

**Summary Description**

This is the fifth in a series of 12 lessons that introduces the student to Asian American history.

**Learning Objectives**

To have the student learn a few key facts about Korean American history and culture.

**Approximate Time for Lesson**

60 minutes

**Suggested Maturity Level for Instruction**

Student should be able to read simple words and perform simple addition and subtraction. Also, student should be able to sit still and engage in one-on-one conversation.

**References:**

"Arirang - An Interactive Classroom on the Korean American Experience",  
<http://www.arirangeducation.com/main/>

Healthyeatingclub.com (for list of foods containing sugar)

<http://www.healthyeatingclub.com/info/books-phds/books/foodfacts/html/data/data2a.html>

"Herbert Choy Served on 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court", The Honolulu Advertiser, Peter Boylan, March 12, 2004 -  
<http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2004/Mar/12/ln/ln25a.html>

"Koreans in Hawaii - 100 Years of Dreams, Accomplishments," The Honolulu Advertiser, Kevin Dayton, January 13, 2003 - <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/specials/korean100/moon/>

**Materials Needed**

1. Internet Access - Pull up the following:
  - a. World Map (go to <http://maps.google.com/maps>)
  - b. Picture of sugar cane field (go to <http://pro.corbis.com/search/Enlargement.aspx?CID=isg&mediauid=%7BAC4FC86F-2485-4E5D-806F-CE0829A2DC40%7D>)
2. Korean Worker Coloring Worksheet
3. Crayons

**Preparation**

Make sure you have materials open, printed and/or available prior to beginning the lesson.

**Script**

*Introduction (5 minutes)*

1. Teacher: Last lesson we learned about the Chinese Americans. Do you remember some of the things the Chinese Americans did? [Engage the Student in discussion around the accomplishments of the Chinese Americans: 1) Creation of Chinatown, San Francisco

as part of their participation in the Gold Rush, 2) Major involvement in creating the Transcontinental Railroad, and 3) Major help in developing and creating farming for the Western United States (Bing cherry invented by Ah Bing as part of this effort)].

2. Teacher: This time, we're going to learn about another Asian American people, called the Korean Americans.
3. Teacher: [Pointing to Korea on the World Map - use the zoom out function by clicking the minus sign. Then, click anywhere in the map and drag to the right until Korea appears (labeled "S Korea", between China and Japan)] This is where the Korean Americans came from, a country called "Korea".
4. Teacher: Would you like to know where they first landed in the United States? [Obtain positive response from Student and begin lesson].

Lesson (50 minutes)

1. Teacher: The first Korean Americans came to an island that was part of the United States, called Hawaii, here [point to Hawaii on the World Map - click anywhere in the map and drag to the right until the island of Hawaii appears]. When you think about Hawaii, what are some things that you can think about? [Engage the Student in discussion but ultimately make the point that Hawaii was one of the best places in North America (specifically in the United States) to create sugar].
2. Teacher: That's right, one of the places that create sugar for the candy and chocolate that you eat comes from Hawaii. And Hawaii was important because it was one of the few places in the United States that can grow sugar.
3. Teacher: And do you know how sugar is grown? [Engage the Student in discussion, but ultimately make that point that sugar is grown from sugar canes in large sugar cane fields].
4. Teacher: Sugar is made from sugar canes, a tall grass that's even taller than you and looks like this. [Show the Student a picture of a sugar cane field].
5. Teacher: And why is sugar so important? Because we use sugar in more than just candy and chocolate and gum. We use sugar in things that you may not realize, like cereal, bread, sauces like soy sauce, barbeque sauce, meats like hamburger, sausages, soups like chicken noodle soup, minestrone soup, and other foods you wouldn't even THINK of like pickles! [Engage in discussion with the Student but make that point that there are a lot of foods that are made of sugar].
6. Teacher: Now, since so much food that people ate back then (and still eat now) needed sugar, a lot of sugar cane needed to be grown to make sugar. It takes around one year to grow a single sugar cane and only a little bit of sugar is made from one stalk of sugar cane. (Note to Teacher: the amount of sugar produced is approximately 10% of the weight of the

*sugar cane. For example, if a sugar cane is weighs 10 pounds, then you can get around 1 pound of sugar from that sugar cane).*

7. Teacher: And that's another reason why a lot of sugar cane needed to be grown, because only a little bit of sugar can be made from the sugar cane.
8. Teacher: Oh, one more thing about sugar canes. When it comes time to cut the sugar canes down so you can make them into sugar, which is called "harvesting", even machines can't easily cut them down so you need people to do it. And that's why the Americans needed a lot of people to harvest the sugar canes – it was a very tough job, one that Americans found very hard to do, so they had to look for other people to do it.
9. Teacher: OK – so far, we talked about why a lot of sugar cane is needed to make sugar and why Americans didn't want to do it themselves (because it was too hard). But why do you think then that the Koreans, all the way from Korea would want to do it?" In other words, why would the Koreans want to move to Hawaii to work the very hard work of the sugar cane fields? [\[Engage the Student in discussion but ultimately come to the point that that Hawaii was an opportunity for a better life that the Koreans did not have in their homeland\]](#).
10. Teacher: In fact, here is how it all happened. Someone from one of the American sugar companies in Hawaii worked in an office in Korea and told the Koreans that that would get paid good money and have a place to sleep if they worked in Hawaii. Also, the Americans said that the children of the Koreans that went to Hawaii would get a free education – in Korea in those days, families had to pay for school for their children, but since they wouldn't have to pay for school anymore, the Koreans thought it was a good deal. The plan would be that the Koreans could work for some time, then when they made a lot of money, they could come back to Korea to live. Does that sound like a good deal to you? Would you move to Hawaii for that kind of deal? [\[Engage the Student in discussion\]](#).
11. Teacher: Oh yeah – there was another reason that some of the Koreans went to Hawaii. At that time, in Korea, there was a battle that was fought between the Chinese and the Japanese. After the Japanese won, they wanted to stay in Korea instead of going back to their own country. And as the Japanese got more powerful in Korea, some of the Koreans were getting nervous because they thought the Japanese wanted to take over Korea. How would you feel if there was a fight in your house between strangers and the winner didn't want to leave? [\[Engage the Student in discussion\]](#).
12. Teacher: So this was another reason why the Koreans went to Hawaii, because they were afraid that their own country was going to be taken over by another country.
13. Teacher: So because there was a lot of trouble in their own country and because the Americans told them that they would have better opportunities in Hawaii, the Koreans went to Hawaii by ship.

14. Teacher: Now, pretend that you are Korean. Times for you are tough because you are a poor farmer. Also, the Japanese have come to your country and decided to stay. The few Americans in a nearby office say that there's work for you in an island called Hawaii - they will pay you more than what you are making here and you will get a place to sleep...and your children will have a free education. But if you go, you think to yourself that you will miss Korean food, your friends, your family everything that is home to you will be gone. Will you leave? Remember, you can always come back... [Engage the Student in discussion].
15. Teacher: You did great! As a reward, you get to color this worksheet...it's a picture of Hawaii and some Korean Americans working in the sugar cane fields. [Wait until Student finishes coloring].
16. Teacher: That's a great picture! It sure seems like the Koreans were hard workers. Do you want to know what ever happened to the Koreans that worked in Hawaii? [Get the Student's positive response].
17. Teacher: Well, first of all, there are only a few Koreans living in Hawaii now when you compare them to everyone else living on that island. BUT, those Koreans are among the richest and most educated of the people of Hawaii. For example, the first Asian American federal judge was a Korean American (Harry Choy, nominated by President Richard Nixon in 1971) who lived in Hawaii. A judge is someone that helps make a decision when two people can't agree on something. The mayor of the Big Island of Hawaii is Korean American (Harry Kim). A mayor is the boss of the city. Chief Justice of the Hawaii State Supreme Court (which is the most powerful judge of the State of Hawaii) is Korean American (Ronald Moon). The Superintendent of Public Education of Hawaii, which is the person in charge of all the public schools in Hawaii) is Korean American (Patricia Lee Harimoto). Finally, the Police Chief of Honolulu was Korean American (Lee Donohue - he retired).
18. Teacher: So you see, what was first a strange island for the first Korean Americans actually became home for their great grandsons and great granddaughters and it looks like they really succeeded by working hard.
19. Teacher: OK - let's finish with some review questions. Stand up and get in front of me. [Wait until the Student goes in front of you and ask the following:
- Why did the Koreans come to America? For a better opportunity. Also, the Japanese were trying to take over their country so they were nervous about that.
  - What did the Koreans do once they came to Hawaii? They worked in the sugar cane fields, helping to make sugar.
  - Do you think life was easy or hard once they were working on the sugar cane fields? Life was hard since Koreans didn't speak English nor did they have Korean food. And also, the work to harvest sugar was tough.

- d. Can you tell me about one of the Korean Americans that have become successful in Hawaii? Any one of the following: 1) Mayor of the Big Island of Hawaii, 2) Chief Justice of Supreme Court of Hawaii, 3) first Asian American federal judge, 4) Superintendent of Public Schools of Hawaii, and 5) former Honolulu Police Chief - all are Korean Americans.

Help the Student review the materials and correct any errors with the Student].

Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Teacher: [Clapping] You did GREAT! Wonderful job! Are there any questions that you have regarding the Korean Americans? [Engage in conversation with the Student, research questions on the Internet, and close the lesson].