

Finding a New Home: The Immigrant Experience

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Description

As the session begins, participants learn first-hand what it would be like to come to a place where they do not understand the language, nor are they understood. This happens as the instructor, Gloria, starts off the program by speaking in an unknown language for a couple of minutes, then begins speaking English to help them understand what it may have been like for Emigrants when they left people and a county that was “home” to create a new life for themselves as Immigrants in a new land. Gloria will share stories and sing songs of the Emigrant experience. She will start out with her own Grandma Hannah’s story of leaving Sweden, crossing the ocean in the cargo hold of a ship with the other Emigrants, arriving in America, and finally settling in the wilderness.

Objectives: The following depends on the participants’ age, questions, group focus, and time.

- **Emigrant to Immigrant:**
 - Experience how difficult it is to communicate when you don’t speak the same language
 - Learn the difference between and *Emigrant* and an *Immigrant*
 - Learn about the voyage across the ocean
 - Find out why some people may not have been allowed into America

- **As an Emigrant/Immigrant...**
 - Decide what you would pack
 - Learn why you might have to leave things behind
 - Learn of the clothing you would be wearing
 - Find out what you would have eaten
 - Think about some reasons why you would have left home in the first place
 - Hear about your travel accommodations
 - Learn about some of the experiences you would have settling in a new home

Different Levels

- All age levels will learn by actively listening and taking part in the immigrant experience

Bibliography

- *Minnesota Historical Society* and the *Virginia Historical Society*
- Oral histories found in the *Research Center* at the *Minnesota Discovery Center*
- Family Stories of the instructor