

Roslyn Cemetery

Lesson Three – Grade Seven

Hardships and Mortality

Summary



The defining feature of the historic Roslyn Cemetery is the many immigrant cultures that came together in Roslyn. The cultural norms, the stories they brought with them and their experiences as workers, families and communities give the cemetery its unique appearance. Between 1886 and 1929, first- and second-generation immigrants of diverse heritage came to work in the mines; they came from Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Germany, Lithuania, Slovenia, Serbia and Croatia, England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, among other places of origin. Immigrant communities that developed in Roslyn often worked hard to maintain their traditions, which can in part be seen in the separation of the cemetery into sections for distinct ethnicities and lodges. Today, many Roslyn residents are descendants of these immigrant miners.

In this unit, students will explore immigrant stories that reveal the diversity, hardship and perseverance of the immigrants in Roslyn. This unit highlights the hardships they faced as they worked to build lives for their families and their contributions to the wealth and growth of Washington state. In rounding out the lesson, students will connect these historical stories to the attitudes held towards immigrants today.



State Standards

G2.6-8.4 Explain the role of immigration in shaping societies in the past or present.

H1.6-8.5 Explain how themes and developments have defined eras in Washington state history from 1854 to the present: railroads, reform, immigration, and labor (1889-1930)

H2.6-8.3 Explain and analyze how cultures and ethnic groups contributed to Washington state history since statehood.

Essential Questions

- In what ways is the Roslyn Cemetery a reflection of the United States as a nation of immigrants?
- What factors might a person weigh when considering whether to immigrate to another country?
- How might an individual feel when considering an immigration decision?
- What might be some of the greatest challenges and rewards for immigrants to a new country?
- How do the experiences of immigrants in Roslyn's history compare to those of immigrants today?

Essential Understandings

- With the exception of Indigenous peoples, everyone in the United States is a descendant of immigrants.
- Immigrant communities in Roslyn faced significant challenges, hardships and mortality but also experienced success, joy and community.
- The development of American towns, cities, and infrastructure owes a great deal to immigrant labor.
- Today's immigrants to America also face hardships and successes, some similar to the past but some different.

Primary Sources

Photographs:

- Roslyn Cemetery graves
Description: Minerich gravestone; Capovilla gravestone

- Roslyn coal miners, circa 1915
Description: Top row: Blazina, John; Wright, Percy. Second row: Smith, Charles; Temperly, George; Graves, Soll. Bottom row: Bosone, Pete; Morgan, John. Seven miners doing outside work stand in a coal chute at one of the N.W.I.Co. mines in Upper Kittitas County.
- Joe Kozelisky and friends
Description: Julia Wallgren's father, "Joe" Kozelisky (far left) with two friends at an unknown location. The photo may have commemorated the young men's 1917 visit to Roslyn.

Secondary Sources

Hill, L. Ed. (2007). Coal Town Heritage: Cle Elum High School Class of 1946. Hillcraft Publishing: Lake Forest Park, WA.

The Roslyn-Ronald-Cle Elum Heritage Club (2005). From Old Country to Coal Country. Morris Publishing: Kearney, NE.

Materials

- Reading scans from Coal Town Heritage and From Old Country to Coal Country
- Reading worksheets
- Photographs of headstones and historical family photographs from the Roslyn Heritage Collection
- Whiteboard OR Butcher paper if doing group brainstorm and feedback on paper

Teacher prep

- There are four separate reading texts: print out enough so that each individual in each group of four will have a copy of that group's text.
- There is one additional reading text, "Barich Family History" with worksheet, for an optional activity.
- Print out enough reading worksheets for each student.
- Print out or prepare another way to display the photographs for context to each reading.

Lesson Plan

WORD	DEFINITION
CCC (Civil Conservation Corp)	
Descendant	
Mortality	
Separator (for cream)	
Scythe	
(other words?)	

Part I

Ask students to remember what they have been learning about Roslyn and its historical cemetery over the last two lessons. Write or otherwise record their ideas. Fill in any important gaps after students have had a few minutes to volunteer their own ideas.

Tell students that today they will be focusing on the Roslyn Cemetery by learning about the experiences of people and their families who came to and worked in Roslyn, many of whom are buried in the Roslyn Cemetery. Roslyn is home to descendants of these historic families. Show them the photographs and briefly describe for context to the reading.

Part II Pre-reading brainstorm activity:

Copy the table below onto the board or on butcher paper. Tell students to imagine the worries, struggles and successes that immigrants and workers in Roslyn might have experienced in the late 1800s. Give them a couple minutes to share ideas with a partner or a group. Then, either invite students to write their ideas in the table or have them call out their ideas for you to write in the table.

Worries	Struggles	Successes

Part III

There are four family histories included in the materials for this lesson:

- “The Capovilla Saga” describes the difficult journey from Italy to America, family challenges including child mortality, and family members’ moves to other areas of Washington and Alaska.
- “Coming to America” describes a grandmother’s experience coming from the former Yugoslavia, working as a woman in Roslyn, infant mortality, death in a mine explosion and community care of a widow.
- “Our Family History” describes hard times working in the mines and surviving on minimal pay, a grandparent returning to Croatia with her children only to decide to return, a diphtheria epidemic and the places where the next generations of the family ended up.
- “Memories of my Roslyn/Cle Elum Roots” describes coming to Roslyn from Wyoming during the Depression as second-generation immigrants of Italian/Austrian/German descent, having to do farm chores as children, using local businesses, and going to the local school.

Break the class into four groups and give each group sufficient copies of one of the histories and worksheets for individual notetaking. Direct students to take notes on the worries, struggles and successes in their history. Tell students to compare notes within their respective groups. Bring the groups together to compare notes, adding ideas to the original class brainstorm based on what they read. Invite feedback on these ideas and ask students for their reactions to the texts that they read:

- what surprised them?
- what was interesting, sad, funny, strange, scary, uncomfortable etc.?

Part IV

Connect the historical ideas to the present by expanding the discussion with students. Ask them what current immigrants and refugees might feel worried about, struggle with and experience success in. Record responses on the board in the same kind of chart as before.

As a way for students to connect personally to the material, ask students (who feel comfortable) to share a time when they felt worried, had to struggle or experienced success.

Part V

Provide copies of the “Barich Family History” and worksheet to each group. Once students have read the Barich account, tell them to come up with as many ideas as they can to complete the worksheet that highlights the lack of modern conveniences to

resolve early Roslyn hardships. When the class reconvenes, share ideas from group worksheets.

Part VI

As an assessment / self-reflection activity, have students write a “3,2,1 List” as an exit ticket:

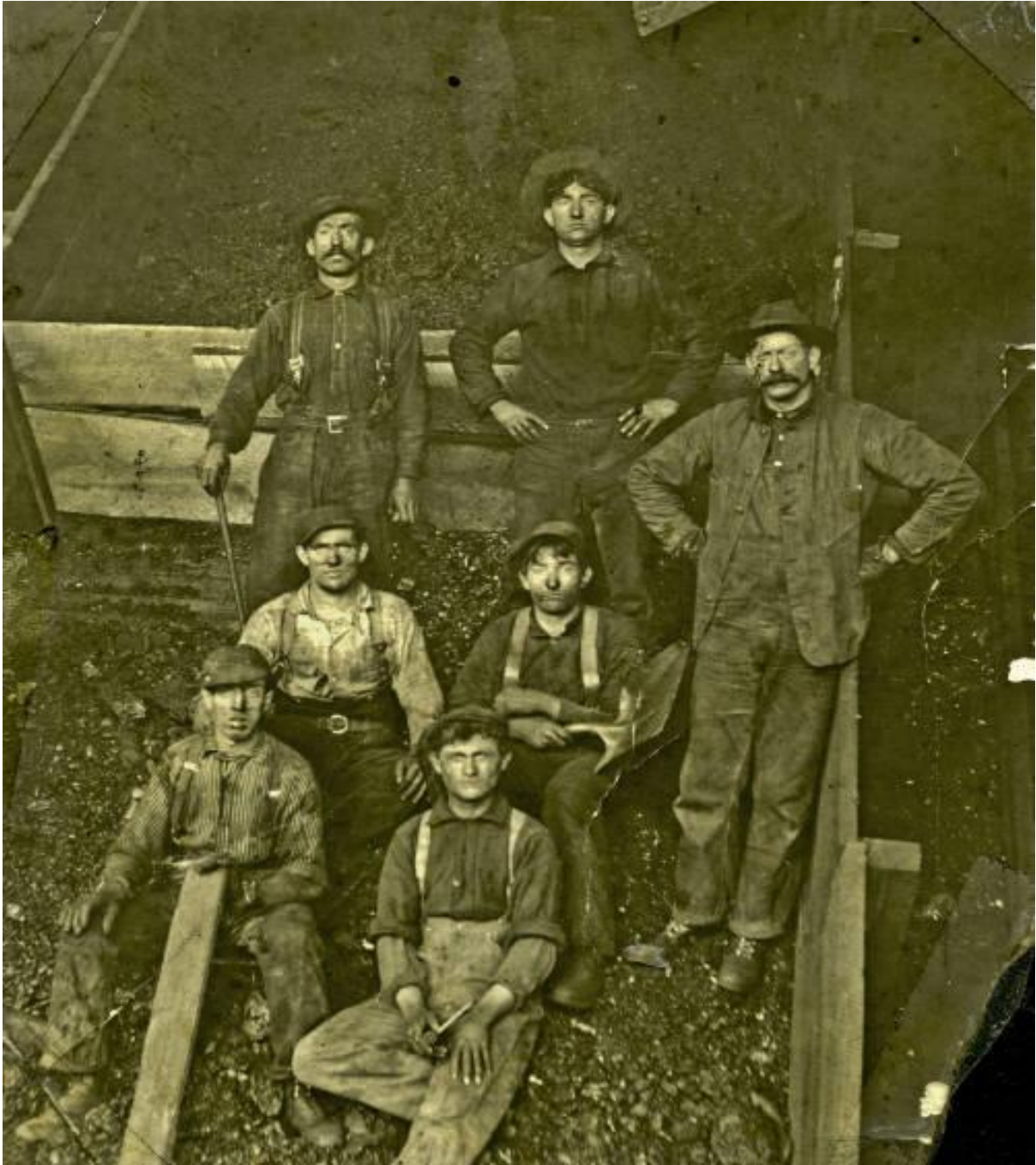
- 3 things that they learned
- 2 things they want to know more about
- 1 question that they have

Collect these tickets to inform the next lessons.

Enrichment Activities:

- Depending on your access to any local immigrant and/or refugee organizations, consider a project that connects to the local immigrant community, such as interviewing an immigrant community member about their experience.
- Interview an elder in a student family or community.
- Research and report on an immigrant group from Roslyn’s past.
- Read the “Barich Family History” and complete the Family Hardships Worksheet.

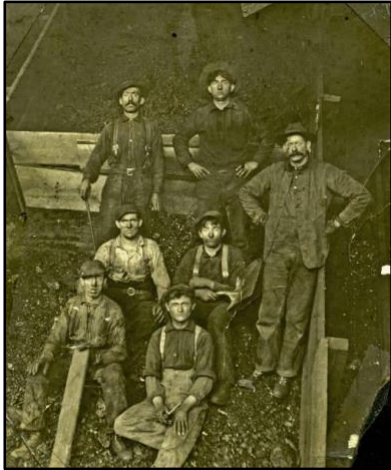








Roslyn’s Immigrant Family Stories



The defining feature of the historic Roslyn Cemetery is the many immigrant cultures that came together in Roslyn. The cultural norms, the stories they brought with them and their experiences as workers, families and communities give the cemetery its unique appearance. Between 1886 and 1929, first- and second-generation immigrants of diverse heritage came to work in the mines; they arrived from Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Germany, Lithuania, Slovenia, Serbia and Croatia, England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, among other places of origin. Immigrant communities that developed in Roslyn often worked hard to maintain their traditions, which can in part be seen in the separation of the cemetery into sections for distinct ethnicities and lodges. Today, many Roslyn residents are descendants of these immigrant miners.

You are going to read a short text about one family’s history in the Roslyn area. Before you read, think about what things immigrants to Roslyn might have worried about in the late 1800s and early 1900s, what might they have struggled with, and what successes they might have had. Write your ideas on the table below:

Worries	Struggles	Successes

After you read one of the immigrant family histories add new ideas to the three columns and compare your ideas with your group.

Optional Interviews of Student Families - questions

There is a story behind every decision to immigrate.

- Where did you or your family immigrate from?
- What were your (or your family's) hopes for your new life here?
- Why did you choose to come to this country instead of somewhere else?
- Who did you come with and who did you leave behind? Did anyone come ahead of you?
- What was the most difficult part about leaving?
- What was your journey to this new country or community like?
- What was it like when you first arrived?
- What most surprised you?
- What did you miss most about the country you came from?
- Who was most helpful with getting you settled?
- Migration can be hard. Where did you find strength in difficult times?
- How do you think that migration has changed you?
- What have been your biggest challenges?
- What have been your greatest sources of joy?
- Overall, how do you think your family is doing after the migration?
- What is the thing you are proudest of so far and why?
- What are you hoping to accomplish in the future?
- What do you think may get in the way of those dreams?
- What do you think may help your dreams come true?
- In what ways do you think migration has made you a stronger person?
- Can you think of times when you felt welcome in your new community?
- Can you think of times when you have felt unwelcome as an immigrant?
- Do you have a story about someone you care about that was treated poorly because they were an immigrant?
- Do you know of anyone you care about that was deported?

- If someone you knew were planning on coming to this country or community, what would you tell them to expect?
- What advice would you give them about whether or not they should come?
- What do you wish more people knew about immigrants or others that are new to the community?
- What are the 2 or 3 most important things that people could do to make the process of coming to a new country or community better?
- Is there anything you would like to add that has not been asked?