

## ELLIS ISLAND DECISION

It's 1905 and you have come to America from Calabria, Italy. Before you left Italy, you had many misfortunes. Your parents died of cholera in 1887. You went to live with an aunt. She had children of her own. There was never enough food to go around. Mostly you ate just bread soaked in oil. The drought made things worse. The soil turned to stone. The heavy rains came and turned your land into a swamp. Mosquitoes swarmed.

Now, as you near Ellis Island, you are afraid. This is where the immigrants are checked to see if they are fit to enter America. What if they find fault with you? Where will you go then?

As you ride in on a barge, you see the Statue of Liberty in the mist. Your heart pounds. It is as if she is welcoming you personally to America!

You are quickly marched down to the landing dock. There are so many others! You feel like an animal in a herd. Then you are led up the stairs to a big room. Babies are crying. Every kind of person is here. Apron-wearing women with bright kerchiefs mill around. Bearded men in fur hats and peasant boots are crowded in with people carrying battered suitcases and blanket bags.

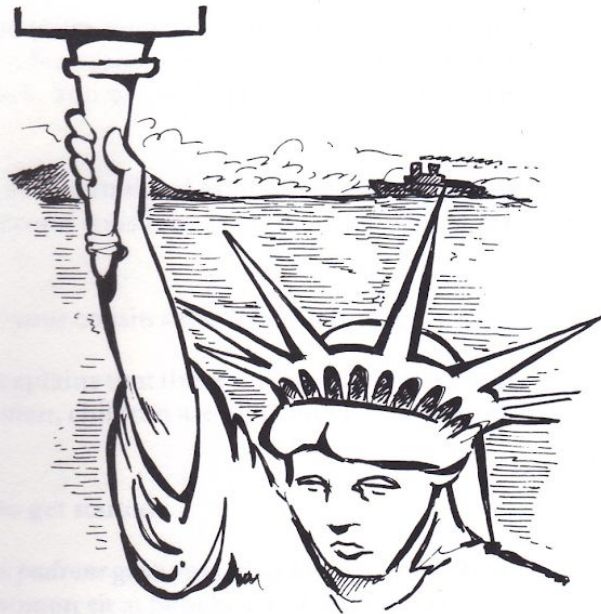
You enter the medical area. The doctor watches to see if you limp. You try to walk very straight. Then he looks for skin infections. Thankfully, you have none.

"Where are you from?" you are asked.

"Calabria, Italy," you say.

"What ocean did you cross?" you are asked.

"The Atlantic," you say. The man asks these questions to see if you have a normal mind. If you were mentally weak, they would turn you away.



Now a chalk mark is made on the coat of a woman beside you. The doctors have found an illness. She begins to cry. How sorry you feel for her.

Your eyes are checked next. Still no chalk mark on your coat. Thank Heaven!

You wait on a wooden bench until your name is called. You are asked more questions: Have you broken any laws? Are you a troublemaker? Do you have enough money to get by on until you have a job?

Then you are approved! You get a landing card. Now you must decide if you want to stay in Little Italy in New York, where a second cousin lives. Or should you go to Boston? Some of your friends from Calabria have gone there.

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■ *If you stay in New York, turn to page 3.*

■ *If you go to Boston, turn to page 4.*

Find out what your fate is!

## THE STORY:

1) What year does your story take place?

2) Where have you emigrated from?

3) Are you immigrating to America due to PUSH or PULL factors? List two of these factors.

4) What did you decide to do? Why?

[Stay in New York \(page 3\)](#)

[Go to Boston \(page 4\)](#)



## LIFE IN THE CITY

1) Summarize your life in the city.

2) What is the next decision you have to make?

3) What did you decide to do?

## **YOUR FATE**

What happens to you in America?

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In “City of Immigrants,” players navigate New York’s Lower East Side as Lena, a young Jewish immigrant from Russia. Trying to save money to bring her parents to America, she works long hours in a factory for little money and gets caught up in the growing labor movement.

<https://www.mission-us.org/games/city-of-immigrants/>

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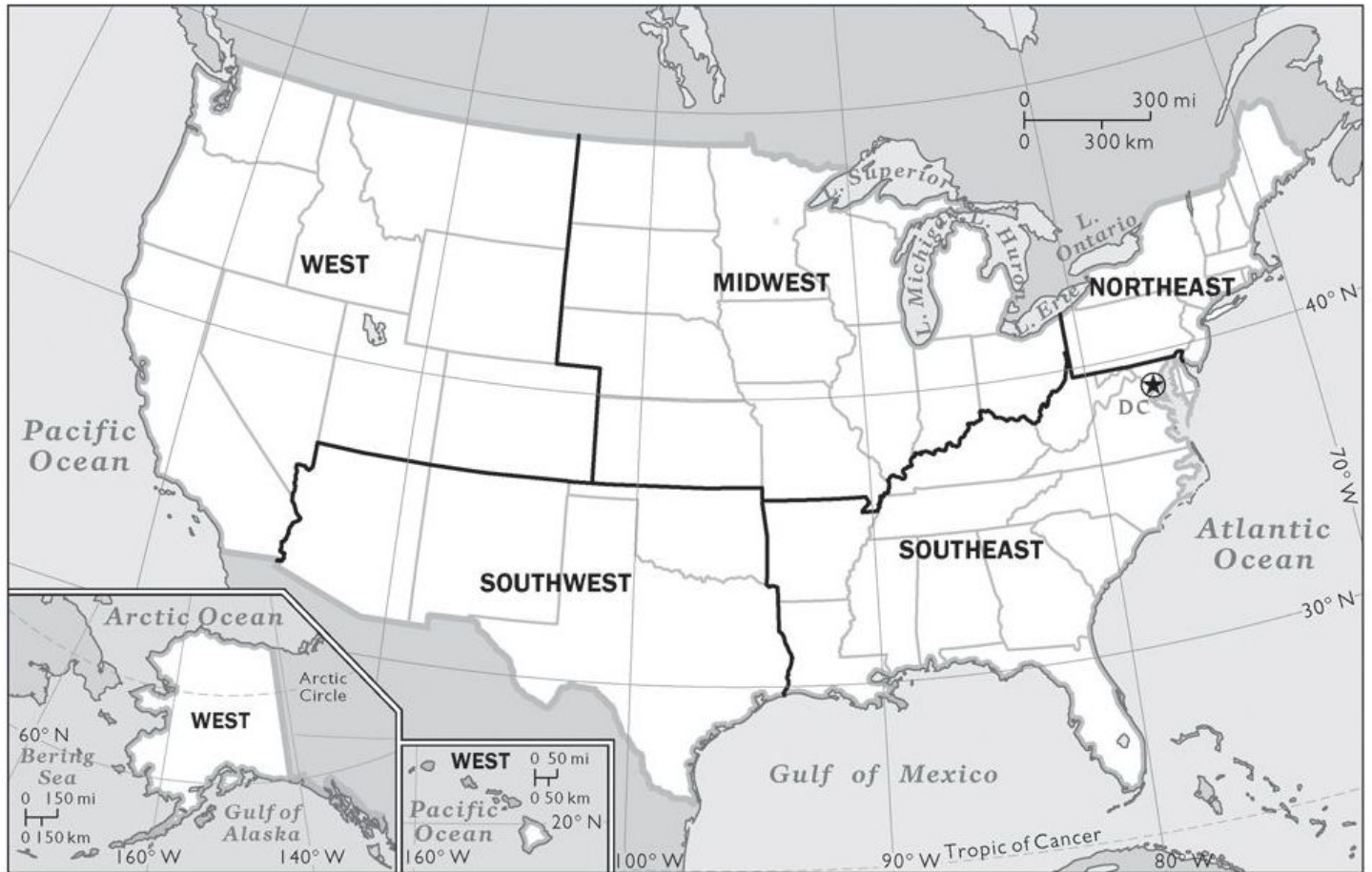
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Breakout EDU



### CITIZEN SCRAMBLE BREAKOUT





## UNITED STATES REGIONS