

The Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education



Companion Books, Videos and Websites on Jewish Immigration for the One Book - One Philadelphia Program Featuring, *Waiting for Snow in Havana*, by Carlos Eire January 16 - March 16, 2007

We are a nation of immigrants and everyone has an immigrant story. This list contains supplemental materials about Jewish immigration to the United States and was especially prepared by the Seidman Educational Resource Center in support of the **One Book - One Philadelphia Program**.

<http://libwww.library.phila.gov/onebook/obop07/index.cfm>

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Books for Primary Grades

Title: *Buba Leah and Her Paper Children*

Author: Lillian Hammer Ross

ISBN #: 0-8276-0375-4

Notes: Buba Leah's fervent wish to see her children in faraway America is fulfilled when she receives a special letter in the mail.

Title: *Grandma Esther Remembers: A Jewish -American Family Story*

Author: Ann Morris

ISBN #: 076132318X

Notes: In Manhattan and Brooklyn, two Jewish girls learn about their heritage from their grandmother, who was born in Lithuania, escaped during World War II and lived for a while in Israel.

Books for Elementary Grades

Title: *All-of-a-Kind Family*

Author: Sydney Taylor

ISBN #: 978-0440400592

Notes: Five young sisters experience life in New York's Lower East Side at the beginning of the 20th century. The close-knit group encounters everyday realities such as boring chores, missing library books, and trips to the Rivington Street market, as well as those details which bring the early 1900's to life--scarlet fever, peddlers, and bathing at Coney Island. Woven into the story are the traditions and holidays of the Jewish religion.

Title: *Hannah's Journal*

Author: Marissa Moss

ISBN #: 0152163298

Notes: In the Russian village where she and her family live, Hannah is given a diary for her tenth birthday, and in it she records the dramatic story of her journey to America.

Title: *I Lift My Lamp: Emma Lazarus and the Statue of Liberty*

Author: Nancy Smiler Levinson

ISBN #: 0-525-67180-3

Notes: A biography of the American poet, activist for humane causes, and friend to immigrants, who authored the noble words now inscribed on the Statue of Liberty.

Title: *The Journey to Ellis Island: How My Father Came to America*

Author: Carol Bierman

ISBN #: 974-71004924-dc21

Notes: An account of the ocean voyage and arrival at Ellis Island of eleven-year-old Julius Weinstein, who, along with his mother and younger sister, emigrated from Russia in 1922.

Title: *Molly's Pilgrim*

Author: Barbara Cohen

ISBN #: 978-0688162801

Notes: Told to make a doll like a Pilgrim for the Thanksgiving display at school, Molly's mother dresses the doll as she herself dressed before leaving Russia to seek religious freedom - much to Molly's embarrassment. This book chronicles her adjustment to the American celebrations of Thanksgiving and birthdays. (See Video V-158/DVD V-5036 below.)

Title: *When Jessie Came Across the Sea*

Author: Amy Hest

ISBN #: 076361274X

Notes: A thirteen-year-old Jewish orphan reluctantly leaves her grandmother and immigrates to New York City, where she works for three years sewing lace and earning money to bring Grandmother to the United States.

Books for Middle School Grades

Title: *Challenge and Change: History of the Jews in America - Volumes I, II, and III*

Author: Shelley Kapneck Rosenberg and Amye Rosenberg

ISBN #: 0-87441-197-1, 0-87441-778-3, 0-87441-780-5

Notes: A concise presentation of the early years of American Jewish history, combining thematic and chronological explorations of events from the expulsion from Spain (1492) to the settlement in American cities from New York to Galveston (1907 - 1914) Developed by the Feinstein Center for American Jewish History, in collaboration with Dr. Jonathan Sarna of Temple University and the Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education, this colorful history shows how the Jews brought their religion, traditions, languages, culture, and ideas to a new land—America.

Title: *Faraway Summer*

Author: Johanna Hurwitz

ISBN #: 0380732564

Notes: In the summer of 1910, Dossi, a poor Russian immigrant from the tenements of New York, spends two weeks with the Meade family on their Vermont farm.

Title: *Independence Avenue*

Author: Eileen Bluestone Sherman

ISBN #: 978-0827603677

Notes: Elias, a fourteen-year-old Russian immigrant, arrives alone in Kansas City in 1907, finding new employment and friends but also receiving bad news about his family back in Russia. Elias must call upon all his resources and learn to modify at least some of his old-world traditions to fit his new environment.

Title: *Journey to America*

Author: Sonia Levitin

ISBN #: 0689711301

Notes: In 1938, Lisa Platt, her mother and sisters, attempt to flee Nazi Germany to Switzerland, and then to America where her father waits for them.

Title: *Letters from Rifka*

Author: Karen Hesse

ISBN #: 0140363912

Notes: In letters to her cousin, a young Jewish girl chronicles her family's flight from Russia in 1919 and her own experiences when she must be left in Belgium for a while when the others immigrate to America.

Title: *The Melting Pot: An Adventure in New York (From the "Do-It-Yourself Jewish Adventure Series")*

Author: Kenneth Roseman

ISBN #: 08074-0269-9

Notes: Set in the turbulent Lower East Side of New York at the turn of the century, this book forces readers to make decisions that propel them through an adventure that teaches them about Jewish values and historical events and people.

Title: *On the Other Side of the Hudson: A Jewish Immigrant Adventure (From the "Do-It-Yourself Jewish Adventure Series")*

Author: Kenneth Roseman

ISBN #: 0-8074-0506-X

Notes: As a young Jewish immigrant from Bavaria in the mid-nineteenth century, the reader makes decisions that mirror the choices made by new Jewish-Americans as they settled in the United States during the first wave of Jewish immigration.

Title: *A Picture of Grandmother*

Author: Esther Hautzig and Beth Peck

ISBN #: 978-0374359201

Notes: Sheltered by her close-knit, extended Jewish family in Vilna, Sara catches a whiff of mystery when a letter arrives from her American uncle. He has sent her mother and grandmother tickets for the 1939 World's Fair and has asked for a specific photo of Grandmother. A Sydney Taylor Book Award silver medal winner, this book is about the value of truth, the importance of forgiveness, and the joy of family bonding.

Books for High School Grades

Title: *Forged in Freedom: Shaping the Jewish-American Experience*

Author: Norman H. Finkelstein

ISBN #: 0827607482

Notes: A history in words and photographs of the growth of the Jewish community in the United States and its contributions to American culture, politics, and economics in the twentieth century.

Title: *The Jewish American Family Album*

Author: Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler

ISBN #: 0-19-508135-8

Notes: Personal stories, written in their own words, of Jewish immigrants - from the time of their arrival in the United States until the 1990's. Beautifully illustrated with photographs of the time.

Title: *120 HIAS Stories*

Author: Kathleen Andersen, Morris Ardoin and Margarita Zilberman, Editors

ISBN #: ---

Notes: A collection of 120 stories, many told in first-person accounts, about the beneficiaries of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. Each story reflects on the experiences of an immigrant coming to this country during one of the three major waves of Jewish immigration to the United States.

Books for Adults

Title: *A Bintel Brief: Sixty Years of Letters from the Lower East Side to the Jewish Daily Forward*

Author: Isaac Metzker, Editor

ISBN #: 0-87441-345-1

Notes: Literally "A Bundle of Letters," this book features immigrants' letters to the advice column, and presents a window into the social and personal challenges of the time.

Title: *The Breadgivers*

Author: Anzia Yeziarska

ISBN #: 0-892552905

Notes: A masterpiece of Jewish American immigrant literature set in the 1920's on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, it tells the story of Sarah Smolinsky, daughter of an Orthodox rabbi, who rebels against her father's rigid conception of Jewish womanhood.

Title: *The Certificate*

Author: Isaac Bashevis Singer

ISBN #: 978-0374120290

Notes: David Bendiner, a young writer and secularized Jew, has qualified to emigrate from Warsaw to Palestine, but he's broke, and in order to make the journey, he must enter into a fictitious marriage with a prosperous woman eager to get there. Grappling with romantic, political and philosophical turmoil, David must also confront his faith when his father, an Orthodox rabbi, shows up in Warsaw.

Title: *The Rise of David Levinsky*

Author: Abraham Cahan

ISBN #: 978-0140186871

Notes: In this powerful and prophetic story of Jewish-American life in turn-of-the-century New York, a young immigrant works his way up from poverty to material success in the garment industry, only to find himself a failure at love and unsure of his identity.

Title: *World of Our Fathers: The Journey of the East European Jews to America and the Life They Found and Made*

Author: Irving Howe, Kenneth Libo and Morris Dickstein

ISBN #: 978-0814736852

Notes: Beginning in the 1880s, this book offers a rich portrayal of the East European Jewish experience in New York, and shows how the immigrant generation tried to maintain their Yiddish culture while becoming American.

Videography

An American Tail - V-834 (1986)

This is Steven Spielberg's animated feature about a Jewish mouse who emigrates from Russia to America in the late nineteenth century. The film follows Fievel's adventures in New York as he tries to find his family, from whom he had become separated during the long journey. 1 hour, 20 minutes; ages 6 - 12.

An American Tail Goes West - V-835 (1991)

Fievel Mousekowitz and his family decide to leave the dangerous slums of New York and journey to the Wild West, in the sequel to **An American Tail**. 1 hour, 15 minutes; ages 6 - 12.

Call It Sleep - V-1256 (1968)

Based on the novel by Henry Roth, the film dramatizes the story of a boy and his father who come to New York from Russia in 1900. It portrays the father's difficulty in adapting, and his confusion and disillusionment. 40 minutes; ages 14 - adult.

Dosvedanya Means Goodbye - V-398 (1990)

Tamar Okun waited eight years to receive her exit visa from the Soviet Union. As the years passed, her sense of Jewish identity grew stronger. When permission came for her and her family to leave, her father was accused of possessing "state secrets" and his request to emigrate was denied. Tamar was forced to leave her elderly parents behind. This film traces the family's journey from Leningrad to Vienna to their new home in Washington, D.C. 30 minutes; ages 12 - adult.

The Frisco Kid - V-789 (1979)

In 1850, an Orthodox rabbi, played by Gene Wilder, sets off to claim his bride and congregation in California, and gets into adventures and escapades along the way. He is aided by Harrison Ford, in the role of a cowboy/bandit. A video that teaches Jewish concepts in a hilarious manner. 2 hours; ages 12 - adult.

Funny Girl - V-865 (1968)

Barbara Streisand stars as the quintessential Jewish Ziegfeld comedian Fanny Brice. The film traces Brice's rise from the Lower East Side, through her stormy relationship with gambler Nicky Arnstein, to her attainment of superstardom. 2 hours; ages 12 - adult.

Island of Hope - Island of Tears - V-703 (1990)

In this Ellis Island Immigration Museum documentary, the story of the immigrants and their first experience in America is told. Although not specifically Jewish, the experience of the Jews is represented as a part of the mainstream. Uses archival photographs. 30 minutes; ages 9 - adult.

Molly's Pilgrim - V-158/V-5036 (DVD) (1986)

This touching film is the story of Molly, a Russian Jewish girl, who together with her American classmates, discovers that it takes all kinds of Pilgrims to make a Thanksgiving. Her mother creates an immigrant doll by dressing her in a traditional Russian costume. The doll represents a Russian Jewish Molly, who, like the Pilgrims, came to America for freedom. Molly and her classmates also learn that the Pilgrims found the reference to the harvest festival of Sukkot in the Bible and used it as inspiration for their Thanksgiving holiday. 25 minutes; ages 6 - adult.

No Wreath, No Trumpets - V-1247 (1961)

A biography of Emma Lazarus, Jewish writer, poet, and social activist. Her poem, The New Colossus, is etched into the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. 30 minutes; ages 12 - adult.

The Road to New York from Eastern Europe: Jewish Immigration at the Turn of the Century - V-1020 (1999)

Using photographs and detailed narration, this documentary traces the path of more than 30% of European Jewry as they pursued the American dream - from the shtetls of Europe to Ellis Island and on to the harsh realities of life on the Lower East Side of New York. 20 minutes; ages 12 - adult.

They Came for Good: A History of the Jews in the United States - Present at Creation 1654 - 1820 - V-1141 (2001)

This is the first part of a comprehensive American Jewish History series documenting 250 years of Jewish immigration in America. It presents the first wave of Jewish settlement, using both general and individual stories. 1 hour; ages 12 - adult.

They Came for Good: A History of the Jews in the United States - Taking Root 1820 - 1880 - V-1142 (2001)

This is the second part of a comprehensive American Jewish History series documenting 250 years of Jewish immigration in America. It chronicles the stories of Jews from Germany and Eastern Europe as they spread across America and founded most of the Jewish communities that exist today. 1 hour; ages 12 - adult.

West of Hester Street - V-1239 (1983)

Concerned that the United States government would close its doors due to the millions of Eastern European Jewish immigrants crowding into the Eastern Seaboard ghettos, Jewish leaders devised a plan to bring thousands of immigrants through Galveston, Texas and settle them in the West, in the early 1900's. This is the story of that "Galveston Movement." 1 hour; ages 9 - adult.

Webography

Ellis Island Immigration Museum - www.ellisland.com

Gates to Jewish History - www.jewishgates.com

The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society - www.HIAS.org

The Jewish Virtual Library - www.us-israel.org/jsource

The Jewish Women's Archive - www.jwa.org

The Lower East Side Tenement Museum - www.tenement.org

The Statue of Liberty Ellis Island Foundation - www.ellisland.org

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