

Dear Teacher,

Congratulations and thank you for booking an education program with the National Park Service at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum. This *Teacher's Guide* is designed to help you prepare for your class's visit. Besides the logistical information found below, the following two pages feature pre-visit and post-visit activities that can be used as part of your lesson(s) about Ellis Island and immigration. Additional resources are can also be found on our website: nps.gov/elis/forteachers.

Please be sure to read through the “Informational Guide for Teachers and Chaperones” available online and feel free to make copies for chaperones so they are aware of their roles and responsibilities while at the museum.

Cordially,

Ellis Island Immigration Museum



Buzz Words for Students

Detention

Deportation

Manifest

Immigration

Inspection

Lice

Steerage

Trachoma

Day of the Trip

- Once you arrive at the ferry terminal and pick up your tickets from Statue Cruises, proceed to the security screening facility.
- Show the National Park Service Ranger your program confirmation letter or invoice.
- Sit, relax, and enjoy the ferry ride to Ellis Island.
- Once your group disembarks from the ferry and enters the Main Building, head to the National Park Service Information Desk (1st Floor West).
- Present your program confirmation to the ranger or volunteer at the desk.
- If time allows, it is helpful if your group takes a restroom break before the program begins. The ranger or volunteer at the Information Desk will assist in providing directions to the nearest location.

Other Hints and Tips

- Your program starts promptly on time, please ensure that your group is ready to begin.
- Please make sure all students and chaperones understand that they need to stay together (one chaperone with every 10 students) while on site and on the ferries.
- Remind students that if they get separated from the group they should proceed to the Information Desk and speak with a National Park Service Ranger to assist in locating your group.
- Eating lunch is often an important part of a field trip. Please remember that food can only be consumed in the cafeteria or outside on the grounds if the weather is appropriate—eating or drinking is NOT allowed in the museum, which includes the Baggage Room.

Pre-Visit Educational Activities

Overview:

The activities listed below will enhance and compliment the student experience with the ranger-led educational program at Ellis Island.

Time Frame:

35-40 minutes

Materials:

- Masking Tape and a clear area of a classroom
- Oral History ([link below](#))
- Onion Paper (if available for Day 1 Letter or Journal entry for authenticity)
- 3.5x5 or 4x6 Index Cards
- Multiple copies of sample postcard on page 4, scissors and glue (optional)

Objectives:

At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Discuss some of the feelings immigrants encountered as they traveled to the United States
- Analyze how “push and pull” factors influenced immigrants decisions to leave their homeland
- Summarize the story about being processed at Ellis Island
- Reflect on the Ellis Island experience in a visual or written way

Procedure: Day 1

1. Pre-set the classroom so that there are three 3ft x 3ft square boxes marked on the floor using the masking tape. Ask one student to stand alone in one box (replicates 1st Class). Then have two students stand in the middle box at the same time (replicates 2nd Class). In the third box have approximately six students stand together (replicates 3rd Class or Steerage). Instruct the students to attempt to move within their box without stepping on the lines.
 - Starting with the student that was alone in the box, ask how they feel about being able to move with the space given. Repeat for the students in the middle box. Finally, ask the last section filled to imagine how they would feel about being stuck in that space for two to three weeks with little fresh air or good food. “If you can imagine how hard it might be to travel like that, then you know a little bit about today’s lesson on how most passengers immigrated to America.”
2. Invite students to listen to a few oral interviews from immigrants who traveled to Ellis Island decades ago, located at nps.gov/elis/forteachers/oral-histories.htm under the heading “Traveling to America.” Listen to immigrants like Morris, William, and Emma talk about their steamship voyage and about how immigrants felt as they moved to their new country. After students have listened to the selected interviews, ask them to do one of the following:
 - Write a journal entry (on onion paper if possible) as a passenger on the boat. Students should imagine the conditions on the ships, and discuss some of the reasons why they and their family left (a good time to scaffold “push and pull” factors). Students should include in the letter what they imagined the new world would be like upon their arrival and where they planned to stay, the jobs they planned to do when arriving, and what they hoped to achieve when immigrating to America.
 - Write a letter (on onion paper if possible) to their family in the old country describing the conditions on the boat while on board. As a free-write, students can creatively explore the journey to Ellis Island while physically here. Ask them to imagine and explore the conditions on the ship, the types of stories told by fellow passengers, how they were treated at Ellis Island, how they envisioned America, and the different kinds of friends they made along the way, as a few examples.

Post-Visit Educational Activity

Procedure: Day 3 (Day 2 is the visit to Ellis Island)

Invite students to write three to five sentences to their families back home describing their inspection at Ellis Island. Using a 4x6 index card or copies of historic postcard below (from Ellis Island's museum collection), students can construct handwritten messages describing their imagined experience through Ellis Island. Make it more authentic by gluing the historic postcard photo from Ellis Island's collection to the back of the written side to make an actual two-sided postcard.



Post Card

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR CORRESPONDENCE

FOR ADDRESS ONLY

PLACE
STAMP HERE
—
DOMESTIC
ONE CENT
—
FOREIGN
TWO CENTS

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