

Cambodian American Studies Model Curriculum
California Department of Education
Reflection from the Past: Building Resiliency
Grade: 4

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Area of Study: Community Building and Healing

Compelling Question: How did Cambodians build communities to thrive and heal in the United States?

Lesson Question (Supporting Question): Why and how do people succeed and flourish despite pain and trauma after a genocide?

Lesson Materials:

Supplies:

- Markers
- Post-it pads (large stick posters or paper)
- Star stickers
- 11x14 Construction paper (for each student)
- Personal Plan Worksheet (located at the end of the lesson)

Videos:

- Overview of the Genocide in Cambodia
- Loung Ung: How can we be resilient? What is collective resilience?
- Loung Ung: The People Who Gave Me Courage
- “First They Killed My Father” Trailer

Readings:

- Loung Ung

Lesson Objective:

Students will explore the concept of resiliency through the Cambodian experience, engaging in group discussions to define and relate the concept to their own lived experiences. This exploration will empower students to identify personal steps for overcoming obstacles and fostering resilience in their lives.

Ethnic Studies Theme: This lesson connects to the ethnic studies theme of *community and solidarity* from the Asian American Studies Curriculum Framework (Asian American Research

Initiative, 2022). Students analyze community resistance and alliances between communities, as well as the complexities within these experiences.

Students will explore how Cambodian immigrants built resilience after the trauma of the genocide and resettlement in the United States.

For additional guidance around ethnic studies implementation, refer to the *Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum* (2022) <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/esmc.asp>.

Standards Addressed:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

Lesson Assessment:

Students will engage in a collaborative process to define resiliency and share at least two to three practical strategies that others can implement to cope with adversity.

Suggested Amount of Time: 180 minutes

Lesson Background:

The Cambodian Genocide took place from 1975–1979 when the Khmer Rouge gained control of the country after the Cambodian Civil War. Pol Pot, the leader of the Khmer Rouge, implemented a communist system where citizens were forced to relocate and work in rural villages throughout Cambodia. Intellectuals, members of the previous government, and minorities were targeted for torture and execution. During the rule of the Khmer Rouge almost 2 million people died from starvation or execution. The genocide ended when the Vietnamese Army defeated the Khmer Rouge in 1979. Many people fled Cambodia for refugee camps during the genocide and Vietnamese occupation with some refugees eventually resettling in the United States.

Lesson Procedures:

Note to teacher: This lesson is based on the aftermath of Cambodian genocide survivors and how success in personal and professional journeys can be achieved in the American diaspora context. Students will be provided opportunities to see success and triumph amid struggle. Students will

have the opportunity to reflect, document, and share their personal experiences about overcoming obstacles and personal growth.

Activate Background Knowledge: (15 minutes)

- Ask whether students know the meaning of the word *resilience*. Invite students to take out scrap paper and jot down a definition of the word. Circulate as students write and choose a few solid definitions to write on the board and discuss as a class. If no one has written an accurate definition, ask a volunteer to look up *resilience* in the dictionary.
- Ask students to share what they already know about the Cambodian Genocide. Prompt them to consider how the term *resilience* connects to folks impacted by the Cambodian Genocide.
 - Teachers can utilize this video as a refresher on what happened during the Cambodian Genocide: “Overview of the Genocide in Cambodia”
<https://youtu.be/swq2dCW65fw?feature=shared>

Interaction with first video source: (15–20 minutes)

- Provide a brief biography of Loung Ung, using the description found at:
<https://www.loungung.com/>
 - Teachers can also show the trailer “First They Killed My Father”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uS3Vp_quGCw by Luong Ung
- Watch Video 1: “Loung Ung: The People Who Gave Me Courage”
https://youtu.be/u2oIqC7_8Ws?feature=shared
 - After watching the video, take notes and discuss the following questions as a class:
 - How did the author, Loung Ung, define resilience as a survivor of the Cambodian genocide?
 - What were her reasons for building resilience as a survivor?
 - What specific strategies did she mention that helped her to build resilience?
 - What did she say was the importance of personal stories?

Interaction with second video source: (15 minutes)

- Video 2: “Loung Ung: How can we be resilient? What is collective resilience?”
<https://youtu.be/LuAxe-fiM68?feature=shared>

- For this second video, watch the video as a class but have students answer the same questions from the other clip with a peer or independently.
- Then, have a whole class discussion for each question.

Assessment: Building Resilience Action Plan Activity: (20 minutes)

- Based on the lesson and discussions around the Cambodian Genocide and the aftermath of historical trauma in Cambodia on survivors, students will engage in a collaborative process to define resiliency and share at least two to three practical strategies that others can implement to cope with adversity.
- Have students form groups of three to four.
- Each group will record the following on a poster paper with :
 - Title: group definition of resilience
 - Two to three strategies that others can implement to cope with adversity
 - The strategies should be written out clearly
 - Strategies should be supplemented with a visual image

Circular Exchange of Ideas: (15 minutes)

- Post each group's posters around the classroom..
- Students will rotate through posters and view their peers' suggested strategies.
- As they rotate, they can...
 - Put a star next to an idea they want to remember.
 - Put a tally mark next to an idea they have used in the past to help themselves overcome obstacles.
- The teacher should then guide the students in coming up with a shared definition of resilience for the class based on the information from each team's poster.
- Exit ticket: Each student will respond to the following question:
 - How did your thoughts about resiliency in Cambodian genocide survivors change from the beginning of class till the end of the lesson? Provide any new or affirming thoughts.

- How can we continue to build and promote resiliency within our communities and for ourselves? Students will record or write their ideas to share with a partner or group.

Scaffolding:

- **Engagement:** Consider the following method to support with lesson engagement:
 - Emphasize process, effort, improvement in meeting standards as alternatives to external evaluation and competition
 - Display the goal in multiple ways
- **Representation:** Consider the following method to support with multiple means of representation:
 - Embed visual, non-linguistic supports for vocabulary clarification (pictures, videos, etc)
 - Link key vocabulary words to definitions and pronunciations in both dominant and heritage languages
- **Action and Expression:** Consider the following method to support in presenting their learning in multiple ways:
 - Embed prompts to “show and explain your work” (e.g., portfolio review, art critiques)

For additional ideas to support your students, check out the UDL Guidelines at CAST (2018) <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>.

Multilingual Learner Supports:

- **Emerging:** Consider the following method to support with emerging student:
 - Speaking: Provide sentence frames for pair interactions
 - In response to a prompt, the teacher offers a sentence frame orally and/or in writing to support expression of student thinking. Frames are adjusted based upon specific grammatical structure, key vocabulary, content learning, and language proficiency level descriptors, etc. Frames are a temporary scaffold that require modification.
- **Expanding:** Consider the following method to support with expanding students:
 - Speaking: Require full sentence responses by asking open ended questions

- In response to a prompt, the teacher offers a sentence frame orally and/or in writing to support expression of student thinking. Frames are adjusted based upon specific grammatical structure, key vocabulary, content learning, and language proficiency level descriptors, etc. Frames are a temporary scaffold that require modification.
- **Bridging:** Consider the following method to support with bridging students:
 - Speaking: structure conversations requiring various points of view with graphic organizers
 - In partner and group discussions, students use conversation moves to extend academic talk. Conversation moves help students add to or challenge what a partner says, question, clarify, paraphrase, support thinking with examples, synthesize conversation points, etc.

For additional guidance around scaffolding for multilingual learners, please consult the following resources:

- *English Learner Toolkit of Strategies*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/ujkdc2xp1dqjzrlq55czph50c3sq1ngu>
- *Providing Appropriate Scaffolding*
<https://www.sdcoe.net/educators/multilingual-education-and-global-achievement/oracy-to-olkit/providing-appropriate-scaffolding#scaffolding>
- *Strategies for ELD*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/dcp15ymah51uwizpmmt2vys5zr2r5reu>
- *ELA / ELD Framework*
<https://www.caeducatorstogether.org/resources/6537/ela-eld-framework>
- *California ELD Standards*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/vqn43cd632z22p8mfzn2h7pntc71kb02>

Enrichment Opportunities:

1. Incorporate some of the following readings into your lesson. Provide time to explore, analyze and reflect on significant findings.
 - a. Readings:
 - i. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/project-preserves-cambodian-genocide-survivor-stories-after-decades-silence-n748256>
 - ii. https://www.voanews.com/a/usa_overcoming-challenges-and-barriers-cambodian-refugees-accomplished-so-much/6207198.html
 - b. Article: Bockers E, Stammel N, Knaevelsrud C. Reconciliation in Cambodia: thirty years after the terror of the Khmer Rouge regime. Torture. 2011;21(2):71-83. PMID: 21715956.

2. **Making Connections Activity: Exploring Past Resilience** - This exercise focuses on student's past experiences with resilience. Have students start by thinking about a time in their life that was particularly challenging or demanding, especially one that was emotionally draining or difficult emotionally. Have students think about how they handled that situation and eventually came through on the other side.
 - a. **Materials:** Markers and 11x14 Construction paper (for each student)
 - b. Next, have students respond to some of the following questions to consider the different resilience skills and strategies from previous lessons in connections to the Cambodian experiences. For example:
 - i. What was your objective at the time?
 - ii. What challenges did you need to overcome?
 - iii. What difficult thoughts and emotions do you recall experiencing at the time?
 - iv. What skills were helpful to you in dealing with the situation?
 - v. What perspectives or mindsets in particular?
 - c. Then connect back to the Cambodian Genocide and have them reflect on the same set of questions to help build on previous knowledge of resiliency. Use this exercise to remind students that resiliency looks different in different cultures and obstacles faced are different and that people are capable of handling significant obstacles faced. Sample guiding questions:
 - i. What challenges did Cambodian genocide survivors need to overcome?
 - ii. What difficult thoughts and emotions did Cambodian genocide survivors experienced?
 - iii. How can Cambodian genocide survivors use their experiences for a purpose?
3. **Self- Reflection Activity: The Resilience Plan (The 4 S's)** - This exercise can help students set goals on improving their resiliency and making sure they keep their resilience-building on track. First, have students identify a recent experience in which demonstrating resilience helped them overcome adversity. Introduce the "4 S's" in helping them build their resilience plan, following these guidelines:
 - a. **Supportive people:** People who gave you advice or perhaps helped you develop a new, more helpful perspective
 - b. **Strategies:** Methods and approaches you implemented to deal with difficult thoughts and feelings
 - c. **Sagacity:** Wisdom and insights that may have been helpful
 - d. **Solution-seeking behaviors:** Planning or searching for useful information.

Next, have students identify a current challenge they would like to deal with by applying their resilience plan. The exercise will guide students through the steps of crafting a plan.

Finally, invite students to develop resilience related to victims of Cambodian genocide. Reference back to the video: Choosing Resilience in Traumatic Times. Use goal-setting exercises to facilitate your goal striving. The plan should reflect on the 4 S's as a brainstorm for reflection: *Self- Reflection Activity: The Resilience Plan (The 4 S's): Supportive People, Strategies Sagacity, Solution-Seeking behaviors*

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