



Part 1: Reading texts

Ellis Island - the gateway to America

Between 1880 and 1930, over 27 million people from across the world entered the United States. Around 12 million of those people came through an island in New York Harbour called Ellis Island.

Ellis Island was the home of an immigration station which opened in 1892 and closed in 1954. ¹Officials here gave the passengers health checks and questioned them, sometimes for a long time.

The people who went through Ellis Island were usually from Europe. They came from countries such as Italy, Russia or Poland. Others were from Ireland or the UK.

These passengers were frequently leaving poor or dangerous places and they wanted to start a new life. Often, they came to join other family members.

The travellers came by ship on the dangerous voyage across the Atlantic. Many people felt ill because the ship constantly moved up and down. It took up to three weeks before passengers finally arrived at Ellis Island.

Factfiles: two museums

When passengers arrived in New York, they sailed past the Statue of Liberty before they arrived at Ellis Island. Today, two museums celebrate these places. You need to travel by ferry to visit them.

Name: Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration

Location: Ellis Island **Opened:** 1990

Visitors can see: different exhibitions telling the story of immigration to the United States.

Most famous thing: the large Main Building where all the passengers once arrived. Visitors go through this.

Name: Statue of Liberty Museum

Location: Liberty Island, home to the Statue of Liberty

Opened: 2019

Visitors can see: some interesting exhibitions about the 204 tonne statue, which was a gift from France in 1885.

They can also watch an aerial video of the statue in a special movie theatre.

Most famous thing: the huge original torch that was once part of the statue.

Spotlight: the first person to go through Ellis Island

Who was the first person to go through Ellis Island?

It was Annie Moore, a 17-year-old girl from Ireland.

How did she travel?

Annie made the voyage across the Atlantic on the ship *The Nevada*. It took nearly two weeks. She had the cheapest type of ticket in steerage, the lower deck of the ship.

Who did Annie travel with?

Annie came with her two brothers, aged 15, and 12. They were travelling to join their parents, who moved to the United States four years earlier.

What was a typical day for passengers like Annie?

- In the morning, they needed to share a small number of toilets with many other people.
- Breakfast was cold ²porridge. Lunch or dinner was often soup. It rarely had a lot of meat in it.
- They were only allowed onto the deck once a day for an hour.
- At night, they slept in very big, crowded rooms.

Refugees today

Many of the people who came through Ellis Island were refugees. This means that they left their homes and home country to escape serious danger.

There are still many refugees in the world today. In one recent year, UNICEF (The United Nations Children's Fund) estimated that out of 272 million international migrants in the world, 29 million were refugees and ³asylum seekers.

The most common reasons that people become refugees are because of war, violence or ⁴persecution. People also need to leave their countries because of natural disasters such as earthquakes.

Glossary

1 official a person who works for the government

2 porridge a dish made from oatmeal boiled in water or milk

3 asylum seeker a person who goes to another country and asks for protection from danger

4 persecution when a person is treated badly because of their race, religion or political ideas



Part 2: Questions and tasks

1 Before reading- discussion questions

- 1 Why do people emigrate to other countries? Think of as many reasons as you can.
- 2 How do you think people feel when they arrive as an immigrant in a new country?

2 Reading task

Read the text *Ellis Island the Gateway to America*. It is part of an introduction to a book. Write the number of the paragraph next to the description.

- a _ how people travelled to America
- b _ where people came from
- c _ what happened at Ellis Island
- d _ how many people came
- e _ why they wanted to come to the US

3 Reading task

Read **Spotlight: the first person to go through Ellis Island**. Decide if the sentences are true (T), false (F) or not mentioned in the text (NM). Correct the false sentences.

- 1 Annie Moore was an Irish teenager.
- 2 The voyage took over two weeks.
- 3 Annie travelled alone.
- 4 The tickets cost hundreds of dollars.
- 5 Annie's parents were already in the United States.
- 6 Annie had plans for a job in New York.
- 7 Passengers like Annie never went up onto the deck of the ship.
- 8 The food for passengers like Annie was poor quality.



4 Reading task

Read *Factfiles: two museums* and answer the questions below. Write **EL** for Ellis Island Museum, **SL** for the Statue of Liberty Museum or **B** for both museums. Which museum(s) ...

- 1 do you need to travel to by boat?
- 2 is the oldest?
- 3 has a number of exhibitions?
- 4 has a historic place that visitors can walk through?
- 5 has a place to watch films?
- 6 is home to a very large object?

5 Discussion

Read the text *Refugees today*. Then discuss the questions below with a partner.

- 1 What do you think is the difference between a migrant and a refugee?
- 2 Where are there a lot of refugees today in the world? Why?

6 Number quest

As quickly as you can, find the numbers below in all the texts. Find the number of ...

- 1 asylum seekers and refugees in the world now.
- 2 foreign people who went to the US between 1880 and 1930.
- 3 tonnes that the Statue of Liberty weighs.
- 4 hours that steerage passengers went up on deck.
- 5 people who are in a different country to their own in the world today.
- 6 weeks a ship usually took to sail from Europe to the US.

7 Vocabulary building - Adverbs of frequency ending in -ly

Some adverbs of frequency are made by adding -ly to the adjective.

For example: regular → regularly

The passengers regularly became ill.

Find -ly adverbs of frequency with the following meanings in the two texts *Ellis Island – the gateway to America* and *Spotlight*.

- 1 all the time, without stopping
- 2 normally, often
- 3 not very often
- 4 very often

Use the four -ly adverbs above to create your own sentences. Use your imagination and write about the passengers on the ships to the United States.

For example: *The passengers regularly talked about the terrible food.*