

-Louisville's Italian Heritage Online Exhibit Activity and Primary Source Set- Fifth Grade | SS.5.1.1

Essential Question

How do we know what we do about Italian families settling in Louisville and how did other groups of people in Colorado view these immigrants?

Background Knowledge

Louisville was founded in 1878 as a coal mining town. Louisville's first Italian residents moved to the area around 1890. Before this, Louisville was home to residents from England, Ireland, France, Austria, Germany, and other places in the U.S. Even with all these other groups represented, Italian culture left quite a few marks on Louisville as it grew. [Louisville's Italian Heritage](#) explores many of the ways Italian culture could be seen in Louisville. Food was a popular way of expressing one's culture as was recreational activities, such as bocce ball. Other sources show how Italian immigrants were viewed by other groups in Colorado.

Students should go through the online exhibit, Louisville's Italian Heritage, before continuing with the activities. The students may also want to know what [bocce ball](#) is ahead of time. Bocce ball is a sport that is played in teams of four or fewer players. Each team takes turns throwing a pallino, a small white ball, across a line. Each team has balls of a different color or pattern. Teams then try to get their balls closer to the pallino than their opponent's balls to score points.

Supporting Questions

1) Why did Italian immigrants come to Louisville?
2) How did Italian culture shape Louisville?
3) Describe at least two ways that Italians expressed their culture in Louisville.
4) What kinds of historical sources can we use to learn about this history?

5) What kinds of information can we learn from primary sources, such as photographs, personal accounts, and objects?
6) What kinds of information can we learn from secondary sources, such as the <i>Louisville's Italian Heritage</i> online exhibit?
7) Today, most Louisville residents wouldn't be considered immigrants. Why is that?
8) Italian immigrants living outside of Louisville had different experiences than those living in Louisville. Explain why their experiences may have been different?
9) How did other groups living in Colorado at the same time view Italian immigrants?

Activities

This resource packet includes Lesson Ideas to help extend lessons and further student understanding.

Primary Source Analysis



- 1) What can this photo tell us about how the Romeo family lived in Louisville?
 - a. How did they travel?
 - b. How did they dress?
 - c. Do you think other Louisville residents had similar lives?

The Romeo Family	
 La Festa, Louisville CO	1) How does La Festa, the Italian heritage festival in this photo, keep Italian culture alive? a. What can someone of non-Italian heritage gain from attending this festival? b. How is Bocce Ball different from other sports?

Group Analysis

In groups as small as two, have a teacher read the following passage out loud and then have students discuss the questions within their group. If this is to be achieved during distance learning, students can write or type their responses.

Spotlight on Italians in Colorado tells us that, “Immigrant groups had little time to spend on documenting their own histories and experiences. Instead, they focused on surviving: adjusting to their new lives in America, earning a living, and caring for their families. As a result, the Italian community’s history has traditionally been recorded in official documents, such as census records and birth certificates, and in secondary sources like newspapers and magazines.”	1) Why did immigrants not leave behind a lot of personal stories? 2) Does that mean that immigrant stories lack primary or secondary sources?
Louisville’s Italian Heritage states that “Some Italian families, such as the Zarini, Romeo, and Martella families, came to Louisville by way of nearby Marshall, which was a rough-and-tumble coal	1) What does this passage tell us about other coal mining towns around Louisville? 2) Why was Louisville attractive to families looking to set up their

camp. The Italian families that settled in Louisville then drew relatives, friends, and fellow villagers from Italy and other places to also move here.”	homes? 3) What does this passage tell us about the ways that Louisville’s Italian population grew in number? 4) Is this a primary or secondary source? Why?
The <i>Louisville’s Italian Heritage</i> exhibit shares that there were over 200 Italian family surnames (last names of individuals and families) in Louisville. That number was calculated using historical sources, such as census records, cemetery records, property records, obituaries, and directories.	1) What specific kinds of sources did historians use to learn about Italians in Louisville long ago? 2) Were these primary or secondary sources? Why?
The following are excerpts from Colorado newspapers around the same time that Italian families were moving into Louisville, Colorado. These will help you see that different areas and groups of people felt differently about Italians. “This would be a very quiet little town were it not for the Italians, who are keeping things pretty well stirred up here at present.” <i>Salida Mail</i> September 5, 1890. “At noon yesterday ninety men, who have been employed on the construction work on the different lines of the Pueblo City Railway company, struck and refused to work longer until a number of Italians, who were employed on the same work, were discharged. The company offered to settle the matter by putting the Italians to work on the mesa and the white men to work on other portions of the work.”	1) How do these perspectives of Italian immigrants differ from how the Louisville’s Italian Heritage online exhibit portrays Italians immigrants? 2) Why might the speakers in each of these newspaper excerpts think or feel differently about Italian immigrants? 3) Why is it important to recognize that there are many historical perspectives to consider for any given historical event?

Colorado Daily Chieftain, September 9, 1890.	
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Comparisons

These prompts, read by the teacher or presented to students, will ask students to compare the experiences of others with the experiences of Louisville residents. Students should respond with at least three complete sentences (spoken or written) per prompt.

Comparisons prompt:	Answer:
Italians formed tight bonds throughout Louisville neighborhoods, including a section known as “Little Italy.” Many families lived within walking distance of relatives and close friends. 1) How is this similar or different from the area where you live? a. Do you live close to all your relatives and friends?	
<u>Portraits of the Past</u> tells us that, “Italian settlement of the Weldon area dates to some uncertain time in the 1880s. Despite the intention of some to return home, they found themselves putting down roots. They prospered and they stayed. Many of them came to the new country intending to make their money in the mines. They found work in the silver mines of Leadville, Georgetown, Silver Plume and Silverdale, as well as the mines in southern Colorado. But when Congress repealed the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1893, a depression hit the silver mining communities of Colorado, and many of the	

Italian miners left the mountains and returned to agriculture as their way of life.

In the beginning, the Italians who came to the Weldona Valley worked for established farmers, and, because there was nothing better available, they made their first homes wherever they could find shelter, often in dugouts and small wooden and sod houses.”

1) These Italian families settled in the Colorado mountains at the same time that Italian families were settling in Louisville, Colorado. How were their experiences different?

Terms

Italian: noun - A native or inhabitant of Italy, or a person of Italian descent.

Culture: noun - The customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group.

Immigrant: noun - A person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country.

Census: noun - An official count or survey of a population, typically recording various details of individuals.

Bocce ball: noun- An Italian variety of lawn bowling played on a dirt court.

Surname: noun – A hereditary name common to all members of a family, as distinct from a given name. A family name.

Cuisine: noun - A style or method of cooking, especially as characteristic of a particular country, region, or establishment.

Primary source: noun - A primary source provides a first-hand account of an event or time period and are considered to be authoritative. They represent original thinking,

reports on discoveries or events, or they can share new information. Often these sources are created at the time the events occurred.

-primary source examples-

- diaries, correspondence, ships' logs
- original documents e.g. birth certificates, trial transcripts
- biographies, autobiographies, manuscripts
- interviews, speeches, oral histories
- case law, legislation, regulations, constitutions
- government documents, statistical data, research reports
- a journal article reporting NEW research or findings
- creative art works, literature
- newspaper advertisements and reportage and editorial/opinion pieces

Secondary source: noun - Secondary sources offer an analysis, interpretation or a restatement of primary sources. They often attempt to describe or explain primary sources.

-secondary source examples-

- journal articles that comment on research
- textbooks
- dictionaries and encyclopedias
- books that interpret
- political commentary
- biographies
- dissertations
- newspaper editorial/opinion pieces