



Compare/Contrast Texts

Immigration: Irish vs. Italians Part to Part

Introductory Information

People from all over the world have moved to the United States to make a better life than they had in their native countries. People who leave their country to set up a new life in another country are called immigrants. Each immigrant group has had different experiences in the U.S. as they have struggled to build a life for their families. But some groups have had some similar experiences because of similarities between their native cultures.

Passage

It is interesting to compare and contrast the experiences of the Irish and Italian immigrant groups as they adjusted to life in the United States. There were many similarities between the experiences of the Irish and Italian immigrants who came to the United States in the early 1800s. Both groups had mostly been farmers in their native countries. When they came to America, most Irish and Italians had to give up farming. Very few of them could afford to buy land here. Instead, they moved to big cities in the Northeast, like New York, Philadelphia, and Boston.

Another similarity was that both the Irish and Italians were Catholic. Many people in America feared them and treated them unfairly because they were Catholic. The Irish and Italians ended up with the lowest paying jobs. They had to live in alleys and slums (poor areas of cities). Because they lived in such bad conditions, they often caught deadly diseases like the lung disease called tuberculosis.

Although there were many similarities between the early Irish and Italian immigrants, there were also important differences. First, the Irish already spoke English. This made it easier for them to make their way in America. Because the Italians spoke Italian and not English, it was harder for them to settle into American culture. Instead, the Italians hung onto their native language and culture. They often lived in family groups that stuck together.

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Another difference between the Irish and Italians had to do with farming. The Irish never returned to their native work of farming when they came to America, but some Italians did. These Italians went to California and set up vineyards for making wine.

Immigration: Irish vs. Italians

Whole to Whole

Introductory Information

People from all over the world have moved to the United States to make a better life than they had in their native countries. People who leave their country to set up a new life in another country are called immigrants. Each immigrant group has had different experiences in the U.S. as they have struggled to build a life for their families. But some groups have had some similar experiences because of similarities between their native cultures.

The Irish

Many Irish people came as immigrants to the United States in the early 1800s. Because the Irish already spoke English, it was easier for them to make their way in America than for people who came from countries where English was not spoken.

Most of the Irish had been farmers in Ireland. When they came to America, they had to give up farming. They could not afford to buy land here. As a result, they moved to big cities in the Northeast, like New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, where they could get jobs working for other people.

The Irish were Catholic. Because of this, many people in America were scared of them and treated them unfairly. The Irish ended up with the lowest paying jobs. They had to live in alleys and poor areas of cities. Because they lived in such bad conditions, they often caught deadly diseases like the lung disease called tuberculosis.

The Italians

A large number of Italians came as immigrants to the United States in the early 1800s. Because the Italians did not speak English, it was not easy for them to settle into American culture. Instead, Italians hung onto their native language and culture. They often lived in family groups that stuck together.

The Italians had mostly been farmers in Italy. When they came to America, many of them could not keep farming. Most of them could not afford to buy land here. Instead, many of them moved to big cities in the Northeast. However, some Italians did keep farming by going to California and setting up vineyards for making wine.

The Italians were Catholic. As a result, many people in America feared them and treated them unfairly. They ended up with the lowest paying jobs. They had to live in alleys and slums (poor areas of cities). Living in such bad conditions, they often caught deadly diseases like the lung disease called tuberculosis.

Chart Using Attributes

Immigration: Irish vs. Italian

Attributes	Italian Immigrants	Irish Immigrants
Work in their native country	Farming	Farming
Work in the United States	Lowest paying jobs. Some did farming (in vineyards)	Lowest paying jobs. None did farming
Where they lived in the United States	Mostly in poor areas of big cities in the Northeast, except the farmers lived in California	Poor areas of big cities in the Northeast
Religion	Catholic	Catholic
Native language	Italian	English
Effect of native language on adjusting in the United States	Hard to adjust because did not know English well. Hung onto native language and culture. Lived in family groups that stuck together.	Easier to adjust because knew English