

Were the Vietnamese Welcomed in Texas after the Vietnam War?



Colonel Nam Văn Nguyễn on his shrimp boat, Seabrook, Texas. 1981, John R. Van Beekum
Source: <https://www.thedailybeast.com/when-vietnamese-fishermen-went-to-war-with-the-klan-in-texas>

Supporting Questions:

1. What struggles did the Vietnamese face when they arrived in Texas in the 1970s and 1980s?
2. What ways did the Vietnamese and local communities resist discrimination and intimidation?
3. How have past struggles shaped Texas' Vietnamese American community in the recent past to today?

Inquiry Design Model (IDM) Blueprint™

Compelling Question	Were the Vietnamese Welcomed in Texas after the Vietnam War?		
Standards and Practices	<p>Asian American Studies</p> <p>6C: analyze the effects of the Vietnam War on migration from Southeast Asia, including refugees and transracial adoptees.</p> <p>8B: describe how the US military interventions in Southeast Asia contributed to the displacement and resettlement of Cambodian, Laotian, lu-Mien, Hmong, Tai Diem, and Vietnamese refugees.</p>		
Staging the Question	Listen to “Galveston Bay” by Bruce Springsteen and have students highlight/underline lyrics in the song that relate to the experience of the Vietnamese in Texas.		
Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3	
What struggles did the Vietnamese face when they arrived in Texas in the 1970s and 1980s?	What ways did the Vietnamese and local communities resist discrimination and intimidation?	How have past struggles shaped Texas’ Vietnamese American community in the recent past to today?	
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	
Create a list of challenges faced by the Vietnamese who arrived in Texas in the 1970s and 1980s.	Write a letter to an imaginary family member from the point of view of a Vietnamese fisherman.	Create an album cover reflecting the experiences and struggles of Vietnamese Americans in Texas today.	
Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources	
<p>Source A: KKK on Fishing Boat, 1981</p> <p>Source B: KKK Buring “Viet-Cong” Boat, 1981</p> <p>Source C: “Klan Inflames Gulf Fishing Fight Between Whites and Vietnamese,” <i>New York Times</i>, April 25, 1981</p>	<p>Source A: “Fishing Town in Texas Tells the Klan to Stay Away,” <i>New York Times</i>, 1979</p> <p>Source B: Vietnamese Fishermen v. Knights (1982)</p>	<p>Source A: “Texas Gulf Coast Fishing Industry Struggles After Hurricane Harvey,” <i>Houston Chronicle</i>, October 18, 2017</p> <p>Source B: Anthony Bourdain’s <i>Parts Unknown</i> Season 8 Episode 5</p> <p>Source C: “Decades After Clashing With the Klan, A Thriving Vietnamese Community in Texas,” NPR, 2018</p>	

Summative Performance Task	Argument	Construct an argument that addresses the compelling question: “Were the Vietnamese welcomed in Texas after the Vietnam War?” Use specific claims and relevant evidence from featured sources.
	Extension	Hold a structured four-corner academic debate on the compelling question.
Taking Informed Action	Create a historical marker that summarizes the experience of Vietnamese Americans in the Texas Gulf Coast region. Choose a specific place in the Texas Gulf Coast where the marker should be located, a title and a summary of the events and experiences that shaped the Vietnamese American community in the region.	

Lesson Overview

Inquiry Description

This inquiry will allow students to explore the struggles of the Vietnamese who settled in the Texas Gulf Coast following the Vietnam War. After analyzing the variety of sources, students will answer the compelling question, “Were the Vietnamese welcomed in Texas after the Vietnam War?” The performance tasks will allow students to understand the racial tensions that existed in the Texas Gulf Coast following the Vietnam War as well as the struggle for justice within the Vietnamese American community. In the final summative assessment, students will bring together all the sources, looking at the struggles of Vietnamese American both past and present to make an argument that answers the compelling question. This lesson is designed to be completed within one 90-minute class period but can be adapted to specific classroom needs.

Staging the Compelling Question

Compelling Question	Were the Vietnamese Welcomed in Texas after the Vietnam War?
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Staging the Compelling Question

To introduce the compelling question, the teacher will play the song “Galveston Bay” by Bruce Springsteen and will provide students with a copy of the lyrics. As students listen to the song, they will highlight/underline lyrics that relate to the experience of the Vietnamese who settled in the Texas Gulf Coast after the Vietnam War. The teacher will have students record the three most important lyrics in their graphic organizer and then share their findings with a partner. The goal of this activity is to set the stage for the lesson by giving students an overview of the struggles Vietnamese fishermen faced in the Texas Gulf Coast in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Staging the Compelling Question

Featured Sources

[“Galveston Bay” by Bruce Springsteen](#) and [lyrics](#)

Fifteen years Le Bing Son
Fought side by side with the Americans
In the mountains and deltas of Vietnam

In '75 Saigon fell
and he left his command
And brought his family to the promised land

Seabrook Texas and the small towns
in the Gulf of Mexico
It was delta country and reminded him of
home

He worked as a machinist, put his money
away
And bought a shrimp boat with his cousin
And together they harvested Galveston Bay

In the mornin' 'fore the sun come up
He'd kiss his sleepin' daughter
Steer out through the channel
And casts his nets into the water

Billy Sutter fought with Charlie Company
In the highlands of Quang Tri
He was wounded in the battle of Chu Lai
And shipped home in '68

There he married and worked the gulf fishing
grounds
In a boat that'd been his father's
In the morning he'd kiss his sleeping son
And cast his nets into the water

Billy sat in front of his TV as the south fell
And the Communists rolled into Saigon
He and his friends watched as the refugees
came
Settle on the same streets and worked the
coast they grew up on

Soon in the bars around the harbor was talk
Of America for Americans
Someone said, "You want 'em out, you got to
burn 'em out"
And brought in the Texas klan

One humid Texas night there were three
shadows on the harbor
Come to burn the Vietnamese boats into the
sea
In the fire's light shots rang out
Two Texans lay dead on the ground
Le stood with a pistol in his hand

A jury acquitted him in self defense
As before the judge he did stand
But as he walked down the courthouse steps
Billy said "My friend, you're a dead man"

One late summer night Le stood watch along
the waterside
Billy stood in the shadows
His K-bar knife in his hand
And the moon slipped behind the clouds

Le lit a cigarette, the bay was as still as glass
As he walked by Billy stuck his knife into his
pocket
Took a breath and let him pass

In the early darkness Billy rose up
Went into the kitchen for a drink of water
Kissed his sleeping wife
Headed into the channel
And casts his nets into the water

Of Galveston Bay

Source: <https://bruce springsteen.net/track/galveston-bay/>

Supporting Question 1

Supporting Question	What struggles did the Vietnamese face when they arrived in Texas in the 1970s and 1980s?
Formative Performance Task	Create a list of challenges faced by the Vietnamese who arrived in Texas in the 1970s and 1980s.
Featured Sources	Source A: KKK on Fishing Boat, 1981 Source B: KKK Buring “Viet-Cong” Boat, 1981 Source C: “Klan Inflames Gulf Fishing Fight Between Whites and Vietnamese,” <i>New York Times</i>, April 25, 1981

The first supporting question: “What struggles did the Vietnamese face when they arrived in Texas in the 1970s and 1980s?”, allows students to explore the discrimination and intimidation that Vietnamese fishermen faced in the Texas Gulf Coast. After viewing the primary source photos and reading the article, students will create a list in their graphic organizer of the challenges faced by the Vietnamese community in Texas. After students have created their list, the teacher will have them share with a partner and add any insights they may have missed to their list. The goal of this activity is to allow students to explore the specific challenges the Vietnamese community faced in the Texas Gulf Coast in the years after the Vietnam War.

Supporting Question 1

Source A

KKK on Fishing Boat, 1981



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Source: <https://www.thedailybeast.com/when-vietnamese-fishermen-went-to-war-with-the-klan-in-texas>

Supporting Question 1

Source B

KKK Buring “Viet-Cong” Boat, 1981



Louis Beam, Grand Dragon of the Texas Realm of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, sets fire to a boat labeled “Viet-Cong” during a rally for white Texas Gulf fisherman in Santa Fe, Texas, on Feb. 14, 1981.

 Bettmann Archive/Getty

Source: <https://www.thedailybeast.com/when-vietnamese-fishermen-went-to-war-with-the-klan-in-texas>

Supporting Question 1

Source C

[“Klan Inflames Gulf Fishing Fight Between Whites and Vietnamese,” *New York Times*, April 25, 1981](#)

Excerpt

KLAN INFLAMES GULF FISHING FIGHT BETWEEN WHITES AND VIETNAMESE

By William K. Stevens

For nearly two years, two tribes, one established and one new to this fishing village on the grayish, sunflecked waters of Galveston Bay, have been locked in a kind of territorial struggle as old as the species. Now the struggle is approaching a critical point.

One tribe is made up of American shrimp fishermen. The other consists of Vietnamese refugees who, having fled their country after the fall of Saigon in 1975, flocked to the Gulf Coast to make their living as shrimpers, too. Operating from a stretch of docks that has been dubbed "Saigon Harbor," they now outnumber the Americans.

The problem, according to the white shrimpers, is that their livelihood is jeopardized because the shrimp fishing hereabouts will simply not support everybody. In the resulting dispute, two Vietnamese shrimp boats have been burned, and hostility and suspicion are rife in the twin fishing towns of Seabrook and Kemah.

Invitation to the Klan

Enter the Ku Klux Klan. Responding to an invitation from the American fishermen, the Klan has made several shows of force here in the last two months. Now local white fishermen and the Klan have been accused in a lawsuit of conspiring to threaten and intimidate the Vietnamese into leaving.

The case pits two longtime courtroom enemies against each other - the Klan and the Klanwatch organization, an arm of the Southern Poverty Law Center in Birmingham, Ala., that filed the class-action lawsuit on behalf of the Vietnamese fishermen.

The suit asks that Federal District Judge Gabrielle McDonald issue a preliminary injunction against the activities of the Klan and the American fishermen, which, according to the complaint, include the burning of crosses near some Vietnamese shrimpers' homes and boat docks and threats against a white who had docked Vietnamese boats. A hearing is expected early next month.

Some Vietnamese say that the Americans are upset because the Vietnamese outwork and outfish them, putting in longer hours, living more frugally, and pooling their resources to buy more boats. "The American fisherman feels he can't compete," Chief Kerber said. "They live off rice and fish. The American fisherman can, too, but he's not going to."

But the basic situation did not change. In the meantime, two Vietnamese were acquitted in the slaying of a white fisherman, Billy Joe Aplin, in a fishing dispute in the town of Seadrift, about

100 miles down the coast from Seabrook. Mr. Aplin was a friend of some of the Seabrook fishermen, and they regard the acquittal as a galling miscarriage of justice.

The Klan was invited, Mr. Fisher says, to attract attention to the fishermen's complaints. It did that. Two months ago the Klan sponsored a rally, with a cross-burning, to protest the Vietnamese presence. A boat was burned symbolically.

On March 15, a shrimp boat carrying robed, hooded and armed Klansmen startled Sunday afternoon diners as it moved past the windows of a waterfront restaurant, patrolling the harbor. It also approached the home of Mr. Nam, and the Klanwatch suit alleges that the Klansmen shouted threats at Mr. Nam's wife. The fishermen deny that anyone aboard the boat threatened anyone.
Cites Klan Threat

Mr. Nam said last month that about 60 of the 100 Vietnamese fishermen here had told him they would sell their boats and leave. "If you no like me to stay," an angry Mr. Nam told a group of American shrimpers, "yes sir, I leave." Should 60 Vietnamese leave, says Mr. Fisher, the problem would be solved. But he says he believes the Vietnamese actually have no intention of moving.

The filing of the Klanwatch lawsuit has reduced the potential for violence, Chief Kerber believes, by putting pressure on the American fishermen to moderate both their talk and their actions. In addition, there is at least one sign that local opinion is not solidly behind the white shrimpers. Two weeks ago, the Seabrook City Council, in a resolution, said that it would not tolerate "merchants of hate" bringing violence to the town.

Source: "Klan Inflames Gulf Fishing Fight Between Whites and Vietnamese," *New York Times*, April 25, 1981.

Supporting Question 2

Supporting Question	What ways did the Vietnamese and local communities resist discrimination and intimidation?
Formative Performance Task	Write a letter to an imaginary family member from the point of view of a Vietnamese fisherman.
Featured Sources	Source A: “Fishing Town in Texas Tells the Klan to Stay Away,” <i>New York Times</i>, 1979 Source B: Vietnamese Fishermen v. Knights (1982)

The second supporting question: “What ways did the Vietnamese and local communities resist discrimination and intimidation?”, allows students to explore the ways Vietnamese fishermen and local communities resisted KKK intimidation and violence. After reading the primary sources, students will write a short letter in their graphic organizer to an imaginary family member from the point of view of a Vietnamese fisherman describing the ways they and their local communities resisted discrimination and the outcomes of their struggles. After students have completed their letters, have them trade papers and read their partner’s letter. The goal of this activity is to allow students to explore the ways the Vietnamese and surrounding communities resisted racial discrimination and violent KKK intimidation.

Supporting Question 2

Source A

[“Fishing Town in Texas Tells the Klan to Stay Away,” *New York Times*, 1979](#)

Fishing Town in Texas Tells the Klan to Stay Away

SEADRIFT, Tex., Nov. 21 (AP) — The City Council of this troubled fishing community has issued a “stay out” plea to Ku Klux Klan group from Louisiana, which has announced plans to demonstrate here Saturday against the presence of Vietnamese refugees.

About 600 persons, more than half the town's population of 1,000, attended a meeting that the Council called last night to discuss the Klan's plans for a rally. By a unanimous vote, the five-member Council passed a resolution saying that it and a majority of Seadrift residents “do not condone or approve of any organization or group of people that may advocate or provoke violence.”

This Gulf Coast town has been tense since the acquittal last month of two Vietnamese brothers charged in the fatal shooting of Billy Joe Aplin, a white fisherman who had argued with the Vietnamese over rights to fish in certain waters. Defense attorneys had asserted that the brothers were defending themselves, and cited a long series of protests and harassment of Vietnamese fishermen by whites.

Many in the audience at the council meeting asked who had invited the Klan group to Seadrift. B.T. Aplin, the father of the slain fisherman, said he had not called anyone, but that Klan leaders from five states had called him with offers to protest here.

However, he added that he would be “proud” if white residents had invited the Klan, because the whites want the Vietnamese out of Seadrift. The refugees began moving to the area two years ago to take jobs in a crab-processing plant was opened.

Craig DeMott, a representative of the Klan group in New Orleans, said that only a few members would go to Seadrift Saturday afternoon.

The audience at the council meeting cheered when Jerry Weaver, a Seadrift resident, said the town “should show everyone we're not backing the Ku Klux Klan — we don't need to invite any more problems into town.”

Source: “Fishing Town in Texas Tells the Klan to Stay Away,” *New York Times*, 1979.

Supporting Question 2

Source B

[*Vietnamese Fishermen v. Knights \(1982\)*](#)

Background

In 1981, Vietnamese American fishermen in the Texas Gulf Coast with the assistance of the Southern Poverty Law Center filed a lawsuit against Louis Beam's Texas Emergency Reserve militia's and the Ku Klux Klan's ongoing harassment of Vietnamese American fisherman.

Excerpt of Court Ruling

CONCLUSION

Over the years, members of various Klan organizations have engaged in acts of racial intimidation, harassment and terrorism...

Accordingly, it is ORDERED, ADJUDGED, and DECREED that defendant Louis Beam and the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan are hereby permanently enjoined from: 1) continuing to maintain or to associate themselves into private military or paramilitary companies or organizations, including but not limited to the Texas Emergency Reserve; 2) carrying on military or paramilitary training including specifically all forms of combat and combat-related training; 3) parading in public on land or water, with firearms; and 4) engaging in any other activities which have as their purpose or reasonably foreseeable effect the use or threatened use of military or paramilitary force to infringe upon the civil rights of the plaintiff class...

FINAL JUDGMENT

1. The organizational defendants, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan for the State of Texas and the American Fishermen's Association and/or Coalition, and their agents, employees, officials, officers, members, assigns, and successors; and the individual defendants, Louis Beam and Eugene Fisher, in their individual capacity and as Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan for the State of Texas and President of the American Fishermen's Association and/or Coalition, respectively; and all others acting in concert or participation with these defendants, are permanently enjoined from:

a) Engaging in unlawful acts of violence or intimidation against the plaintiff class, including, but not limited to:

(i) the placing of an armed person or persons within the personal view of the class of Vietnamese fishermen, their boats, or Vietnamese owned and/or operated establishments *220 with the intended purpose or having the reasonable foreseeable effect of intimidating members of the plaintiff class;

(ii) the burning of crosses on property within the geographic area where members of plaintiffs' class live and/or work without the consent of the owner of said property; or

(iii) gatherings of two or more robed members of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan within the personal view of members of the class.

b) Engaging, or inciting others to engage, in acts of boat burning, armed boat patrols, assault and battery, or threats of such conduct; and

c) Any other unlawful activities undertaken with the intended purpose or having the reasonably foreseeable effect of intimidating or harassing the members of the plaintiff class.

2. The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan for the State of Texas, and its agents, employees, officers, officials, members, assigns, and successors; and the individual defendant, Louis Beam, in his individual capacity and as Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan for the State of Texas; and all others acting in concert or participation with these defendants, including, but not limited to, the Texas Emergency Reserve, are permanently enjoined from:

a) Continuing to maintain or to associate themselves into private military or paramilitary companies or organizations, including, but not limited to, the Texas Emergency Reserve;

b) Carrying on military or paramilitary training, including all forms of combat and combat-related training;

c) Parading in public on land or water, with firearms in any city or town of the State of Texas; and

d) Engaging in any other activities which have as their purpose or reasonably foreseeable effect the use or threatened use of military or paramilitary force to infringe upon the civil rights of the plaintiff class.

3. Plaintiffs shall recover the costs incurred in prosecuting this action. Said shall be taxed against the defendants.

4. Plaintiffs shall be awarded reasonable attorneys' fees. The parties are directed to meet and attempt to reach agreement on the amount of such fees within ten days of the entry of this Judgment. In the event the parties cannot agree on a reasonable attorneys' fee, the Court shall set said fee upon the receipt of affidavits from the parties in support of and in opposition to the amount of said fee. Said fees shall be taxed against the defendants.

It is further ORDERED that this Judgment will be posted in conspicuous places in the Kemah-Seabrook area.

Source: *Vietnamese Fishermen v. Knights* (1982), <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/FSupp/543/198/1460786/>

Supporting Question 3

Supporting Question	How have past struggles shaped Texas' Vietnamese American community in the recent past to today?
Formative Performance Task	Create an album cover reflecting the experiences and struggles of Vietnamese Americans in Texas today.
Featured Sources	Source A: "Texas Gulf Coast Fishing Industry Struggles After Hurricane Harvey," <i>Houston Chronicle</i> , October 18, 2017 Source B: Anthony Bourdain's <i>Parts Unknown</i> Season 8 Episode 5 Source C: "Decades After Clashing With the Klan, A Thriving Vietnamese Community in Texas," NPR, 2018

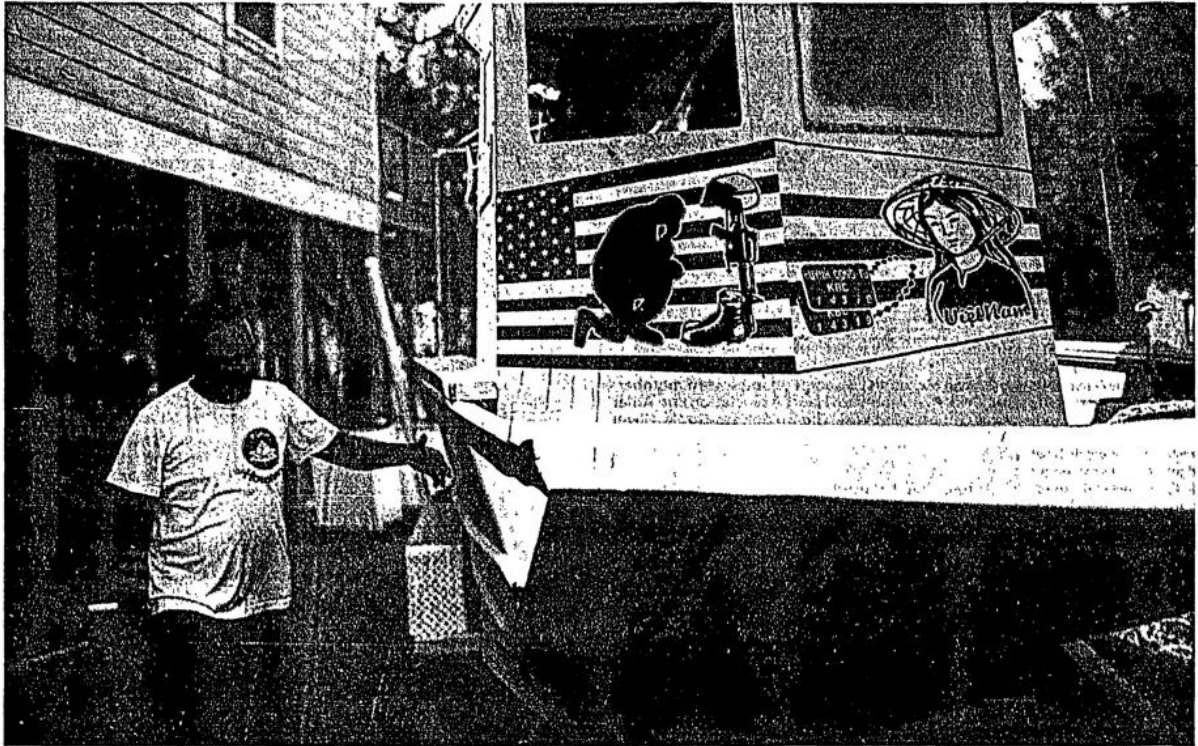
The third supporting question: "How have past struggles shaped Texas' Vietnamese American community in the recent past to today?", allows students to explore how the past has shaped the experiences of the Vietnamese community in Texas in recent years. For this portion, have students read source A and then choose between either source B or source C. After viewing the video clip or listening to the radio episode, students will create an album cover on their graphic organizer with a title and image that reflects the experiences and struggles of Vietnamese Americans today. If time allows, students can also create a track list on the margin or on a separate sheet of paper with song titles that further detail the experiences of the Vietnamese American community in Texas. The goal of this activity is to allow students to reflect on how the past struggles of the Vietnamese American community have shaped the present.

Supporting Question 3

Source A

“Texas Gulf Coast Fishing Industry Struggles After Hurricane Harvey,” *Houston Chronicle*, October 18, 2017.

4A | Wednesday, October 18, 2017 | Z1 | Pasadena Citizen · Deer Park Broadcaster ★★



Marie D. De Jesus photos /Houston Chronicle via AP
Cong Tu Huynh, a Vietnamese-American fisherman, shows one of his boats that memorializes Vietnam War veterans in San Leon. Hurricane Harvey devastated not only Galveston Bay's marine life but also the tight-knit group of predominantly Vietnamese and Mexican immigrants who ply the normally bountiful waters for a living.

Texas Gulf Coast fishing industry struggles after Hurricane Harvey

By ILEANA NAJARRO
Houston Chronicle

Victoria Vo watched her father's calloused hands twist honeycombed wire into a commercial crab trap.

With each strain of the pliers, Cong Tu Huynh's American tale grew fresh in her mind.

How he left Vietnam at 18, seeing no future for himself in a Communist state.

How he boarded a boat full of refugees bound for the U.S. How his boat survived the journey across the Atlantic and four others did not.

How he spent the next four decades on the water, providing for his family by catching and selling crab in Galveston Bay.

Now, the Yamaha motor on his battered teal work boat no longer sputters to life.

Bright orange and white buoys lie in a tangled mess on his yard.

More than 100 professionally made crab traps were swept away by Hurricane Harvey, with made landfall in South Texas on Aug. 25.

With the bay closed, Huynh will struggle to repay the \$945 he borrowed to make the repairs, and he has no idea where he will find \$10,000 to replace the motor.

"It's hard to see my dad go through all this," Vo said, tears welling in her eyes.

"He works so hard to take care of us."

Harvey devastated not only Galveston Bay's marine life but also the tight-knit group of predominantly Vietnamese and Mexican immigrants who ply the normally bountiful waters for a living.

It's grueling work that supports a multimillion-dollar seafood industry, puts food on tables and lets Huynh, 57, send his daughters to college.

In a normal year, commercial fishing and seafood processing in the bay would account for more than \$66 million in direct income. B

ut this year, trillions of gallons of freshwater runoff pushed shrimp, fish and crab populations further out into the Gulf and wiped out the prolific local oyster crop.



A crab fisherman stands by a dock in San Leon. Area fishermen lost shellfish traps during Hurricane Harvey.



Cong Tu Huynh stands on a dock with fellow fishermen who have found themselves without a job after crabs and shrimp left the area after floodwaters with contaminants ended up in the bay after Hurricane Harvey in San Leon.

Even if there were anything left to catch, the Texas Department of State Health Services temporarily closed the bay to commercial fishing, leaving many unemployed for the past month.

"I have the electricity bill to pay and other expenses," said James Tran, 65, a Dickinson shrimper. "But there is no work now."

The Vietnamese fishermen living along the Texas Gulf Coast are no strangers

to hard times. Houston was an official relocation site for refugees from the Vietnam War and its aftermath, and it now boasts the second-largest Vietnamese immigrant population in the U.S.

Many who arrived in the 1970s and '80s settled along the coast and took up jobs catching shrimp, crab and oysters.

More than 400,000 died crossing the Atlantic. The survivors rarely discussed the horrors they

witnessed.

In Texas, they have survived the Ku Klux Klan and weathered hurricanes and tropical storms.

Many still recall how Hurricane Ike destroyed their homes in 2008. They don't divulge too many details.

The week after Harvey made landfall, Jannette Diep, executive director of Boat People SOS-Houston, a nonprofit community service group, fielded up to 60 calls a day from fishermen in Anahuac, Galveston, San Leon and Texas City.

She expected questions about government aid.

Instead, fishermen and their families overwhelmed her with stories of stress. We can't eat, we can't sleep, they said.

Seeking mental health services remains taboo in the Vietnamese community, Diep said. Yet for hours at a time, immigrants bared all.

"I've never seen such defeat on their faces before," Diep said.

In the shade beneath his house on stilts in San Leon, Huynh tinkered with his boat's broken motor. The wrinkles on his forehead creased in frustration.

"Too much water," he said. "It was just too much."

Vo, who attends college

classes in Webster, looked on helplessly.

Her father never taught her the trade.

Instead, he encouraged her and her U.S.-born siblings to pursue a degree and a career with stable pay.

The fishermen in San Leon belong to an older immigrant generation, Diep said. Many believe they have no other job options.

"I'm a 57-year-old man, and I don't speak English well," Huynh said. "What else can I do? Who is going to hire me?"

"I will be fishing until the day I die."

Earnings can vary. Primitivo Rojas, 57, who owns an oyster harvesting boat, said he can make about \$5,000 a month during the peak season in the fall.

For shrimpers such as Duoc Ngo, 59, late August and mid-September should be prime catching weeks.

On Sept. 15, Ngo squinted at the idled shrimp boats lined up at a San Leon dock. Rusted metal jaws that collect the daily catch were sealed shut.

"Everything is going to die," Ngo whispered, scowling at the bobbing waves.

Co Mai, 59, said most of the smaller independent

fishermen have licenses that are good only within the bay.

He suspects there is still marine life in the Gulf, but if the Coast Guard catches them there without authorization they could lose their vessels.

Their salvation rests with organizations such as Boat People SOS.

One year after Ike, the group secured federal grant money to buy new traps, nets and boat engines. Recovery still took three years, Diep said.

Initial assessments show fishermen are once again in need of new equipment, tools to repair damaged homes and assistance in covering daily living expenses.

The plan is to seek a new federal grant, Diep said. But with recovery efforts underway in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, it's unclear how quickly such funds can be secured, if at all.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency funded Huynh's house after Ike.

Yet he and others say the federal agency has so far denied their request for help with buying fishing equipment damaged by Harvey.

Cultural aversion to government debt has dissuaded many from applying for a federal small-business loan.

"I'm a 57-year-old man, and I don't speak English well," Huynh said. "What else can I do? Who is going to hire me?"

"My people have a saying, 'If you worry, you die,'" Huynh said. "All I can do is do good and good times will come."

He remembers the first time he drove into Dickinson and passed a sign posted by the KKK that read, "No Blacks. No Mexicans." He remembers the lawsuit on behalf of Vietnamese fishermen that drove the Klan away.

He remembers welcoming Mexican immigrant families in the 1990s, inviting them to visit the local temple and ensuring they, too, receive aid in hard times. He keeps a white porcelain Buddha hanging over his grassy driveway.

The laughing figure is a symbol of eternal good luck.

Source: "Texas Gulf Coast Fishing Industry Struggles After Hurricane Harvey," *Houston Chronicle*, October 18, 2017.

Supporting Question 3

Source B	Anthony Bourdain's <i>Parts Unknown</i> Season 8 Episode 5
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Note: Start the *Parts Unknown* clip at the 27-minute mark and end at the 33-minute mark.



Source: Anthony Bourdain's *Parts Unknown* Season 8 Episode 5,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CgEorwIXUvI>

Supporting Question 3

Source C

[“Decades After Clashing With the Klan, A Thriving Vietnamese Community in Texas,” NPR, 2018](#)

Transcript

Decades After Clashing With The Klan, A Thriving Vietnamese Community In Texas

The Trump administration wants to turn down the heat on America's melting pot by creating policies that would slow the rate of even legal immigration. The president believes many foreign-born people are not assimilating to American society and are expanding the underclass. But what exactly does it mean to assimilate? NPR's John Burnett looks back to the 1970s, when large numbers of Vietnamese refugees settled on the Texas Gulf Coast. And he tells us how they've fared since then.

JOHN BURNETT, BYLINE: On this day 39 years ago, the Ku Klux Klan came to the fishing village of Seadrift, Texas. KPRC-TV in Houston covered the story and interviewed Louis Beam, the Texas grand dragon of the KKK.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

UNIDENTIFIED REPORTER: In Texas, the Klan is mobilizing against these Vietnamese fishermen.

LOUIS BEAM: If they are to have this state, they will get it one way and one way only, just like the Mexicans got the Alamo - by storm.

UNIDENTIFIED REPORTER: The Klan says it'll hold a rally soon at which it'll set fire to a shrimp boat meant to represent all those owned by Vietnamese.

BURNETT: After the fall of Saigon in 1975, the US government helped 130,000 South Vietnamese resettle in America as political refugees. They were U.S. allies during the Vietnam War. But most Americans didn't want them in their backyard. Many Vietnamese made their way to the Texas Gulf Coast, drawn by balmy weather and fishing - a trade they knew well - only to be met by hooded Klansmen who told them America for Americans.

THE NGUYEN: Really, they don't like us - seems like discrimination. And they want to try to push us out. But we not give up easy.

BURNETT: The Nguyen joined the exodus from Vietnam and arrived in Seadrift in 1978 as a skinny, bewildered 21-year-old. He launched a crab boat in San Antonio

Bay, whose placid waters are patrolled by pelicans and plied by sea trout and black drum. There was bad blood between the Vietnamese fishermen and longtime residents from the beginning, complicated by the language barrier. People were resentful. The newcomers were getting help from the government. Also, they put out too many crab traps, according to Diane Wilson. She's a fourth-generation fisherwoman in Seadrift.

DIANE WILSON: When the Vietnamese came and first started doing it, they would put 10 where there had been one. So they didn't know, and nobody told them.

BURNETT: Then tensions escalated. A local white crabber was shot and killed in a dispute with Vietnamese fishermen over fishing territory. Two Vietnamese were charged with murder and acquitted on grounds of self-defense. That's when the Ku Klux Klan showed up, and things got ugly.

WILSON: After the shooting, it was like (mimicking explosion). I know several houses got burned. Several boats were set fire to. And I think a large number of Vietnamese left because they were afraid.

NGUYEN: See, really, before, I didn't know about KKK or nothing. But it end up when you get killed - the guy get killed, they show up. You know, they burn two, three boats over here - crab boats. We left after that.

BURNETT: The Nguyen and other Vietnamese crabbers fled to Louisiana for their safety. But many came back to Seadrift over time, including Nguyen, who started a family there and opened a bait shop on the town docks. He still traps blue crab. In his packing shed, workers dump a chest of ice onto a table. The cold quiets down the crustaceans.

The Vietnamese fisherman have blended in. Forty years later, Seadrift is more a mosaic than a melting pot. Vietnamese is still spoken around town. And they celebrate the Lunar New Year. Vietnamese kids attend Seadrift School, home of the Fighting Pirates, alongside Anglo and Hispanic students. And everyone who makes a living on the bay is united against common foes - heavy regulations, ocean pollution and cheap, imported shrimp.

NGUYEN: Really, I say everything right now - we work together. We fundraise - all that. Like, church and all that - we together - the work. After hurricanes, we helped, all that. Yeah, we're good friends together.

BURNETT: A hundred and fifty miles up the coast from tiny Seadrift, Houston is home to more than 80,000 Vietnamese - the largest population outside of California. Like the Astros, the NASA space center and flooding bayous, the Vietnamese are now part of what makes Houston Houston.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON #1: This is Radio Saigon - KREH 900 AM - Pecan Grove, Houston.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

BURNETT: In addition to Vietnamese radio, street signs are in the native language. And the South Vietnamese flag - red stripes on a yellow field - flutters outside of pho noodle houses.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON #2: (Speaking Vietnamese).

BURNETT: Thao Ha is driving us down Bellaire Boulevard, the main street of a sprawling district they call Little Saigon.

THAO HA: OK. So now you start to see, like, Tan Hoy (ph) Sandwich Shop. It's got Vietnamese language and English. And then Don's Cafe is a very popular banh mi shop.

BURNETT: Thao Ha came to Houston with her parents in 1975. She's a sociologist at MiraCosta College in California. According to her, the flinty fishing towns were not the only places hostile to Vietnamese back then.

HA: There was some racism, some bullying from the neighborhood kids. They told us to go back to our country and called us gooks and things like that.

BURNETT: Houston's Vietnamese community, like the one in Seadrift, offers a lens through which to view the current climate toward immigrants. Some immigration hardliners consider these enclaves too foreign. And the Trump administration wants to admit newcomers based on skills and education, not family-based immigration, which is how most Vietnamese got here.

HA: When Vietnamese came in '75 and '80, there was a governmental support. There were government programs to bring us here. And that's the complete opposite now, where it's doing everything that they can to turn away immigrants, to turn away asylum-seekers, to push out those who are already here.

BURNETT: After the war ended, Vietnamese refugees carried with them a fiery anti-communism. Like the Cubans before them, many became staunch Republicans. That political fidelity continues today. Steven Le, a conservative family doctor,

represents Little Saigon on the Houston City Council. He supports Trump's aggressive border security.

STEVEN LE: You know, obviously, I think all countries should have borders and making sure that there's not a lot of illegal immigration, you know, happening.

BURNETT: But he doesn't think the president should slow down legal immigration. In fact, Le believes there's a way to make sure immigrants become part of the larger community.

LE: I find the easiest way to assimilate and to be proud that you are an American is actually make them a citizen - plain and simple.

BURNETT: According to a recent study by the Migration Policy Institute, Vietnamese in America are thriving. Compared to other immigrants, Vietnamese have higher incomes, are less likely to live in poverty and more likely to be naturalized U.S. citizens, though they lag behind in English proficiency.

Mike Trinh is proud to be part of the prosperous Vietnamese business community of Little Saigon. After becoming a champion kickboxer, Trinh opened Mike's Seafood.

MIKE TRINH: I can say it's the immigrant mentality. We work our butt off for everything. We carve a niche out of - from nothing.

BURNETT: Mike's specializes in Vietnamese-Cajun seafood and Asian-Southern fusion that's all the rage in Houston. Trinh leads us into the kitchen with bubbling vats of shrimp and the air pleasantly piquant.

TRINH: We spice. We season everything - onions, garlic, everything. Vietnamese community - we like a lot of flavor. And some people put ginger. Some people put - everybody has their own twist of how they do things.

BURNETT: Across town, we visit an historically Vietnamese apartment complex, where we meet My Linh Tran. She's a 22-year-old math and science teacher who's also navigating two cultures. Tran stands outside of her parents' apartment that looks onto a Buddhist shrine in the courtyard.

MY LINH TRAN: I know a lot of my friends - my American friends - there is shock because I'm still living with my parents. But they don't understand. It's a choice. And if I can and if my boyfriend - I have an American boyfriend - is OK with it if we get married, like, I want to continue to stay with my parents. And he seems OK with it.

BURNETT: Her parents want her to retain as much of her Vietnamese identity as possible.

TRAN: They don't really like it that I have an American accent when I speak Vietnamese. But they don't understand the fact that I have a Vietnamese accent speaking English, as well.

BURNETT: The administration has removed the phrase a nation of immigrants from official terminology. Meanwhile in Houston, city officials boast it has become the most diverse city in America. And the Vietnamese are deep in the heart of it. John Burnett, NPR News, Houston.

Source: "Decades After Clashing With the Klan, A Thriving Vietnamese Community in Texas," NPR, 2018, <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/669857481>.

Summative Performance Task

Compelling Question	Were the Vietnamese Welcomed in Texas after the Vietnam War?
Argument	Construct an argument that addresses the compelling question: “Were the Vietnamese welcomed in Texas after the Vietnam War?” Use specific claims and relevant evidence from featured sources.
Extension	Hold a structured four-corner academic debate on the compelling question.

Argument

In this summative performance task, students will utilize the ACES writing protocol to construct an argument that answers the compelling question: “Were the Vietnamese welcomed in Texas after the Vietnam War?” Students will review their graphic organizer notes and then write a one-paragraph response that uses specific claims and relevant evidence from the featured sources. Responses should include at least two examples that support the thesis. This summative performance task allows students time to synthesize the sources they have read and to reflect on the struggles and victories of the Vietnamese American community in Texas in their fight for equality.

Extension

To extend this lesson further, students can participate in a structured four-corner debate on the compelling question. The teacher will designate four corners of the room that answer the compelling question: yes, no, mostly yes, and mostly no. Students will then stand in the corner that most aligns with their response. The teacher will then call on each corner to share out their responses. This extension allows students the opportunity to share their responses and hear alternative points of view.

Taking Informed Action

Action	Create a historical marker that summarizes the experience of Vietnamese Americans in the Texas Gulf Coast region. Choose a specific place in the Texas Gulf Coast where the marker should be located, a title and a summary of the events and experiences that shaped the Vietnamese American community in the region.
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Name _____ Date _____

Were the Vietnamese welcomed in Texas after the Vietnam War?

Staging the Question

Directions: Listen to “Galveston Bay” by Bruce Springsteen and follow along on your lyrics sheet. Highlight/underline lyrics in the song that relate to the experience of the Vietnamese in Texas. Record the three most important lyrics below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Supporting Question 1

What struggles did the Vietnamese face when they arrived in Texas in the 1970s and 1980s?

Directions: As you read through the sources, create a list of challenges faced by the Vietnamese who arrived in Texas in the 1970s and 1980s.

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Supporting Question 2

What ways did the Vietnamese and local communities resist discrimination and intimidation?

Directions: After reading the sources, write a short letter to an imaginary family member from the point of view of a Vietnamese fisherman describing the ways you and your local community resisted discrimination and the outcomes of your struggles.

Supporting Question 3

How have past struggles shaped Texas' Vietnamese American community in the recent past to today?

Directions: In the space below, create an album cover reflecting the experiences and struggles of Vietnamese Americans in Texas today.

