ School
(name of student's school)

the tape recorded interview (or handwritten transcript of the interview) and its contents listed below, donated for educational purposes.

Printed name of person being interviewed Signature of person being interviewed Date signed

Address of person being interviewed: _____

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New Neighbors - New Friends

“If I was an American, I would approach the immigrant, because a lot of immigrants do not know what is expected of them here... There are certain things you do not know because it is not a part of your culture.

You are in need and you also don't know how to ask for help. “

- Senel, born in Turkey - excerpted from Our Voices oral histories

Discussion Questions:

Some people say that America is like a kaleidoscope that forms constantly changing patterns from many different shapes and colors. Do you agree? (Ashabranner p. 119)

If America is a kaleidoscope, how could you help a newcomer feel a part of the patterns?

Vocabulary:

diversity - the condition of being diverse; variety.

(Source: *Merriam Webster*)

metaphor - a figure of speech in which a word or a phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them. (Source: *Merriam Webster*)

tolerance - sympathy or indulgence for beliefs or practices differing from one's own. (Source: *Merriam Webster*)

Background:

Immigrants to a new country leave behind everything that is familiar to them. Sometimes they do not speak the language of the new country, so that even the simplest tasks become extremely difficult. Not only that, but they leave behind familiar foods, customs and folk groups. No longer is it easy to understand how to act or what is expected of you. In this lesson we try to learn from each other how to help a newcomer and welcome a newcomer to our folk groups.

Works Cited:

American Immigration Law Foundation (2002). “*Famous Immigrants in History*”.

<http://www.aifl.org/notable/historical.htm>

American Immigration Law Foundation (2002). “*Celebrity Immigrants*”.

<http://www.aifl.org/notable/famous.htm>

Ashabranner, Brent, *Still a Nation of Immigrants*. New York: Cobblehill Books, 1993.



Our Voices Student Workbook

Famous Immigrants and Refugees

America has been known for many years as a nation of immigrants, because all of our people - with the exception of the Native American peoples - came here from somewhere else. Our strength has been in our diversity. We are not a nation of one culture, but a nation of many cultures, with people who all believe in the same basic freedoms. Through the years there have been many immigrants and refugees who have come to America, made it their home, and made important contributions to our sciences, our arts and our technology. Look at the chart of famous immigrant and refugee contributions below. Choose one of these people to research. Write a three to five paragraph report about this person's life and practice an oral presentation to share what you have learned with your class. Use the *Writing Chart* and *Oral Presentation Chart* with your teacher to score your report and your presentation.

Name	Birth Country	Contribution
Gloria Estefan	Cuba	Singer and Performer
Sammy Sosa	Dominican Republic	Baseball Player
Liz Claiborne	Belgium	Fashion Designer
Louis Chevrolet	Switzerland	Business Leader - Chevrolet Automobiles
Jenny Ming	Macau	Business Leader - CEO of Old Navy
Yo-Yo Ma	France	Musician - concert cellist
Sidney Poitier	Bahamas	Actor
Arnold Schwarzenegger	Austria	Actor and Politician
Teresa Heinz Kerry	Mozambique	Business Leader - The Heinz Foundation
Elizabeth Taylor	United Kingdom	Actress
Anthony Quinn	Mexico	Actor
Albert Einstein	Germany	Physicist
Kahlil Gibran	Lebanon	Author and poet
Wayne Wang	China	Director
Madeleine Albright	Czechoslovakia	Secretary of State
Midori	Japan	Classical Violinist
Carlos Santana	Mexico	Musician
Angela Lansbury	United Kingdom	Actress
Isabel Allende	Chile	Author
Le Ly Hayslip	Vietnam	Author
Bete Bao Lord	China	Author

(Source: *American Immigration Law Foundation*)

Our Voices Student Workbook

Oral Presentation Chart

- Based on the PA Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening Standards
designed for English Language Speakers - Modifications must be made for Limited English or English as a Second Language Students.

	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic
Volume and Articulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses skillful choices of volume and pace to maintain the audience's attention and interest and add to the presentation. • Articulates words with exceptional clarity and pronounces all words correctly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses appropriate volume so that it is easy to hear what is being said. Words are • Words are clearly articulated and pronounced correctly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses inappropriate volume choices-speaking either too loudly or too softly so that the presentation is difficult to listen to and understand. • Words may be mumbled or mispronounced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks so softly that the audience can not hear. • Mumbles, blurs words together or mispronounces words so often that the audience can not understand what the speaker is trying to communicate.
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation has a clear beginning, middle and end. • Presentation uses complete sentences carefully chosen to interest the specific audience. • Speaker uses a formal voice, grammar and choice of words. • The presentation has been worded in an entertaining, creative or innovative way so as to hold attention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation has a clear beginning, middle and end. • The speaker uses complete sentences. • The speaker uses formal language suitable for speaking to a group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation lacks a clear beginning, middle and end. • Presentation lacks complete sentences and use of formal language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation lacks any clear structure. • Language chosen is informal or inappropriate for a formal speaking situation. • The presentation may even be confusing or difficult to follow.

Writing Chart

Designed for English Language Speakers - Modifications must be made for Limited English or English as a Second Language Students.

	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information is in a logical and especially interesting sequence that flows easily from one thought to another with no grammar, punctuation or spelling errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information is in a logical, easy to follow sequence with no grammar, punctuation or spelling errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is difficult to follow the sequence; the writing jumps around from thought to thought. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little or no clear structure; thoughts seem unrelated.
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing shows an excellent understanding of the assignment. • Knowledge of the material is communicated with many interesting details. • The writing gives credit to any person or source quoted within the paragraphs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing shows a clear understanding of the assignment and knowledge of the material. • The writing gives credit to any person or source quoted within the paragraphs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing shows a limited understanding of the assignment. • It is difficult to tell how much the student knew about the subject. • The writing may or may not give credit to any person or source quoted within the paragraphs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is unclear from the available writing if the student understood the assignment.

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Our Voices Exhibit Treasure Hunt

- An activity for the museum visit

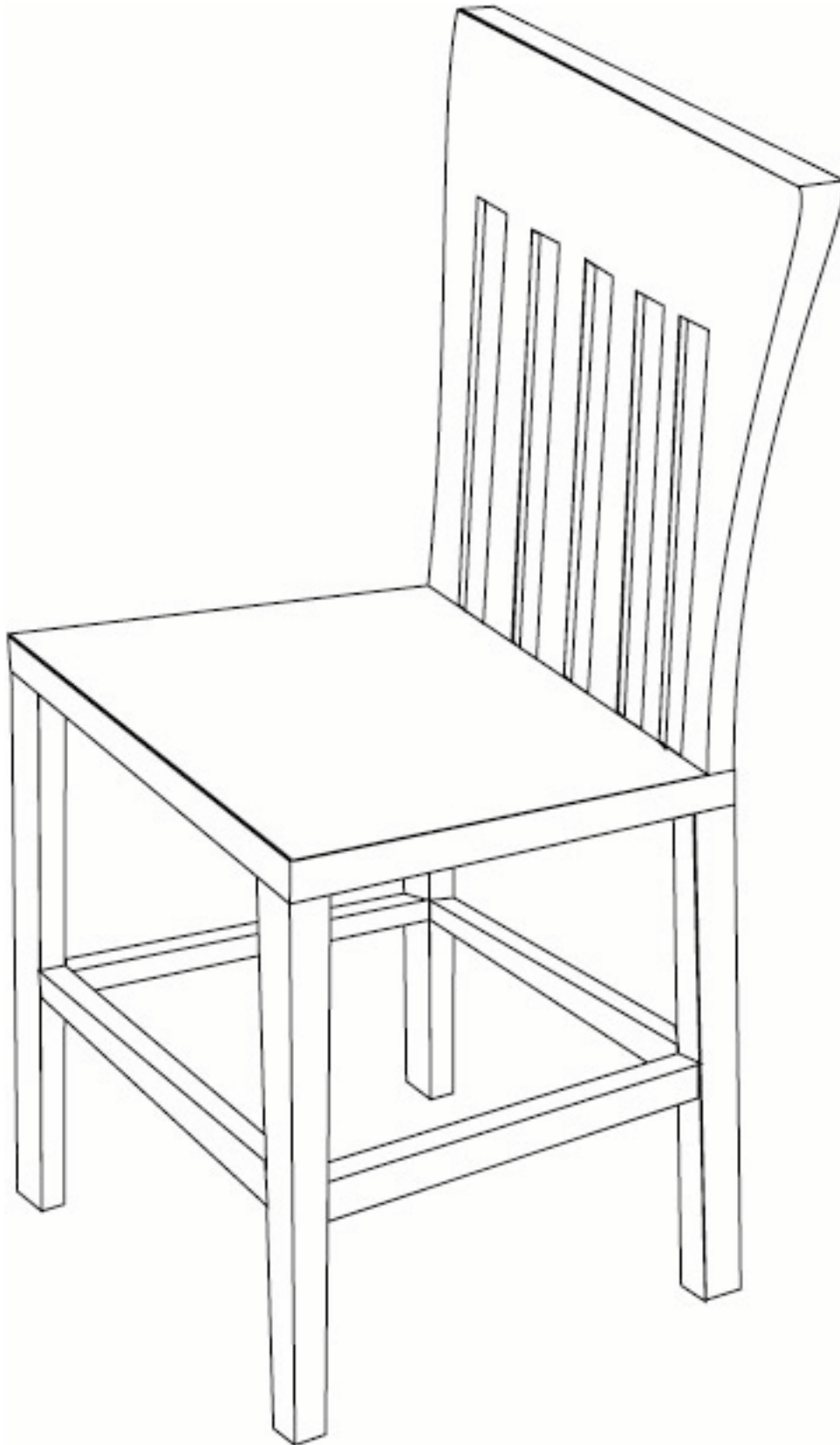
This is a treasure hunt for answers. See how many of the questions below you can answer during your visit to the museum.

1. How many objects are in the object display case? _____
2. Who drew a picture of herself with her books, learning English and getting an education?

3. Write down one food you saw in the kitchen cupboard display. _____
4. Which of the women was born in China? _____
5. _____ and _____ often receive a gift of a gold coin for good luck in Turkey.
6. Who says she doesn't want to melt in the melting pot but wishes to be like the red tomato in the salad bowl that keeps all of its flavors? _____
7. Whose precious object is a red peace scarf? _____
8. Look at one of the traditional dresses on display. What country does it come from? _____
9. Who is this woman and what country is she from? She is: _____
from: _____
10. Which of the women are shown with their children? _____

11. Some of the women in the exhibit are shown on the table of contents page in your workbook. Make a check mark by each one as you find her picture in the museum display. How many can you find? _____
12. Now that you have gotten to know the women of the exhibit a little better, think how you might get to know a new immigrant that moves into your neighborhood. What might you do or say to welcome them? Write an answer below and share it with your teacher:





Story Circle Chair

This Story Circle chair is a symbol for welcome and sharing. Make it your own by filling it with colors and symbols that have meaning for you. Then staple it to several blank pieces of paper and use it as the cover page of your journal.

*This Journal
belongs to:*



OUR VOICES

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