

DISCOVER AMERICA

Teacher Guide



Journey to Ellis Island: Exploring Immigration

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Key Themes

- Immigration
- Journey and Exploration
- Important American Symbols

Core Values

- Community
- Life
- Faith
- Liberty



Learning Objectives

Students will be able to

- Explain the role of Ellis Island as an immigration station and the significance it held for immigrants coming to America.
- Describe the journey of immigrants to America, including the challenges they faced and the hopes they had for a better life.
- Identify notable immigrants, such as Chef Boyardee and Albert Einstein, and explain how they contributed to American society.
- Describe the inspections immigrants underwent at Ellis Island, including medical and legal inspections, and understand why these procedures were important.

Key Terms

- 0 1 **culture:** a way of life that includes the beliefs, customs, traditions, art, food, and language of a group of people.
- 0 2 **gateway:** something that gives you the opportunity to make progress or to further success in that activity.
- 0 3 **immigrant:** someone who moves from their home country to another country to start a new life.
- 0 4 **immigrant aid society:** an organization designed to help immigrants.
- 0 5 **inspection:** when someone looks at something carefully in order to make sure it is okay.
- 0 6 **opportunity:** a situation in which it is possible for you to do something that you want to do.

Introduction

TELL Students

Let's pretend that we are going on a trip to another country. Today, if you want to go to another country to visit, you need a passport. **[Reference Passport Image]** [Ask students to think about different items they may need on a trip. Make a list of these items with the class using a whiteboard or butcher paper. Then, ask students what items they would take if they were permanently moving to another country. Add a column to your chart and make a list of these items in the new column. Compare each list as you guide students to understand that when you move, you want to take all of your belongings.] A long time ago, many people came to America. These people, called immigrants, came through a place called Ellis Island. **[Reference Ellis Island Image]** An **immigrant** is someone who moves from their home country to another country to start a new life.

ASK Students

Have you heard of Ellis Island? Do you know what American statue is located near Ellis Island?

TELL Students

The Statue of Liberty is located near Ellis Island. **[Reference Statue of Liberty Image]** She is a large, beautiful statue that was given to the United States by France as a symbol of friendship. The Statue of Liberty holds a torch high in one hand, which represents light and hope, guiding people to freedom. She also holds a tablet with the date that America declared her independence on it. Many immigrants who came to America through Ellis Island saw the statue and felt excited because it represented a new beginning and the chance for a better life in the United States. The statue is located on Liberty Island, which is very close to Ellis Island, and both places are important parts of American history!

ASK Students

Why do you think the Statue of Liberty was so important to immigrants arriving in America?

TELL Students

The Statue of Liberty was very important to immigrants arriving in America because she symbolized hope and new beginnings. When immigrants saw her, they felt excited and inspired as they thought about the opportunities that awaited them in their new country.

Introduction

TELL Students (continued)

An **opportunity** is a situation in which it is possible for you to do something that you want to do. Many immigrants were leaving difficult lives behind and dreamed of freedom, safety, and a better future for themselves and their families. The immigrants who came to Ellis Island were not able to bring all of their belongings. They were only able to bring necessary items. So, many of them left belongings and friends behind to come to America through Ellis Island. Ellis Island is a very special place! **[Reference Ellis Island Image]** We are going to discover what Ellis Island looked like, what people did there, and why it is so important in American history. We will learn about the brave people who traveled across the ocean to get here and the exciting adventures they had when they arrived. Let's watch another episode of Star Spangled Adventures to learn more about Ellis Island!

WATCH ▶

Star Spangled Adventures Cartoon [Ep. 21: Ellis Island](#)



Lesson

TELL Students

Do you know what Chef Boyardee and Albert Einstein have in common? **[Reference Chef Boyardee and Albert Einstein Image]** They were both immigrants who came to America! People come to America for different reasons. Some need to leave their homeland because there isn't enough food or there is fighting. Others come because they hear about good things in America, like jobs and freedom. Some of your family might have moved to America. **[Reference Ellis Island Image]**

ASK Students

What are some reasons that people come to America? Did you know that a lot of Americans can trace their families back to people who came through Ellis Island?

TELL Students

America is a wonderful country with a lot of opportunities. Ellis Island was originally a place where sailors who misbehaved were sent as punishment. Later, it transformed into a welcoming gateway for people from other countries to enter America. Ellis Island was called the 'gateway to America' because it was the place where people entered the country, like how a gate lets you through a fence. A **gateway** is something that gives you the opportunity to make progress or to further success in that activity. Millions of people, mostly from Europe, came through Ellis Island a long time ago. Many of them came on steamboats. Before steamboats were available, it took almost three months to travel to America! But it only took ten days on a steamboat. Even though the journey on a steamboat was still hard, it was faster and safer than before. **[Reference Steamboat Image]**

ASK Students

What do you remember about Robert Fulton and steamboats?

TELL Students

Robert Fulton was an important inventor known for developing the first successful steamboat. He created a boat called the Clermont, which made its first journey on the Hudson River in 1807. **[Reference Clermont Image]** The Clermont was powered by steam, which allowed it to travel faster than traditional boats that relied on sails. Fulton's invention of the steamboat changed transportation in America. It made traveling on rivers much easier and quicker, helping people...

Lesson

TELL Students (continued)

... and goods move from one place to another. Most immigrants arriving at Ellis Island took a steamboat on what is called the “Transatlantic Journey” across the Atlantic Ocean from Europe.

[Reference Atlantic Ocean Image] This is a long journey! Steamboats made it possible for more people to travel across the “Transatlantic Journey.” Some people could buy expensive tickets for nice rooms on the top of the steamboat. Others bought cheaper tickets and stayed below deck, where it was crowded and not as nice. Many people became seasick during the trip.

ASK Students

What is the “Transatlantic Journey?” How would you describe this journey?

TELL Students 🦋

The “Transatlantic Journey” refers to the trip across the Atlantic Ocean, often taken by people traveling between Europe and North America. For many, this journey involved sailing on ships that could take weeks to reach their destination. This journey could be exciting and adventurous, as travelers would see new lands and experience different cultures. **Culture** is a way of life that includes the beliefs, customs, traditions, art, food, and language of a group of people. For example, different cultures may have special holidays, unique foods, and different ways of celebrating. However, the journey could also be very challenging. The ocean was sometimes rough, and people faced storms and long days at sea. Many traveled in hopes of a better life, seeking freedom or new opportunities in a different land.

ASK Students

What were the main reasons people took the “Transatlantic Journey,” and what hopes and dreams do you think they had?

TELL Students 📷

Many people took the “Transatlantic Journey” for different reasons. Some wanted to find a better life, while others were looking for freedom. They hoped to find jobs, own land, and be part of a new country where they could be happy. Many dreamed of a future where they could take care of their families and live without fear. The first person to arrive at Ellis Island was an Irish teenager named Annie Moore. She came with her younger brothers. Today, there is a statue of Annie and her brothers in the Ellis Island Immigration Museum. **[Reference Annie Moore Statue Image]**

Lesson

ASK Students

What do you think life was like for immigrants coming to America? Do you think the immigrants were eager to get to America?

TELL Students

Life for immigrants coming to America was often very challenging, as they faced long journeys and had to leave their homes behind. Many immigrants were eager to get to America because they hoped for a better life, new opportunities, and the chance to be free. Every immigrant had to undergo two inspections. An **inspection** is when someone looks at something carefully in order to make sure it is okay. The inspections didn't take a lot of time – but waiting for your turn did! **[Reference Medical Inspection Image]** The medical inspection was like a check-up. Doctors looked for signs of sickness. Most people passed the medical check. If they had a disease, they went to the Ellis Island hospital until they got better.

ASK Students

Why do you think the inspections at Ellis Island were important for immigrants when they arrived in America?

TELL Students

After immigrants finished the medical inspections, they had to go through a legal inspection. The workers on the steamboat had to keep a record of everyone onboard. The United States government created a form with about 30 questions for immigrants to answer before they left their country. If someone couldn't enter America, the steamboat had to take them back home and pay a fine to the government.

ASK Students

What would happen if an immigrant could not enter America?

TELL Students

During the legal inspection, immigrants were asked questions they already answered. This helped officials check if their answers were true and if they met the rules to enter the United States. Questions included where they would live and how much money they had.

Lesson

TELL Students (continued)

If immigrants didn't have enough money, they could get help from immigrant aid societies. An **immigrant aid society** is an organization designed to help immigrants. If immigrants did not pass the inspection, they could explain their situation in a hearing. Most immigrants who had a hearing were allowed to enter the United States.

ASK Students

Why were inspections conducted before immigrants entered America?

TELL Students

After completing all the important steps at Ellis Island, immigrants were excited and ready to begin their new lives in America. Some found jobs working on farms, in mines, or in factories, where they contributed to building a stronger economy. **[Reference Farms, Mines, Factories Images]** Others took the bold step of starting their own businesses, working for various companies, or even achieving fame for their talents! One inspiring example is Chef Boyardee, who arrived at Ellis Island from Italy in 1914. He worked as a chef in famous hotels and even had the honor of catering President Woodrow Wilson's wedding! His passion for cooking led him to create his own line of pasta sauces, and today, you can find Chef Boyardee products in grocery stores all over the country. **[Reference Chef Boyardee Image]** Another remarkable immigrant is Albert Einstein, a brilliant scientist who also made his way to the United States. His groundbreaking work in physics changed our understanding of the universe, and he was awarded the Nobel Prize for his contributions to science. **[Reference Einstein Image]** When you enjoy a bowl of Chef Boyardee pasta or learn about incredible scientists like Einstein, remember the brave immigrants who came to America seeking new opportunities. Their hard work and determination helped shape our country, and their stories still inspire us today!

ASK Students

What famous immigrants came to America? How did they use their new opportunity in America?

TELL Students

Immigrants came to America for different reasons. But, they all made the brave journey. They knew that our country offered opportunities for a good life. Today, the Statue of Liberty stands near Ellis Island. It represents the spirit of America. **[Reference Statue of Liberty Image]**

Lesson

ASK Students

Where is the Statue of Liberty located? What does it represent?

TELL Students

The Statue of Liberty is located on Liberty Island in New York Harbor. It stands tall and proud, welcoming people who arrive in America by boat. The statue represents freedom and hope. It was a gift from France to the United States and serves as a symbol of friendship between the two countries. The Statue of Liberty reminds us that America is a place where people can work hard for a better life. She holds a torch in her hand, which represents light guiding people to freedom, reminding everyone that our country is the land of opportunity.



Ellis Island Immigration Experience

Objective

To engage third-grade students in an interactive learning activity to understand the immigrant experience at Ellis Island.

Materials Needed

- Classroom setup to resemble Ellis Island immigration station (tables, chairs, signs).
- Pictures or posters depicting scenes from Ellis Island.
- Immigrant identification cards (printouts with fictional immigrant names and details).
- Inspection stations with props (e.g., stethoscope for medical inspection, immigration officer badges).
- Immigrant aid society booth with props (e.g., pretend money, food items).
- Written instructions for each station.

Introduction

- Gather students and introduce the topic of Ellis Island and immigration to the United States.
- Show pictures or posters depicting scenes from Ellis Island and discuss its significance in American history.
- Explain that students will participate in a simulation of the Ellis Island immigration process to better understand the challenges immigrants faced.

Immigration Simulation

- Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a starting point in the simulation.
- Rotate groups through different stations representing different stages of the immigration process:
 - a. Arrival: Students receive immigrant identification cards with fictional names and details.
 - b. Medical Inspection: Students undergo a simple medical check-up (e.g., checking temperature, listening to heartbeat).
 - c. Legal Inspection: Students answer questions about their background and intentions in America posed by "immigration officers."
 - d. Immigrant Aid Society: Students learn about the assistance available to immigrants and receive support (e.g., food, money).
 - At each station, students interact with props and volunteers acting as immigration officers or aid society representatives.
 - Encourage students to role-play as immigrants and immerse themselves in the experience.

A vintage-style map of North America serves as the background. A blue airplane is flying from the left side towards the center. On the right side, the Statue of Liberty stands on a pedestal. The map includes labels like 'Sierra Nevada' and 'Rio Ara'.

Ellis Island Immigration Experience

Reflection and Discussion

- Gather students back together and facilitate a discussion about their experiences during the simulation.
- Ask students to share their thoughts and feelings about the immigration process and the challenges immigrants faced.
- Discuss the importance of Ellis Island as a symbol of hope and opportunity for millions of immigrants.
- Conclude by emphasizing the contributions of immigrants to American society and the value of diversity.

Extension Activity

- Encourage students to research their own family history and discuss any immigrant ancestors they may have.
- Have students create a poster or presentation about Ellis Island and immigration to share with the class.

Closing

- Thank students for their participation and engagement in the activity.
- Reiterate key concepts about Ellis Island and immigration learned during the simulation.

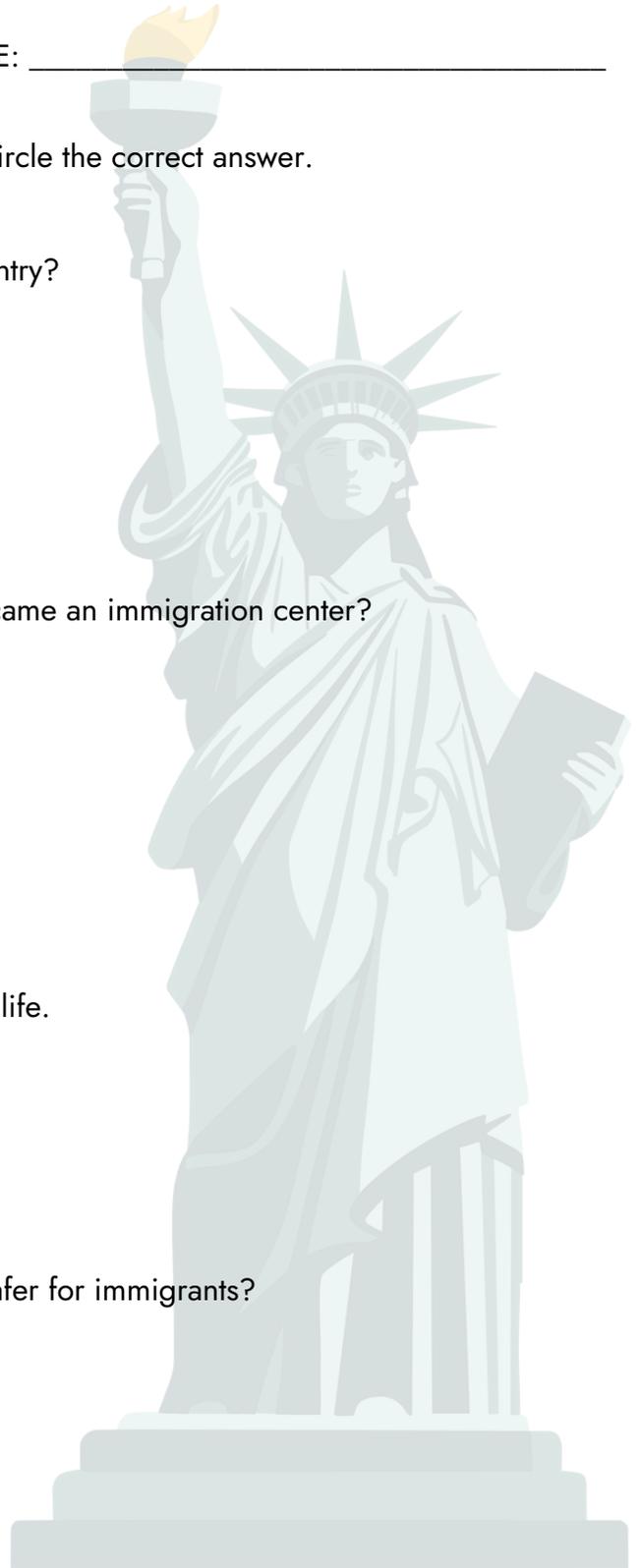
This interactive learning activity provides students with a hands-on experience to deepen their understanding of Ellis Island and the immigrant journey to America.

Multiple Choice Review

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Instructions: Please read each question carefully and circle the correct answer.

1. What document do you need to travel to another country?
 - a. Plane ticket
 - b. Passport
 - c. Library card
 - d. School ID
2. What was Ellis Island originally used for before it became an immigration center?
 - a. A punishment site for sailors
 - b. A vacation destination
 - c. A military base
 - d. A trading post
3. Who were immigrants?
 - a. People who move to another country to start a new life.
 - b. People who stay in their own country.
 - c. People who visit other countries for vacation.
 - d. People who travel for business.
4. What made the "Transatlantic Journey" shorter and safer for immigrants?
 - a. Cars
 - b. Steamboats
 - c. Horses
 - d. Bicycles



Multiple Choice Review

5. Who was the first person to arrive at Ellis Island?
 - a. Annie Moore
 - b. Albert Einstein
 - c. Chef Boyardee
 - d. Robert Fulton

6. What happened during the medical inspection at Ellis Island?
 - a. Immigrants answered questions about their background.
 - b. Doctors checked for signs of sickness.
 - c. Immigrants received help from aid societies.
 - d. Immigrants explained their situation in a hearing

7. What did immigrants have to answer during the legal inspection?
 - a. Questions they hadn't heard before.
 - b. Questions they already answered.
 - c. Questions about their favorite food.
 - d. Questions about their pets.

8. What does the Statue of Liberty represent?
 - a. Freedom and opportunity
 - b. Punishment
 - c. Wealth and power
 - d. Sadness and loneliness



Answer Key

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Resources

- <https://www.nps.gov/media/video/view.htm?id=4BA86258-4024-4710-9329-40BDA66102EF>
- <https://www.history.com/topics/immigration/ellis-island>
- <https://www.nps.gov/elis/learn/education/eie-series.htm>
- <https://daily.jstor.org/the-curious-history-of-ellis-island/>
- <https://www.history.com/news/9-things-you-may-not-know-about-ellis-island>
- <https://daily.jstor.org/the-curious-history-of-ellis-island/>
- <https://www.nps.gov/media/video/view.htm?id=36COB1E7-431E-48BB-9D5E-8E98E0C2E0DE>
- <https://www.nps.gov/media/video/view.htm?id=E5F6E193-4342-4F94-9523-8C13B4A7A7AB>
- <https://www.nps.gov/media/video/view.htm?id=8B7E4516-0E9D-4C91-8C86-78D4E1D8E805>
- <https://www.chefboyardee.com/articles/hector-boiardi-chefs-resume>
- <https://www.chefboyardee.com/articles/chef-boyardee-restaurant-your-table>
- <https://www.statueofliberty.org/discover/famous-passengers/>
- <https://www.discovermagazine.com/the-sciences/a-century-ago-einsteins-first-trip-to-the-u-s-ended-in-a-pr-disaster>
- <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/physics/1921/einstein/biographical/>

Images

Passport



Credit: Canva Pro

Ellis Island



Credit: Canva Pro.

Images

Statue of Liberty



Credit: Canva Pro.

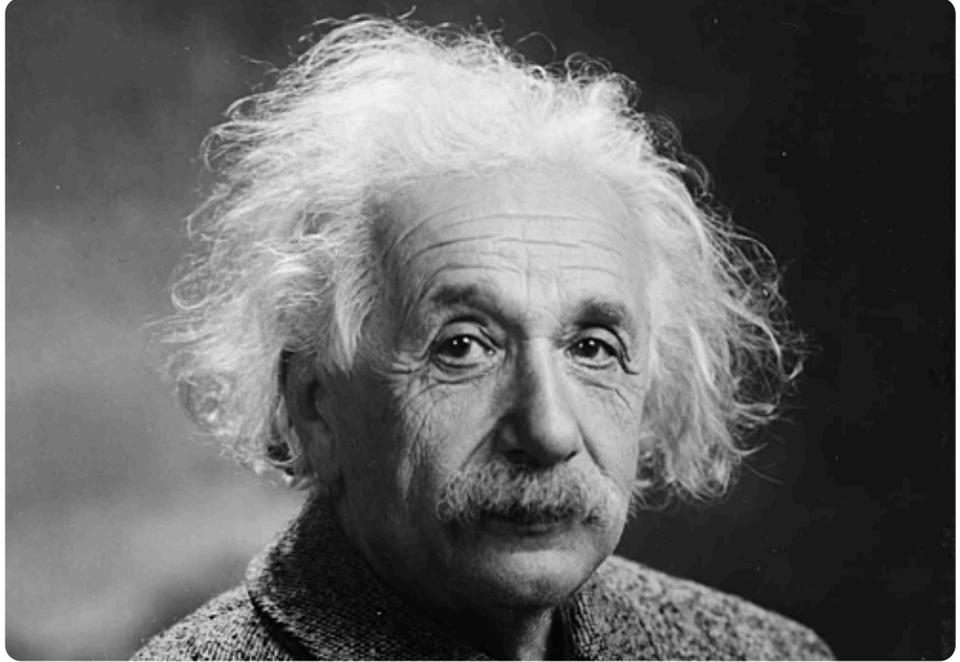
Chef Boyardee



Credit: Chef Boyardee.

Images

Albert Einstein



Credit: Wikipedia.

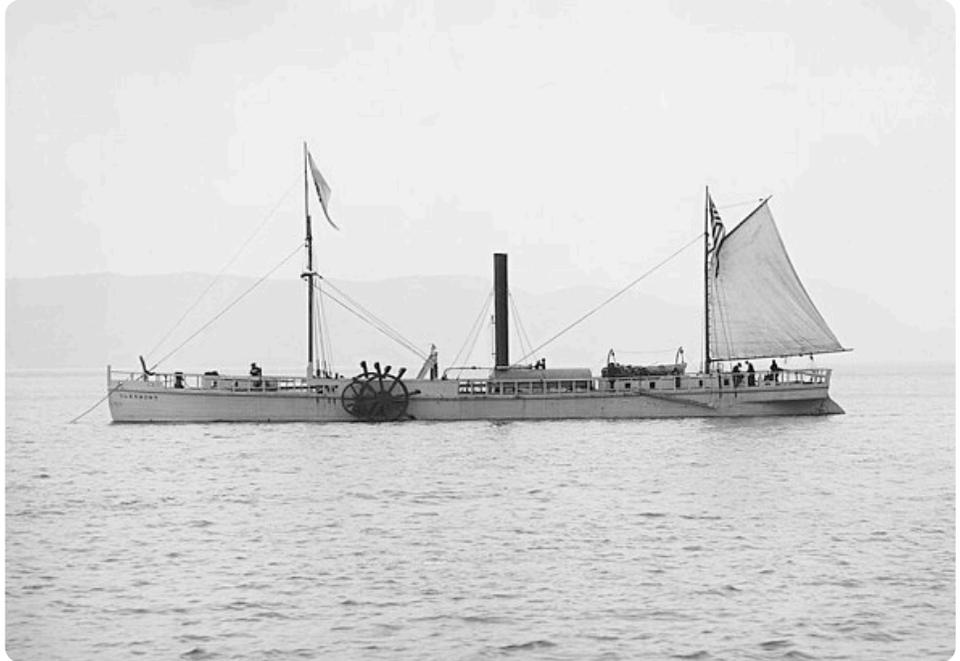
Steamboat



Credit: Canva Pro.

Images

Clermont



Credit: Wikipedia.

Atlantic Ocean



Credit: Canva Pro

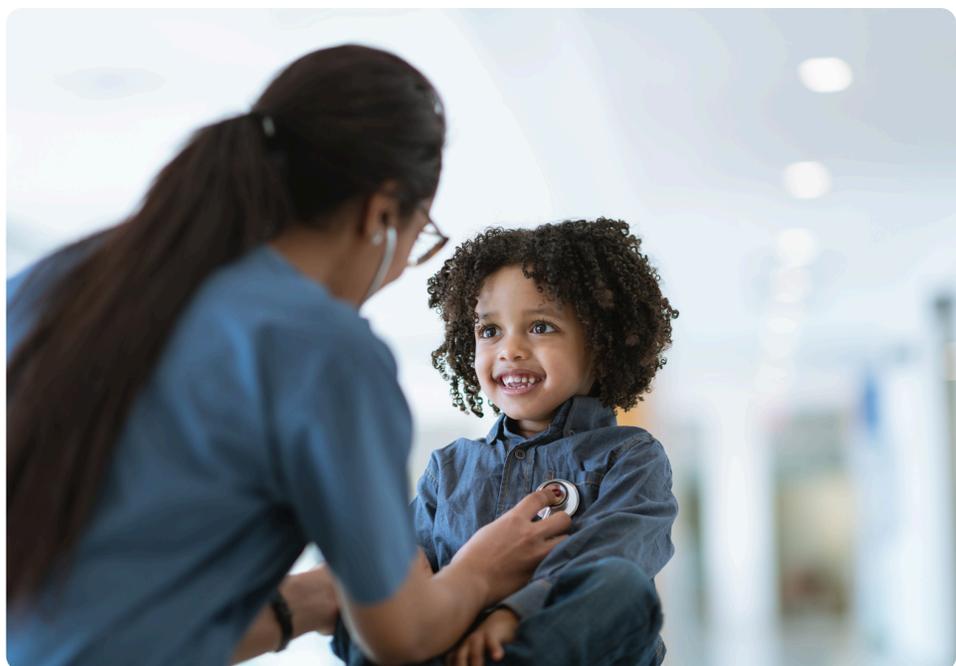
Images

**Annie Moore
Statue**



Credit: Wikipedia.

**Medical
Inspection**



Credit: Canva Pro

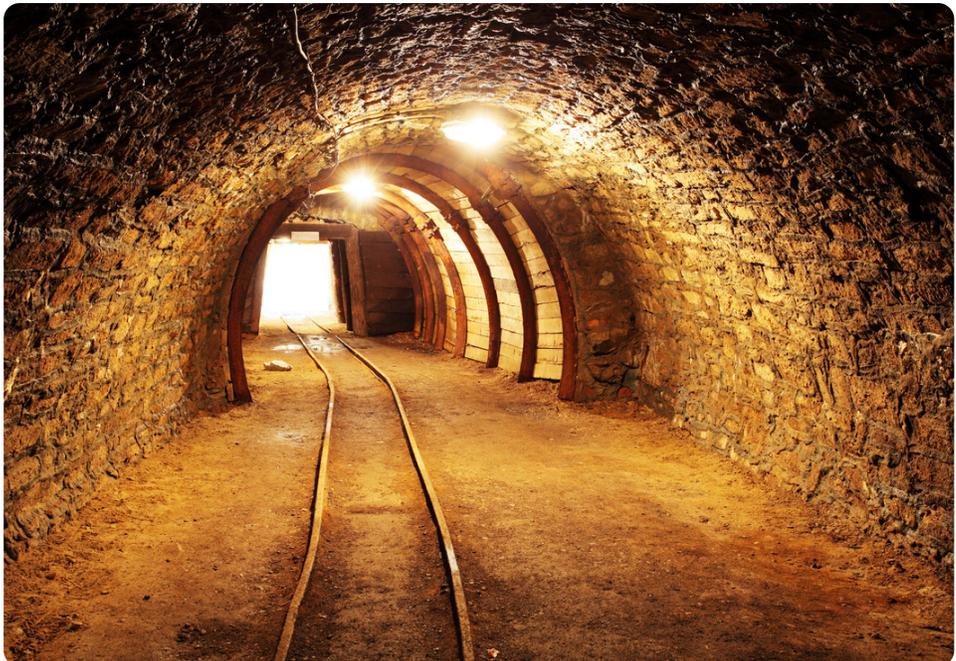
Images

Farms



Credit: Canva Pro

Mines



Credit: Canva Pro.

Images

Factory



Credit: Canva Pro.

