

Hello New York!

1 Reading

Read the introduction and part of the diary of an immigrant called Helen Meinwald who arrived in New York in 1920 when she was 14 years old. Have you ever been on a long boat voyage like Helen?

Ellis Island is in New York Harbor, near the Statue of Liberty. Between 1892 and 1954 more than 12 million immigrants entered the United States through Ellis Island. Usually immigrants stayed on Ellis Island for a few hours. They answered some questions, and a doctor made sure they were healthy. But sometimes immigrants stayed on the island for up to a year if they were sick.

March 6

We said goodbye to Poland today and to all my friends and family. My grandparents can't come with us. I feel very sad.

March 9

It is my third day on the boat now and it's awful. Mother, Father, Lawrence, and I share a bunk bed in the bottom of the boat. It's very crowded and I can't sleep. Why does everybody want to go to the USA? Mother is worried because we don't have much food left.

March 12

I felt very seasick today. I asked father to throw me over the side of the boat into the ocean. The ocean was very rough, and Lawrence was frightened. I feel terrible.

March 14

Today I feel much better. Father says we are almost there. He talked to me about our new lives in America. Aunt and Uncle Cohen live there already. They have a house with two bedrooms. I am very excited about living in America.

March 17

Today was a great day. Mother was walking on deck when she saw the Statue of Liberty. She ran to find Lawrence and me. It was like a party on the boat. Everybody was singing and dancing - we were all delighted to be in America.

March 20

My aunt and uncle came to take us to their home. They were very pleased to see us. I feel very free and happy. We stayed on Ellis Island for three days, but now the awful boat trip is over and my new life is about to start.

2 Comprehension

Answer the questions.

- 1 How many immigrants came through Ellis Island into the USA? _____

- 2 How long did the immigrants stay on Ellis Island? _____

- 3 Where was Helen Meinwald from? _____

- 4 Who did she travel to America with? _____

- 5 Did she have a good trip? _____

- 6 How long did she stay on Ellis Island for? _____

- 7 Was she happy to be in America? _____

3 Vocabulary

Complete the chart with these adjectives.

awful delighted excited frightened
happy pleased terrible worried

positive	negative

Answer the questions.

- 1 Which two negative words mean the same?

- 2 How would you feel if you saw a ghost?

- 3 How do you feel before an important test?

- 4 Which two words mean the same as happy?

- 5 How do you feel on your birthday?

4 Writing

Look at this information about another immigrant who came to America through Ellis Island.

Name: *George Cholakians*
 Age when arrived in USA: *16*
 Country of birth: *Armenia*
 Year arrived in USA: *1921*
 Journey time: *14 days*
 Reason for immigration: *to be with his father*
 Who did he travel with: *nobody*
 Who did he leave behind: *mother and two sisters*

Imagine you are this person and write a letter to your family back home telling them about the voyage and your new life. You may want to answer some of these questions:

- How was the voyage?*
- Did you meet anyone on the boat?*
- How did you feel about going to America?*
- How did you feel about leaving your mother and sisters behind?*
- How long did you stay on Ellis Island for?*
- How did you feel when you saw your father?*

August 12, 1921

Dear Mother,
 I am writing to you with father sitting next to me. I am in America and very happy to be here...