PERMANENT EXHIBITION STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

FOR EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS
ITALY’S IMPRINT ON NORTH AMERICA AND THE AMERICAN WEST

- Reflect on Filippo Mazzei’s phrase, “All men are by nature equally free and independent,” from which Jefferson wrote the famous statement enshrined in the United States Constitution, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.”
  - What did this phrase mean in the time of Jefferson and Mazzei?
  - What does it mean now?
  - How has this idea guided the American nation?

- How was the experience of Italian immigrants in California different from that of Italian immigrants in industrial cities such as New York City?
- Describe how Italian immigrants were received during the Mexican era in Los Angeles.
- What were some of the lasting contributions Italian immigrants made to the Southern California region?
SETTLEMENT PART I:

- WHAT WERE THE MAJOR PUSH FACTORS (REASONS THAT A PERSON LEAVES HIS OR HER HOMELAND) AND PULL FACTORS (SOMETHING THAT DRAWS A PERSON TO A PARTICULAR PLACE) FOR ITALIANS DURING THE LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES?
- HOW ARE THESE PUSH AND PULL FACTORS SIMILAR AND DIFFERENT FROM WHAT MOTIVATES IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND MIGRANTS TODAY?
- WHAT IS CHAIN MIGRATION?
- MANY ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS SETTLED IN NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE OTHER ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS LIVED, OFTEN CALLED "LITTLE ITALY," EXPLAIN WHY IMMIGRANTS AND MIGRANTS, BOTH PAST AND PRESENT, SETTLE IN NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE OTHER PEOPLE FROM THEIR COUNTRY OR CULTURE LIVE.
- SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA IS HOME TO PEOPLE FROM OVER 110 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES WHO COLLECTIVELY SPEAK MORE THAN 130 DIFFERENT LANGUAGES. DISCUSS THE WAYS THAT DIVERSITY HAS MADE AN IMPACT ON OUR REGION AND CONTINUES TO SHAPE IT.

SETTLEMENT PART II:

- WHY IS A.P. GIANNINI REFERRED TO AS THE "PEOPLE’S BANKER"?
- WHAT WERE THE IMMEDIATE AND LONG-LASTING EFFECTS OF PROHIBITION ON THE ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY? HOW DID IT PERMANENTLY CHANGE THE PERCEPTION OF ITALIAN AMERICANS FOR THOSE OUTSIDE THE COMMUNITY?
ITALIAN HALL

- ITALIAN HALL HAS SERVED MANY PURPOSES DURING ITS LIFETIME. AFTER READING ITS HISTORY, WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ITS MOST IMPORTANT ROLE HAS BEEN?
- SELECT A BUILDING IN YOUR AREA THAT IS IMPORTANT TO A PARTICULAR COMMUNITY. BRIEFLY EXPLAIN ITS HISTORY AND THE SIGNIFICANCE TO THAT COMMUNITY.

DAGO

- HOW WERE ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS PERCEIVED IN THE LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES? WHAT TYPES OF PREJUDICE DID THEY EXPERIENCE? HOW DOES THIS RESEMBLE THE PREJUDICE THAT SOME IMMIGRANT GROUPS FACE TODAY?
- WHAT WERE THE LASTING EFFECTS OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066 ON THE ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY? WHY DO YOU THINK MANY ITALIAN AMERICANS CHOSE NOT TO TALK ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES LONG AFTER THE WAR HAD ENDED?
HOLLYWOOD

- WHAT ARE STEREOTYPES AND WHY ARE THEY HARMFUL?
- WHERE DO STEREOTYPES, LIKE THOSE ATTRIBUTED TO ITALIAN AMERICANS, COME FROM? WHAT PURPOSES DO THEY SERVE? IF THESE STEREOTYPES ARE SO FAR FROM REALITY, WHY DO PEOPLE STILL BELIEVE THEY ARE TRUE?
- IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY WHEN WE ARE CONFRONTED WITH STEREOTYPES, INCLUDING THOSE THAT PERTAIN TO GROUPS OTHER THAN THE ONES TO WHICH WE BELONG?

CULTURE PART I:

- HOW ARE ITALIAN AMERICAN CULTURAL TRADITIONS SIMILAR TO OR DIFFERENT TO YOUR TRADITIONS?
- HOW HAS ITALIAN AMERICAN CULTURE INFLUENCED SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA?
CULTURE PART II:

- WHAT ROLE DID SPORTS PLAY IN THE LIVES OF ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS AND THEIR CHILDREN? HOW IS THIS HISTORY SIMILAR OR DIFFERENT TO IMMIGRANTS AND MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES TODAY?
- SELECT THREE OF THE ITALIAN AMERICANS PROFILED IN THIS EXHIBITION AND SUMMARIZE THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS.