The Ghosts of

In 1934, 12-year-old Wong Kai Chong leaves everything he knows in **China** and travels to the United States to join his father. When he lands in San Francisco, he is **detained** on Angel Island, an **immigration** station off the coast of California. Kai is shoved into crowded **barracks** and fed soggy rice.

During his stay, Kai is **interrogated**. "What is the name of your village in China?" the immigration officer barks. "How many rooms were there in your house? What did the chairs look like?" Kai knows that his answers must match what his father said before him. If they don't, he will be sent back to China.

Kai's experience is detailed in the book *Kai's Journey to the Gold Mountain*. The story **depicts** the difficult passage of more than 175,000 Chinese immigrants through Angel Island from 1910 to 1940. The people suffered harsh conditions to immigrate to the United States.

In December 2005, President George W. Bush signed the Angel Island Immigration Station

Restoration and Preservation Act to help commemorate the immigrants' difficult journey. The legislation provides up to \$15 million to establish a museum and research center on the island.

On the Border

Chinese people didn't always have difficulty entering the United States. The earliest Chinese immigrants arrived during the California gold rush in the late 1840s and 1850s. They called their new home *Gam Saan*, or "Gold Mountain."

But as the number of Chinese immigrants rose, Americans became less welcoming. In 1882, the U.S. government passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, making it almost



impossible for Chinese workers to enter the United States.

Immigration officials detained newly arrived Chinese families at Angel Island while they decided whether the people should be allowed to enter the United States. The process was dramatically different from that of Ellis Island—the New York **entry port** for European immigrants.

On Ellis Island, more than 90 percent of travelers were processed immediately and allowed into the country. On Angel Island, however, Chinese immigrants were held for weeks, months, and sometimes years. After interrogation, more than 30 percent of those immigrants were sent back to China.





Visualizing

The Ghosts of **Angel Island**

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Lesson focus:

Students will learn, using all of their senses, to visualize in order to maintain engagement with, develop deeper understanding of, and evaluate evidence in a social studies text.



Text type: Informational text Literary nonfiction (exposition)

Pages 37-38 of this book include the following vocabulary support for ELLs and struggling readers:

China, detained, immigration, barracks, interrogated, depicts, commemorate, legislation, entry port

Follow-up activity



Page

Student Cooperative Activity Book

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Lesson focus:

In this lesson, using all of your senses, you will be able to visualize in order to maintain engagement with, develop deeper understanding of, and evaluate evidence in a social studies text.



Note:

Before you begin the lesson, mask the text so that only the title shows.

Prior to reading



State the lesson focus. Display the title and read it aloud. Ask students what they think the text will be about.



Display the entire text.



Model, by thinking aloud, how to skim and scan a text to get a sense of its meaning and purpose, and to find key ideas and words. For example, "As I skim and scan the text, the words 'China' and 'Immigration' jump out at me. I realise that the text is about actual people, not ghosts, who perhaps moved from China to Angel Island. I also see a lot of dates, numbers and statistics. So, it seems like the text's purpose is to inform the reader about a historical event, or series of events, on Angel Island. I need to read closely to see if I'm right and to find out more information."



Visualize your home or a favorite place. Describe to your learning partner(s) your mental picture as it forms in your mind. Listen to your partner(s) describe their mental picture.

Interacting with the text



Model a close reading of the first two paragraphs. Show students how you evaluate evidence in a social studies text. For example, "How can I trust Kai's account of his evaluation?"



With your partner(s), read paragraph three closely. Discuss how the accounts of many immigrants might give credibility to Kai's account.



Model how to read paragraph four closely. For example, "The president's actions further validate Kai's account."



Read the rest of the text closely. Share your visualizations of each scene. Discuss how well the author supports each key idea with evidence in the text.

Reflecting on the text





Discuss why you think Chinese immigrants were treated differently from European immigrants. Discuss the author's point of view: what words and phrases in the text show you this?



Facilitate a whole-group discussion about how the strategy of visualizing helps readers develop a deeper understanding of the text.

Writing connection





Imagine you are a Chinese immigrant detained on Angel Island. Write a letter to your family back in China, describing your circumstances and how you feel about your situation in the United States.

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Visualizing

Prior to reading: Skim and scan the text, the poem, and the map. Creating pictures in your mind (visualizing) helps you to develop a better understanding of words on a page. With your learning partner(s), discuss any words you saw during your skim and scan that may be powerful for visualizing.

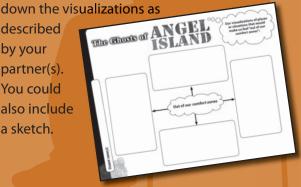
Interacting with the text: Read the text (but not the poem) to your partner(s). Together, locate the words that describe how the Chinese immigrants felt. Create a mental picture of a place or situation that would make you feel this way. Describe it to your partner(s).

Take turns reading the poem aloud. Working together, locate the words that help explain why the writer of this poem feels so sad and frustrated. Think about what being away from your home, family, and friends would be like for you. Create a mental picture of yourself experiencing "homesickness." Share your visualization with your partner(s).

Reflecting on the text: With your partner(s), discuss why the Chinese immigrants on Angel Island wrote on the walls. Discuss why people write on walls today, and whether today's graffiti might be tomorrow's poetry. Visualizing enables you to place yourself in the story. Discuss how this helps your comprehension.

Writing activity: Work with your partner(s) to complete the graphic organizer. Think of a place or situation where you felt "out of your comfort zone." In the spaces provided, write

described by your partner(s). You could also include a sketch.



The Ghosts of

Powerful Poetry

Angel Island's doors closed in 1940 when China and the United States became allies during World War II (1939–1945). The island's main **immigration** station was scheduled to be demolished in the 1970s until a park ranger found poetry engraved in its walls.

"The Chinese immigrants used poetry... to leave their mark on the island," says Charles Egan, a **professor** at San Francisco State University. "When you walk through the hallways of the immigration station, you are surrounded by the ghosts of these people."



The poems describe the despair, frustration, and sadness that many people felt at Angel Island. Because the poems were written in Chinese characters, immigration officers had dismissed them as graffiti and covered them with paint. Since 1980, Egan and his team have uncovered more than 60 poems.

THE POEMS THEY EFT BEHIN

Historians recently found this poem carved in Chinese characters on a wall on Angel Island.

It's been a long time since I left my home village Who could know I'd end up imprisoned in a wooden building?

I'm heartsick when I see my reflection, my handkerchief is soaked in tears

I ask you, what crime did I commit to deserve this?

—Li Hai of Nancun, Taishan

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Student name(s): he Ghosts of Our visualizations of the poem Sketch or write about your visualizations of the poem from the text. 82