

IMMIGRATION

An **immigrant** is a person who comes to live in another country. Immigrants came to live in the United States for many reasons:

- political freedom
- religious freedom
- to join their family who was already here
- forced to come as slaves
- in hopes of a job, money, or land
- because of problems in their home country (Potato Famine in Ireland in 1845)

Most immigrants in the 1800s came by boat. The boats were very crowded. They had bad food, bugs, and disease. There were bad storms and people got very seasick. Boats often arrived at Ellis Island on the East Coast or Angel Island on the West Coast. These places were called **Federal Immigration Stations**.



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The **Statue of Liberty** is in the New York Harbor. It became known as the “lady of hope” who welcomed immigrants to their new home.

Restrictions

At some times in U.S. history, there have been millions of people coming into the U.S. as immigrants. At other times, immigration has been restricted, or limited. For example:

- **Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882:** This law kept Chinese workers from coming into the U.S. for ten years.
- In 1891, criminals were not allowed to come into the U.S.
- Sometimes there have been **quota** laws. This kind of law limits the number of immigrants. It also told how many people could come from certain countries.

Citizenship

In order to become citizens, immigrants go through a process called **naturalization**. Back in 1790, there was a Naturalization Act that was passed. It let white men who lived in the U.S. for two years become citizens. Today, it is not just white men who can become citizens. People who go through the process of naturalization can become citizens. Any baby who is born in the U.S. is a citizen.

Try This!

Which of these places welcomed immigrants?

Grand Canyon

Statue of Liberty

Lincoln Memorial

Some immigrants
that they

- A] go to America
- B] go to find work
- C] go back to their home countries
- D] go by boat

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meant

The U.S. had many jobs, lots of land, and was a place for people to get a new start. This is why it was called the

- A] land of pain
 - B] land of opportunity
 - C] land of the poor
 - D] land of sadness
- Answer] b

True or False?

The Naturalization Act of 1790 let white women become citizens. T / F

Many immigrants came to this country by boat. T / F

To pay for the trip to America, some people became indentured servants. T / F