

# Dreaming of America

BRIGHT STAR TOURING THEATRE

## Overview

America is a great and vast land with an incredible amount of diversity. When looking to create a show that celebrates all that makes America great we thought, "What better way to do that than through the stories of how America was made?"

In creating "Dreaming of America," we wanted to help even our youngest audience members understand how wonderful it is that our country has been built by so many diverse people and cultures.

This show brings to life the story of the Statue of Liberty, of families risking everything for a new life in America and just some of the wonderful inventions and things that have come from our diverse people.

America is truly a land of opportunity and immigrants--just look around at the faces of the assembly.

We hope each of your students leaves our production feeling that, in America, anything is possible. We hope they see that any dream, no matter how unachievable it may seem, is within reach with hard work



## Dreaming of America

(This show is designed for grades 3 and higher.)

The American Story is the story of people who dreamed of a new home. Migrants and immigrants, who faced tremendous difficulty, risked everything for the chance at a new start. From the earliest settlers of Jamestown and the Pilgrims of Massachusetts, to the immigrants of Ellis Island; from the Dust Bowl farmers to those who come to America to find a better life in modern times, this story explores what it means to be a stranger in a new land.

### Definition Spotlight:

**Migrant:** A worker who moves from place to place for seasonal work.

**Immigrant:** A person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country.



**ARRIVING BY SHIP!** At one point, the average passenger mortality rate was 10% per voyage. Crowded, unsanitary quarters, and foul smells led to dangerous conditions for passengers risking everything for a new life!



**IMMIGRATION NUMBERS:** 5,000-10,000 people passed through Ellis Island every single day during the height of the American immigration boom.



**ELLIS ISLAND:** The Gateway for more than 12 million immigrants entering the United States. Close to 50% of all Americans can trace at least one ancestor to Ellis Island!

## ABOUT ME



**Who?:** Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi

**When?:** Aug 1834 -Oct 1904

**Where?:** France

**What?** Designed the Statue of Liberty

**Why?** Bartholdi wanted to build a monument commemorating the relationship between the French people and the American people and their alliance or friendship during the American Revolutionary War. Since it was first unveiled it has become a symbol of freedom recognized around the

### Did you know?

Eiffel Tower: built in 1889  
Alexandre Gustav Eiffel, helped to supervise the construction of the inner framework, years before he would build the famous Eiffel Tower!

# The Statue of Liberty: A Symbol of America!



## THE IMMIGRANTS STATUE

“I thought she was one of the seven wonders of the world,”

exclaimed a German nearing his 80th birthday.

A Polish man said, “The bigness of Mrs. Liberty overcame us. No one spoke a word for she was like a goddess and we know she represented the big, powerful country which was to be our future home.”

Between 1886 and 1924 almost 14 million immigrants entered the United States through New

York-- Ellis Island being one of the largest immigration stations --seeing this historical statue.

The Statue of Liberty was a beacon of hope for those arriving in the United States. The statue, along with Liberty Island and Ellis Island, were designated as a National Monument in 1924, and are cared for by the National Park Service.

## NUMBERS

How tall is the Statue of Liberty? (heel to head)

**111 ft**

How much does she weigh?

**450,000 lbs**  
How big is her face?



## About Ellis Island

Ellis Island is located in Upper New York Bay, east of Liberty State Park and north of Liberty Island in Jersey City, New Jersey. The entire island has been owned by the United States federal government since 1808 and has been operated by National Park Service since 1965.

Originally a much smaller island, the government began to expand and build upon it after the federal government assumed control over immigration on April 18, 1890. The ballast of incoming ships and landfill from the creation of the New York City subways was used to double the size of the island. By 1892 the first immigrant processing facility was built on the island - a three-story structure that processed 450,000 immigrants in its first year.

Fire destroyed the original structure in 1897 and the present structure that can still be seen was erected in 1900. Between 1905 and 1914, an average of one million immigrants per year made their way to America through Ellis Island. Generally, immigrants could expect to be approved for entry in two to five hours, but not all were allowed to

stay. Immigrants were expected to have money. Inspectors wanted immigrants to have between \$18-25 to start out (about \$600 in today's currency). In addition to the financial restrictions, immigrants in poor health might expect to be rejected or sent to the island's hospital. About 2% of those that arrived on the island were denied entry. For this reason,

the island became known by many as "Heartbreak Island." Alternately, "The Kissing Post" is a wooden column outside the Registry Room where new arrivals could finally be greeted by their relatives and friends with hugs, tears and kisses. It is estimated, that 50% of Americans can trace at least one ancestor to Ellis Island.

## DID YOU KNOW?

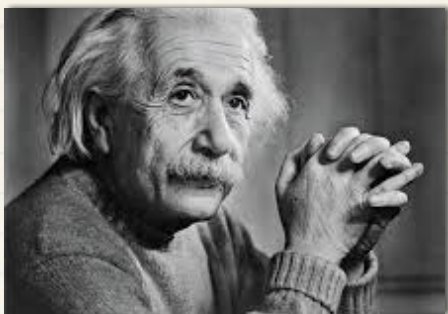


During her restoration in 1986, Lady Liberty's torch was covered with thin sheets of real 24k gold!

There are seven rays on the Statue of Liberty's crown; one for each of the seven continents. They are up to nine feet in length and weigh as much as 150 pounds each!



## AMERICA: THE GREAT MELTING POT



"A bundle of belongings isn't the only thing a refugee brings to his new country"

— Albert Einstein



"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breath free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" - Poet Emma Lazarus

### Ellis Island Facts!

- \*Opened January 1, 1892
- \*An Irish immigrant was the first to be processed into America
- \*Ellis Island sits on over 27 acres of land
- \*Over 12 million immigrants were processed through Ellis Island
- \*Ellis Island was closed on November 12, 1954

## WHAT IF WE

### DEPORTED ALL ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

#### Economy:

**285 Billion** is the cost of removing the entire undocumented population from the US over a 5-year period.

**2.6 trillion**--the amount of money that would evaporate from the US Cumulative GDP over 10 years if all undocumented immigrants in the country were deported.

**\$23,482** the cost of apprehending, detaining, processing and transporting one individual in deportation

**3.9  
million  
foreign  
born  
people  
were  
living in**

# Ten Myths About Immigration

## 1. MOST IMMIGRANTS ARE HERE ILLEGALLY

The nation with the most visitors to the United States that don't leave at the end of their authorized stays is Canada.

## 2. IT'S EASY TO ENTER THE COUNTRY LEGALLY. MY PARENTS DID; WHY CAN'T IMMIGRANTS TODAY?

For the first 100 years the United States had an open immigration system. Today immigration is generally limited to people with specialized skills, those escaping political persecution, who are joining family, or who win a green card lottery.

## 3. TODAY'S IMMIGRANTS DON'T WANT TO LEARN ENGLISH.

Immigrants must speak, read, write, and understand the English language, especially so they can pass a 100-question civics test that has both oral and written components.

## 4. IMMIGRANTS TAKE GOOD JOBS FROM US.

The US workforce includes 8 million unauthorized immigrants in 2014-- only 5% of the total workforce. Service, farming, and construction occupations are especially heavily represented--thanks to a void in low-skilled U.S. Workers.

## 5. 'THE WORST' PEOPLE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES ARE BRINGING CRIME AND VIOLENCE TO THE U.S.

Immigrants have a far lower incarceration rate than US Citizens. In fact, 'sanctuary counties' average 35.5 fewer crimes per 10,000 compared to non-sanctuary counties.

## 6. UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS DON'T PAY TAXES AND BURDEN THE ECONOMY.

Undocumented workers pay 11.74 billion a year in state and local taxes. The U.S Social Security Administration estimates that undocumented immigrants pay \$13 billion in payroll taxes each year.

## 7. THE US IS BEING OVERRUN BY IMMIGRANTS LIKE NEVER BEFORE

From 1890-1910, the foreign born population of the U.S. was between 13.6% and 15%. By 2010, about 13% of the population was foreign born.

## 8. BUILDING A WALL WILL STOP ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

People have always found ways to cross walls--like by turning to boats and planes--but a majority of immigrants cross the border through airports and overstay their visas. Not to mention, since 2009, immigrants arriving from Mexico have continued to decrease.

## 9. BANNING MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS WILL PROTECT THE US FROM TERRORISTS.

Between 1975 and 2015, the annual chance of being murdered by somebody other than a foreign-born terrorist was 252.9 times greater than the chance of dying in a terrorist attack committed by a foreign-born terrorist-- according to the Cato Institute.

## 10. REFUGEES AREN'T SCREENED BEFORE ENTERING THE UNITED STATES.

The average time it takes the United Nations and the United States government to approve refugee status is 18-24 months. Extensive background checks, interviews, fingerprints, health screenings, and more are all part of the background checks performed by the United States.



# Classroom Activities!

## ... GEOGRAPHY FROM THE CLASS!

For this activity it's time to gather around a big map! It's time to figure out who is in class and where their ancestors and family may have come from. Start by asking each student to locate the countries their families traveled from to come to the United States. How far did they travel to come to their current location? Are there any regions especially represented in the class?

## ... HOLIDAYS AROUND THE WORLD

Understanding foreign cultures and the world around us is a wonderful way to fight ignorance and prejudice. Break the class up into small groups or as individuals--or even have them learn about a holiday in an area their ancestors may have traveled from--and research the origins of the holiday and prepare to share what they learned about this area and celebration with the class. Are there parts of the holiday or the holiday itself that we celebrate in America? Do their families still have any of these traditions from these far away places?

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*-Prejudice is a burden that confuses the past, threatens the future and renders the present inaccessible'*

*-Maya Angelou*

## ... IMAGINE STARTING LIFE OVER IN A NEW PLACE!

Can you imagine putting yourselves in the shoes of a new immigrant coming into America? What kind of emotions and feelings would come along with leaving your country and friends behind to start a new life someplace else? What would be the first things you'd do in your new country? How would you make money? How would you learn the language? Some ways to start this dialogue would be to start by playing a foreign film or YouTube clip for the class where there are no subtitles just a foreign language being spoken. You could also pass out handouts for the class printed in a foreign language and tell them it's a test that will count heavily toward their grade. What is this experience like and what feelings come with it? Have any of them experienced these things first hand? Have their families or parents?

## ... BRING IN A CLASSROOM GUEST / WORLD CULTURE DAY

Contact your local church, temple, or civic group and ask if there are any foreign born members that may be interested in coming in and talking about their culture and home country. Can you sample food from a special region or put together a World Culture Day for your school? On a smaller scale you can have students research different countries and share what they learn with the class including construction paper recreations of the flag, foods that are popular, etc.

## ... CHECK THE ELLIS ISLAND DATABASE

The Ellis Island Foundation has wonderful material available and even a way to research their database to see if people that share your last name or ancestors were recorded traveling through Ellis Island. Check it out!

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*"When will our consciences grow so tender that we will act to prevent human misery rather than avenge it?"*

*-Eleanor Roosevelt*

## ... FIGHT PREJUDICE WITH THE GAME 'WHAT DO WE HAVE IN COMMON?'

Split the students into pairs. Give them 1-minute to find five things they have in common. Then have two pairs join up to form groups of four--give this group 45 seconds to find something they all have in common. You can continue doing this until larger groups must find commonality among the group. It's a great activity to see how alike we all really are.

## ... CREATE A WELCOMING COMMITTEE

There is a lot of bullying and meanness that happens with students that are different than their peers. Can you form a kind of welcoming committee with your students that help new students--especially new immigrant students-- feel welcomed and accepted in the school? Can we make sure the students have people to sit with at the lunch table, help them adjust to the school, and answer questions they may have about this new world?!



# Everything about the Theatre!



Some fun theatre vocabulary!

...

**Costumes:** The wigs, clothing and glasses that the actors wore to help flush out their characters .

**Auditions:** How an actor gets a role is by auditioning, they may have to interview, pretend to be a character from the play, read something from it, etc.

**Set Designer:** The person who decided what should be on the background and who painted or created it.

**Upstage:** The area away from the audience, like the back wall of the a stage.

**Director:** The person who told the actors where to go while they were on-stage and helped them create the characters they would play.

## Facts about us!

1. Did you know that we're owned by an Emmy award winning actor?

2. Our actors average 1,000 miles a week traveling the country to entertain young audiences.

3. Our programs have been seen in almost every corner of the country and around the world.

4. We watch over 1200 actors a season audition, before we cast our season.

5. We offer dozens and dozens of different shows a season from Black History to anti-bullying and literary classics.

6. *We now have tours throughout Europe!*

7. We're based in Asheville,

## BRIGHT STAR THEATRE

Bright Star Touring Theatre performs across the country from Boston to Burbank and virtually every school, museum, theatre, and community event in between. Each season our shows run the gamut from Black History to anti-bullying, from literary classics to biographical shows. Our shows are available throughout the year for any event in any part of the world.



## ABOUT US!

Founded in 2003, Bright Star Theatre tours the nation offering high quality, affordable programs to every imaginable venue. We've had countless engagements at the National Theatre, Toured to Moscow and are so grateful to be in your very school today!

## Dreaming of America

Made it's Debut in September 2017  
National Tour

We want every show to be special and remarkable for our audience. Please feel free to connect with us at anytime to tell us about your experience:

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## Dreaming of America

Created by Bright Star Touring Theatre Lead Authorship carried out by David Ostergaard,

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Learn more about this show, this company & our whole season:

[www.brightstartheatre.com](http://www.brightstartheatre.com)