

culture

Hello New York! – Teacher's Notes

Aim

This lesson looks at immigration into America through New York at the beginning of the 20th century. Students will read the diary of a girl who came to the USA as an immigrant and will learn some vocabulary to describe emotions. They will then write an imaginary letter from a newly arrived immigrant to his family.

Warmer

Show students a picture of the Statue of Liberty – there are lots on the internet to download or you can do a simple drawing of it (which could be funnier!). Ask students what it is called and where it is.

1 Reading

- Pre-teach any vocabulary that your students might not know. The following are some suggestions: immigrant, bunk bed, seasick, harbour, crowded, on deck.
- Students answer the comprehension questions.

Answers

- 1 *12 million immigrants came through Ellis Island between 1892 and 1954.*
- 2 *From a few hours up to a year.*
- 3 *She was from Poland.*
- 4 *Her mother, father and Lawrence (probably her brother).*
- 5 *She didn't have a good journey. It took eleven days. She was seasick and the boat was very crowded. They didn't have much food.*
- 6 *She had to stay on Ellis Island for three days.*
- 7 *She was very happy to be in America and felt free there.*
- 8 *There is no right or wrong answer. She does not say if she missed Poland, but she did not see her grandparents again or her Polish friends, so students might assume she missed Poland a bit.*

2 Vocabulary

- Students must decide if the adjectives have a positive or negative meaning. They are all in the text and students can use it to help them.

Answers

Positive – happy, delighted, excited, pleased.
Negative – awful, horrid, terrible, worried, frightened.

Which three negative words mean the same? – *awful, horrid and terrible*

How would you feel if you saw a ghost? – *frightened*

How do you feel before an important test? – *worried*

Which two words mean the same as happy? – *delighted and pleased*

How do you feel on your birthday? – *excited*

3 Writing

- Encourage students to use their imagination and some of the adjectives that they have worked on in this lesson to describe how the young boy felt when he traveled to America on his own. The questions will help them to write the letter. Students should also use the reading to help them with their letter.

Homework ideas

Students could write a letter from the mother or sisters in reply to the one they wrote in class.

Here are some websites that you or your students might find useful for more information about Ellis Island and the immigrants that came in to New York.

Websites

<http://www.nps.gov/stli/> - statue of liberty website
<http://www.ellisland.org/lmmexp/index.asp> - Ellis Island history
http://www.statueofliberty.org/Ellis_History.html - Ellis Island history
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/seymour/index.htm> - read first hand accounts of immigrants' journeys to America