



## *The New Americans Series Guide and Activity Book*

ITVS's Community Connections Project has contracted with New England Literacy Resource Center-World Education to develop a discussion and activity guide for THE NEW AMERICANS. Below is an overview of what the guide will offer to educators and community organizations.

THE NEW AMERICANS guide supports community leaders and educators in facilitating an exploration of the stories and themes that unfold in THE NEW AMERICANS television series. The guide identifies shorter segments of the seven-hour series that can be viewed and then stopped for discussion. It offers engaging activities that prompt viewers to look at the commonalities and differences among immigrant transitions to life in the U.S., and then to reflect on their own beliefs and experiences. The purpose of the guide is to foster dialogue in both communities and adult education settings, where immigrant and U.S.-born viewers can share their hopes and fears about immigration and what it means to be an "American."

### *The guide includes:*

- Guided community discussion activities that invite viewers to build on their own experience to reach a deeper understanding of the immigration issues raised in the film.
- Classroom-based activities, including ESOL, that build skills through research and exploration of issues relevant to immigrant and U.S.-born communities.
- Professional development and cultural competence training activities for educators and workers in healthcare and mental health.
- Project-based activities that build dialogue within and across cultures, and which link the classroom to the community.

### *Activity topics and themes:*

**A Global Perspective:** These activities build background knowledge about the history, geography, and politics of the five represented countries, so that viewers can better understand the decisions made by each family or individual. Designed particularly for academic settings, they orient participants to the global factors that shape immigration.

**Interacting Cultures:** These activities examine the beliefs, values, and social power that individuals, as part of a social group, bring to their interactions with others. Using specific scenes from THE NEW AMERICANS, participants are invited to analyze the factors that undermine or facilitate real communication, and to reflect on their own experiences in a diverse society.

**Identity and Change:** These activities follow the journeys of each character as they negotiate new identities in the U.S. culture. Each must grapple with who they want to be, who they are perceived to be, and how they will blend their native and U.S. cultures. The activities also examine the way each character's development is shaped by gender, age, education and cultural background, etc.

**Resources:** These activities explore the challenges faced by immigrants as they deal with U.S. systems and the support systems available to the families we follow in THE NEW AMERICANS. The activities support viewers in sharing information, identifying resource gaps, and building community collaborations and networks.

Visit The New Americans companion website at [www.pbs.org/newamericans](http://www.pbs.org/newamericans) to find original content that includes a section on cultural riches, a myths about immigration quiz and background stories of the film subjects along with updates on their lives today.

Learn more about how community organizations and educational institutions throughout the U.S. are working with THE NEW AMERICANS series by visiting [www.itvs.org/outreach.newamericans](http://www.itvs.org/outreach.newamericans).

The guide is downloadable at [www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans/guide](http://www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans/guide).

To order copies of THE NEW AMERICANS contact Home Vision Entertainment at 1.888.572.8918