

The New Immigrants

As a Young Historian, I will be able to...

- **Compare the 'new immigrants' of the late 1800s to earlier immigrants.**
- **Explain the push and pull factors leading immigrants to America.**
- **Describe the challenges that immigrants faced establishing new lives in America.**
- **Analyze how immigrants adapted to American life while contributing to American culture.**

Immigration Rush

Most immigrants to the U.S. used to be protestants from Europe, Irish, or German.

The “new” immigrants would come from southern & eastern Europe such as Italy, Greece, Poland, & Russia

Soon the Chinese & Mexicans would join them to seek new economic opportunities or avoid war at home

Many were also “[chain-immigrants](#)”- people coming to the U.S. to join family or friends already in America

Optimism in Immigration

People saw the United States as a beacon of freedom, opportunity, education, & morality

Immigrants would only pack what they could carry & spend everything on a ticket to the U.S.

Most immigrants traveled in **steerage**- the bottom of the ship making the trip uncomfortable & dangerous

Coming into Port

The first stop coming into the U.S. was to a port to decide if they could stay.

Immigrants had to show they were healthy, had money, & could provide a skill.

Most Europeans were processed at [Ellis Island](#) in New York. They would take a ferry to the mainland when approved.

Those crossing the Pacific would stop at [Angel Island](#) in California, although it would often filter out the Chinese.

Social Issues

Immigrants often had to work with “an agent” to help them become accustomed to the new country.

Immigrants would move into neighborhoods of people from the same region they came from.

Americanization programs- Programs used to help immigrants learn English & adopt American culture

Many felt that American society was a melting pot- white people of different nationalities blend into a single culture.

More Social Issues

Many newcomers faced **nativism**, people preferring “native-born” Americans.

Religious backgrounds also created tension between groups of people.

Chinese Exclusion Act- prohibited immigration by Chinese laborers & limited Chinese civil rights.

Soon laws prohibiting anyone who was a criminal, immoral, a pauper, or needed assistance from the U.S.

Immigrants Affect American Society

Immigrants fueled innovation such as ranching, railroads, labor, & domestic servants

New languages, food, religions, & medicines were brought to the United States

Basketball, the telephone, plastic, & electrical innovations were created by immigrants

Immigrants would eventually expand the definition of American.