

This Land is Our Land A Blue Beetle Story by Julio Anta & Jacoby Salcedo



Vocabulary

Immigration	Great Migration
Tension	Extraterrestrial
Identity	Invasion
Community	Dissent
Xenophobia	Extremism
Propaganda	Dehumanization
Assimilation	Marginalization
Resistance	

BEFORE AND AFTER READING

Before Reading:

Timeline of Key Anti-Immigration Policies and Events

Before engaging with the central text, students will begin by constructing a shared timeline of key anti-immigration policies in U.S. history. Using events such as the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), the Immigration Act of 1924, Japanese incarceration during World War II, and the 2017 “Muslim Ban,” students will work collaboratively to map when these policies occurred and what they did.

Students will examine brief descriptions of each event and begin to ask: Who is being targeted? What reasons are being given? What patterns do we see across time?

This initial exploration is intentionally incomplete. Students are not yet asked to fully analyze impact, but instead to surface early ideas about belonging, exclusion, and power. The timeline becomes a living document—one that holds their first thinking and questions as they prepare to enter the text.

After Reading:

Returning to the Timeline — Deepening Understanding Through Story and Perspective

After reading, students will return to the timeline with a deeper lens shaped by the text. With a stronger understanding of lived experiences, they will revisit each event to analyze its human impact—moving beyond policy to consider the people and communities affected.

Students will revise and expand their timeline entries by incorporating insights from the text, asking: How do these policies shape identity and opportunity? Whose stories are missing from the original timeline? How does this history connect to what we see today?

As a culminating task, students may annotate the timeline with reflections, add missing perspectives, or create a written or visual response that speaks back to one moment on the timeline.

In this phase, the work shifts from noticing to meaning-making and connection. Students are not only learning history—they are using story to understand how systems impact real lives, and how those impacts continue across generations.

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Identifying Cultural Behaviors

Cultural Behavior	Examples from the Text
<p>Communalism (“we over I”) "We" is more important than "I." The success of the whole (community, family, class, collaborative group) outweighs and is more valued than the success of the individual.</p>	<p>The text consistently centers relationships, family, and community over individual success. Characters make decisions based on family, survival, and connection—not individual gain.</p>
<p>Realness (direct, authentic communication) Realness (frank, direct, upfront) The level of truthfulness, authenticity, and directness we utilize in our communications. Different cultures value different levels of directness.</p>	<p>The text does not soften injustice—it presents it directly. Moments of unfairness, fear, and separation are clear and honest.</p>

Possible Writing Prompts

Informative / Explanatory Essay

Explaining Patterns Across Time: Write an informational essay that explains how anti-immigration policies have developed over time and their impact on individuals and communities.

Use the timeline and the novel to trace patterns across at least two historical moments. Your goal is to help readers understand not just what happened, but how these policies function and whom they affect

Argumentative Essay

Taking a Stand on Belonging and Policy: After studying historical anti-immigration policies and reading the novel, write an argument that answers: How do immigration policies shape who belongs in the United States? Use evidence from both the timeline and the novel to develop a claim about patterns of exclusion, fear, and power. Consider how these policies impact individuals and communities, and whether those patterns continue today.

Narrative Writing

The Outsider Story (Alien Lens): Imagine you are a newcomer to Earth—an alien trying to understand human rules about belonging. As you observe the world, you begin to notice how people are treated differently based on where they come from. Write a narrative in which you document your experiences and observations. As you try to make sense of what you see, connect your thinking to Jamie’s experiences in the novel and the patterns you noticed in the timeline.

Extension Activities

1. Counter-Story Graphic Narrative (Creative + Critical)

Task: Students create a short graphic narrative that tells a missing or untold story connected to the novel and timeline.

2. “Who Gets to Belong?” Policy Rewrite Project

Task: Students redesign a historical policy from your timeline into something more just.

Product options: rewritten law (student-friendly language), visual “before vs after,” or speech defending their new policy

Core question:

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Activity	CLR Protocol
<p>Pre-Reading Vocabulary</p>	<p>Word Splash</p> <p>This Responsive Vocabulary Activity is great for K-12 for front-loading text & vocabulary and using as a before reading strategy. This K-12 pre-reading strategy builds vocabulary by connecting key Tier 2 and 3 words to images, synonyms, and associations, aligned with Marzano’s 6 Steps. The teacher models each word with a brief definition and sketch while students copy and add their own connections. Students then discuss the words and use them to predict the upcoming text or topic before beginning the lesson.</p> <p><i>Validate and Affirm (VA) Sociocentricism, Collaboration, Spontaneity, Subjectiveness, Attention Span, Build and Bridge BB Responsive Vocabulary</i></p>
<p>During & After Reading</p>	<p>Walk and Talk</p> <p>Students gather information, share their learning, seek information, or solve a problem with a partner based on a prompt or question from their teacher. Walk and Talks are brief and a way to process socially with movement. Teacher asks a question, students partner up to walk and discuss. Teacher calls them back with a call & response and students share out with involuntary response protocol (80%).</p> <p><i>Validate and affirm (VA) Kinesthetics, Sociocentrism, Collaboration, Verbal Expressiveness</i></p>
<p>Responding</p>	<p>Wheel of Names</p> <p>Students participate in a discussion protocol and know ahead of time that a response protocol will be coming (80% involuntary). After given the chance to discuss, the teacher uses the wheel of names to elicit responses.</p> <p><i>Validate and Affirm (VA) Spontaneous (VA), Individual Accountability Build and Bridge (BB) Turn Taking</i></p>