

THE EMMA LAZARUS PROJECT

RESOURCE OVERVIEW:

In 1883, Emma Lazarus wrote *The New Colossus*, a poem now affixed to the Statue of Liberty and a vital part of America's story and identity. Emma's life and message will inspire your students to participate in the ongoing conversation of what it means to be an American.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- What factors and experiences shaped Emma Lazarus's identity and her message?
- How did *The New Colossus* become a part of the Statue of Liberty?
- What is the role of art in helping people express, understand, and debate American identity?
- What is the relationship between our individual family stories and a larger American narrative?
- How does knowing about history help us to become better Americans?
- If you could write a poem for the Statue of Liberty today, what would it say?

OUTCOMES:

Students will:

- Learn about Emma Lazarus, a role model who used her talent to help others see a new possibility for America
- Understand some of the debates that were central to Emma's life including immigration, inequality, and antisemitism, and how she responded
- Examine and interpret primary sources
- Make connections between Emma's life and theirs today and reflect on the current and historical issues that matter to them
- Write a poem that expresses what it means for them to be American

1) DISCOVERING THE NEW COLOSSUS

DURATION: 30 MINUTES

Explore Emma's poem and reflect on her message. Students will generate questions about Emma which will be revisited in later steps.

2) POSSIBLE PATHWAYS THROUGH THE ARCHIVE

WATCH THE FILM

DURATION: 20 MINUTES

AJHS has created a **12 minute film** and **digital storybook** that brings AJHS' archives to life through animation.

You can choose to share one or both of these digital storytelling tools with your students.

SUGGESTED LESSONS

DURATION: 90 MINUTES

AJHS has created two model lessons for how to utilize the primary source archive.

Emma & Me: Connect past and present by exploring the factors that shaped Emma's Identity

A Statue's Meaning: Examine how the statue has meant different things to many people over time.

DESIGN YOUR OWN

DURATION: RANGES

AJHS has created an online archive of scaffolded primary sources that have been tagged based on overarching themes (i.e. immigration, American identity, Jewish identity, inequality).

We encourage you to mix and match sources to deepen and enrich your own lessons!

3) WRITING THE NEW "NEW COLOSSUS"

DURATION: 45 MINUTES

Students create their own New "New Colossus," expressing their vision and ideals about America. Students have the opportunity to enter their poems in AJHS' national poetry contest.