



STUDENT HANDOUT

Coming to America

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Questions:

1. How has life changed from then until now? (*comparing and contrasting; making inferences*)
2. What were the most common modes of transportation? (*understanding visuals*)
3. What conveniences do we have that they didn't have? (*connecting; making inferences*)
4. Which countries had the highest numbers of immigrants? (*scanning; understanding visuals*)
5. What trends do you notice in the number of people emigrating from different countries? (*scanning; comparing and contrasting*)
6. Why might the numbers of emigrants dramatically change from one ten-year span to the next? (*understanding visuals; making inferences*)
7. Do you think these advertisements were effective? Why or why not? (*understanding visuals; connecting*)
8. What pushed people out of their homeland? (*understanding visuals; making inferences*)
9. What pulled people to the United States? (*understanding visuals; making inferences*)
10. What circumstances resulted in so many Italians immigrating to the United States in 1900? (*main ideas, supporting details*)
11. Would you have been willing to work under a padroni in order to immigrate to the United States? Why or why not? (*connecting*)

Slide 1

Life in the 1900s

What was life like in the 1900s?



A group of Russian children pose for a photograph in 1908.



A family at home in Ireland.



▶ Slide 2



Flower sellers on the Street of Steps in Naples, Italy, 1902.



Families in Ireland share letters from family in America.

▶ Slide 3

England, Edwardian Era around 1900

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQV1_B63LTM&feature=endscreen&NR=1

(Runtime: 5:35)



Lost film footage of 1904 London

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1e8hnCRrGoE&feature=fvwp&NR=1>

(Runtime: 1:13)

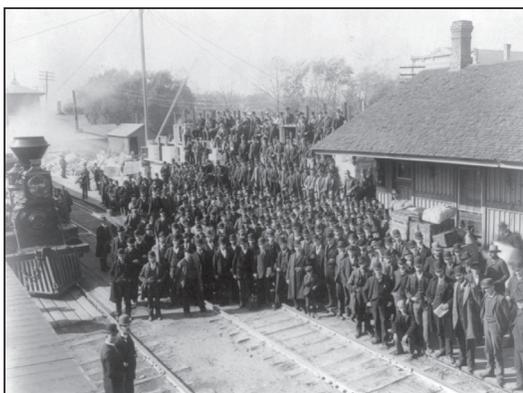




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◀ **What world events caused an increase in immigration to North America?**

Many changes were happening in the last half of the 19th century causing people to move from one place to another. North America and Western Europe experienced an increase in industrialization so more jobs became available particularly in the United States, Canada, and Australia. In fact, these countries needed workers both for industries and farms. Advertisements appeared offering land for homesteading and jobs for workers.



Waiting for the train in Illinois, 1891.

Transportation became easier in Europe and the United States. Steam trains transported people across Europe and with the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in the United States in 1869, travel across the United States became much easier. The steamship decreased the amount of time it took to travel from Europe to North America making passage faster than sailing ships.

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◀ In 1861, Tzar Alexander II of Russia granted the serfs their freedom. With their new freedom, the peasants slowly amassed the financial resources to move in search of a better life. For Russian Jews, emigrating was often a necessity because of persecution sometimes resulting in massacres of whole villages (pogroms). Jews were targeted for persecution because of their religious beliefs. Many of these Jews lived in the Ukraine, Belarus, and Poland, all within the borders of Tzarist Russia. To escape persecution, many chose to immigrate to North America. They made their way to the ports of Hamburg, Bremen, Danzig, and Rotterdam where they embarked on ships to America.



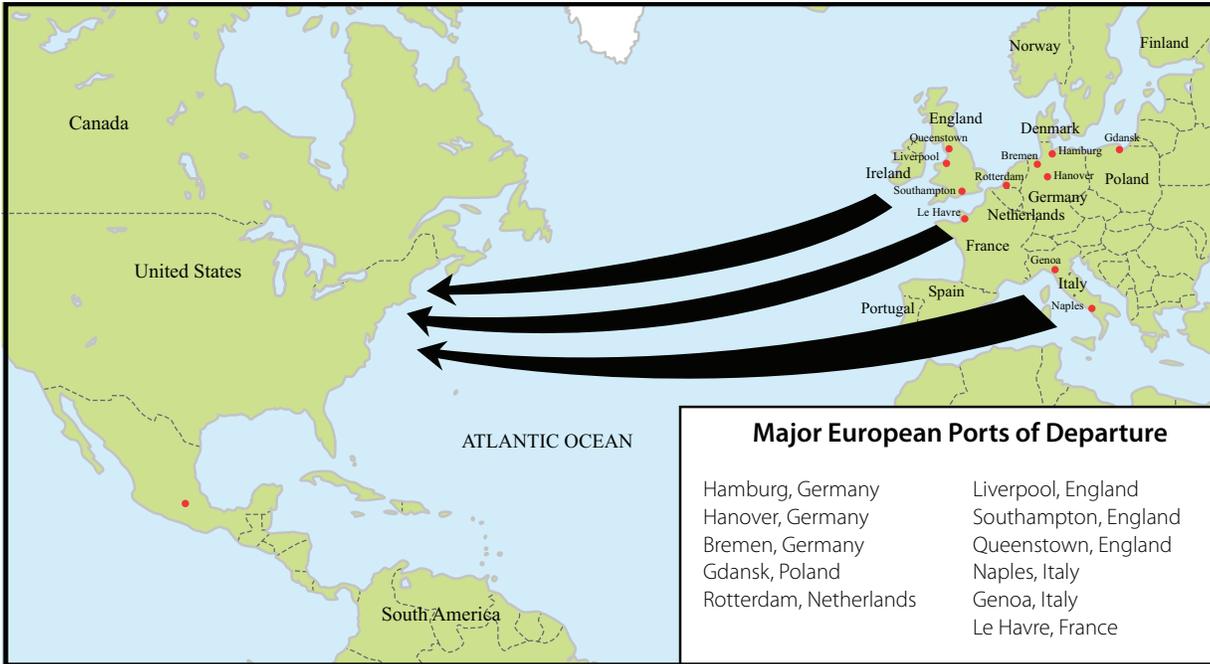
Jewish children in a street of Warsaw, Poland, Russia.

Other European countries also experienced conditions that caused many to emigrate. Scarcity of jobs and farmland, religious persecution, and little opportunity for a better life led many to look to America for a new start.



Major Ports of Departure

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Global Migration to the United States, 1880-1910

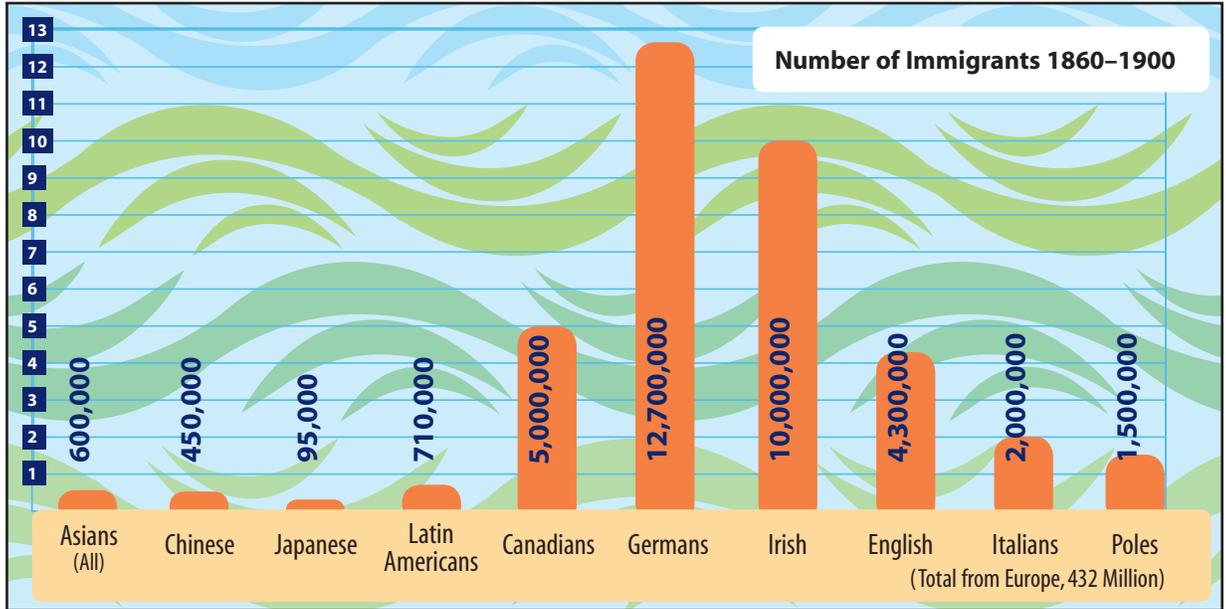
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Where did the immigrants come from?



Slide 9

Between 1880 and 1920, over 20 million immigrants came to the United States. Fifteen percent of our total population were immigrants. Many people at that time were alarmed by the large number of immigrants and worried that they would take jobs and change the nation. When the immigrants arrived, they often stayed in the cities where they disembarked but some moved to other cities and regions. They took jobs in factories or on farms often working for less money than those who already lived here.



Polish emigrant boarding ship.

Once the emigrants reached their port of departure, they often waited several days, weeks, months, or even years before actually boarding a ship to America. If they were ill, they knew they needed to be healthy to enter the United States. If they did not have enough money, they had to earn more to pay for steamship passage and transportation as well as settlement in their new homes. Earning this money often took time working long hours and carefully saving money.

It cost an average of \$30 for a ticket in steerage, and steamships could carry 1,500 to 2,000 emigrants. The cost to feed a passenger was about 60¢ so steamship owners made a huge profit.



Census Data

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U.S. Immigration Numbers by Country			
Country	1880	1890	1900
Northern Europe			
BRITISH ISLES			
England	662,676	908,141	840,513
Scotland	170,136	242,231	233,524
Wales	83,302	100,079	93,586
Ireland	1,854,571	1,871,509	1,615,459
SCANDINAVIA			
Denmark	64,196	132,543	153,690
Finland	(NA)	(NA)	62,641
Norway	181,729	322,665	336,388
Sweden	194,337	478,041	582,014
Western Europe			
LOW COUNTRIES			
Belgium	15,535	22,639	29,757
Luxembourg	12,836	2,882	3,031
Netherlands	58,090	81,828	94,931
Austria	38,663	123,271	275,907
France	106,971	113,174	104,197
Germany	1,966,742	2,784,894	2,663,418
Switzerland	88,621	104,069	115,593
Southern Europe			
Greece	776	1,887	8,515
Italy	44,230	182,580	484,027
Portugal	15,650	25,735	40,376
Spain	5,121	6,185	7,050
Eastern Europe			
Czechoslovakia	85,361	118,106	156,891
Hungary	11,526	62,435	145,714
Poland	48,557	147,440	383,407
Romania	(NA)	(NA)	15,032
Russia (Soviet Union)	35,722	182,644	423,726
Turkey in Europe	1,205	1,839	9,910

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Source Data from: Campbell Gibson and Emily Lennon, "Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-born Population of the United States: 1850-1990," Population Division, U.S. Bureau of Census (Washington, DC, 1999).



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Pushes and Pulls

Immigration the world over has always been about “pushes” and “pulls.” The pushes are the events that cause people to leave their homes to settle in new places. The pulls are the events that attract people to move to new homes. In this *Storypath*, we are going to explore the pushes and pulls that caused people to move from Europe to the United States around 1900. This was a time when many people immigrated to the United States.



New York City Harbor with the Statue of Liberty in the distance, circa 1900.

The difference between emigrate and immigrate:

Emigrate from—to *leave* your own country to settle in another.

(Example: My grandmother emigrated from Norway.)

Immigrate to—to *come* to another country to live.

(Example: Many Irish immigrated to the United States during the Great Famine.)

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Pushes — why people left their homeland in the early 1900s

- War
- Government laws that treated certain people unfairly
- Religious prejudice
- Loss of jobs
- Famine
- Sickness

Pulls — why people came to the United States in the early 1900s

- Higher paying jobs
 - * Skilled workers such as iron and steel workers, paper makers, ship builders, stone masons, and coal miners were needed in the United States
 - * Unskilled workers were needed in factories; manual laborers were needed to build roads, dig ditches, and work in laundries
- More freedoms—for example, freedom to practice one’s religion without fear of being killed
- Advertising
 - * Shipping companies advertised America as the “land of milk and honey” so they could sell tickets to America
 - * Advertisements for workers
 - * Advertisements for land to homestead
- Letters from family members who had already emigrated to the United States encouraging others to come
- Opportunities for women to find husbands
- Spirit of adventure



Shipping Lines Advertise for Passengers



What factors would cause people to leave their homeland to come to America?



Painting by Edvard Petersen depicts Danish emigrants preparing to leave for America in 1890 from the Port of Copenhagen.

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Research Your Own Country

Norway

Sweden

Russia

Ireland

France

Germany

Poland

Austria-Hungary

Italy

Japan

China

What caused people from different countries to emigrate?

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Italy: Why did so many people emigrant?

In 1900, half a million people left Italy to settle in another place. Overpopulation, poverty, and unemployment were contributing factors in the decision to leave. Italy's geography and history contributed to these conditions. Because the country is a peninsula with the Alps forming the northern border and the Apennines Mountains running down the peninsula, communities were isolated from one another and governed by kings and dukes. In 1861, a group of patriots banded together to create one united country resulting in the crowning of King Victor Emmanuel II. While Italy had a rich history by 1861, the country was poor. Many people worked as peasants, shepherds, or agricultural laborers because Italy did not have natural resources like coal and iron ore for factories. At the same time, there was an increase in population causing a shortage of farmland. To get more farmland, trees were cut down, resulting in the rain washing away topsoil and ultimately making the land unproductive for growing crops.



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Italian bread peddlers, Mulberry St., New York.

These conditions caused workers to begin to search for work away from home. In the 1860s, they travelled to other parts of Europe seeking jobs as chimney sweeps, plaster workers, mosaic makers, and glassblowers. With the onset of the industrial revolution, these crafts disappeared as factories could make these items much cheaper thus decreasing the need for these workers. During this time many Italians immigrated to Chicago and New York and also to the countries of Brazil and

Argentina. By the 1890s, an economic depression in South America decreased the flow of immigrants to South America and at the same time, new factories in northern Italy were providing jobs for the people in that region of the country. This was not so in southern Italy where an agricultural depression was causing many people to leave their farms in search of a better life.

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Despite reports of racism and anti-Italian feelings, southern Italians left their homeland to come to the United States. They had no money to purchase farmland so they worked in factories and on construction sites with many settling in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. Some became miners and others found work on the railroad. Some worked in vineyards in California. Because many were illiterate, they took the lowest paying jobs. Some started their own businesses as barbers or shoe cleaners. They tended to settle with other Italians forming close-knit communities.

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Italian immigrants also developed a “padrone” system. A padroni was a labor boss who looked out for his workers. He also took a portion of their pay for these services. However, if you could not speak the language, read, or write, the padroni was essential. The padroni would contract with employers to provide workers. He would arrange for emigration documents, steamship tickets, and transportation to the worksite. If you were poor and had no future in your homeland, this was an opportunity for a better life even if you had to pay your patroni.



Group of Italian boys selling newspapers on South Avenue, New York City. They were called “newsies.”



Ireland: Why did the Irish leave their homeland to come to the United States?

From 1845–1849, Ireland experienced the “Great Famine.” When the potato was introduced to Europe, it resulted in a boom in population, particularly in Ireland. Potatoes were easily cultivated so people had more food and the population grew. In 1845, a fungus attacked the potato resulting in crop failures. This happened for the next three years and many people died of starvation or disease, or emigrated. Historians estimate that during this time one million people died. Two million emigrated, most of them to America.

By 1900, many Irish immigrants were settled in America and could help new immigrants make a new life in North America. Times were still difficult in Ireland particularly for peasants and laborers. Families that owned land gave their land to the oldest son leaving other family members to fend for themselves. With little prospect of finding work in Ireland, especially from the poorest counties, young unmarried men and women had no choice but to leave. Families in the United States would send money for purchasing steamship tickets but others, who were destitute, received money from the Irish government. Eighty thousand immigrated to North America under the Irish Poor Law.



A typical farm home in Ireland circa 1900.

The very poor were also unskilled and were forced to take low paying jobs often being compensated less than other workers. This situation caused resentment, and anti-Irish prejudice grew. Magazine cartoons depicted Irish immigrants as stupid and advertisements for jobs often included the statement, “No Irish need apply.” Fights and riots occurred over the anti-Irish sentiments.



Two Irish women working at home knitting (left) and spinning yarn (right).

The Irish worked hard and improved their life in the United States. They found work as fire fighters and police officers. In fact, in 1900, nearly all the fire fighters and police officers in New York, Boston, and Chicago were Irish. They worked in trade unions, were elected to public office, and became business owners.

Traveling on their own, many young unmarried Irish women also emigrated. Their future was bleak. In the



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past young women were able to earn a small income by spinning yarn from linen and wool. With factories doing this work more efficiently and cheaply, these jobs were gone. With no way to earn money, they had difficulty finding husbands. Thousands decided to emigrate faced with such a future. When they arrived in the United States, they found jobs as domestic servants, factory millhands, or needleworkers. The textile mills were dangerous places with poor working conditions, but at least the workers earned an income. Domestic service was desirable because it paid better and the young women could learn about middle-class life. They often lived in the homes where they worked and thus were able to save money to send to their families in Ireland. They married and had families of their own, ensuring their children were educated and had a better life in America.

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From the old world to the new: German emigrants bound for New York embarking at Hamburg, Germany, late 1800s.

Germany: What caused Germans to emigrate?

In the 1880s, many Germans immigrated to the United States. Many of these immigrants were families from rural areas of Germany searching for land to farm in the United States. Others were artisans and shopkeepers in search of a better life. Low wages and a lack of land and job opportunities contributed to the desire to emigrate.

Advertising also played an important role as shipping companies promoted the American Dream and the Land of Opportunity. In 1882, 250,000 Germans immigrated to the United States. Many of them settled in Cincinnati, Milwaukee, and St. Louis. Many settled in farming communities in the Midwest.

By 1900, fewer Germans were emigrating but those who did were usually unmarried and planned on staying for a short time. Because steamship travel made emigration cheaper and advertisements encouraged them to emigrate, many came for adventure. Germans who had already emigrated also encourage their families to come, often sending them money to travel to the United States.



Norway: What factors contributed to emigration in Norway?

Norway, for such a small country, had large numbers of immigrants coming to the United States and Canada between 1865 and 1910. “The second, and also the greatest, period of emigration lasted 14 years, from 1880 to 1893, when on the average 18,290 left annually—ten for every 1,000 Norwegians.”*

Conditions that contributed to emigration included an increase in population and lack of jobs. Many of these emigrants settled in rural areas in the upper Midwest with Minnesota having the largest number of Norwegian Americans. Norwegians also settled in cities such as Seattle, Brooklyn, and Chicago. Wisconsin, California, Washington, and North Dakota were popular states for settlement.

Interestingly, “the Norwegian Bureau of Statistics has estimated that about 25 percent of the immigrants to North America between 1881 and 1930 have resettled in Norway.”* With the onset of steamships crossing the Atlantic Ocean, transportation became cheaper, allowing those who wanted to return to their homeland to do so.

*Source: <http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Le-Pa/Norwegian-Americans.html#b%23ixzz2WDIXlvQI>



S.S. Angelo (Wilson Line steamship) leaving Christiania, Norway, with emigrants for America..



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Slide 1

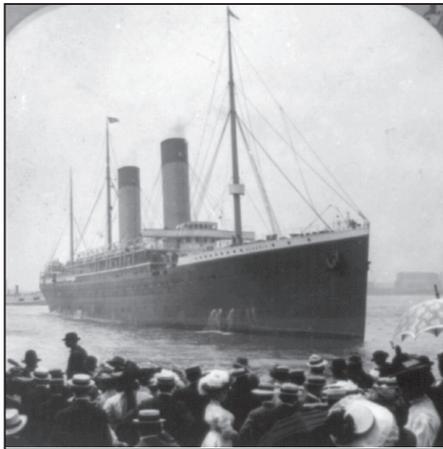
What was it like to travel on a steamship in 1900?

Primary Source:

In the early 1900s, Broughton Brandenburg and his wife decided to study the immigration experience by traveling to Italy and taking passage in steerage aboard the *Prinzessin Irene* from Naples to New York City. The following passage describes boarding the ship for departure.

Struggling up the steep incline of the gangplank, set from the quay of Capitaneria [harbor office] of the port of Naples to the gap in the railing of the after deck of the Prinzessin Irene, came hundreds of men, women, and children, one and all weighted with luggage. Some staggered under the weight of great cloth-wrapped bundles; others lugged huge valises [suitcases] by the grass ropes which kept them from bursting open because of their flimsy construction; and even the tots carried fibre-baskets of fruit, straw-cased flasks of wine, cheese forms looped with string, and small rush-bottomed chairs for deck sitting, bought on the quay for twenty cents each, or home-made ones from the villages.

Source: Brandenburg, Broughton. (1903). *Imported Americans*. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., p. 171.



The arrival of a great ocean steamship at New York.



People in steerage on the deck of an ocean liner.



Physicians examining a group of Jewish emigrants before departing the ship.

Ferry terminals were crowded with hundreds of men, women, and children waiting to board the steamships. Before boarding, emigrants had to be inspected to make sure they were in good health. If they were not in good health, they would be sent back to their home country by the immigration inspectors in America.

Source: Maggie Land Blanck, <http://www.maggieblanck.com/Immigration.html>

Traveling in Steerage





Questions:

1. What did you learn from Brandenburg's experience aboard ship? *(main ideas/supporting details; connecting)*
2. How do you think you would respond to traveling in steerage? *(comparing and contrasting; connecting)*
3. How are the menus different? *(scanning; comparing and contrasting)*
4. Which menu do you prefer? *(understanding visuals)*

Slide 1

What was life like aboard ship?

Primary Source: Life Aboard Ship

Broughton Brandenburg was a journalist who wanted to learn about emigration, so he took on the role of an emigrant and travelled with a group of Italians to New York. This excerpt is from his book published in 1904:

In a compartment from nine to ten feet high and having a space no larger than six ordinary-sized rooms, were beds for 195 persons, and 214 women and children occupied them. The ventilation was merely what was to be had from the companionway that opened into the alley-way, and not on the deck, the few ports in the ship's sides, and the scanty ventilating shafts.

Slide 2



Polish emigrants on the steerage deck.

The beds were double-tiered affairs in blocks of from ten to twenty, constructed of iron framework, with iron slats set in checker fashion to support the burlap-covered bag of straw, grass, or waste which served as a mattress.

Pillows there were none, only cork-jacket life-preservers stuck under one end of the pseudo-mattress to give the elevation of a pillow. As each emigrant had passed through the alley-way to come forward when



▶ Slide 2

boarding the ship, he or she had been given a blanket as the storeroom door was passed. This blanket served the purpose of all bedclothing, and any other use to which the emigrant might be forced to put it. In material it was a mixture of wool, cotton, and jute, with the latter predominant. In extent it was the length of a man's body and a little over a yard and a half wide. For such quarters and accommodations as I have described the emigrant pays half the sum that would buy a first-class passage. A comparison of the two classes shows where the steamship company makes the most money.

Never had the tumult on deck ceased. Singing, crying, laughing, quarrelling, complaining of hunger, the fact that they were at last off for America seemed to rouse in all a desire to say something or make a noise. Some few women who fancied that already they were seasick, though the ship merely quivered now and then from the motion of the screw, sat about with their heads on their husbands' shoulders.

Now a greater stir was brought about by the ringing of the bell that announced supper for the steerage. The majority of the emigrants had had but a hasty bite at breakfast-time twelve hours before, and, being healthy and hearty, were ravenously hungry.

Source: Brandenburg, Broughton. (1903). *Imported Americans*. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., p. 175-177.

▶ Slide 3



The steerage (1907).



Emigrant child.



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Slide 4



Steerage passengers taking life easy on an ocean liner.

From the steerage galley, which was on the level of the main deck forward under the fo'c's'le [forecastle] head, the cooks and stewards began to lug great tanks of food and baskets of bread. These they lined up in a narrow passage-way between the hatch and bulkhead of the galley. The tanks were huge tinned things holding about twenty-five gallons each, and from the first there was ladled out macaroni Neapolitan, from the next chunks of beef the size of one's

fist, from the next red wine, and then came the bread-baskets and the boiled-potato tank.

Source: Brandenburg, Broughton. (1903). *Imported Americans*. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., p. 177.

Slide 5

Europe to the U.S.
STEAMSHIP
First Cabin Passengers

MENU

SOUPS

Turtle and Spring

FISH

*Scotch Salmon and
Hollandaise Sauce*

ENTREES

*Blanquettes de Poulet aux
Champignons
Filets de Boeuf a la Bordelaise.
Cailles sur Canapes*

JOINTS

*Saddle of Mutton and Jelly
Beef and Yorkshire Pudding
York Ham and Champagne Sauce*

POULTRY

*Roast Turkey and Truffles
Spring Ducklings*

VEGETABLES

*Pommes de Terre Duchesse
Asparagus
Potatoes. Parsnips*

SWEETS

*International Pudding
Rhubarb with Custard
Strawberry Jam
Tartlets. Sandwich*

PASTRY

*Genoise Pastry
Marlborough Pudding
Gooseberry Souffles
Lemon Cream*

DESSERT

*Seville Oranges
Black Hamburg Grapes
English Walnuts
Madeira Nuts
Cantaloupes
Café Noir*

Steerage Passengers Dinner Menu

Served at 6 P.M.

MAIN DISH

Rice dish in milk

Barley
with plums

Potatoes with herrings

Labshaus

Ragout

Irish Stew

SIDES

White Bread with butter, tea and sugar

Rye Bread with butter, tea and sugar



Questions:

1. What were emigrants' first impressions of Ellis Island Immigration Center?
(*understanding visuals; making inferences*)
2. How did the emigrants feel when they finally saw New York?
(*main idea/supporting details; making inferences*)
3. How do you think the emigrants responded to seeing the Statue of Liberty?
(*understanding visuals; making inferences*)
4. If you lived on a farm or small village, how would you feel when you saw the Manhattan skyline?
(*understanding visuals; making inferences*)
5. If you lived in a city in Europe, how would you feel when you saw the Manhattan skyline?
(*comparing and contrasting; making inferences*)

Arriving in New York Harbor

In preparation for disembarking at Ellis Island, many emigrants were anxious that they would not be admitted. In Broughton Brandenburg's story, *Imported Americans*, he vividly recounts one group as they prepared to arrive in America.



New York, Ellis Island.

▶ Slide 1

Happy excited, enthusiastic as they [the emigrants] were, there was still that dread among the people of the "Batteria," the name used to sum up all that pertains to Ellis Island. I saw more than one man with a little slip of notes in his hand carefully rehearsing his group in all that they were to say when they came up for examination, and by listening here and there I found that hundreds of useless lies were in preparation. Many, many persons whose entry into the country would be in no way hindered by even the strictest enforcement of the letter of the immigration laws, were trembling in their shoes, and preparing to evade or defeat the purpose of questions which they had heard would be put to them.

Source: Brandenburg, Broughton. (1903). *Imported Americans*. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., p. 200.

▶ Slide 2



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Statue of Liberty, New York Harbor.



New York - Welcome to the land of freedom - an ocean steamer passing the Statue of Liberty: Scene on the steerage deck.

France gave the United States the Statue of Liberty, in 1886, as a gift to commemorate the centennial of the American Declaration of Independence. The United States and France had a longstanding friendship from the time of the American Revolution, when France came to the aid of the Patriots. The Statue of Liberty was to symbolize freedom and democracy as well as the international friendship between the two nations.

Slide 4



1902, New York City (Manhattan) skyline.

People arrived from Europe, coming from farms, small villages, as well as large cities. The Manhattan skyline was only one of many sights the emigrants saw as they entered New York Harbor. Imagine coming into this harbor after being at sea for two weeks or maybe longer. Here was the land of opportunity, but first the emigrants had to get through the immigration process at Ellis Island. They looked longingly at the skyline hoping that they would find their way to the mainland and then to their new homes. This new land was finally within sight. How exciting for the emigrants!

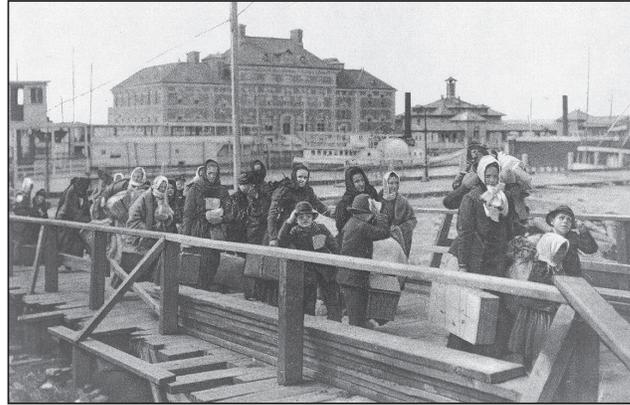


Ellis Island

▶ Slide 5

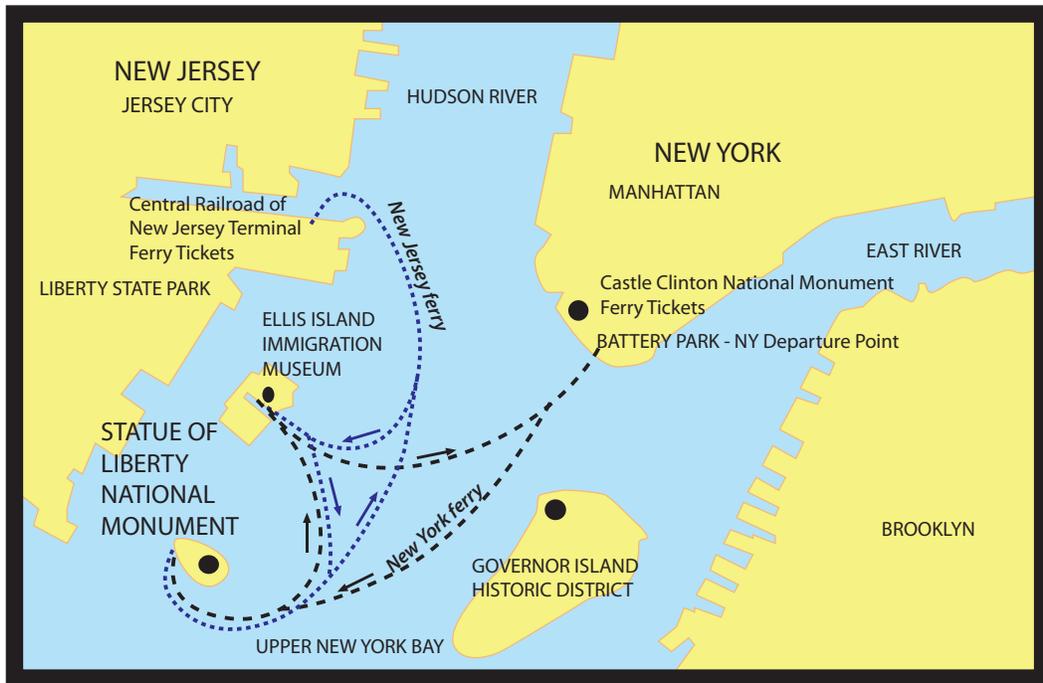


Ellis Island detention pen on roof of main building, where emigrants held for deportation may go in good weather, 1902.



Emigrants moving up the boardwalk from the barge, which transported them from the steamer ship to the Ellis Island dock, 1902.

▶ Slide 6



When emigrants arrived in New York Harbor, they disembarked at Battery Park from the steamship and then took a ferry to Ellis Island to be processed through immigration. Today, you can take a boat to visit the Ellis Island Immigration Museum and the Statue of Liberty traveling the same route as the emigrants.



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Questions:

1. What do you notice about the passengers disembarking? (*understanding visuals*)
2. Do you think they are looking forward to arriving on Ellis Island? Why or why not? (*making inferences*)

Slide 1

Immigrants Landing on Ellis Island 1903

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-2fRjIT-NNk&feature=player_embedded

(Runtime: 2:24)



Slide 2

The Immigration Process



Awaiting examination, Ellis Island.



Emigrants in "pens" at Ellis Island, New York, probably on or near Christmas — note the decorations.

Slide 3



U.S. Inspectors examining the eyes of immigrants, Ellis Island, New York Harbor.



How have immigrants enriched our nation?

▶ Slide 1



47th and Baltimore Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with a variety of ethnic food choices.



Greek restaurant in Sarasota, Florida.

Celebrating Our Cultural Diversity

▶ Slide 2



What special dishes have immigrants contributed to our nation?

▶ Slide 3





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Slide 4

The United States continues to be enriched by the many people who come here for a better life. After all these years, the United States is still seen as “the land of opportunity,” and people make great sacrifices to emigrate here for a better life. No matter when someone moves to a new place, there are adjustments. Just as we learned about the immigrants in 1900 experiencing hardships and uncertainties, these experiences still exist today. We can reach out to newcomers in our community to help them learn about our way of life and the promises of freedom and justice guaranteed by our constitution.

Extending the learning:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4wzVuXPznk&feature=player_embedded#

(Runtime: 28:25)





Immigration to Angel Island, San Francisco

▶ Slide 1

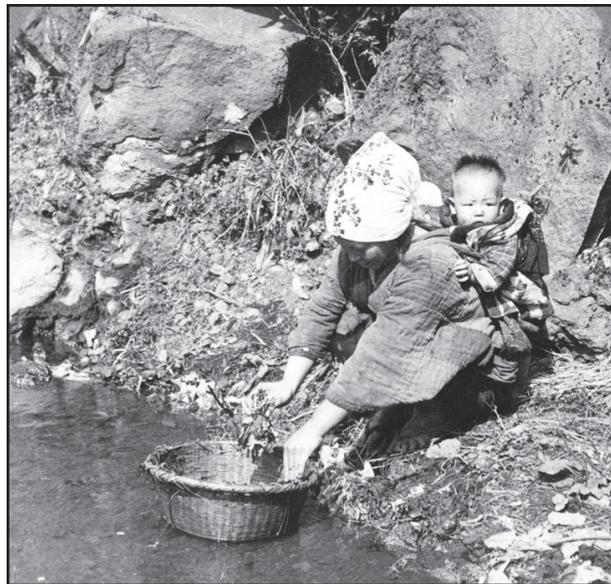


Immigration station at Angel Island, Marin County, California, circa 1915.

Angel Island served a similar role as Ellis Island. Located in San Francisco Bay, the immigration station opened in 1910. Many immigrants were housed on the island from several days to several months while officials verified their legal status. This was especially so for Chinese immigrants.



A street market in Hong Kong, China.



Japanese peasant woman, with a baby tied on her back, washing lettuce on the shore.

▶ Slide 2



Slide 3

The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 restricted Chinese laborers from entering the United States stating it “endangered the good order of certain localities.” Prior to that time, Chinese immigrants were urged to come to America because they provided cheap labor for the railroad builders and mining companies. As these jobs disappeared, Chinese laborers were no longer wanted and racial prejudice increased, often resulting in violence. In the 1800s, China was a difficult place to live—there was famine, war, and little prospect of a better life. When the Gold Rush happened in California in the 1840s, many came to mine. In the 1860s, the building of the transcontinental railroad attracted many railroad builders. The Chinese immigrants had a reputation for being hard workers, and they were paid less than other immigrants. Of course, this often caused friction among workers and many felt the Chinese immigrants were taking jobs away from others.

Slide 4



Bird's-eye-view of ruins of San Francisco after the great earthquake and fire of 1906.

Paper Sons

In 1906, the San Francisco earthquake and fire destroyed local public records. Dating from the fire, many Chinese claimed that they were born in San Francisco. With this citizenship, a father would claim citizenship for his offspring born in China. In subsequent trips to the Orient, the father would report the birth of an offspring or two upon his return, usually a son.

Sometimes, the father would report the birth of a son when in reality there was no such event. This was what was termed a “slot” and would then be available for sale to boys who had no family relationships in the United States in order to enable them to enter this country. Merchant brokers often acted as middlemen to handle the sale of slots. “Sons” who entered the United States in this fashion were known as “paper sons.”

The fact that such deception was practiced was entirely due to the exclusion law. All the “paper sons” wanted was to immigrate to America, searching for a better life.

*Source: <http://www.sfmuseum.org/hist11/papersons.html>



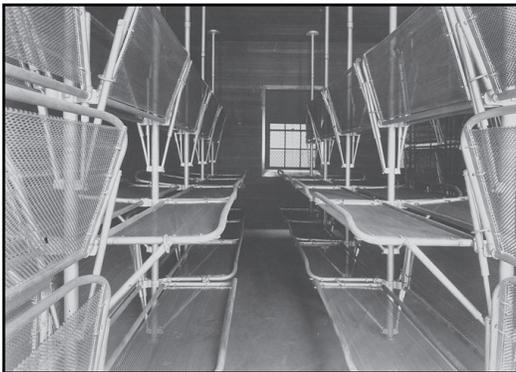
Angel Island

Unique to Angel Island is the poetry left by the Chinese detainees. The Chinese wrote poetry on the walls about homesickness, their voyage to America, and their feelings about how they were being treated. Many were sent back to China.

Here is an example of one poem.

*Barred from landing, I really am to be pitied.
My heart trembles at being deported back to China.
I cannot face the elders east of the river.
I came to seek wealth but instead reaped poverty.*

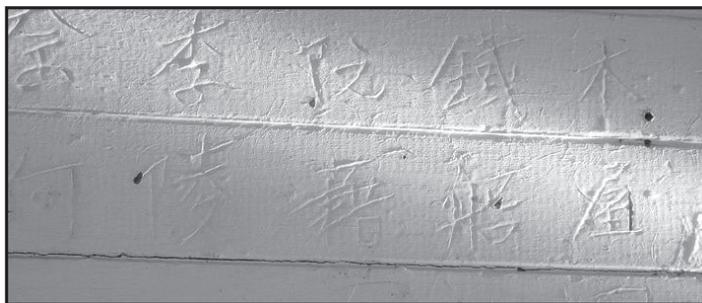
*Source: Lai, Him Mark, Genny Lim, and Judy Yung (1980). *Island*. San Francisco; HOC DOI, p.126



Angel Island Immigration station dormitory.



Immigration station at Angel Island, Marin County, California, circa 1915.



Chinese writing on the walls at Angel Island.



Immigration station at Angel Island, Marin County, California, c. circa 1915



Slide 6

Japan

In 1900, there were 24,326 Japanese living in the United States; of that number, only 410 were women.* Those that immigrated to the United States were often laborers working on sugar plantations in Hawaii or in other agricultural jobs primarily on the West Coast. They worked as farmers, tailors, gardeners, and fishermen. They worked in can-

neries and some opened small businesses. The men left Japan because they were the second born sons. The first son would inherit the family land and business; second and subsequent sons had to find other means of stability. The prospects looked better in the United States, so these men came in search of new opportunities. As time went on, the men arranged for a “picture bride.” Arranged marriages were the tradition in Japan, where families agreed on the marriage based on economic status, personality, and family background of the bride and groom. Sometimes the groom would travel back to Japan to marry; other times the bride would arrive in the United States having never met her husband-to-be. The brides would travel through Angel Island. When they arrived in San Francisco the future couple would search for each other, often with only a photograph sent prior to the marriage. Imagine a bride’s surprise when she discovered her husband was many years older than the picture she received, or the wife did not look like the portrait she sent.



A Japanese lady at home.

* Source: A History of Japanese Americans in California: Immigration. http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/5views/5views4a.htm

Slide 7



Women and children of a Japanese family in Uyeno Park, during the Cherry-blossom Festival, Tokyo, Japan.



Gathering mulberry leaves for the silk worms in Japan.

