

Immigrant Voices at the Turn of the Century

Name: _____ Date: _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will research a real or family immigrant experience from the late 1800s/early 1900s and present findings in an infographic.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- poster board or large paper (11x17 or bigger)
- markers or colored pencils
- ruler
- internet-connected device or library book
- index cards

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

1. Read the excerpt below, adapted from Mary Antin's *The Promised Land* (1912), an immigrant memoir: "So at last I was going to America! Really, really going, at last! The boundaries burst. The arch of heaven soared. A million suns shone out for every star."
2. Underline the words and phrases that show Antin's emotional excitement about immigrating to America.
3. Research one real immigrant story from 1880-1920 (a family member's history if known, or a documented historical figure) using an internet-connected device or library book, and note: where they came from, why they left, and one challenge they faced.
4. Divide your poster board into four labeled sections: Homeland, Reason for Leaving, The Journey, Life in America. Fill each section with drawings, facts, and short captions about your chosen immigrant.
5. Write one direct quote (real or realistically imagined, in quotation marks) that this person might have said about their experience, on an index card, and tape it to your poster.

QUESTIONS

1. What emotions does Mary Antin express about coming to America, and how do you know?

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2. Who did you research, and what was their main reason for leaving their homeland?
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3. What was one major challenge this immigrant faced in America?

4. How does studying individual immigrant stories change or add to our understanding of this period in American history compared to just reading dates and statistics?
