

Vietnamese American Experiences Model Curriculum
California Department of Education
Northern Refugees in North-South Migration of 1954
Grades: 10–12

Author: Joseph Nguyễn

Area of Study: Social & Political Transformations in Twentieth Century Vietnam

Compelling Question: How did French colonialism, political ideologies and geopolitics shape the internal divisions of Vietnam?

Lesson Question (Supporting Question):

- How did contending political ideologies and geopolitical divides such as, but not limited to, nationalism, modernity, republicanism, and communism shape the internal divisions of Vietnam from 1954 to 1975?
- What were the policies, laws, conflicts, and agreements behind the Geneva Accords of 1954 and how did they impact Vietnamese society?
- Who were the one million migrants who left from North to South Vietnam, why did they flee the North, and how did they impact society in both the Republic of Vietnam and after 1975 in the refugee community?

Lesson Materials:

- Supplies:
 - Access to laptop device
 - Poster paper
- Videos:
 - Northern Vietnamese Refugees to the South, 1954
 - “1954 My Father Left his Hometown, 1975 I Left my Country” by Phạm Duy
- Handouts:
 - “Northern Refugees in North-South Migration of 1954” Slide deck, suggested text in lesson
 - “1954 My Father Left his Hometown, 1975 I Left my Country” with translations
 - Northern Migrant Oral History “Station” Activity Sources
 - How to Embed English Subtitles onto Vietnamese-language Youtube Videos

- Link to handouts:
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/47zd04yngb948uazh3gpxgpiq2opmvgf>

Lesson Objective: Students will be able to analyze the complexities of the Geneva Accords of 1954 and the North-South migration in Vietnam by examining primary sources, engaging in group discussions, and analyzing a song.

Ethnic Studies Theme: This lesson connects to the ethnic studies theme of *power and oppression* from the Asian American Studies Curriculum Framework (Asian American Research Initiative, 2022). Students will consider war, migration and imperialism as contexts shaping citizenship and racialization. Students will explore how US imperialism, wars, and military interventions in Southeast Asia induced a mass migration.

For additional guidance around ethnic studies implementation, refer to the *Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum* (2021) <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/esmc.asp>.

Historical Thinking Skills: This lesson will facilitate student proficiency in *historical significance*, one of Seixas' historical thinking skills (Seixas & Morton, 2013). Students make personal decisions about what is historically significant, and then consider the criteria they use to make those decisions. Students consider how to decide what is important to learn about the past.

Standards Addressed

HSS-10.8 Students analyze the causes and consequences of World War II.

HSS-10.9 Students analyze the international developments in the post–World War II world.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.1 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Lesson Assessment: Students participate in an Oral History Stations activity where they rotate through six stations featuring different types of sources related to the North-South migration of 1954 in Vietnam. At each station, students are reading and discussing the source, answering specific questions, and recording their thoughts. The lesson concludes with a debrief where each group shares their findings and reflections with the class.

Suggested Amount of Time: 60–100 minutes

Lesson Background: The Geneva Accords of 1954 marked a pivotal moment in Vietnamese history, leading to the division of Vietnam at the 17th parallel into North and South Vietnam. The Accords were designed to bring about a ceasefire on all fronts and stipulated the withdrawal of French troops from Vietnam. One of the most significant outcomes was a 300-day period during which Vietnamese citizens could move freely between the North and the South. This period saw

a mass migration of the approximately one million Northern Vietnamese who moved to the South, known as *Bắc 54*, *Bắc di Cư* or Northern Migrants. The majority of these migrants were Catholics, who made up about 80% of the total, fleeing in fear of religious persecution under the communist regime. The remaining 20% included intellectuals, soldiers who had served under the French, musicians, poets, writers, and other elites who also feared persecution.

The experiences of these Northern migrants were fraught with challenges and dangers. Many left under the cover of darkness, taking perilous journeys by boat or on foot to escape the scrutinizing eyes of communist police. Once in the South, these migrants, particularly those who were intellectuals, musicians, and poets, became influential figures in political, cultural, and intellectual spheres. Their experiences did not end with the migration; many were among the Vietnamese refugees who fled after the Fall of Sài Gòn in 1975. Today, these Northern migrants have played significant roles in the Vietnamese American community, most well-known for their contributions as intellectuals, writers, political leaders, musicians, and artists in the community.

Lesson Procedures:

Accompanying slides for this lesson may be found here:

<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/9qd0usjwzhosglrjmipo4io8t9cm35k9>

- a. Warm-Up (5 min)
 - i. Prompt students to think about the following question: How do you typically deal with change? Are you open or reluctant to change, or somewhere in between?
 1. Have students share with a peer, then solicit student responses to the class.
 - ii. Teacher to introduce lesson objectives and lesson questions.
- b. Lesson Introduction: Video and Think-Write-Pair-Share (10 min)
 - i. The teacher will play a video clip from the Sài Gòn Broadcasting Television Network (SBTN), which is the largest Vietnamese American TV station in the US. Video Titled: “Northern Vietnamese Refugees to the South, 1954”. This clip briefly explains the Geneva Accords of 1954 and the North-South Migration of over one million Northern refugees.
 1. The clip (with subtitles) can be found at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FaZCWc6dFvY>
 2. Question for students to answer while watching the video: How did the Geneva Accords of 1954 cause a massive migration of Northern refugees to the South?

- a. Answer Key: The Geneva Accords of 1954 allowed for 300 days in which people could migrate from North to South or South to North, due to the division of Vietnam into two countries. This allowed for many Northern refugees to migrate to the South to escape communist persecution.
3. Based on the video, what were the two paths that the first Vietnamese refugees from communism took to migrate to the South? How many migrated? What type of backgrounds, based on the video, do the refugees seem to have?
 - a. Answer Key: Based on the video, there were about 900,000 Northern refugees to the South, most who seemed to be of Catholic background. They took two paths to the South: by road from Hà Nội and by boat from Hải Phòng.
 - ii. In the final two to three minutes, the teacher will review answers with the class as a review of the Geneva Accords in 1954 transition to the North-South migration.
- c. Historical Background (15–20 min)
 - i. The teacher will show “Northern Refugees in North-South Migration of 1954 Slide deck” (Slides 1–8).
 1. The slide deck will cover the following topics: connecting to the 1954 migration and the refugee exodus after 1975, the Geneva Accords of 1954, the profile of Northern migrants, their contributions to the Republic of Vietnam, and what they look like in the Vietnamese American community.
 2. Recommended for teachers to share the presentation with discussion. Teachers can screencast the presentation so students can pre-watch and re-watch or interact with them independently. Ask students to explain what the content means after each slide.
 - d. Interaction with first source: Analysis of “1954 My Father Left his Hometown, 1975 I Left my Country” by Phạm Duy (15–25 min)
 - i. The teacher will divide the class into groups of three to four.
 - ii. The teacher will provide each student with a handout which shows the translated lyrics of “1954 My Father Left his Hometown, 1975 I Left my Country”, as well as a short biographical overview of Phạm Duy, one of the most influential musicians in Vietnam and in the Vietnamese American community.

1. The lyrics and biography handout can be found towards the bottom of the lesson plan.
- iii. Students will take five minutes to read the biographical overview of Phạm Duy in groups.
- iv. After reading, the teacher will play the music video of the song to the class.
 1. The music video (with subtitles) can be found on Slide 9 of the Powerpoint Presentation, or found at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3c9leGamiM>.
 2. Music video (no subtitles):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTZPIQYD-CY>
- v. While watching the video, the teacher will ask students, on the worksheet, to jot down bullet points of all the emotions evoked by the music video and the imagery (ex: nostalgia, pain, sadness, etc.). Try to encourage more focused and nuanced vocabulary that captures the feeling of the video.
- vi. After watching the video, the teacher will have students fill out a chart, one detailing the experiences of Phạm Duy's father in 1954, and Phạm Duy's own experiences in 1975. (Five minutes)
 1. Students will then discuss in their groups what similarities (emotions, history, experiences, etc.) they encountered in this song for a Northern migrant in 1954 vs. a Vietnamese refugee who fled after 1975. (Five minutes)
 2. The class will come back together, and students will share their thoughts. (Five minutes)
 - a. Discussion question for students: What do you think it must have been like for some Vietnamese Americans to have been double refugees in both 1954 and 1975? How do you think those experiences shape their identity as Vietnamese Americans?
- e. Shared Learning: Northern Migrant Personal Experiences Oral History Activity (30 min)
 - i. The teacher will have the students move the desks to create six separate stations (each station should have four to six seats).
 - ii. The teacher will also divide the students into six groups of four to six students and have them be seated at each station.

- iii. Students will go into stations in which they will read one of the sources, and discuss the meaning and context of that source within that station, until prompted to move onto the next station.
 1. Station activity sources can be found in the handout titled “Northern Migrant Oral History “Station” Activity Sources”.
 - iv. At each station, there will be one source, which is either a poem, excerpt from a short story or novel, article, or an oral history from a Vietnamese American reflecting on the North-South migration of 1954.
 1. There will also be one blank piece of paper, or a blank poster paper.
 - v. At each station, students will have seven minutes each to read the source together, and discuss their thoughts.
 1. Potential discussion questions:
 - a. What do they think the source means?
 - b. What perspective is being shown?
 - c. What are the emotions of these Northern migrants in 1954?
 - a. How do these emotions connect with the emotions you know about Vietnamese refugees after 1975?
 - d. Did you like or relate to the source? What about it did you like or relate to?
 - vi. On the blank sheet of paper or poster paper, groups should record their thoughts with a certain colored marker, and mark in some way which ones are their thoughts.
 - vii. After one station, the teacher will instruct all groups to get up, leave behind the sources and the poster paper, and to move clockwise to the next station.
 - viii. Groups will add to the poster paper with a different colored marker and mark their own thoughts.
- f. Reflection and Closure (10 min)
- i. The teacher will have a final debrief after all the stations, where each group will share the notes written at their particular station with the class and come up with their own conclusion to one of the following lesson questions:

1. How did contending political ideologies and geopolitical divides such as, but not limited to, nationalism, modernity, republicanism, and communism shape the internal divisions of Vietnam from 1954 to 1975?
 2. What were the policies, laws, conflicts, and agreements behind the Geneva Accords of 1954 and how did they impact Vietnamese society?
 3. Who were the one million migrants who left from North to South Vietnam, why did they flee the North, and how did they impact society in both the Republic of Vietnam and after 1975 in the refugee community?
- ii. The reflection can be done orally, typed, or hand-written.

Scaffolding:

- **Representation:** Consider the following method to support with multiple means of representation:
 - Supplement lesson information with a flow chart.
 - Display information in a flexible format so that the following perceptual features can be varied:
 - The size of text, images, graphs, tables, or other visual content
 - The contrast between background and text or image
 - The color used for information or emphasis
 - The volume or rate of speech or sound
 - The speed or timing of video, animation, sound, simulations, etc.
 - The layout of visual or other elements
 - The font used for print materials
- **Action and Expression:** Consider the following method to support in presenting their learning in multiple ways:
 - Provide alternatives for physically responding or indicating selections (e.g., alternatives to marking with pen and pencil, alternatives to mouse control)
- **Engagement:** Consider the following method to support with lesson engagement:
 - Vary the level of novelty or risk

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 students:
 - Reading: Provide additional multi-level texts matched to reading level
- **Expanding:** Consider the following method to support with expanding students:
 - Reading: Use guided reading
 - In a shared or interactive writing format, chart out characters, setting, problem, and events (including orientation, complication, and resolution). Add theme, as appropriate.
- **Bridging:** Consider the following method to support with bridging students:
 - Reading: Use focused questions to guide reading
 - Students use inquiry posing their own questions and wonderings to guide shared research experiences.

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. Allow students the opportunity to delve deeper into the reasons Northern migrants fled North Vietnam by analyzing the song: “We Want to Live (Chúng Tôi Muốn Sống)”. The teacher will show a 25-minute clip of We Want to Live (Chúng Tôi Muốn Sống), which shows the details of how certain class enemies of the revolution were denounced by communist officials and executed. The clip excerpt can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-yFyl-gDvg> (Students watch timestamps 30:25-56:30). The teacher will then debrief with the class (summary, main character, plot, themes). Discussion Prompt: Why do you think so many Northern Vietnamese migrants fled the North in 1954?

2. Students can research and compare and contrast Northern and Southern Vietnam. Recommended characteristics to research: language and dialect, geography, culture, climate, etc.

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Note: This lesson contains Youtube videos in Vietnamese that do not have subtitles. If the links below do not work, please refer to the bottom of the lesson plan for instructions on how to embed the subtitles into the Youtube video using a Chrome extension.

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