

DISCOVER AMERICA

Course 21 - Teacher Guide



Journey to Ellis Island: Exploring Immigration

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Key Themes

- American Freedom and Opportunity
- Immigration
- Journey and Exploration
- Important American Symbols

Core Values

- Community
- Life
- Faith
- Liberty

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain the historical significance of Ellis Island.
- Define immigration.
- Compare and contrast “push” and “pull” factors.
- Analyze the Transatlantic Journey and its significance for immigrants.
- Describe what immigrants experienced on the Transatlantic Journey.
- List the various nationalities of American immigrants that came through Ellis Island.



Ellis Island - Fifth Grade

Key Terms

- 01 **gateway:** something that gives you the opportunity to make progress or to further success in that activity.
- 02 **immigrant:** someone who moves from their home country to another country to start a new life.
- 03 **pull factor:** something that attracts individuals to a new country like the United States such as employment opportunities, economic prosperity, liberty, security, and the natural beauty of our nation.
- 04 **push factor:** something that makes an immigrant want to leave their home country, such as famine, conflict, unemployment, religious oppression, or political instability.
- 05 **steerage passenger:** a passenger on the lowest level of a boat.

Ellis Island - Fifth Grade

Introduction

TELL Students

What do you know about Chef Boyardee and Albert Einstein? How are Chef Boyardee and Albert Einstein similar? They were both American immigrants! An immigrant is someone who leaves their home country to start a new life in a different one. (Remember, the first settlers in America were immigrants too!) American immigrants come from various parts of the world and have diverse reasons for making the journey.

The reasons behind their decisions are termed as "push" and "pull" factors. A push factor is something that makes an immigrant want to leave their home country, such as famine, conflict, unemployment, religious oppression, or political instability. A pull factor is what attracts individuals to a new country like the United States! Pull factors include employment opportunities, economic prosperity, liberty, security, and the natural beauty of our nation.

ASK Students

What are push and pull factors? How are these factors related to Ellis Island?

TELL Students

Today, we are going to learn about Ellis Island. It is situated in New York Harbor and served as the first federal immigration inspection station. From 1892 to 1924, over 12 million immigrants, mostly from European nations, entered the United States through Ellis Island. Let's watch another episode of Star Spangled Adventures to learn more about Ellis Island!

WATCH

Star Spangled Adventures Cartoon Ep. 21: Ellis Island



Ellis Island - Fifth Grade

Lesson

TELL Students

Before becoming a gateway to America, Ellis Island was called "Gibbet Island." Gibbet Island served as a punishment ground for pirates and criminals. A gateway is something that gives you the opportunity to make progress or to further success in that activity. Ellis Island is named after its last private owner, Samuel Ellis. In 1808, the state of New York purchased the island from Samuel Ellis's family, and later it became property of the federal government.

In the late 19th century, many immigrants began arriving in America on steamships. Before steamboats, travelers relied on wind-powered sailing ships. The sailing ships took three months to sail from Europe to America. Although the journey was still hard, steamships drastically reduced travel time to just 10 days.

Most immigrants that entered the United States through Ellis Island followed the Transatlantic Journey across the Atlantic Ocean from Europe.

ASK Students

What is the "Transatlantic Journey?" How did the steamboat transform this journey?

TELL Students

Steamships changed how people traveled. Because of steamboats, more people could afford to go on trips. Travelers could choose between first or second-class tickets for spacious rooms and meals. Travelers could also purchase cheaper tickets to travel as steerage passengers. Steerage passengers, those below deck, endured crowded quarters and often suffered from seasickness during the voyage. Please read the paragraph below to learn more about the first person to arrive at Ellis Island.

Annie Moore, a 17-year-old Irish immigrant, was the first person to arrive at Ellis Island. Accompanied by her younger brothers, ages 11 and 7, she made history as the first immigrant to set foot on the island. Today, a statue honors the Moore siblings at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum.

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Lesson

ASK Students

What was life like for immigrants when they arrived at Ellis Island?

TELL Students

Please read the following passage to explore what life was like when immigrants arrived at Ellis Island.

When steamships arrived, they couldn't dock at Ellis Island. They docked in Manhattan. First and second-class passengers met Ellis Island inspectors on board and began their new lives if no issues arose. Steerage ticket holders faced a longer process. They had to board a ferry to Ellis Island for medical and legal inspections.

Medical inspections aimed to prevent diseases from spreading. Due to the high number of immigrant arrivals, doctors conducted brief "6-second inspections." They looked for physical signs of illness like fever or unusual behavior. Doctors also checked for trachoma, a disease causing eyelid bumps, which could lead to vision loss and was a common reason for immigration denial.

ASK Students

Why was a "6-second inspection" conducted?

TELL Students

Most immigrants passed medical inspections. Those who didn't were treated at Ellis Island hospitals. Then, immigrants had legal inspections where they answered questions from their ship's manifest. A ship's manifest is a list detailing everything loaded for a specific sea journey. The legal inspection also included questions about housing plans, finances, and criminal history. The majority of immigrants passed. A few immigrants had to attend hearings to resolve issues. Overall, only two percent were denied entry, half for medical reasons and half for legal issues.



Map of Ellis Island/Manhattan

Ellis Island - Fifth Grade

Lesson

ASK Students

What happened during the medical and legal investigations?

TELL Students

After passing their inspections, immigrants were ready to start their new lives in America. While some immigrants found work in farming, mining, or factories, others pursued business, construction, and even achieved celebrity status! Please read the following passage about a famous American immigrant:

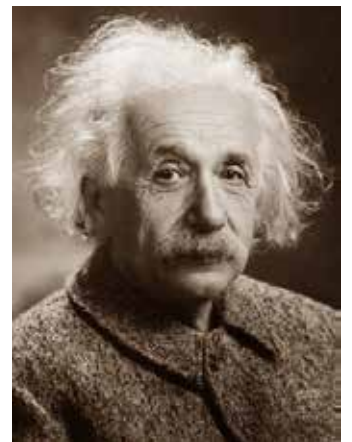
Hector Boiardi was originally from Piacenza, Italy. He arrived at Ellis Island in 1914. He started as a chef at New York's Plaza Hotel. Hector eventually became head chef and later worked at the Greenbrier Hotel in West Virginia. He even catered President Woodrow Wilson's wedding. Inspired by his success, he opened his own restaurant in Cleveland, where his Italian pasta dishes gained popularity. To share his creations with more people, he began selling his pasta sauce in cleaned milk bottles. This led to the establishment of the Chef Boyardee company, known for its convenient and delicious products available in stores today!

ASK Students

How did Chef Boyardee make the most of his opportunity in America? Which other famous immigrant did you learn about earlier?

TELL Students

Yes! Albert Einstein is another famous American immigrant. His name is even recorded in Ellis Island's passenger logs. Einstein is known as one of history's most accomplished physicists and was awarded the Nobel Prize for his groundbreaking work.



Chef Boyardee (top) and Albert Einstein

Ellis Island - Fifth Grade

Lesson

ASK Students

Why is Ellis Island important? How did immigrants contribute to American history?

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 on Ellis Island. It represents the spirit of America.

ASK Students

What does the Statue of Liberty mean to you? Turn to your neighbor and discuss the freedom and opportunities available in our country.



Statue of Liberty

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Student Text

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The Statue of Liberty is an important symbol for immigrants from diverse nationalities who sought refuge and opportunity in the United States. For immigrants arriving at Ellis Island, the sight of Lady Liberty welcomed them with the promise of freedom and a better life. The statue's torch, representing enlightenment, offered hope to those seeking a brighter future. The tablet at the statue's feet, inscribed with the date of the Declaration of Independence, symbolized democracy and equality. Regardless of their nationality, immigrants found hope in the Statue of Liberty, knowing that they were welcomed with open arms to a land of opportunity and liberty.

Ellis Island - Fifth Grade

Ellis Island Nationality Chart

Objective: To learn about the diverse nationalities of people who immigrated through Ellis Island.

Materials Needed:

- Ellis Island Nationality Chart (blank chart with columns for nationality, number of immigrants, and notable contributions)
- Information sources (books, websites, videos) about Ellis Island and immigration
- Markers or colored pencils

Introduction:

- Begin by discussing with the students the concept of immigration and “push” and “pull” factors.
- Remind students that Ellis Island was a significant immigration station in the United States, where millions of immigrants from various countries arrived to start new lives.
- Ask students to review what they learned about Ellis Island today.

Research:

- Divide the students into small groups.
- Provide each group with access to information sources about Ellis Island and immigration.
- Instruct the groups to research and identify different nationalities of people who immigrated through Ellis Island.
- Encourage students to take notes on the number of immigrants from each nationality and any notable contributions or achievements made by immigrants from those countries.

Creating the Ellis Island Nationality Chart:

- Provide each group with a blank Ellis Island Nationality Chart.
- Instruct the students to fill in the chart with the nationalities they researched, along with the corresponding number of immigrants and notable contributions.
- Encourage creativity in decorating and organizing the chart with colorful markers or colored pencils.

Presentation:

- After completing the charts, allow each group to present their findings to the class.
- As each group presents, discuss the significance of the nationalities represented, the diversity of immigrants at Ellis Island, and the contributions they made to American society.
- Encourage students to ask questions and engage in discussions about the information presented.

Reflection:

- Facilitate a brief class discussion about what students learned from the activity.
- Encourage students to consider how immigration has shaped American culture and society.

Ellis Island Nationality Chart

nationality	number of immigrants	notable contributions

Ellis Island - Fifth Grade

Push and Pull Factors

Instructions: Read each scenario carefully and determine whether it describes a push factor, a pull factor, or both. Write "P" for push, "Pu" for pull, or "P/Pu" for both push and pull factors.

1. Scenario: Maria's family lives in a country where there is ongoing political unrest and frequent violence. They fear for their safety and want to find a safer place to live.

Factor: _____

2. Scenario: John's family lives in a region where the land has become infertile due to a severe drought. They struggle to grow enough food to feed their family and are facing starvation.

Factor: _____

3. Scenario: Mei's family hears about a country across the ocean where there are many job opportunities, and people can earn higher wages. They decide to move there in search of better economic prospects.

Factor: _____

4. Scenario: Carlos' family belongs to a religious minority group in their country, and they face discrimination and persecution because of their beliefs. They decide to leave their homeland in search of religious freedom.

Factor: _____

5. Scenario: Emily's family learns about a country where children have access to free education, and there are many opportunities for them to pursue their dreams and ambitions. They decide to immigrate there to provide a better future for their children.

Factor: _____

6. Scenario: Ahmed's family lives in a country where there are strict government controls on the economy, and it's challenging to start a business or become financially independent. They decide to move to a country with more economic freedom.

Factor: _____

7. Scenario: Sofia's family lives in a region where natural disasters, such as earthquakes and hurricanes, frequently occur. They decide to move to a safer area where the risk of such disasters is lower.

Factor: _____

8. Scenario: David's family lives in a small town with limited access to healthcare facilities and educational opportunities. They decide to move to a larger city where they can access better services and amenities.

Factor: _____

9. Scenario: Fatima's family learns about a country where people have the freedom to express their opinions, participate in democratic processes, and advocate for social justice. They decide to immigrate there to live in a more politically open society.

Factor: _____

10. Scenario: Juan's family lives in a country with high levels of pollution and environmental degradation. They decide to move to a country with stricter environmental regulations and cleaner air and water.

Factor: _____



Ellis Island - Fifth Grade

Answer Key

1. Factor: P (Push)
2. Factor: P (Push)
3. Factor: Pu (Pull)
4. Factor: P (Push)
5. Factor: Pu (Pull)
6. Factor: Pu (Pull)
7. Factor: P (Push)
8. Factor: Pu (Pull)
9. Factor: Pu (Pull)
10. Factor: P (Push)

Ellis Island - Fifth Grade Resource List

<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=36C0B1E7-431E-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/>

