Ellis Island: Gateway of Dreams

Book and lyrics by Debra Clinton; Music by Jason Marks

Audience: Students in grades 3-12

Curricular Connections:
Music, Reading, Science, History, Family, Environment, Social Skills, Multi-Cultural

Additional Resources:
Library of Congress: America's Story
http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/progress/jb_progress_ellis_1.html

Learn about Annie Moore, the first immigrant to land on Ellis Island in 1892.

Library of Congress:
Prints & Photographs Reading Room
http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/070_immi.html

Selected images of Ellis Island and immigration, ca. 1880-1920 from the collections of the Library of Congress.

The Statue of Liberty - Ellis Island Foundation, Inc.
http://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/

Learn the history of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.

National Park Service: Ellis Island
https://www.nps.gov/ellis/index.htm

Explore the history of Ellis Island and those who stopped there as they sought the American dream.

Ellis Island was the entry point to the land of dreams for countless immigrants from 1892 to 1954. Some were drawn to America by promises of opportunity and fortune. Others fled lives of poverty and oppression. For all, America promised a new beginning, but one that was filled with risk and uncertainty.

Follow the story of Silvano and Marco from Italy, Claire from Ireland, and Rebecca from Romania - all immigrating to the United States and landing on Ellis Island. Trials, heartbreak, and triumphs mark their quest for a new life in the United States of America. Ellis Island: Gateway of Dreams portrays an important era in American history - one that makes us who we are today - a nation of immigrants.
Filling the Melting Pot: Immigration in America

Analyze the following data and answer the questions below. Data courtesy of the US Department of Homeland Security.

Immigrants by Region

This chart and map show the number of legal immigrants who came to America from each region from 1820 - 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EUROPE</td>
<td>6,388,708</td>
<td>23,024,946</td>
<td>6,015,679</td>
<td>4,287,351</td>
<td>39,716,684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIA</td>
<td>90,698</td>
<td>836,136</td>
<td>674,952</td>
<td>10,538,843</td>
<td>12,140,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. &amp; S. AMERICA</td>
<td>306,513</td>
<td>2,255,534</td>
<td>4,745,814</td>
<td>14,606,684</td>
<td>21,914,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRICA</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>16,759</td>
<td>51,998</td>
<td>1,417,802</td>
<td>1,487,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCEANIA</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>51,755</td>
<td>62,411</td>
<td>209,951</td>
<td>324,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT SPECIFIED</td>
<td>203,122</td>
<td>49,637</td>
<td>13,656</td>
<td>549,404</td>
<td>815,819</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Immigration is complex. Many things affect immigration trends. What are some reasons why immigration from Europe far outpaced immigration from other areas from 1820 - 2010?

Look at the table above. What trends over time do you notice?

Based on current events, what future immigration trends might we see?

Quick math: According to the data, how many total legal immigrants came to the US from 1820 - 2010?
EXCERPT FROM **LOOK AHEAD**:

I don't know what to expect.
I don't know how to survive.
The future is a question.
Will I make a life and thrive or simply fail and disappear?
Look ahead.

I can see her standing proudly
with her lamp held high for me.
It’s as though she’s saying “welcome”
this is where you ought to be.
It’s a place you won’t be hungry,
it’s a place you can be free!
It’s a land where you can have a chance
to find security.

So yes I’ve left my home,
turned my back on all I know.
Turning loved ones into memories
because I chose to go.
My life fits inside a bag of cloth, I’m standing here alone,
and anything that happens, happens to me on my own.

I can fail or I can fly,
I can be famous or afraid,
will I wish that I had stayed?
Look ahead!
Look ahead!
Look ahead!

**INSIDE A BAG OF CLOTH**

The song says, “My life fits inside a bag of cloth.” Imagine leaving your home forever with just a bag of belongings. What would you take with you? Inside the bag below, list 5 - 10 items you would bring along, and discuss the importance of those items as a class.

---

**An Immigrant’s Hopes and Fears**

Answer the following on the back of this sheet:

List the hopes and fears mentioned in this song. What would be your greatest fear if you had to immigrate to a new country? What would be your greatest hope?

Pretend you are one of the immigrants from the play. Write a letter home from New York City. What would you tell your family?
Push and Pull Factors in Immigration

PUSH AND PULL FACTORS
People migrate because of push and pull factors. These factors either entice people to a new country or place (pull), or drive them away from their current homes (push). Push and pull factors are sometimes economic, political, cultural, environmental, or a combination of these.

A CASE STUDY
The character, Rebecca, in Ellis Island: Gateway of Dreams was from Romania. Using internet and other social studies resources, research the history of Romania during the early 20th century.

What was happening in Romania that may have “pushed” people like Rebecca to leave?

What was happening in America during that same time period that may have resulted in a “pull” to come?

Classify each of the following as a factor that “pushes” people to leave their homeland, or as a factor that “pulls” immigrants to a new land. Place them on the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUSH FACTORS</th>
<th>PULL FACTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>famine, drought, crop failure</td>
<td>religious freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>religious freedom</td>
<td>peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peace</td>
<td>violence and crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>violence and crime</td>
<td>good health care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good health care</td>
<td>natural disasters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natural disasters</td>
<td>unemployment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unemployment</td>
<td>fertile land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fertile land</td>
<td>war or revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>war or revolution</td>
<td>job opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>job opportunities</td>
<td>search for adventure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>search for adventure</td>
<td>political fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political fear</td>
<td>religious persecution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>religious persecution</td>
<td>good infrastructure (safe water, good roads)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An Immigrant’s Tale

There are as many tales of immigration to America as there are immigrants. Both images below portray immigrants coming to America from Europe on ocean steamers, yet they are very different.

What details do you notice in each image?
Which image is more appealing?
Which image is more realistic? Create a caption for each image.

Images courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

Choose one of the immigrants from the play: Silvano, Marco, Claire, or Rebecca. Think about that immigrant’s hopes, dreams, and fears. Write a sequel to the immigrant’s story from the play Ellis Island: Gateway of Dreams.
Many people with different skills and talents work together to make a production such as *Ellis Island: Gateway of Dreams* come to life. Can you match these theater jobs with their descriptions?

- **set designer**: a person who plays a role or character in stage plays, motion pictures, television broadcasts, etc.

- **playwright**: a person who creates the look of each character by designing clothes and accessories the actors will wear in performance.

- **stage manager**: this person’s job is to pull together all the pieces and parts of a play—the script, actors, set, costumes, lighting and sound, and music to create a production.

- **actor**: this job focuses on using light to create effects that match the mood of various scenes in a performance.

- **costume designer**: this person is a writer of scripts for plays. The script tells a story through the actions and words of the characters.

- **lighting designer**: this person creates the physical surroundings of a play, including any scenery, furniture, or props used throughout the play.

- **director**: this person helps the director and helps organize the actors, designers, stage crew, and technicians throughout the production of a play.
Theater Etiquette

We are delighted to have you as our guest and want your experience to be an enjoyable one. Attending a live performance is very different from watching television or going to the movies. You are not simply watching what is happening on the stage; you play an active role. The artists have worked very hard to prepare this performance for you, so please remember the golden rule:

_Treat others the way you would like to be treated._

Here are a few guidelines to help you—and your fellow audience members—enjoy the performance:

**Be Prepared**
- Arrive early. Please plan to arrive at the theater at least 15 minutes before curtain time. Be generous in your estimation of travel and parking time.
- Plan ahead to meet anyone in your group who travels separately. Once inside the theater, ‘saving seats’ for friends will only prove frustrating to all involved.
- Remember to turn off all beepers, cell phones, and watch alarms before entering the theater (And then double check!) and leave all laser pointers, cameras, etc. at home.

**Be Courteous**
- Walk, don’t run, when entering or leaving the theater. The term “break a leg” means good luck to the performers not the audience!
- Do not take food or drink into the theater, and please — NO GUM!
- Please take children out of the theater if they become restless and disrupt other’s ability to listen.
- Actors love to hear applause—it shows how much you enjoyed the performance. If you like something, applaud— if not, don’t. It’s rude to boo or whistle.

**Be Aware**
- It’s ok to talk _quietly_ with those sitting next to you before the performance; however, when the lights dim, it’s time to be quiet and direct your attention to the stage.
- Practice the International Sign of “Quiet Please!” by _silently_ raising your finger to your lips to politely remind a neighbor or friend. You communicate your wish for quiet without adding to the distraction. Excessive noise or motion can disturb not only other audience members, but the performers as well.
- Take everything you brought with you when you leave. Once the cast has taken their bows and the house lights come up, check under your seat for any items (coats, backpacks, etc) you might have placed there.

**Be Open**
- A good audience member is open to new sights and sounds. Enjoy!

Getting to Ames

Stephens Auditorium is part of the Iowa State Center located at the corner of University Boulevard (formerly Elwood Drive) and Lincoln Way in Ames, Iowa. Plentiful parking is available on all sides of the building. Please follow traffic directors’ instructions if you are asked to park in a specific location. Handicapped-accessible and limited-mobility parking is available on the west side of the auditorium.