

Summary Description

This is the sixth in a series of eleven lessons that introduces the student to European American history.

Learning Objectives

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

Approximate Time for Lesson

35 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:

"French Canadian Americans", Marianne Fedunkiwi, Multicultural America -

<http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Du-Ha/French-Canadian-Americans.html>

"French Americans", Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Multicultural America -

<http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Du-Ha/French-Americans.html>

Franco-Prussian War - <http://francoprussianwar.com/>

Materials Needed

1. Internet Access - Pull up the following:
 - a. World Map (go to <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/atlas/index.html?Parent=world&Mode=d&SubMode=w>)
 - b. Europe Map (go to <http://www.sitesatlas.com/Maps/Maps/Europe.htm>)
 - c. United States Map (go to <http://www.sitesatlas.com/Maps/Maps/usa1.htm>)

Preparation

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

Script

Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Teacher: Last week, we learned about the Polish Americans, who moved to the United States because their lands were always being invaded by other countries. Today, we will learn about the French Americans. The French Americans come from the country of France [[point to France on the Europe Map](#)].
2. Teacher: Out of all the European people so far, you're going to learn that the story of the French Americans was the least tragic. Actually, because life was not too bad in France, there are not as many French living in the United States as say, the Irish Americans, whose country experienced the Great Famine.

3. Teacher: So are you ready to learn about the French? [[Get positive response from Student and begin lesson](#)].

Lesson (25 minutes)

1. Teacher: Great. Now, the French came to the United States mostly to find better opportunity to make money and provide for their families. Other than that, France was always a very strong and successful European country and so, since many French people were satisfied with their lives in France, many French people did not leave to come to the United States.
2. Teacher: Now, as for the French who did move to the United States, their reasons for moving here were mostly the same as Germans - they wanted to provide more their families and thought they could make that happen in the United States.
3. Teacher: But there were two other things that happened that made French people move to the United States, and both were because of war, one war with England and one with Germany.
4. Teacher: But before I start talking about the wars, did you know that the French were one of the three countries in Europe to claim land in the United States? Claiming land means announcing that some part of the land now belongs to your country because you were the first one to discover it.
5. Teacher: Anyway, there was a time when the French actually owned a big part of the middle of the United States, and there are still signs of French words in American states and cities because the French owned these lands long ago. For example, the city of Chicago is pronounced with a soft "ch" like, "shh" - this is the way to pronounce "ch" in French. The American way to pronounce "ch" is a harder sound, like the "ch" in "chicken". Also, when people talk about the State of Illinois, the word "Illinois" has a silent "s" - well, again that's because the French people named and claimed Illinois long ago. The American pronunciation would include the "s" sound at the end of Illinois.
6. Teacher: Actually the first war I'm going to tell you about has to do with this middle part of the United States that the French owned long ago. The war was between the French and the English, called the French and Indian War. This war was a fight for control over North America (both Canada and the United States). Well, the French lost and because of this, the English forced many French people living in what is now known as the country of Canada [[point to Canada on the World Map](#)] down to the Northeast United States.
7. Teacher: Well, these French people that were forced to move did not want to live among the Americans and so, they eventually made their way down to what is now known as the State of Louisiana [[point to Louisiana on the United States map](#)]. They moved down to Louisiana because this land was also part of the land claimed and owned by the

French. In fact, the name Louisiana came about in honor of King Louis the Fourteenth, the current king of France at that time. The French explorers named this part of the land after their king.

8. Teacher: Anyway, like I said, these French people moved to Louisiana, and even today, there are a lot of people living in Louisiana that come from French families.
9. Teacher: The second war the French fought was against the Germans in what is called the Franco-Prussian War. "Franco" means French and "Prussian" means German. Anyway, the French lost this war as well and because of this, the Germans took a part of what was once France's land. Well, French people living in this land did not want to live as Germans, so they moved to the United States.
10. Teacher: Other than that, there weren't too many French who moved to the United States. But even though there are not too many French Americans, compared to the Irish or Germans or English, the French gave very much to the United States. For example, the French, like the Polish Americans, helped the Americans win the war against England. Also, do you like croissants for breakfast? They were invented by the French. And there are many famous French Americans today like Jessica Alba, who played the role of Sue Storm in the Fantastic Four movies and Jim Carrey, who was the voice of Horton in Horton Hears a Who.
11. Teacher: OK - time for review. Get in front of the class. [Have the Student stand in front of you (consider inviting other members of the family also to set the stage) and ask her the following:
 - a. Why did fewer French Americans move to the United States compared to the Germans, English, and Irish? Because the life in France wasn't too bad compared to these other countries and therefore, the French didn't want to move to the United States
 - b. What was the biggest reason for the French to move to the United States? To find a better opportunity for their families
 - c. Why is the city of Chicago pronounced with a soft "ch" and not a hard "ch", like most American words? Because that name was created by the French, who owned the land under Chicago, along with most of the middle of the United States
 - d. Can you name one war that made the French move to the United States? Any one of the following: 1) French and Indian War and 2) Franco-Prussian War

Teacher reviews any questions that the Student missed].

Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Teacher: [Clapping] You did GREAT! Wonderful job! Are there any questions that you have regarding the French Americans? [Engage in conversation with the Student and resolve further questions by researching the Internet].