



LAYER THE WALLS

JIMMY'S
STORY

QUESTIONS

- What are reasons you know of that people immigrated to the United States in the late 1800's?
- What do you think were the challenges for immigrants in New York City when they came to America in the late 1800's?
- What kinds of discrimination did Jimmy face when looking for a job and how did he overcome these acts?
- Why do you think our country has had different immigration laws over time? What might impact changes to those laws?
- What kind of immigration laws would you put in place if you were an elected official?



IMMIGRATION THEN AND NOW

LATE 1800S–EARLY 1900S

THE ARRIVAL

Immigrants entered the United States through various ports. Those from Europe entered from the East Coast and those from Asia entered the United States from the West Coast. The main East Coast port of entry after 1892 was Ellis Island in New York Harbor near the Statue of Liberty. More than 12 million immigrants entered through Ellis Island from 1892-1954.

REASONS FOR LEAVING HOME

Immigrants came to America fleeing religious and political persecution, famine, poverty, rising taxes, land and job shortages, and war.

WHERE TRAVELING FROM

By 1840, the majority of European immigrants (almost half) came from Ireland fleeing famine. Also coming in large numbers were Italians and Jews from Eastern Europe.

U.S. IMMIGRATION LAWS

The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was one of the first pieces of legislation or laws that imposed restrictions on immigration. It was aimed at Chinese laborers coming to America.

In 1917, Congress passed legislation requiring immigrants of 16 to pass a literacy test.

The Immigration Act of 1924 restricted the amount of people who could come from each country.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS

Immigrants faced harsh discrimination from those living in America based on race, nationality and religion. It was hard for immigrants to find work, fair wages, housing, and safe working conditions.

MODERN DAY

THE ARRIVAL

Immigrants arrive to America by land, air and sea. Immigrants coming to the United States legally have several methods of doing so including obtaining a visa such as a family-based visa or employment-based visa or seeking asylum from religious or political persecution. These policies constantly shift depending on decisions made by the President and Congress.

REASONS FOR LEAVING HOME

Immigrants come to America fleeing religious and political persecution, poverty, lack of work, and war.

WHERE TRAVELING FROM

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 43.1 million immigrants were living in the United States as of 2016 which comprises of 13.5 percent of the population. The majority of immigrants arrive from Latin America followed by Asia and Europe. Mexico has the largest amount of immigration from a single country.

U.S. IMMIGRATION LAWS

Laws and legislation around immigration have been in flux since the mid-1900's.

In 1965, Congress passed a law that stopped limiting how many people could come from each country, doing away with quotas.

In 1976 & 1978, the U.S. allowed a total immigration of 290,000 per year and 20,000 from any single country.

In 1986, Congress passed immigration reform that included a requirement of "English proficiency and knowledge of U.S. history" to become a legal resident, and increased border enforcement.

In 1990, Congress altered the laws and increased the annual immigration limit from 290,000 to 675,000 people annually, plus an addition 125,000 for refugees.

Today, immigrants seeking to come to the U.S. legally need to pass a criminal background check and can be denied permanent residence for reasons including lack of vaccinations, drug abuse or addiction, disease that poses a public health risk or are likely to become a burden to taxpayers. At the time of this writing stricter restrictions are being enforced based on nationality, religion and country of origin.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS

Immigrants today face discrimination from those living in America based on race, nationality, and religion. This poses challenges for immigrants to find work, fair wages, housing, a quality education, and healthcare.

NOT A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

America is often referred to as a “land of immigrants”. Have you heard this?

And it’s true right? Haven’t many immigrants come to the US? Isn’t that what Layer the Walls is about? Well yes and no.

Yes, there are many immigrants and descendents of immigrants who are American citizens. And those stories and people are important.

But statements about the US being a land of immigrants do not tell the full story and erase people’s stories. This country includes many people who did not come here as immigrants and their stories are important too.

Let’s start with the definition of an immigrant: **An immigrant is someone who makes a conscious decision to leave their home and move to a foreign country with the intention of settling there.**

Can you think of any situations when someone might not fit that description?

- For hundreds of years African people were enslaved, kidnapped, and forcibly brought to this land. This was not a form of immigration.
 - When European colonizers arrived, Native people had been living here for thousands of years, they were not immigrants. When the United States enacted a forced migration of Native people from one region to another, this was not immigration.
 - Refugees are forced to flee their homes because of violence or persecution, often without notice. They are not considered immigrants and often can never safely return to their homeland, even for a visit.
-

So, while the United States has been shaped by a rich history of immigration, there are many other narratives that need to be heard and honored so that we can more fully understand our past, present and future.

There is much more to learn about our complex history and ideas discussed above. Please keep discussing and learning more about these ideas.

THE TENEMENTS



INTERESTING FACTS

- Many immigrants in NYC lived in the tenements of the Lower East Side. By 1900, 2.3 million people were living in these tenements. The Lower East Side was once the most densely populated place in the world.
- Often, dozens of people lived together in each room which was unventilated and dark. These created unsafe conditions and aided in the spread of disease. You can imagine how Danny McKenna got sick.
- Tenement living was hard! No elevator for your fifth floor walkup; poor lighting on the dark stairs made it easy to fall; during Jimmy's story there would have been latrines in the backyard.
- There was so little space in the crowded apartments, so often, people would hang out on the fire escape.

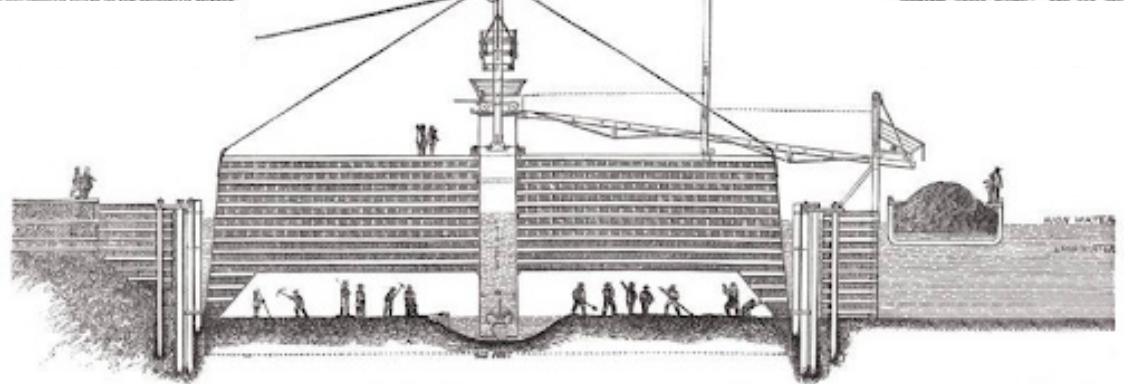
QUESTIONS FOR YOU!

- What do you think would be the most challenging thing for you if you lived in the tenements? Where do you think you could go for your private space?

DISCOVER MORE

- Jacob Riis, a photographer at the time, photographed the horrid conditions in the tenements. He published these images in book called *How The Other Half Lives*. Google the images and see for yourself!

THE 5 W'S OF THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE



WHO

John Augustus Roebling: German born, creator of the Brooklyn Bridge, was known his design and engineering of suspension bridges. He died before seeing the Brooklyn Bridge completed.

Washington A. Roebling: John Roebling's son who took over as chief engineer after his father died in an accident while building the Brooklyn Bridge. He became paralyzed when he succumbed to caisson disease.

Emily Warren Roebling: Washington Roebling's wife, who managed the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge after her husband developed paralysis due to caisson disease. Without her efforts, the completion of the bridge would likely never have happened. She was also the first person to cross the Brooklyn Bridge.

Sandhogs: The workers who helped build the Brooklyn Bridge, many of them immigrants, were known as "sandhogs" because they cleared the mud, rocks and boulders at the bottom of the river.

WHAT

The Brooklyn Bridge is a suspension/cable-stay hybrid bridge that connects Brooklyn and Manhattan in NYC. Completed in 1883, it is one of the oldest suspension bridges in the United States and it was the longest bridge in the world at the time of its completion.

Caisson: A caisson was a closed wooden box that was placed in the river and filled with compressed air. This allowed workers to go to the bottom of the river to clear mud, rocks and boulders and lay the granite foundation for the bridge.

Caisson Disease: A sickness, also known as "the bends" or decompression sickness, that can occur from the change in pressure from working in a caisson. Affecting the nervous system, it can cause fatigue, pain, and paralysis.

WHERE

The Brooklyn Bridge connects Brooklyn and Manhattan over the East River in New York City.

WHEN

The construction of the Brooklyn Bridge began on January 3, 1870 and was completed on May 24, 1883.

WHY

The Brooklyn Bridge was built to allow ease of travel between Brooklyn and Manhattan. Because of this, in 1898 Brooklyn (which used to be its' own city) formally became part of New York City and Staten Island forming Greater New York.

JIMMY'S WORLD:

THE 5 W'S OF THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE (CONT.)

WHERE

The Brooklyn Bridge connects Brooklyn and Manhattan over the East River in New York City.

WHEN

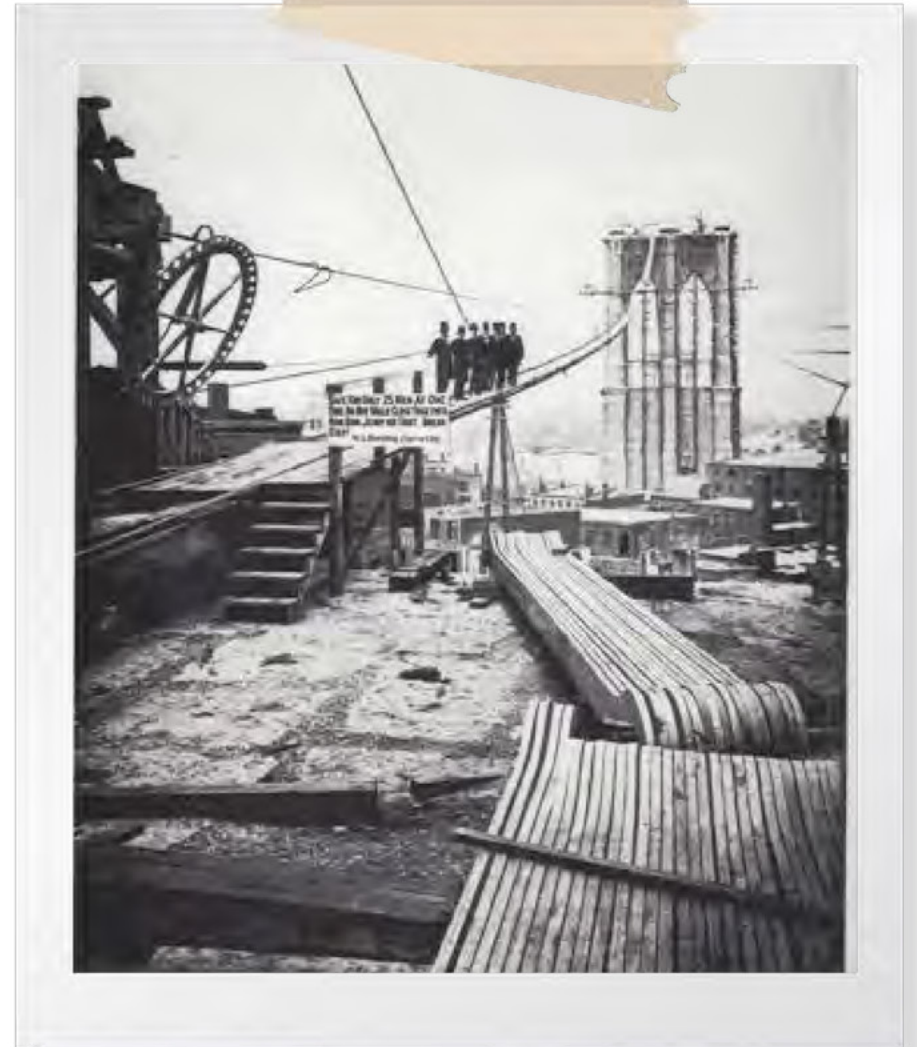
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WHY

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QUESTIONS

- What kinds of discrimination did Jimmy face when looking for a job and how did he overcome these acts?
- Would you have worked in a caisson like Jimmy did?
- How do you think bridges are built today?
(Hint: they still use caissons!)



GAELIC TIME – LEARN JIMMY’S NATIVE LANGUAGE



In Jimmy’s story, the characters are from a country called Ireland and would have spoken the Gaelic language. Let’s learn it together! Next to the word, we teach you how to say it correctly. Do you want to impress your family and friends? Let’s learn some Gaelic words and phrases!

Gaelic (pronounced *GAY-lik*): A language spoken in Ireland and nearby Scotland

Failete (pronounced *fawl-cha*): Welcome

Chan eil (pronounced *chan yayl*): No

Tha (pronounced *ha*): Yes

Dia duit (pronounced *Dee-ah gwit*): Hello

Slan (pronounced *slawn*): Goodbye

Go raibh maith agat (pronounced *guh ruh mah a-gut*): Thank you

Ta failete romhat (pronounced *taw fawil-cha roh-ot*): You are welcome

Conas atá an craic? (pronounced *Kun-ass a-taw on crack?*): What’s up?

An bhfuil Gaeilge agat? (pronounced *On will Gail-geh ah-gut?*): Do you speak Gaelic?

DOBHAR-CHÚ, THE WATER MONSTER, COMES TO LIFE



Jimmy tells Danny a story about the fearsome, mythical creature, Dobhar-chú (which means 'water dog' or 'hound of the deep' in Gaelic). The Dobhar-chú (pronounced do-war coo) is a combination of several animals (Jimmy says part dog, part otter and part crocodile). There are no official pictures of the Dobhar Chu so we're curious how you imagine it looks.

1. Look at pictures of a dog, an otter and a crocodile
2. Next, choose one of your animals to use as the head, one for the body and one for the tail.

(head)

(body)

(tail)

3. Draw a picture using these three animals to show what you think the dreaded Dobhar-chú looks like.

MYTHICAL CREATURES



Part One – Develop your own mythical creature

In the last activity, we drew a picture of the Dobhar-chu, a mythical creature which is part dog, part otter and part crocodile. But other cultures have mythical creatures as well. In China, the dragon has the tail of a fish, the neck of a snake, the head of a camel, the horns of a deer, the claws of an eagle, the paws of a tiger and ears of an ox. If you could create a mythical creature what would it look like?

1. Pick at least 3 animals that you want to use.

2. Decide which animal will be the head, the body and the tail.

Head: _____

Body: _____

Tail: _____

3. Give some specific traits to your mythical creature.

Name: _____

Special power: _____

Secret weakness: _____

MYTHICAL CREATURES (CONT.)

Part Two – Draw a cartoon of your mythical creature

1.) Make some decisions

- Decide on a setting where your mythical creature will be _____

- Determine what conflict or problem your mythical creature will face _____

- How will the cartoon start? _____

- How will it end? _____

2.) Take a plain piece of paper and fold it so that it creates four boxes. You can do this by folding it in half horizontally and then again vertically.

3.) In the boxes, create a cartoon or graphic novel with your mythical creature as the main character.

STORYTIME: OVERCOMING A FEAR



Jimmy overcame his fear of going into the caisson. You may not have been in a caisson or faced a Dobhar Chu, but you've probably faced other fears. We're going to explore fears you've faced or seen others faced. You have two options:

Option One

Write about the time you were afraid to do something, but you overcame that fear and did it anyway. What did the fear feel like? How did you overcome it?

Option Two

Write about a time someone you know was afraid to do something, but overcame that fear and did it anyway. How did they face the fear? What do you think of their situation?

Bonus: Imagine your story is a movie. Create a title for that movie and design the movie poster!

SOUND DESIGNERS AND SOUNDSCAPES

A sound designer's job in the theatre is to create the mood with sounds or music. In Jimmy's story there are different moods and sounds when he is at home, walking on the street, finding the newspaper and working in the caisson. Today we are going to explore the caisson sounds. These sounds include actual sound effects like creaking and a loud bang, but also sounds that build the drama and tension of the blowout and the Dobhar Chu battling Jimmy.

Part One: Think about the sounds in the world of the play

What sounds might Jimmy hear in the caisson?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What feelings does Jimmy have in the caisson?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



What are the various moods Jimmy experiences in the caisson?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SOUND DESIGNERS AND SOUNDSCAPES

Part Two: Read the below portion of the script, when the water is coming into the caisson.

Boss

You thinking of leaving already Irish?

Jimmy

No sir, I'm here to work. All day.

Boss

Glad to hear it. Let's get to it.

Jimmy

Alright rock! By the rising of the moon, by the rising of the moon! What is that noise? That sounds worse than yesterday! Keep on going Jimmy "The McKenna's will survive here by - "

Boss

The pressure's off in the chute! Take cover men, we're headed for a blow out!

Jimmy

No no no that is bad that is really bad, the river is rushing by out there, if there's a blow out that water will come in and I can't even swim. I'm done for! The water is coming in!! Oh no! The Dobhar-chú!!! Oh no!!!! I've got the red thread!!!! Take that you beast!

Jimmy

I'm alive! It's just a rock! I did it! I survived!!

Part Three: Now read the script again and mark down any place you think there might be a sound effect or a place where you'd like to help the mood with sound.

Hint: Think about the beginning, middle and end of this part of the script. At the beginning, Jimmy is nervous even though he is trying to be brave. Maybe you want a sound that creates *suspense*. In the middle, the caisson has broken and Jimmy thinks he sees the Dobhar-chú. This is the *climax* of the scene. At the end, he has survived and feels brave. The *tone and mood* is much happier.

Part Four: Gather different objects in your home like pots, pans, boxes, a can of coffee beans, a musical instrument, etc...

Part Five: Think about which of your objects (or voice/body) can make the sound effects and mood noises you would like to include.

Part Six: Have someone read the dialogue and you create the sounds of the caisson and the mood. This is called a *soundscape*.

Bonus Challenge: Find a song that plays before the scene starts or when the scene ends. The song should reflect Jimmy's mood or emotions.

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