

Vietnamese American Experiences Model Curriculum
California Department of Education
Living Under Communist Regime
Grade Level: 11–12

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Area of Study: Vietnamese Departures and Transit

Compelling Question: How did Vietnamese build communities as they attempted to survive and traverse the hardships of life in transit?

Lesson Question (Supporting Question):

- What happened to Vietnamese civilians who stayed in Vietnam after the communist government took over?
- What impacts did the communist government actions have on the remaining Vietnamese civilians, and how did that influence the people to leave their home country?

Lesson Materials:

- Supplies:
 - Access to laptop device
 - Photo: “Jubilant communist troops make their way to the center of Saigon as the city fell under their control, April 30, 1975”
 - Photo: Saigon 1969 - Nguyen Hue Boulevard
- Videos:
 - “Linda Ta reflects on her experience in Communist Vietnam”
 - “Long Nguyen discusses his experience in Communist Vietnam”
- Readings:
 - “Life Lessons Through my Escape from Vietnam”

Lesson Objective: Students will be able to describe and reflect on the conditions of Vietnamese civilians who remained in Vietnam after the communist government took over by creating a medium of choice.

Ethnic Studies Theme: This lesson connects to the ethnic studies theme of *reclamation and joy* from the Asian American Studies Curriculum Framework (Asian American Research Initiative, 2022). Students explore the ways that communities reclaim histories through art, cultural expression, and counternarratives.

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 *cause and consequence* one of Seixas' historical thinking skills (Seixas & Morton, 2013). To help students to understand that there are short-term and long-term consequences of events. Students consider the impacts of communism on the Vietnamese civilians.

Standards Addressed:

HSS-11.9 Students analyze US foreign policy since World War II.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.7 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.11-12.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Lesson Background:

The Vietnam war dated from November 1955 to April 1975. In January of 1975, North Vietnam began massive invasions of South Vietnam and eventually captured the capital city of Saigon. Not all Vietnamese civilians were able to flee the country, and for those that remained, their lives were heavily impacted by the communist regime. The new government implemented many socialist policies which caused economic hardship, food shortages, and many more struggles. They confiscated private ownership and stole treasures and wealth from the middle class people of Vietnam. The communists tripled monetary reform (or monetary exchange) to devalue the money and wipe out the wealth. They also pushed the city people out of their homes and relocated them to suburban areas. Prior to this lesson, it will be helpful for students to have already learned about the major events of the Vietnam War. This lesson will navigate the time immediately right after the end of the Vietnam War. The new communist rules were a great factor in the onset of the second wave of refugees.

Lesson Assessment:

Students will reflect on the lesson questions with one of the following assessment options:

- Students can produce a written product (i.e: poem, song, etc.) in the perspective of a Vietnamese civilian to reflect on their experiences.
- Students can generate original artwork (i.e: collage, painting, drawing) that reflects the Vietnamese civilian experiences during communist regime.

Suggested Amount of Time: 70–85 minutes

Lesson Procedures:

- a. Warm-Up (five minutes)
 - i. Ask students to share what they enjoy, or like, about the current community they live in (i.e: the food options, the parks, the events, etc.).
 - ii. Solicit student responses to the whole class.
 - iii. Introduce the lesson objective and questions to the class. Inform students that sometimes people do not have the freedom to choose where they live, nor have control over the conditions in which they live.
 1. Prior to this lesson, students should have already learned about the major events of the Vietnam War.
- b. Anticipatory Set (10–15 minutes)
 - i. Share these two photos with students. Prompt them to think about the differences they can identify. Encourage them to go beyond surface level.
 1. Photo 1: Saigon 1969 - Nguyen Hue Blvd
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/hcuascp0o9rf5x9vnau3i7a1qvwpwthv>
 1. Original source:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/13476480@N07/7653460820/in/album-72157630880900536/>
 2. Photo 2: Jubilant communist troops make their way to the center of Saigon as the city fell under their control, April 30, 1975
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/j8vfe6ahnr53e7g136ndrvnwhihdk424>

1. Original source:
<https://www.cnn.com/2016/05/23/asia/america-vietnam-view-vietnam-war/index.html>
- ii. Possible guiding prompts to discuss as a class (can be answered as a written product or orally):
 1. What mood words would you use to describe each photo?
 2. The photos have a gap of six years, what do you think happened in between those years?
 3. Teacher can reveal the caption from photo two to the class. Have students make inferences to consider what difference the communist presence has on the Vietnamese community.
- iii. Optional: Teachers can discuss the following keywords and their definitions: communism and fall of Saigon.
- c. Interaction with first source (10 minutes)
 - i. As students interact with the sources, students should take notes responding to the two lesson questions. For this first source, teachers should be modeling how to answer the lesson questions.
 1. Suggested format: Cause and effect thinking map, including what the communist group did, and the impact on the individual and/or their family.
 - ii. Watch this minute long video with the class: “Linda Ta reflects on her experience in Communist Vietnam” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXpHvP9yt7s>
 - iii. Complete notes together.
- d. Interaction with second source (10–15 minutes)
 - i. Watch this video as a class: “Long Nguyen discusses his experience in Communist Vietnam” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJrIRss6ioI>
 - ii. Then, have students work with a partner or small group to add notes to address the lesson question (What impacts did the communist government actions have on the remaining Vietnamese civilians, and how did that influence the people to leave their home country?).
- e. Interaction with third source (20 minutes)

- i. Students will interact with the third source independently. The following article should be made accessible to students digitally or via a physical handout, “Life Lessons Through my Escape from Vietnam”.
<https://www.navsea.navy.mil/Media/News/Article/3226334/life-lessons-through-my-escape-from-vietnam/>
 - ii. As students are reading, they should continue to add to their notes.
 - iii. Then, have students compare their findings with a peer.
 - iv. Have a whole class discussion on the lesson question (What impacts did the communist government actions have on the remaining Vietnamese civilians, and how did that influence the people to leave their home country?).
- f. Cultural Production (20 minutes)
- i. Students will reflect on the lesson questions by creating one of the following (the final product can be open to a written, visual, or audio narrative):
 1. Students can produce a written product (i.e: poem, song, etc.) in the perspective of a Vietnamese civilian to reflect on their experiences.
 2. Students can generate original artwork (i.e: collage, painting, drawing) that reflects the Vietnamese civilian experiences during communist regime.
- g. Circular Exchange (10 minutes)
- i. Students will share their final products in small groups of four or five. It would be effective if teachers group students up with a variety of assessment products so that students can reflect on the lesson in different ways.

Scaffolding:

- **Engagement:** Consider the following method to support with lesson engagement:
 - Invite personal response, evaluation and self-reflection to content and activities.
- **Representation:** Consider the following method to support with multiple means of representation:
 - 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:

- Compose in multiple media such as text, speech, drawing, illustration, design, film, music, dance/movement, visual art, sculpture or video.

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: Preview the text content with pictures, videos, demos, charts, or experiences.
- **Expanding:** Consider the following method to support with expanding students:
 - Reading: Provide a content vocabulary word bank with non linguistic representations.
 - Students use a Frayer graphic organizer to support understanding of a key word or concept. Place the target word in the center amid four surrounding quadrants to support different facets of word meaning.
- **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/dcp15mah51uwizpmmt2vys5zr2r5reu>
- *ELA / ELD Framework*
<https://www.caeducatorstogether.org/resources/6537/ela-eld-framework>
- *California ELD Standards*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/vqn43cd632z22p8mfzn2h7pntc71kb02>

Enrichment Opportunities:

1. North Vietnamese Veterans Stories: Students can read about the Vietnam War in the perspective of North Vietnamese individuals who had to fight for the North Vietnamese Army or Viet Cong at the following website:
<https://www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-33408096>
2. Before and After: Students can use this source to read about what South Vietnam was like before 1975. Then, based on their knowledge about the Vietnam War, they can do a before and after the Vietnam War analysis and reflection.
<https://medium.com/@realScofield/south-vietnam-before-1975-how-prosperous-was-saigon-before-1975-compared-to-other-countries-back-84ecfdbf80f1>
3. Oral History Interview of Thuy Vu: Students can watch this oral history interview, “Former Vietnam Refugee Thuy Vu Recounts her Escape from Saigon 40 Years Ago”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3C7dwBIF61c>

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