

Immigration
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Immigration is moving from one country to another, usually for the purpose of freedom of religion, freedom to work, and freedom to live in a democratic society. At the turn of the century, there was a place in New York where immigrants first entered our country. This place was called Ellis Island.

Twenty-two million people passed through Ellis Island before they were admitted to the United States. As ships sailed in from Europe, the immigrants had to endure interviews and medical exams before they could make their entry to this new country. The trip to America from Europe took two months, and if someone did not pass the health exam, they were placed back onto a ship to make the two-month trip back to their homeland. For people that did pass the inspection, they were resolved to the fact that they would probably never see their old country again. In one respect, it was a sad time, but on another note, it was a happy time because of all the promise people were finding in America.

Many Americans today have their roots in a foreign country. My great-great-grandfather came to America purely by chance. He did not know there would be more freedom, and his children, and even his great-grandchildren would have a better life. He also did not know that he could practice his religion in the United States without being persecuted. He did not know he could stop worry about whispering his prayers quietly. Getting to board the ship to America was quite by chance.

On the day that my great-great-grandfather boarded the ship to America, he did not know where he was going, but he knew it must be better than from where he came. In fact, there were two ships that day side by side at the dock, going to America. Half way through the journey, the ship next to the one my great-great-grandfather was on, sank like a rock. Finally my great-great-

grandfather made it to America, endured the interviews at Ellis Island, and ended up spending the rest of his life in his new country, and this is where I know I will stay as well.