
Concursul Interjudețean „BILINGUAL=BEST”
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SUBIECTE
CLASA a IX-a

Read the text below about immigrants. Imagine you were one of the immigrants knocking at America’s “golden door.” Write a narrative essay about your new “home”, new “life” using the background information provided by the text. (180-220 words).

Becoming an American

Nine million immigrants came knocking at America’s “golden door” between 1900 and 1910. Many were so poor that they could barely pay their fare-sums as small as \$12 for the voyage from Italy on board a ship were hard to get for a good number of people. Yet, they were all irresistibly drawn by the conviction that in America they would find what their old country had denied them.

For most of the newcomers the ordeal of Americanization began on a bleak scrap of land in New York harbor, Ellis Island. Only in 1907 more than a million immigrants poured through the island’s immigration doors. What they found in America severely tested their faith and courage. Once admitted in the “Land of Opportunity” , most newcomers were doomed to years of toil meaning twelve-hour days and six or even seven-day weeks at subsistence pay (less than \$12 a week) in the garment making industry, in coal mines or in slaughterhouses.

Though the immigrants were welcomed by many Americans of good will, they also met with plain prejudice. Xenophobic natives ridiculed their alien ways and regarded them as subhuman. Disillusioned by bigotry and poverty, many immigrants gave up and returned home; 395,000 departed in 1908 alone. But the vast majority persevered and the ideals and the opportunities of the new democratic world changed them completely.