

Ellis Island

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Ellis Island Immigration Museum
Statue of Liberty National Monument
New Jersey/New York

Teacher's Guide for Education Programs Grades 7-8

LIST OR MANIFEST OF ALIEN PASSENGERS FOR THE UNITED STATES
Arrived at the port of arrival of the vessel on the 27th day of FEBRUARY 1900

STATES IMMIGRATION OFFICER AT PORT OF ARRIVAL
Arriving at Port of Arrival on the 27th day of FEBRUARY 1900

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Dear Teacher,

Congratulations and thank you for booking an education program with the National Park Service at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum. This *Teacher's Guide* is designed to help you prepare for your class's visit. Besides the logistical information found below, the following two pages feature pre-visit and post-visit activities that can be used as part of your lesson(s) about Ellis Island and immigration. Additional resources are can also be found on our website: nps.gov/elis/forteachers.

Please be sure to read through the “Informational Guide for Teachers and Chaperones” available online and feel free to make copies for chaperones so they are aware of their roles and responsibilities while at the museum.

Cordially,

Ellis Island Immigration Museum



Buzz Words for Students

Detention

Deportation

Manifest

Immigration

Inspection

Lice

Steerage

Tuberculosis

Day of the Trip

- Once you arrive at the ferry terminal and pick up your tickets from Statue Cruises, proceed to the security screening facility.
- Show the National Park Service Ranger your program confirmation letter or invoice.
- Sit, relax, and enjoy the ferry ride to Ellis Island.
- Once your group disembarks from the ferry and enters the Main Building, head to the National Park Service Information Desk (1st Floor West).
- Present your program confirmation to the ranger or volunteer on duty.
- If time allows, it is helpful if your group takes a restroom break before the program begins. The ranger or volunteer at the Information Desk will assist in providing directions to the nearest location.

Other Hints and Tips

- Your program starts promptly on time, please ensure that your group is ready to begin.
- Please make sure all students and chaperones understand that they need to stay together (one chaperone with every 10 students) while on site and on the ferries.
- Remind students that if they get separated from the group they should proceed to the Information Desk and speak with a National Park Service Ranger to assist in locating your group.
- Eating lunch is often an important part of a field trip. Please remember that food can only be consumed in the cafeteria or outside on the grounds if the weather is appropriate—eating or drinking is NOT allowed in the museum, which includes the Baggage Room.

Pre-Visit Educational Activity

Overview:

The activities listed below will enhance and compliment the student experience with the ranger-led educational program at Ellis Island.

Time Frame:

2 class periods; each 35-40 minutes

Materials:

- Oral History (link below)
- Worksheet (next page)
- TV/DVD player or equivalent
- Cartoon-classic, *The American Tail*
- Selection of Lower East Side photos from the Library of Congress (see Day 3, Number 4)

Objectives:

At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Discuss various “push and pull factors” that enabled immigrants to travel to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries.
- Explore the difficult housing and working conditions that plagued immigrants upon their arrival.
- Analyze why immigrants elected to settle in certain neighborhoods and interpret why immigrants continue to settle in similar communities today.

Procedure: Day 1

1. Anticipatory Set: “Has anyone been to the doctor’s office for a checkup? Do you remember the pieces of paper and documents you had to bring, the applications you had to fill out, and the long wait on line? If you understand this about your doctor’s office, then you know a little bit about today’s topic of Ellis Island and the journey of immigrants in the early 20th century.”
2. Mini-Lesson: Explain that immigration has largely derived from push and pull factors:
 - I. Push factors – things that make people want to leave their country
 - II. Pull factors- things that make people want to come to a new country

Using a worksheet found on the next page, students will decide whether these reasons would be considered push or pull factors. Students will then be paired up into groups of 2-3 to defend and give reasons for their choices.

3. Invite students to listen to a few oral interviews from immigrants who traveled to Ellis Island decades ago, located at nps.gov/elis/forteachers/oral-histories.htm under the “Traveling to America” heading. Listen to immigrants like Morris, William, and Emma talk about what they packed, “The Voyage,” and about how immigrants felt as they moved to their new country. After students have listened to the selected interviews, ask them to do one of the following:
 - Write a journal entry as a passenger on the boat. Invite students to imagine the conditions on the ships, and discuss some of the reasons why they and their family left (a good time to scaffold “push and pull” factors). Students should include in the letter what they imagined the new world would be like upon their arrival and where they planned to stay, the jobs they planned to do when arriving, and what they hoped to achieve when immigrating to America.
 - Write a letter to their family in the old country describing the conditions on the boat while on board and what happened at Ellis Island. As a free-write, students can creatively explore the journey to Ellis Island while physically here. Ask them to imagine and explore the conditions on the ship, the types of stories told by fellow passengers, how they were treated at Ellis Island, how they envisioned America, and the different kinds of friends they made along the way, as a few examples.

Worksheet: Day 1

Decide if the situation described along the right is a "pull factor" or a "push factor."
Draw an arrow toward the correct area.

The first one is done for you.

PUSH
FACTOR

Can't get proper medical attention

Your home is unsafe

Not enough food for children

Freedom

Children can get an education

Allowed to travel freely

War

Want a better life

Violence

Crops are destroyed

Lost your job

Can own land

You heard the streets are paved with gold

Government is unfair to your religion

A chance to start all over again

Factory jobs

Pay is better than where you are now

Able to vote for government

Going to meet your husband

PULL
FACTOR

Post-Visit Educational Activity

Procedure: Day 3 (Day 2 is the visit to Ellis Island)

1. The Lower East Side as the “The Gateway to America”
 - Share with the class that, for many immigrants, the Lower East Side represented one of their first homes in the United States. Discuss why the neighborhood had so much appeal (community life, familiar foods, customs, tradition, and language).
 - Ask students: “What are some things you look for when you arrive to a new place? Why would that be important?”
 - Despite having some comforts of home, discuss some of the difficult realities immigrants faced upon settling.
2. A five-minute clip from the cartoon movie *An American Tail*¹ will serve as a case study for some of the hardships immigrants faced at the turn of the 20th Century. *Beginning around minute 30:00, Fievel is wandering after escaping a forced labor sweatshop and then is nearly run over by a train when he hears the sounds of a violin (he thought he was hearing his papa play but instead it was an “Edison” phonograph music player) which initially attracted him to a particular neighborhood. The clip ends around 35:00 when Fievel’s friend is smitten by a social reformer (see #4 below) before a gruesome cat attack.*

When watching the video, consider Fievel’s experience as a newly-arrived immigrant. What are some of the challenges he faces? What familiar things does he find there? Why does he choose to live in that specific neighborhood? Students should be able to list several reasons.
3. Sample Transition: “I want everyone to think about the immigrant communities in your neighborhood and how they are making themselves a new home today. If you moved to another country, what would it take to make you feel like you belong? Like Fievel, what are some of the things you would know about your first day in America?” A brief discussion should follow.
4. Introduce the role of social reformers (see video clip above) who tried to help improve the neighborhood. Some used photographs as a way to show people the crowded conditions. Show a couple photos taken in the Lower East Side in the early 20th Century (visit loc.gov/pictures and search by “Mulberry Street” and “Lower East Side” and look for photos from the early 1900s) to the class. Ask students to consider on paper some of the daily conditions of urban life, seen on film and photos, of that time period. Reflections can be included in the short paragraph (see below).
5. Conclusion/Homework:
 - Students will compose a short paragraph describing the urban conditions in the early 20th Century Lower East Side.
 - Ask students to play the role of a social reformer and consider the two questions below. Emphasize this is a critical inquiry question and there are no right or wrong answers.
 1. “What are some push and pull factors that continue to attract immigrants to the United States? What do you think the conditions are like currently?”
 2. “Where do you think immigrants can get information about protection of rights and access to basic resources today?”
 - A one-page written response will be due and discussed at the beginning of the next class period.

¹ Not an endorsement of this particular film, rather it is the only readily-available clip we could find that is both student-friendly and portrays the immigrant experience at the turn of the century in New York City.