Who Could Enter?

How a change in immigration law reshaped American communities

USH.C.7.3.C "Describe the changing immigration policy, with emphasis on how the Immigration Act of 1965 began to transform American society through removal of an origins quota system."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the old rule for deciding who could enter, circle what the 1965 law changed, and number two ways the change affected communities.

A New Way to Decide

1. Imagine two families hoping to move to the United States in 1960, one from Italy and one from India. Their chances depended partly on rules set decades earlier. A 1924 law assigned annual immigration quotas by national origin, with larger quotas for countries in northern and western Europe. Many Asian immigrants faced separate exclusions. These rules did more than limit numbers. They favored some places of birth over others, shaping who could join American communities.

2. In 1965, Congress passed the Immigration and Nationality Act, which ended the national origins quota system. The new law gave priority to people with close family members in the United States and to some workers with needed skills. It also kept numerical limits, so the United States did not open its borders to everyone. The change shifted attention away from an applicant's national origin and toward family ties or job skills.

3. Over time, more immigrants came from Asia and Latin America, and smaller but growing numbers came from Africa. Family preferences allowed some new arrivals to sponsor eligible relatives later, helping communities grow across generations. These changes affected neighborhoods, businesses, schools, and religious life. The shift was gradual, not instant, and other forces also shaped migration. Still, removing origins quotas helped change where immigrants came from and widened the range of languages and traditions in American life.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the national origins quota system favor some immigrants over others?

2. How did the 1965 law change the way applicants were considered?

3. Why did ending origins quotas not mean that everyone could enter?

4. How could the law's family preferences change a community over time?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 55 to 75 word caption for a neighborhood history display. Compare the rules before and after 1965, explain two changes the neighborhood might see over time, and include one limit on immigration.

ANSWER KEY

Who Could Enter?

HIGH SCHOOL · USH.C.7.3.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the old rule for deciding who could enter, circle what the 1965 law changed, and number two ways the change affected communities. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the national origins quota system favor some immigrants over others?	**It gave larger quotas to northern and western European countries, while many Asian immigrants faced separate exclusions.**
2	How did the 1965 law change the way applicants were considered?	**It ended national origins quotas and gave priority to qualifying family ties and some needed job skills.**
3	Why did ending origins quotas not mean that everyone could enter?	**The law kept numerical limits on immigration.**
4	How could the law's family preferences change a community over time?	**New arrivals could sponsor eligible relatives, helping immigrant communities grow and adding languages and traditions to community life.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Before 1965, national origins quotas favored people from certain European countries. After Congress removed those quotas, a resident could sponsor an eligible relative from India. As relatives arrived over time, neighbors might hear more languages at school and see new businesses open nearby. These shifts could bring new traditions to local festivals. Entry still had numerical limits, and the neighborhood would not change overnight.

Accept other plausible neighborhood changes linked to immigration, such as new religious communities. Responses should distinguish the removal of origins quotas from the removal of all limits.