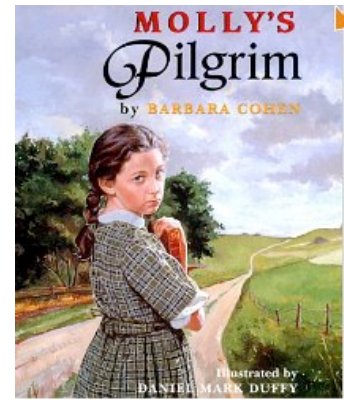


Molly's Pilgrim by Barbara Cohen

- Topic:** Immigration
- Objective:** To acquaint students with the multi-ethnic, multicultural makeup of America's citizens.
- Time Frame:** 45-55 minutes for each lesson



Areas of Infusion: Language Arts, Social Studies, Character Education

Objectives: To understand the symbolism of the Statue of Liberty.
To appreciate the poem, "The New Colossus."

- Hold up a picture or photo of the Statue of Liberty and ask students what it is and what it commemorates. The teacher should explain that the statue, given by France to the United States in 1886 is a sculpture made of copper and iron that symbolized freedom. It stands 151 feet tall in New York Harbor. Frederic Bartholdi, who decided what pose it would have, how it would be constructed, and where it would be placed, designed the statue. The base (pedestal) was financed through donations by schoolchildren in the United States.
- On the base is the poem, "The New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus. The title refers to a large statue which stood centuries ago on a hill above the harbor in Rhodes, Greece and was considered one of the Seven Wonders of the World. (This excerpt may be placed on a transparency or PowerPoint.)

THE NEW COLOSSUS

Give me your tired, your poor,

Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,

The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,

tempest-tost to me,

I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

- The following should be discussed.
 - What kind of people does the poem welcome? (Underprivileged, tired, poor, those wanting freedom, homeless.)
 - Define refuse and teeming.
 - What does the phrases "teeming shore" mean? (Europe was overcrowded, and the United States had plenty of room for all)
 - Tempest-tost refers to the storms that people experienced; did it mean only on the seas or everywhere? (Students may discuss the

political upheaval in many countries that brought and still brings immigrants to America. Current immigration can be discussed)

- What is the "golden door"? (The change for a better life in America...opportunity.)
- Show students a picture of the Statue and point out that it sits in New York harbor facing Europe. Ask why it faces Europe. (Europe was the center of earlier U.S. immigration.)
- Have students hypothesize if another statue was build today, where do they think it should be built? (Answers may vary.)
- Is a harbor still the best location for a statue welcoming new immigrants? (Answer may vary.)
- Have students examine a drawing or photo of the Statue.
 - Why is she dressed this way? (The dress is a toga, the ancient robe of Greece, the birthplace of democracy.)
 - What is around her head and why does it have seven spokes? (It is a crown whose seven rays symbolize the seven continents or seven oceans.)
 - What is holding? (A tablet on which is written July 4, 1776, the date the Declaration of Independence was signed.)
 - Why would she be holding a flame or torch? (It is a beacon of light for those trapped in the darkness of oppression, and signifies the role of the U.S. to enlighten the world.)
- Have students write the poem "*The New Colossus*" on the handout of the Statue of Liberty.

Objective: To understand that many Americans are immigrants

- Ask students the meaning of the word IMMIGRANT. Brainstorm to define it and have students write it in their notebooks.
- Ask children to raise their hands if they are immigrants or the descendant of one.
- Tell the class that both North and South America experienced isolation until Columbus thought that he had found a sea route to Asia from Europe. Many immigrants began coming to the "New World." At first, the Spanish immigrants settled in Florida, Caribbean, Central and South America, while English immigrants settled the Atlantic coast. Dutch, Germans, Scandinavians, French, and Africans who where bought as slaves soon joined them along the seaboard. Later, immigrants arrived from Ireland, Italy, Russia, Greece, and Eastern Europe. Dreams of wealth, promises of jobs, and religious and political freedom drew most here.

- Have partners do the map activity.
- Map Activity:
 - Label the seven continents on your map.
 - Label the oceans.
 - Draw a red arrow from southern and western Europe to the United States. (More than 12.5 million immigrants came to America from 1861-1920.)
 - Draw a green arrow from southern and western Europe to the United States. (More than 13.4 million immigrants came to America from 1861-1920.)
 - Draw a yellow line from the coast of Africa to the United States. (18,000 immigrants came to America from 1861-1920.)
 - Draw a blue line from the South Africa to the United States. (700,000 immigrants came to America from 1861-1920.)
 - Draw an orange line from Asia to the United States. (800,000 immigrants came to America from (1861-1920.)
- Tell students that between 1892-1954, 17 million immigrants' first sight of America was the Statue of Liberty. This was the greatest mass movement in human history. America's immigration policy later became more restrictive.
- Have students speculate whether if they had been in America prior to this immigrant wave, how they might have felt seeing many new immigrants coming to America. (Responses might include: happy, having more customers, fear of competition for jobs, resentful those who don't speak or understand English, fear of different custom and religion.)
- Ask students: If you were an immigrant how you might have felt? (Responses might include: fearful of learning a new language, unfamiliarity with different way of doing things, having no friends or support groups.)
- Ask what might be most important if you were a new immigrant. (Responses might include: ties to the old country, religious practices, and sense of family, speaking a familiar language.)

Objective: To understand the nature of prejudice.

- Look at the cover of the Molly's Pilgrim. What do the students notice? What does this lead you to suspect?
- Look at the dedication page; tell students this is the place where an author gives thanks to those inspired or helped the book come into being. In this case why did the author decide to write this book?

- Read pages 1 and 2 aloud. Why doesn't the storyteller (narrator) like the school? How would you imagine someone would feel with people laughing at him or her? Have the other kids ever laughed at any of them? Why?
- How does Molly feel about the song they sing about her? How do you think she felt when Elizabeth gave candy to the other girls and not her? Have students give some examples of the name-calling prejudice attitudes mentioned in the book.
- Continue reading through page 5. The word in italics *Shaynkeit* means beauty, a beautiful person. Describe Molly's relationship with her mother. Why does Molly ask her mother to take her back to New York City? Have students complete the activity "Schoolhouse Writing" and discuss ways in which to make newcomers feel welcome.
- *Malkeh* is an affectionate, pet name meaning "Little Molly". Molly and her mother are speaking Yiddish; a language used by the Jews of Europe in addition to their national language.
- Why doesn't Molly's mother want to return to New York City? Have students compare life in New York City with life in Winter Hill using a Venn diagram.
- Why doesn't her mother want to go back to Russia? Read p. 13. Cossacks were soldiers who didn't like Jews. If they went back, it would mean more persecution. Also Russian girls weren't educated, they only learned how to keep house, cook, and sew. Can Molly's mother read and write? Students can use a world map to locate Russia and New York.
- *Paskudnyak* is Yiddish for nasty or mean people. Why doesn't Molly want her mother to speak to her teacher, Miss Stickley? What would you have done if you were in Molly's place?

Objectives: To appreciate the significance of being a Pilgrim.
To understand how hurtful others may be.

- Read pp. 15-17. In what way did Elizabeth treat Molly? Why is using the phrase "you people" so hurtful? Do you think Molly knows about Labor Day or the Fourth of July?
- Ask students to name holidays that are celebrated in other countries. How does the teacher help Molly in the classroom?
- Read pp. 18-23. When Molly explained her assignment to her mother, what happened that made her realize that her mother understood what she had to do? Do you think that Molly's Mama knew what the Pilgrim doll was supposed to look like? Why is this holiday celebrated? Talk with the students about the ways they celebrate with their families. Where do they go? What do they eat? What are they grateful for?

- Read pp. 24-27. Have a student describe Molly's pilgrim doll. How does Molly react to the doll that her Mama made? (*It looks like a picture of her mother taken as a young girl. Mama did that on purpose.*) Have students color the drawing of Molly's doll.
- Why did Mama make the Pilgrim doll resemble her? If you were to make a pilgrim, would it be similar or different from Molly's doll?
- Read pp. 28-32. What would the students do if they were Molly? Would they have taken the doll to school? What does Molly do with the doll? What does Elizabeth say when Molly shows her doll?
- Read pp. 32-35. Compare the picture of the other children's dolls with Molly's. How was Molly's doll different? How do the class and Miss Stickley respond to Molly's Pilgrim?
- Complete the story. How does Molly explain why her doll is so different from the others? What action does Miss Stickley take when Elizabeth and others hooted?
- Ask students the same questions Miss Stickley asked Elizabeth. Where does the idea for Thanksgiving come from? Ask if any of the students have celebrated this holiday and describe what they saw.
- Why does Miss Stickley place Molly's doll on her desk?
- At the end of the story, how do we know that school is probably going to be better for Molly in the future?
- What does Molly mean when she says, "I've decided it takes all kinds of Pilgrims to make a Thanksgiving."?
- How have Molly's feelings about Mama changed?
- What lessons can the class learn from Molly? From her mother? From her father? From the Pilgrim doll?
- Discuss samples of prejudice from the story. Why does prejudice make people feel lonely or isolated from a group? What are some of the reasons Molly was excluded from the others? How can we be accepted? What is the responsibility toward others who are different?
- Use the "Main Idea" Activity to conclude the class.
- Show the video, *Molly's Pilgrim* and contrast it with the book. If you were to make a film or rewrite the story, what changes might you make? Why?

Assessment

A project can be assigned. Some suggestions for projects:

- Have children interview their parents about their ethnic background and do research to create a doll wearing a native costume from the country their ancestors came from.
- Have students create a family tree.
- Have students do research on ethnic foods and with parental help prepare and serve an ethnic meal containing dishes from different ethnic backgrounds. Combine recipes into a cookbook for all members of the class.
- Have students look in a telephone book to find one family name for each letter of the alphabet and make a list.
- Have students do research into holidays unique to the country from where their ancestor come from. Present this to the class orally.

MAIN IDEA

Directions: Read the sentences below. Which is the main idea of *Molly's Pilgrim*? Write it on the cornucopia.

1. The "First Thanksgiving" took place in Massachusetts.
2. The other children made fun of Molly.
3. Molly wants to go home to Russia.
4. A pilgrim is someone who moves to a new place to find religious freedom.
5. Miss Stickley helps Molly with her English.