

Lola Gong Notes Sheet: for students

Slide Number:

- 1. Document: "Application of Alleged American Citizen of the Chinese Race for Preinvestigation of Status."
The story begins with a child who... *[fill-in what you think will be the next step in the child's life].*

- 2. Close-up of "Application..." document: This section of the document suggests that ... *[fill-in].*

- 3. Another close-up of the "Application..." document:

This section of the document says that the holder of this document may ... *[fill-in].* Application claims evidence of American citizenship; therefore entitling Re-entry into the United States. What have you learned from this document about what the Chinese Exclusion Act meant for Chinese wanting to travel?

- 4. Document: "U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service."

What does this document show, nine years later (July 1939)? What do you imagine has gone on during those nine years?

- 5. Document: Detailed photo of Lola. Add any other thoughts you might have about Lola based on this higher resolution photo.

6. Document: Interrogation page of interview of Lola Gong, Oct. 16, 1939.

What is the point of all these questions? What do you think is going on in Lola's head as she is being questioned? Look at a few of the questions in detail. Pick two that make an impression on you and explain why they do so.

7. Document: "Western Union"

What kind of document is this? What is it saying about what might happen to Lola? (Dated April 11, 1940.) What do you think happens to her?

8. Documents: More detailed photo on left, shown in slide 5, from July 1939. Compare and contrast with photos from 1932, slide 1 on right. Is there anything that might make one suspicious about Lola's identity?

9. Document: "Certificate of Marriage"

Jump ahead a few years. It is now [19..]. What world events have happened in the meantime? Where did this marriage take place? Who's getting married?

10. Document: Group photo in Honolulu, Hawaii. 1948

What's going on here? Describe what you see.

11. Documents: Five photos, slides 11-15: Midway Market; man behind counter; woman behind counter; boy in front of store; girl inside store.

Based on all that you know now, tell a story that fits with these photos of these people.

Lola Gong Notes Sheet: for teachers - contains explanatory notes

Slide Number:

1. Document: "Application of Alleged American Citizen of the Chinese Race for Preinvestigation of Status."

The story begins with a child who... *[fill-in what you think will be the next step in the child's life].*

As students work through the analysis of the document, be sure to look closely at its title and the words used: alleged, race, preinvestigation. Have them note that the exclusion laws pertained specifically to one nationality (later to all Asians).

2. Close-up of "Application..." document: This section of the document suggests that ... *[fill-in].*

Acknowledge that the whole of the text cannot be read since a photo is covering part of it. However, enough is clear to show that the section is asserting the applicant's intention to return to the U.S. after travel abroad. This application document, when approved, would be evidence of the traveler's right to return.

3. Another close-up of the "Application..." document:

This section of the document says that the holder of this document may ... *[fill-in].* What have you learned from this document about what the Chinese Exclusion Act meant for Chinese wanting to travel?

Application claims evidence of American citizenship; therefore entitling Re-entry into the United States. This section also means that Chinese re-entering the country would need to show proper documentation, a certificate of residence, in order to do so.

Be sure students realize that this is the only time that individuals from a specific country were required to carry a certificate proving their right to reside in the U.S.

4. Document: "U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service."

What does this document show, nine years later (July 1939)? What do you imagine has gone on during those nine years?

"Lola Gong" returns, entering Angel Island. Let students use their imagination to write this section about what Lola's life in the intervening 9 years.

5. Document: Detailed photo of Lola. Add any other thoughts you might have about Lola based on this higher resolution photo.

Students may make observations or descriptions of what they see: the identification number, her hair, dress, any other features.

6. Document: Interrogation page of interview of Lola Gong, Oct. 16, 1939.

What is the point of all these questions? What do you think is going on in Lola's head as she is being questioned? Look at a few of the questions in detail. Pick two that make an impression on you and explain why they do so.

The interrogators clearly want to put the person being questioned on the defensive, waiting for her to make a mistake. It is not hard to imagine how intimidating this can be. The document makes several points: the government's concern over "paper sons," "paper daughters," and others who might use false documents to gain entry to the U.S.; the use of "coaching books" by immigrants to help them through the interrogation process (see Angel Island Resources at end of lesson); and that Angel Island was really more a place to exclude immigrants rather than welcome them.

Students may take any two questions they like and explain what impression they take away from them.

7. Document: "Western Union"

What kind of document is this? What is it saying about what might happen to Lola? (Dated April 11, 1940.) What do you think happens to her?

It's a Western Union Telegram. For many students today, understanding what a telegram was and the role it played in communication is a mystery! (Maybe for some teachers, too!) This can make for some fun discussion!

8. Documents: More detailed photo on left, shown in slide 5, from July 1939. Compare and contrast with photos from 1932, slide 1 on right.

Have students see if they can compare/contrast the photos.

Is there anything that might make one suspicious about Lola's identity?

The body part of the photos that doesn't match are the ears! The younger Lola has distinct ear lobes; the older Lola does not. It is on that basis that it is determined that "Lola" is not the same Lola who left nine years before, and deportation plans proceed. In fact, it is a mystery as to what happened to the real Lola.

9. Document: "Certificate of Marriage"

Jump ahead a few years. It is now [19..]. What world events have happened in the meantime? Where did this marriage take place? Who's getting married?

It's now 1947. Pearl Harbor and World War II happened and the war is over. In 1943, the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed. The War Brides Act is passed in 1946. Kit Chow Low - no longer Lola Gong - is married to Jack Gong! This is another twist to the story. The marriage is one planned before, an arranged marriage. The next year, Kit Chow Low enters the U.S. through Hawaii.*

10. Document: Group photo in Honolulu, Hawaii. 1948

What's going on here?

Students may feel free to speculate on who might be in the picture and what it means. Perhaps will observe the leis around people's necks that suggest the Hawaiian welcome, Aloha, and the contrast to her earlier arrival as "Lola" in 1939.

In the center in the blue dress is Kit Chow Low Gong, the former "Lola Gong." Behind her on her right is Jack Gong, her husband.

11. Documents: Five photos, slides 11-15: Midway Market; man behind counter; woman behind counter; boy in front of store; girl inside store.

Based on all that you know now, tell a story that fits with these photos of these people.

Encourage students to create their own narrative about what these photos represent. Slide 11 shows the general store, Midway Market, that Jack and Lola Gong own. They are the ones in slides 12 & 13. Ted Gong is their son in slide 14; his younger sister, Theresa, is in slide 15.