

Summary Description

This is the ninth 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 the Norwegian and Swedish Americans.

Approximate Time for Lesson

30 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:

"Norwegian Americans", Odd S. Lovoll, Multicultural America -

<http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Le-Pa/Norwegian-Americans.html>

"Swedish Americans", Mark A. Granquist, Multicultural America -

<http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Sr-Z/Swedish-Americans.html>

"Norwegian Immigration", Minnesota State University Mankato -

http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/history/mnstatehistory/norwegian_migration.html

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://maps.google.com/maps>)

d. Picture of Peanuts comic strip (go to <http://comics.com/peanuts>)

e. Picture of Angie from Shark Tale (go to <http://www.sharktale.com/main.html>)

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 Dutch Americans, who moved to the United States because to find better opportunities for their families. Today, we will learn about two European American people, the Norwegian Americans and Swedish Americans. The Norwegian Americans come from the country of Norway [[point to Norway on the](#)

[Europe Map](#)] and the Swedish come from the country of Sweden [[point to Sweden on the Europe Map](#)].

2. Teacher: You're going to learn that the Norwegians and Swedish came to the United States to find a better opportunity for their families. So, are you ready to learn about these people? [[Get positive response from Student and begin lesson](#)].

Lesson (20 minutes)

1. Teacher: Great. Now, like I said before the Norwegians and Swedish came to the United States to find better opportunities for their families. But something different about the Norwegians was that in Norway, they lived in what is called a "social class" system. That's when there are some classes already set up, from lowest to highest, and these classes tell you what things you can and cannot do, the higher the class, the more you can do, but the lower the class, the less you can do.
2. Teacher: And how do you know which social class you belong to? Well, it depends on which family you were born from, which means that before you are born, Norway has already told you what social class you belong to. What do you think about that? [[Engage the Student in conversation but come to the point that if you are born into a high social class, it's great but if you are born into a low social class, it's not great – the point is you have NO choice on which social class you belong to because it was already determined at birth](#)].
3. Teacher: Well, some Norwegians who belonged to the lower social class didn't like it because it meant doing things like having to take your hat off as a sign of respect when a higher social class person walked by. The United States didn't have a social class system. Also, as long as you were a man who came from Europe, you could vote in the United States, but in Norway, not every man could vote, only the ones in the higher social class could vote. And finally, Norway was getting too crowded with people which made it harder for people to buy land (because there was not much of it left since people already owned most of it) and get jobs (because again, there were too many people for not too many jobs).
4. Teacher: And so for these reasons, the Norwegians decided to move to the United States – no social class, plenty of land that was cheap, and plenty of jobs.
5. Teacher: As for the Swedish, there was once a time when a famine in Sweden made a lot of Swedish come to the United States, but other than that, the Swedish came to the United States for same kinds of reasons as the Norwegian did (without the social class issue though).
6. Teacher: So where did the Norwegian and Swedish live in the United States? At first, the Norwegians came to New York to live, but then they started to move west, into Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota [[draw a line with your finger from New York to Illinois to Wisconsin to Minnesota on the United States Map](#)]. The Swedish started out in Illinois and Iowa [[point to Iowa on the United States Map](#)], but then spread out to the same

areas as the Norwegian. Also, the Swedish even further, into Kansas and Nebraska [[point to Kansas and Nebraska on the United States Map](#)].

7. Teacher: Most of the Norwegians and Swedish started out as farmers. In fact, one of the biggest things that the Norwegians did for the United States when they first got here was to help develop and grow food for the Americans by farming.
8. Teacher: Actually, the Norwegians have something to be very proud of regarding the discovery of North America, which is made up of Canada on the top and the United States on the bottom [[point to Canada and the United States on the World Map](#)]. One of the first people to ever sail to North America was a Norwegian, named Leif Ericson. He actually came to North America almost 500 years before Columbus did!
9. Teacher: As for the Swedish, they should also be proud in the fact that once they arrived to the United States, many moved up very quickly into higher paying jobs, like those working with iron and steel for making tall buildings. In fact, Swedish Americans helped create America's first warship made of steel and also the modern navy cannon. The modern navy cannons were cannons used onboard warships that were even better than the ones used on European warships in those days.
10. Teacher: Anyway, there are Norwegian Americans and Swedish Americans everywhere in American life, in government, science, military, and business. They are also working in entertainment. For example, Charles M. Schulz, who is a creator of Peanuts comics (Charlie Brown, Snoopy, etc), is part Norwegian. Also, Renee Zellweger, who played the voice of Angie the Angelfish (Oscar's best friend) in Shark Tales, is part Norwegian. Here are pictures of both Peanuts comics and Angie in Share Tales. [[Show Student pictures of Peanuts comics and Angie from Shark Tales](#)].
11. Teacher: As for the Swedish, actress Candice Bergen is Swedish American who played in the movie, Miss Congeniality. Maggie Gyllenhaal, another Swedish American, is an actress that played the role of Rachel Dawes in The Dark Knight (the second Batman movie after Batman Returns).
12. 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 Norwegian Americans and Swedish Americans move to the United States? To find a better opportunity for their families.
 - b. What was the name of the Norwegian explorer that discovered North America almost 500 years before Columbus? Leif Ericson
 - c. What did the Swedish Americans invent for the American navy? The iron-clad warship and modern navy cannon

d. What was the name of the comics strip that was created by a Norwegian? Peanuts

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 Norwegian Americans and Swedish Americans? [Engage in conversation with the Student and resolve further questions by researching the Internet].