



**HOW DID WE GET HERE: A  
LOOK AT AMERICAN  
JEWISH HISTORY DURING  
THE 1880'S-1920'S**

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## RATIONALE

History is essentially a construction of hypotheses based on an interpretation of primary sources. History is based on what happened and why it happened. It is the piecing together of remnants. It is the working together of important events and interpretations. The historian, the interpreter deems these events important.

Teaching history enables individuals to make judgments about why we are who we are. History enables us to place events into context. History enables us to think about phenomena in two different ways, diachronically and synchronically. By looking at an event diachronically, one learns the historical evolution of a particular idea or phenomena. By looking at an event synchronically, one takes the idea or event and relates it to a similar contemporaneous event. We teach history for inspiration, to get a better understanding of what our ancestors went through and to relate to our achievements. The American Jewish experience is one which our youth should be familiar with for these reasons and others. By studying American Jewish history, one can emphasize Jewish adaptability, the importance of Jewish identity, and Jewish contributions to American society.

The American Jewish experience during the period of the Third Migration (1880-1920) is one filled with change and turmoil, struggle and success. We learn about our failures along with our accomplishments. By learning about who we were and why we are who we are the student will

begin to build character and citizenship. The period of the Third Migration saw the development of many Jewish organizations in the United States. It was during this time period that Jews began agencies to help better not only Jewish society , but the American society as well. Jews played an important role in the world of business, medicine and land development during this time. They were salesmen, doctors, entrepreneurs and pioneers. The impact these Jews had was long-lasting. During this time Reform Judaism was thriving. The Jews of America were using their new found freedom to make choices for themselves and the future of Judaism in America.

The Jews have a long and dramatic ancient history. The average high school student cannot really relate to ancient history. Although developmentally they can imagine ancient history, what is more important to them is modern history. They want to know about the present and the more recent past. This curriculum on American Jewish life in the early 20th century will examine a more modern history. High school students are beginning to develop their own sense of self. They have many questions about who they are and where they came from.

Post bar/bat mitzvah age students are beginning to develop their own personal Jewish identities. At this stage of development, students can critically analyze the past and facts. They are able to compare the past to the present to gain understanding and predict the future by looking at trends and important events. By using their critical thinking and analyzing skills, the students can learn from their past and better understand their present.

By studying American Jewish history during the early twentieth century, students will gain a better understanding of their culture and people. The Jews of this time were developing a new Jewish culture. The Yiddish theater was flourishing. Music, art, and entertainment were thriving. High school students are most familiar with Judaism as a culture. It is their sense of identity. To them bagels and lox are just as Jewish as staying home on Friday night to celebrate Shabbat.

The period of the Third Migration (1880-1920) was one that had a great impact on not only American society, but on Jewish life as well. The numbers of Jews in the United States increased tremendously during the early 20th century. Jewish life in America flourished and Jewish communal life exploded. The number of synagogues and communal organizations increased during the early 20th century. Jews established themselves across the United States and began their new lives as Americans. Yet they did not leave their Judaism behind. Their Jewish identity stuck with them and they used their new and improved status to fight for religious freedom and make a name for themselves in America.

This curriculum hopes to develop in the students a greater sense of self and a strong sense of Jewish identity. By learning about the history of their families in the United States and the role Jews played in the development of the United States, the students should develop a sense of Jewish identity, nationalism, and pride. High school students are on a journey to find themselves. I hope by giving them a place to start learning about where they came from, they will take the next step on their journey and place themselves on the right path.

## CURRICULAR GOALS

To familiarize students with the American Jewish Experience during the 1880's-1920's.

To develop skills in order to interpret history using primary source material.

To help students better understand the development of Jewish community organizations.

To familiarize students with the development of American Jewish culture.

To encourage students to have a greater appreciation for the past, present, and future of American Jewry.

To familiarize students with the development of Reform Judaism in the United States.

To familiarize students with their own personal family history.

To familiarize students with the development of various Jewish communal institutions in America.

To help students better understand how people adapt to new environments.

## UNIT ONE: THE IMMIGRATION EXPERIENCE

This unit will introduce the students to the immigration experience of the Eastern European Jews. The students will also have the opportunity to research their own family history. Students should be provided with background information concerning the process of immigration, including the process at Ellis Island, entrance examination, language barriers, and other difficulties that arose.

This unit will be divided into 3-4 classes. The first class will focus on the shtetl experience, another class or two will focus on immigration and the last class will focus on personal family histories. This unit is divided into sub-units to ensure that the background information be provided to the student in an orderly way. This introductory unit serves as the back-drop to the rest of the curriculum.

### OBJECTIVES:

- To gain a better understanding of what it was like to live in a shtetl.
- To discuss the concept of immigration and its affects upon the immigrants as well as the society at large.
- To retell their own personal family's history

### KEY CONCEPTS AND TERMS:

**-Immigration-** Ellis Island: Almost all immigrants of a certain time period passed through Ellis Island where they were expected to pass several tests before they were allowed entry into America.

**-Shtetl-** Little town or village. The majority of Eastern European Jews lived in shtetlach.

**-Yiddish-** The language spoken by the majority of Eastern European Jews. Yiddish is a combination of Hebrew and German.

**-Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS)-** Formed in 1909 by the merger of several organizations to help newcomers to America find lost relatives, jobs, housing. The HIAS also helped newcomers learn English.

## SHTETL LIFE

**OBJECTIVES:** Students will be able to :

Identify different elements of shtetl life.

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

(1) Tour of the shtetl:

Students will be given a map of Jewish Eastern Europe 1830-1914 and a drawn up map of a shtetl. The students will rotate through stations that represent people, places, or events typical to shtetl life. They will talk to the people (student volunteers) at each station and ask questions about their role in the shtetl. Different students will role play the different people found in a typical shtetl at each station. At each station families will be given clues to help locate their village on the map of Eastern Europe.

Some examples of roles to be played out are:

#### SHUL

Rabbi- Role of the Rabbi in the shtetl- "So, what problem do you need me to decide for you?" ex: who should return dowry, sold a bad cow, a broken sewing machine, etc. Be creative.

Shames- talks about how small the building is, how everybody is here everyday, poor people sit anywhere and the rich sit on the east side, men sit separately from women (women were behind a curtain up in the balcony)

#### KOSHER BUTCHER

Mashgiach- talks about the strict laws of kashrut, what he does with extra meat (sells it to the goyim), what it's like in the butcher shop on Shabbes morning.

Customer- complains about the prices, the lines, etc. Wonders about the food at the wedding. Complains about the living conditions, cold in the winter, hot in the summer, not enough wood for fires, etc.

#### YESHIVA

Melamed- Yells at them to sit down for their lesson, talks about lessons that they should know and will know. What are you girls doing in here?

Yeshiva bucher- throwing spitballs, talks about life of a child in the shtetl.

#### RICH PERSON'S HOME

Schnorrer talks about tzedakah, chutzpah of a beggar, what's the difference between me and the rich man, just a few cows!!

Daughter- the one getting married, talks about the wedding, the dowry, etc. has only met the bridegroom once or twice, she hopes he's nice.

### TAILOR

Tailor talks about business being hard, not enough people buy clothes, mostly repairs, resizes, etc. Lucky big wedding (They were going to buy the dress from Warsaw)

Bridegroom getting a final fitting for his kittel, the wedding garment.  
Nervous about wedding, talks about in-laws, job

### BAKER'S SHOP

Baker-I'll never finish the cake, and the challah, and all the rest of the bread. Everyday, I bake black bread, but on Shabbes, the white bread, the Challah. I put in a little, bit honey, a little bit poppy seed. Just between you and me, it makes Shabbat a little like heaven on earth.

Mother of the Bride-Fix that cake. You know, he's the only baker in town. I had to stand over him all morning - I made him sift the flour four times, to get out the bugs. My daughter's wedding, the cake shouldn't get caught in your teeth.

### TOWN SQUARE

Constable-Harasses them, asks for papers, talks down to Jews. Tells them how proud he is his town doesn't have a problem with Jews. They know their place, and we know it too.

Yenta the matchmaker (shadchan) The matchmaker arranged marriages for a fee. The matchmaker kept a list of available boys and girls. Sometimes the bride and groom did not meet until an agreement was reached. After meeting the man she was to marry, a girl complained to the matchmaker, "He limps!!" "But only when he walks," the matchmaker explained. The big wedding will be here in the town square. What a match!! I made it myself!! What a beautiful bride, well at least she will be behind a veil! And the groom what a scholar!! He can quote any passage from the Talmud and tell you what he was eating when he studied it!!

(2) Use The Shtetl (video mini-course) by Behrman House. This mini-course presents an over-view of the shtetl and it's way of life based on actual photo-documentation. The mini-course includes a teaching guide, the video and a number of suggested class activities.

(3) Show The American Jewish Experience: A Letter to David. It is an audiovisual introduction to shtetl life presented in three parts by the Jewish Museum of New York and Behrman House. Using filmstrips and audio tape, offer the students Part I: My Life in the Shtetl. Reinforce its impact by asking the following questions:

1. What was the center of the shtetl? (The marketplace.)
2. What does great-grandmother call the center of Jewish life? (The *shul*.)



3. How did great-grandmother's father make a living? (He was a tailor)
4. What was a *schulklopper* ? (A man who let people know the time by pounding on the doors of houses with a wooden mallet.)
5. Why did great-grandmother leave Lukomir? (Because of the pogroms.)
6. Why did great-grandmother decide to take the boat to America from Bremen, Germany? (Her mother had distant relatives who lived there.)
7. What in this filmstrip impressed you the most?
8. What photograph did you enjoy the most?
9. How does this filmstrip help you understand the experience of shtetl life and Jewish immigration?

(4) Have students create their own shtetl in the classroom. Journal the activities of daily life in a shtetl.

## THE IMMIGRATION EXPERIENCE

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

#### (1) VALUES CLARIFICATION

Objectives: Students will be able to:  
discuss their personal values and be able to express them and prioritize them.

#### Set induction:

Someone dressed in some military type costume will disrupt class with an edict from the Czar. They will tell the students that they have to leave home immediately and can only take a few possessions with them. They will ask the students to gather in groups and sit in various places in the room.

#### Procedure:

The groups will be told that they must pack their bags immediately and can only take what they can carry in their suitcase. Each group will come up with a list of items and write it down on a piece of paper. If the students need help give some examples, such as family pictures, Shabbes candlesticks, featherbed, siddurim, tablecloths, etc. Each group will then have to decide upon which items they would like to take with them. The groups will then be given a few sponges, and a few markers. The groups will prioritize their values and label the sponges with the items they want to take with them. They will then have to figure out which items will fit in their "suitcase" (video tape boxes).

#### Debriefing:

Some guiding questions might be: Has anyone seen the movie Fiddler on the Roof? Does anyone remember what happened when they were forced to leave Anatevka? How did you feel when you were told that you had to leave their homes? What kind of things would you take with you if you were forced to leave your home? What are some things that your family took with them and why? How did you feel about making those decisions? How were those decisions made? Did you vote?

#### (2) HEIRLOOMS

Discuss with the students what an heirloom is. Have each student bring a family heirloom to class and discuss it's history. Have students think about something that they would want passed on to their children.

(3) FIDDLER ON THE ROOF

Watch the scene in Fiddler on the Roof where the czar's edict is read and all of the people have to leave Anatevka. Have students re-enact those scenes in class. Have students write their own scripts and video tape them.

(4) Divide students into small groups and have them read through either one of Kenneth Roseman's choose your own adventure books; On the Other Side of the Hudson or The Melting Pot. Have students discuss each choice they made and why they made that decision. Have each student write their own "choose your own adventure" based on the experience of a new immigrant to the United States in the 1990's.

## THE IMMIGRATION PROCESS

### OBJECTIVES:

Students will be able to:

- Identify different aspects of the immigration process.
- Recognize different organizations involved in aiding immigrants to America.

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

(1) Have students read pages 114-124 in This Land of Liberty (Behrman House Publishers). Discuss the Close-Ups on pages 121-124. Can they think of any organizations that provide assistance to immigrants? Have the students create their own organizations to help newcomers to America.

(2) Read pages 94-106 in America: The Jewish Experience (UAHC Press). Have the students role play the script titled "An Immigrant Comes to America" (page 109 of teacher's guide). One student should be dressed as an immigrant wearing a worn jacket and a kerchief and carrying a bundle of clothes. Another student, representing an immigrant who has been in America for some time, should be dressed more fashionably with a large hat and a cane. The third student is the narrator. After the script has been enacted, ask the students the following question: "Did the American help the new immigrant?" Answers should generate a discussion.

(3) Write an imaginary scene between an immigrant and an immigration official in the early 1900's.

(4) Read Ellis Island: The Immigration Experience. Discuss how it must have felt to arrive in a new country not knowing the language, customs, or where you were going to live. Have students create a video documenting the immigration process. Have the students write a story through the eyes of a new immigrant or an immigration official.

## PERSONAL FAMILY HISTORIES

**OBJECTIVES:** Students will be able to:

- Write out their family origins.
- Write out their own family history.

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

(1) Use the M.U.S.E. Family History Workbook (Skirball Museum, Los Angeles, CA).

Prior to class have students fill out a family tree with their families. Have students bring in any information they have about their family history including photographs and old letters, etc. Each student will then present their family history to the class.

(2) QUILT

Have the art specialist discuss the history of family quilts with the class, telling them that families created these quilts as a record of their family's history to be passed down from generation to generation. Each participant will design a square for a family history quilt. They will be given a square of muslin, fabric markers, paper, and a pencil. Prior to the class the students were asked to do some research into their own family history. They were asked to create a family tree and find out where their families came from. They will use their own personal Jewish family history as a basis for this activity. Some suggested drawings are: family tree, maps, names, pictures that represent their family, etc. The quilt will be sewn together and hung up in the synagogue.

(3) Have the students interview their grandparents to find out about their family history. Invite the grandparents to class to talk to the students about their experiences.

(4) Create a family history museum. Have each student create an exhibit based on their family history.

## UNIT TWO: AMERICAN JEWISH CULTURE

This unit will provide the students with an overview of American Jewish culture during the 1880's-1920's. Students will be exposed to Yiddish theater, newspapers, music, and foods. As new immigrants, the Jews became part of American culture. Yet, they still held on to many of their beliefs and practices.

### OBJECTIVES: Students will be able:

- To correctly pronounce, recognize, and use properly in context ten Yiddish words.
- To sing several Yiddish songs.
- To identify a variety of Jewish foods, know their origin and importance.
- To identify such institutions as Yiddish newspapers and the Yiddish theater.

### KEY CONCEPTS AND TERMS:

**-The Jewish Daily Forward**- Most popular Yiddish newspaper. Founded in 1897 and edited for almost fifty years by Abraham Cahan.

**-Bintel Brief**- One of the most popular features of The Jewish Daily Forward, in which readers' personal problems were answered. Everyday immigrant life was reflected in the questions in this column.

**-Yiddish Theater**- The Yiddish theater was a professional enterprise with its own playhouses and stars, such as Jacob P. Adler, Boris Thomashefsky, Bertha Kalisch, and Keni Lipzin. It featured plays inspired by current events, translations into Yiddish of works by classic European writers such as Tolstoy, Goethe, and Ibsen, as well as Jewish versions of Shakespeare's plays.

**- Jewish Foods**- Some examples of foods brought into American Jewish culture from Eastern Europe are: kishke (stuffed cow intestine with a bread based stuffing), stuffed cabbage, borscht (beet soup), and gefilte fish.

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

(1) Read some selected excerpts from *A Bintel Brief*, edited by Isaac Metzker. Ask students to compose letters for the Bintel Brief. Depending on your preference, ask them to write letter which reflect problems they know about today; or else ask them to put themselves in the shoes of an immigrant. When they have handed in the letters, redistribute them randomly and allow students to formulate the editor's answer. No student should answer his/her own letter. Ask students to read the letters aloud together with their replies. **(Key word: Bintel Brief)**

(2) Have students write articles for The Jewish Daily Forward to help educate and Americanize new immigrants. For example, one article found in The Jewish Daily Forward in 1909, gave the rules of baseball. **(Key word: The Jewish Daily Forward)**

(3) Invite a guest to teach the students some Yiddish songs. Have the students perform the songs for the entire student body or at congregational services. **(Key word: Yiddish Theater)**

(4) Show the movie Yentl. Have the students read one of Isaac B. Singer's short stories prior to watching the movie. How is his style of writing reflected in the movie? Have a discussion about the implications of such a movie. **(Key word: Yiddish Theater)**

(5) Have students read pages 62-65 in An Album of the Jews in America by Yuri Suhl. Have students write their own play based on today's American Jewish culture. **(Key word: Yiddish Theater)**

(6) Write the headings American Culture and Jewish Culture on the chalkboard. Ask students to list ways in which the cultures are similar and ways in which they are different. The students' responses may include: "Jews and non-Jews celebrate holidays like Thanksgiving, Columbus Day, July 4th, etc. They dress alike, go to the same schools, participate in the same sports, etc. However, Jews celebrate the Sabbath on Saturday and non-Jews on Sunday. Jews observe Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, etc., and we eat traditional Jewish foods on these holidays." Be sure to challenge any stereotypes put forth by the students. Once a sizable list of responses has been compiled, explain that every ethnic and religious takes pride in its own culture. Today in America, many people see the value in each group's preserving its cultural identity. We call this "cultural pluralism" or "multiculturalism." Explain that at the turn of the twentieth century, many people thought that all Americans should be the same and that America should be a melting pot" in which all groups give up their unique

characteristics and blend into one "soup." Review the two lists on the chalkboard and ask the students: "What would happen if we as Jews lived only according to the American Culture list? What if we lived only according to the Jewish Culture list?" Discuss with the students whether they agree with the "melting pot" theory or with "cultural pluralism."

(7) View the movie Gefilte Fish. Discuss how the recipe changed from generation to generation. Have each student bring in their favorite Jewish food and recipe. Have a food tasting and distribute the recipes for the students to take home. Discuss what each food is and its significance (challah- Shabbat, haroset- Passover, bagel- Jewish cultural food). (**Key word: Jewish Foods**)



## UNIT THREE: JEWISH COMMUNAL LIFE

When Jewish immigrants came to America, they tried to re-create the communities they left behind in Europe. They tended to live in areas with other Jews who came from the same place. They formed groups to help one another.

During the 1880's-1920's Jewish communal life flourished. As Jews were adapting to their new lives as Americans, they were establishing organizations to assist them in that process. The number of Jewish communal agencies and synagogues increased tremendously during the early 20th century.

This unit will provide an overview of some of the Jewish communal agencies established during the early 20th century and some of those still in existence today. These agencies helped newcomers adapt to their new lives in America. The Jews used their new and improved status to fight for religious freedom and make a name for themselves in America.

### OBJECTIVES: Students should be able:

- To identify the various agencies that assisted Jewish immigrants during the early 20th century.
- To identify the various Jewish communal agencies that exist in their communities.
- To identify the Jewish value behind why Jews help one another.
- To identify the concept of hachnasat orchim- welcoming the stranger.

### KEY CONCEPTS AND TERMS:

- **Jewish Federation**- The Jewish Federation began as an organization to raise and distribute money to local agencies in the Jewish community. Its primary function today is the distribution of funds it receives from the United Jewish Appeal/Federation Campaign.

**Hachnasat Orchim-** The Jewish value of welcoming the stranger. The new Jewish immigrants were welcomed into the United States and were assisted by their fellow Jews.

**-The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS)-** The HIAS was formed in 1909 by the merger of several organizations whose purpose was to help newcomers to America. HIAS representatives defended those threatened with deportation, investigated complaints about conditions on the ships, provided food, housing and job counseling, and conducted classes in citizenship.

**-The National Council of Jewish Women-** Founded in Chicago in 1893 by Hannah G. Solomon, the National Council of Jewish Women was made up mostly of women of German-Jewish backgrounds who were pioneers in the field of volunteer social work.

**-Kehillah-** Established in 1908 by Judah Leib Magnes. The Kehillah promoted Jewish education, fought crime, and helped the various Jewish groups work together. One of the projects of the Kehillah was the Bureau of Jewish Education, which helped provide a Jewish education for Jewish children in New York City.

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

- (1) Bring in a representative of the local Jewish Federation to talk about the history of the Jewish Federation and what the Federation does today. **(Key word: Jewish Federation)**
- (2) Assign each student a different agency to research and present to the class in the form of an agency fair. Have the students create brochures for their agency to give out at the "Jewish Agency Fair."
- (3) Have students read pages 121-124 in This Land of Liberty (Behrman House Publishers). Discuss the role each of these organizations played in assisting immigrants adapt to living in America. **(Key words: HIAS, The National Council of Jewish Women, Kehillah)**
- (4) Take a tour of the local Federation building and find out which agencies work out of the Federation and what they do.
- (5) Have students create their own agency to assist newcomers to America. **(Key word: Hachnasat orchim)**

(6) Invite a recent immigrant to talk about his/her experience in adapting to life in America. Discuss ways to help new immigrants. Decide on a social action project dealing with new immigrants. (Key word: **Hachnasat orchim**).

(7) Have students view the filmstrip United HIAS Service. Discuss the story of the HIAS and the United Service for New Americans. (Key word: **HIAS**)

## UNIT FOUR: CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICA

Throughout the years Jews have contributed to the development of America. From the first settlers in New Amsterdam to the modern day fourth or fifth generation American, Jews have fought for religious freedom, contributed to the fields of science, medicine, sports, and entertainment. The Reform movement was growing during this time period. Many synagogues were established and institutes of higher learning were created.

### OBJECTIVES: Students will be able:

- To identify a number of Jews who contributed to the development of America.
- To recognize the contributions Jews made to America.

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

- (1) Divide students into groups. Assign each group of field of study such as, entertainment, sports, medicine, science, politics, etc. Have each group choose a Jewish individual who made a contribution in that area. Have the students present their person in any way they wish. Some example presentations might be a video history of his/her life, a written biography of the individual, a song about the individuals life and contribution to America, etc.
- (2) Have students read pages 36-41 in Tracing Our Jewish Roots by Miriam Sagan about various people who made contributions to America. Discuss the contribution each of the individuals made to America.
- (3) Have students view the filmstrip Hebrew Union College. Discuss the historical development and purpose of HUC. Bring the rabbi, cantor, or educator into the class to discuss their experiences at HUC.
- (4) View the filmstrip To America with Love. Discuss the contributions of American Jews to the development of American society and American Jewish communities.
- (5) Have students write an essay or poem on the following topic- Looking into the future, what do you think your generation will contribute to the

future of American Jewry. What do you hope your generation will contribute to American Jewry.

## MEMORABLE MOMENTS

### IMMIGRATION SIMULATION:

Through the use of a simulation game students will be able to describe the process of the Jews who immigrated to the US. This program should be used at the conclusion of the first unit to reinforce their study of the immigration process. Several facilitators are needed to make this program a success.

#### Procedure:

The students will "travel" in family groupings during this program. The students will gather together in family groups. The facilitator will explain that since they have been forced to leave their homes and have chosen to come to America they will have to go through the immigration process. There will be a large board game taped down to the floor, a spinner, mazel cards, and shlemazel cards will be in the center of the board. Each "family" group will be asked to undergo a medical examination and a legal check before they enter the US. (the board game) at Ellis Island. After passing the medical and legal exam the "family" will enter the US. and the next "family" will be processed through the medical and legal exam. When the "family" has entered the US. they will proceed to the Jewish Welfare square and collect their first month's salary. They will then proceed around the board by spinning the spinner and moving the appropriate number of spaces. At each square the "family" will read the instructions and do as the square says. The squares are described below. The purpose of the game is to collect as much money for your "family" to ensure a good life in the US. There is no winner. Time will be called as the facilitator deems fit.

### MEDICAL EXAMINATION

The medical examiner" will examine each member of the family first inspecting the hair and face looking for any type of contagious disease. If the examiner suspects that the "immigrant" has a medical problem, he/she will take the "immigrant" out of line and mark his/her clothing with an "L" for lameness, an "H" for suspected heart disease, and an "E" for eye problems. The "immigrant" will then wait to be seen by a second examiner. This second examiner can ask questions about the "immigrant's" health, etc. In order to pace the number of families on the board at one time, the medical examiner will find something wrong with a few of the "immigrants".

### LEGAL INSPECTION

The "legal inspector" will ask rapid-fire questions to the "immigrants" in some made up language, but a translator into English can be provided if the family requests. Some suggestions for questions are: What is your name? Where were you born? Where are you coming from? Where are you going to? Have you ever been to the United States before? Do you have any relatives here? Where do they live? Is there anyone who came to meet you

on Ellis Island? Who paid for your passage? Do you have any money?--let me see it. Do you have any skills? Do you have a trade? Do you have a job waiting for you here in the United States? Do you have a criminal record? Just your basic El Al security check. Be creative use your own judgment. If the "immigrant" answered any of these questions improperly, take them out of line. They should receive an "SI" on their clothing in chalk. They will be detained until they can appear before the Board of Special Inquiry--the legal examiners on Ellis Island. Again this station will be used to pace the families unto the board.

### THE BOARD

There are 22 spaces on the board.

**Mazel square (3)**- pick a mazel card and do what it says.

**Shlemazel square (3)**- pick a shlemazel card and do what it says.

**Jewish Welfare**- collect monthly salary \$50.

**Upper West side**- you're living well, listen to a concert of your favorite Yiddish hits .

**Tax collector**- pay \$7

**Henry Street Settlement**- Learn a few words in English, remember you probably speak Yiddish (actually they'll be learning Yiddish, because they already know English). Translation worksheet, check bulletin board for lost relative (there will be a list of names for them to check).

**Canal Street**- kosher butcher, buy a chicken for Shabbes dinner, \$2.

**Steamship**- port of entry, look for an apartment in the Forward.

**Hester Street**- tailor, buy a new tablecloth for your Shabbes/Yom Tov table.

**Prospect Place**-peddler, check out the peddlers wares and decide whether or not you will help him out by buying something.

**Shul**- The shul needs you to make a minyan, daven with them a little while and say the Shema.

**Lower Eastside**- hatshop, design a new hat for the high holy days

**Workman's circle**- pay your union dues \$5, if there is a job for you collect \$2. (this will be determined by the staff, if your family needs the money get a job)

**Piecework Job**- put together as many pieces as possible, collect 10 cents a piece (a piece may be a sleeve, a pocket, a collar, etc.).

**Medical Quarantine**- one of your family members has been detained for medical reasons wait here a turn.

**Garment District**- apply for a job, exhibit your family's trade (if your a tailor, show them a shirt you have made, if your a butcher, give one law of kashrut, if your a Rabbi, tell a Torah story, etc.)

**Delancy Street**-congratulations you own your own pickle business, of course you must pay for the barrel that holds your pickles in it, pay \$5.

**Triangle Shirt factory**- put together as many shirts as possible, collect 50 cents per shirt.

### MAZEL CARDS

You just got a job working in the garment district. Move ahead 3 spaces.

You just received a sewing machine from your Uncle Motel. Move ahead 2 spaces.

You find an apartment on Hester Street. Move ahead to Hester St. If you pass the Jewish Welfare Agency, collect \$50.

You have been elected as a representative in the Workman's Circle, collect \$3.

Your wife just had a baby, go to the shul and receive a blessing from the Rabbi.

Your cousin Herschel just moved to town and invited you and your family to come and stay with him. Go to Delancy Street.

Your son just finished learning his Aleph Bet, go to the synagogue and receive a blessing from the Rabbi.

You heard that you have some relatives in town. Go to the Henry Street Settlement and check the list.

A long lost relative leaves you part of his business, you inherit a pushcart. Move ahead to Delancy Street.

You found a new apartment. This time there are only two other families living there. Move ahead 1 space.

You've struck it rich! Move up to the Upper West side.

You just got a new job. Go to the Jewish Welfare Agency.

You made a little extra money this month. Go to Canal Street and buy some extra food for Shabbes.

You have inherited \$2. Go to Prospect Place and buy some new clothes.

The matchmaker has found a match for your daughter!! Go to the Shul and donate \$1.

### SHLEMAZEL CARDS

You can't sew fast enough and lose your job. Move back 3 spaces.

You find a new apartment, but you must share it with 3 other families. Using all members of your families make a pyramid.

Someone stole a wheel off of your pushcart, pay \$2 for a new wheel.

Your daughter has small pox and you are quarantined for a week. Sit down quietly next to the board for 2 minutes.

You lost your passport return to the Steamship and stand in line next to the board as close together as possible.

Your cousin Moishe died, got to the shul and say the Barechu with the Rabbi.

Make a donation to the shul for the Rabbi's services at the funeral \$1.

Your son is having trouble in Heder. Say the Aleph Bet forwards and backwards.

The matchmaker can't find a suitable mate for your eldest daughter. Spend 2 minutes teaching her some manners.



You bought a hat for your son but it doesn't fit him. Go to the Lower Eastside and try to find him a new one.

Go to Workman's Circle. Without talking arrange your family in a straight line from youngest to oldest.

Your uncle Shlomo offered you a new job in New Orleans, but you missed the boat. Go back 2 spaces.

You hear of a job opening on Prospect Place. Go to Prospect Place and sing two Hebrew songs.

You lost your siddur and have to daven without it. Sing Mi Chamocha

Your Bubbe thinks you are becoming to American. She wants you to name 7 people in the Torah and tell her a little bit about 3 of them.

### CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE:

Through a "choose your own adventure" type experience, the students will experience how life was for the Jews of the early twentieth century throughout several cities in America. Students will make decisions similar to those made by the new immigrants during that time. This program can be used during the third unit to help students get a better understanding of how Jews adjusted to their new lives in America.

Objective: Students will be familiar with various Jewish communities in the United States during the late 1800's through the early 1900's.

Procedure: Students will travel in "family" groups from station to station. The "family" groups will be traveling with a facilitator from station to station. The facilitator will assist at each station allowing the students to read the stations and then facilitate a discussion based upon the decision to be made. The facilitator must help the "families" make decisions based on the options given at the station. The room will be divided into different cities. In each city there will be a number of stations. Each "family" group will start in Manhattan, there will be a number of "Manhattan" cities so that a number of "families" can start at the same time. At the first station in Manhattan the "families" will have to decide on whether to stay in New York or not. Based on the decision made, the card at the station will tell the family where to go next. Upon arrival at a new city, a "family" will start at station 1, which will give information about the city in this historical period and end with a series of choices of what to do in that city. Students, based on their choices, will loop through the stations in each city, making choices at each one, eventually moving to another city or settling down.

## Sample Cities and stations:

### Manhattan:

Station 1: Welcome to Manhattan, the Big Apple, home of Jews since before it was part of New York, when it was the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam. Since then, Jews have found themselves in all parts of the city in all types of occupations. Recently, since the opening of Ellis Island immigration facility, Manhattan and New York City have become the transit point for most Jewish immigrant to the United States. Lady Liberty, recently finished out in New York Harbor, is the first glimpse of the promised land for many Jews hoping to make their fortunes in the land whose streets were supposed to be paved with gold. Unfortunately, as you can see, they're not. But, just because you don't see the gold, doesn't mean its not out there for the taking. America is full of opportunities and this is your first chance to take advantage of it! Consider carefully the choices you and your family make, but have fun and stretch your imaginations....

The first thing you need to decide is whether you will stay here in New York. There are many advantages: In Manhattan there are many Jews, and on the Lower East Side you can lead your whole life without ever learning English. The people are just like those at home. Of course, you may want to plunge into American culture and travel.

If you decide to stick around for a while, go to STATION 2 here in Manhattan.

If you want to travel somewhere else, pick any city: St. Louis, New Orleans, San Francisco, Savannah, Chicago, or Cincinnati and go to STATION 1 in that city.

### Manhattan, Station 2:

So, now that you've decided to stay in New York, where will you live? Jews have settled all over Manhattan, from the tenements on the Lower East Side to Harlem in the north. Do you want to live in an apartment or a townhouse? Do you want to live in a Jewish neighborhood or mingle with people of other backgrounds?

If you decide to move uptown, go to STATION 3.

If you decide to live on the Lower east Side, go to STATION 4.

### Manhattan, Station 3:

Uptown is very different from the Lower East Side. There are lots of Jews who live here, but they aren't new immigrants. Most of them were born here, but their parents came from Germany around the middle of the century.

To you, they don't even look Jewish: they dress like Americans, they go to American schools. You go to their synagogue, but you don't understand the German and English prayer. They are not very welcoming: they refuse to speak Yiddish. You feel very alone.

If you decide to leave and move back to the Lower East Side, go to STATION 4.

If you decide to stick it out, go to STATION 5.

Manhattan, Station 4:

Wow, this is almost like home! Everywhere you go in this neighborhood, there are Jewish faces. The shopkeeper speaks Yiddish and there are shuls on every corner. Every morning you come down from your apartment and look in the FORWARD, the daily Yiddish paper. It tells you news from home, news of the US, gives you helpful hints for adjusting to America, and even helps you look for a job. Well, it's not helping much in the job search. You've tried a few different things, but nothing has worked out; times are tough. You and your family get a letter from Uncle Shlomo in New Orleans. He says there are plenty of jobs, but you've always dreamed of seeing the Pacific.

If you decide to go see Uncle Shlomo, go to STATION 1 in New Orleans.

If you decide to head for the Pacific, go to STATION 1 in San Francisco.

Manhattan, Station 5:

Well, it's not too friendly, but you decide to stay. You work hard at your English, and gradually you become accepted in the community. You even get used to services. Actually, you start to like praying in a language other than Hebrew. You never really knew what the prayers meant, but now with your growing knowledge of English, you discover new meaning in Judaism. You had never really thought of it before, but maybe Judaism is really important to you, maybe you want to study more. You hear about a man named Isaac Mayer Wise who has started a school for training Reform rabbis in Cincinnati and it sounds interesting. However, some members of your family want to see this country they've moved to. They want to go West.

If you decide to try the Rabbi route, go to STATION 1 in Cincinnati.

If you opt to go West- start your trip at STATION 1 in St. Louis.

Cincinnati, Station 1:

Who would have believed it? Here on the Ohio River in the middle of this huge country, a large, active Jewish community has developed. Isaac Mayer Wise, after leaving the east coast, has come out here to build American Reform Judaism through the establishment of a Rabbinical school- the Hebrew Union College, and an organization for Reform Temples- the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Reform Judaism started in Germany, but has adapted very well to life in America. It's certainly not what you are used to, the prayers are in English and sometimes in German. There is organ music and a very long sermon. All of this is new to you and to Judaism, but somehow you've found it exciting enough to come out here to the Queen City to find out more.

If you'd like to enroll at Hebrew Union College to become a Rabbi, go to STATION 2.

If you'd like to talk to Isaac Mayer Wise and learn what you can do to help Reform Judaism, go to STATION 3.

Cincinnati, Station 2:

Hebrew Union College (HUC) is not exactly what you expected. Classes meet in people's homes and you spend a lot of time learning things besides Hebrew and Talmud. But, you find it very interesting. As a class you've decided not to keep the laws of kashrut, but some people aren't happy- they are worried that keeping kosher, wearing a kippah, and praying only in Hebrew are important parts of being Jewish. Other argue fiercely that people have to understand what they pray and still be able to live in America like other Americans. It's a tough debate and many people decide to leave the school. You finally make it through to ordination and become a Rabbi. The faculty is very impressed with you and your work, they ask you to consider joining them as a professor. But, you have become excited about being a Rabbi and working in a congregation.

If you decide to stay in Cincinnati and join the HUC faculty, go to STATION 4.

If you think it's time to move on, go to STATION 5.

Cincinnati, Station 3:

Isaac Mayer Wise welcomes you into his office. He tells you of all his great plans for Reform Judaism. He visualizes Reform congregations spreading from the Atlantic to the Pacific, all members of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) with Rabbis ordained by Hebrew

Union College (HUC). You are excited by his vision, but you look around and see that his office is not as nice as befits such a leader. You ask him about his building plans. He tells you that he has a lovely site picked out for the new HUC campus near the new University of Cincinnati. You look at the plans and get excited too.

If you decided to stay in Cincinnati and help out by becoming a Rabbi, go to STATION 2.

If you decide to donate money, join the board of directors, and travel the country raising money for the Hebrew Union College, go to STATION 5.

#### Cincinnati, Station 4:

You join the faculty at HUC and take part in educating a new generation of Reform Rabbis. You see new vision of HUC yourself- you imagine working together with Stephen S. Wise's Jewish Institute of religion in New York, you want to expand to the Jewish community on the west coast and build a college there. You want to train Reform Cantors, Educators, and Communal Service Workers. Finally you decide you've done all you can for HUC and it has done all it can for you and you need to travel the rest of the United States to find out how Reform Judaism is doing out there. You say good-bye to your good friends and leave Cincinnati.

Go to STATION 5.

#### Cincinnati, Station 5:

By now, Reform Judaism has spread all over the country. Some cities have thriving Reform communities and others seem just to need some guidance to create active Reform communities.

If you decide to try out a pre-existing Reform congregation, go to STATION 1 in SAVANNAH.

If you decide to try to start a new Reform congregation, go to STATION 1 in St. Louis.

#### MEETING OF THE MINDS

Have students volunteer to represent the individual they researched on a panel. Have the rest of the students generate a list of questions for the panelists. Role play a meeting of the minds. Have a discussion about

Zionism or how they adapted to life in America. This meeting of the minds would allow students to further explore the life of the individual they researched. The students would be able to experience the lives of many different people who contributed to the development of America.

## PRECIS 1

Based on A History of the Jews in America  
by: Howard Sachar

American Jewish history begins in 1492 with the Inquisition in Spain. Many Jews fled Spain and settled in the New World. It is known that Christopher Columbus' translator Luis de Torres, the first European to set foot on American soil, was a former Jew who had been baptized the day before the expedition set sail. Jews of Spain and Portugal whom the Inquisition had forced to convert, realized the potentialities of the new lands and sought a new life there. They turned first to the Spanish and Portuguese colonies of in South America, but in 1654 a small group of refugees from the Inquisition in Brazil sought a new home in New Amsterdam (later New York). After some difficulty, they were allowed to remain. The great majority of the earliest settlers were Sephardim of Marrano origin, but they were before long joined by Ashkenazim, arriving mainly from Amsterdam or London.

In this new land, Jewish settlers enjoyed a degree of social freedom and emancipation greater than in their countries of origin. 1776 marks an important date not only in United States history, but also in Jewish history. It marks the first emancipation of the Jews as a matter of public policy. The Virginia Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom (1785) was the earliest law in history to grant full equality to all citizens regardless of religion. The American Jewish community was created by three main waves of immigration: those who arrived during the colonial period (1654-1880); those

who fled hunger and revolution in Central Europe during the mid 19th century; and the mass of almost three million, mostly Eastern European, Jews who came in the last two decades of the 19th century and the years preceding World War I.

During what can be called the English period (1664-1776), the Jews engaged in overseas trading. In 1700 there were approximately 200-300 Jews in the colonies. Jewish merchants had built-in advantages and special skills. They had a knowledge of the international market and a network of kinsmen-business associates in Italy, Spain, the Near East, and India. They spoke many languages including, Hebrew, Yiddish, German, Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch. Jews helped develop the country's colonial prosperity, largely as shopkeepers, traders, and merchants. During the British rule, Jewish merchants were able to hold many positions of public responsibility. A number of Jews were elected to office in New York, generally to the position of constable or assessor, and the Christian oaths necessary for office, voting, and naturalization were often modified or eliminated for the Jewish citizen. The average Jewish settler in the colonial town was devoted to Judaism. During the colonial period, six synagogue communities were established in North America- New York (1706), Savannah (1735), Philadelphia (1742), Charleston (1749), Newport (1763), and Montreal (1768).

The typical American Jew of the mid 18th century was of German origin, a shopkeeper, hard-working, enterprising, frequently uncouth, but with sufficient learning to keep his books and write simple business



correspondence. He had a sense of Jewish community and despite his absorption in business, he supported his religious congregation.

When the Revolutionary War broke out in 1775, most Jews were Whigs. Many Jews played military and financial roles in the Revolution. The most notable Jewish rebel was the Polish immigrant Haym Salomon, who at great personal risk, served as an underground agent for American forces while working for the British. The affluence and expansion that followed national independence brought new economic fields into prominence in the United States. Jews turned to shipping, garment manufacturing, mining, distilling, banking, insurance, and the stock exchange. Jews took advantage of the expanding opportunities in a developing America to become well integrated into the country's economic life.

In the second quarter of the 19th century German Jews, escaping discrimination in their homeland and attracted by the economic opportunities of the new America, began to immigrate. Mainly merchants and traders, they spread quickly from the coast inland, founding new communities and synagogues in every new urban center, and playing an important role in developing the Midwest. The Gold Rush of 1849 drew them out to California and the Pacific Coast. Many Jews in the post-Revolutionary period were educated and cultured in the classic, in modern languages and literatures, and music. In the area of Jewish culture, the contributions of American Jewry were limited to two English translations of Hebrew prayer books, a Hebrew grammar, and post-Revolution collections of sermons and eulogies. The beginning of religious diversity, and cultural and

communal organization beyond the synagogue framework became apparent during the mid 19th century.

The years between the end of the Civil War and the onset of mass immigration from Eastern Europe during the 1880's mark the coming of age of German Jewry in the United States. The most characteristic expression of the influence of the German Jews upon American Jewish life was the growth of Reform Judaism. The German-Jewish merchant class climbed rapidly in the post-Civil War age of industrial and financial expansion, and the private banker gained importance. Jewish participation in general cultural life remained small, with the exception of music, which was extensively cultivated by German Jews.

The intensification of persecution in Russia in the 1880's coupled with the economic opportunities in America, resulted in a migration on an enormous scale, which within a few years completely changed the face of Jewish life in America. The population growth was incredible. In 1880 the Jewish population was about 280,000 in a population of 50,155,000. In 1925 it grew to approximately 4,500,000 of 115,000,000. The East European Jewish immigrant generally joined the working class, mainly in the ready-made clothing industry. In the United States, the Jewish socialist labor movement helped foster a secularist Yiddish environment which offered an alternative to Jewish religious tradition, but preserved strong folk loyalties. The Eastern European immigrants brought with them the identity of a deprived national minority, sustained by great forces of religious, cultural, and communal cohesion. Eastern European Jewish immigrants brought about the firm establishment of Orthodoxy in the United States, although only a minority

remained Orthodox Jews. During this time the Conservative movement got it's beginnings while trying to balance the Reform and Orthodox ideologies. As a result of this mass immigration, the role of the United State Jewry in world Jewish affairs became significant. World War I proved decisive in welding together the various segments of American Jewry and affirming their place in U.S. society.

As one can see from this brief synopsis of American Jewish history from the time of the colonies until World War I, the Jew had an impact and a role in the creation and development of the United States. This synopsis provides an understanding of the Jew's place in society and the development of that place. Jews have been a part of America's history from the very beginning. It is important to show how the Jew developed right along side the United States. The information here allows for a better understanding of the American Jewish communities during and after the mass immigration of Eastern European Jews (1880-1920). This history provides an understanding of how and why the Jews came to the United States and spread themselves across the newly developing land.

## PRECIS 2

Based on A Time for Building: the third migration 1880-1920  
by: Gerald Sorin

In 1880 close to 6 million of the world's 7.7 million Jews lived in eastern Europe. By 1920, however, after a series of large-scale migrations, nearly 23 percent of world Jewry called America home. The great bulk, more than 73 percent, of Jewish immigrants to the United States between 1880 and 1920 came from the Russian Empire, particularly from the Pale of Settlement, the fifteen western provinces of European Russia, and the ten provinces of Russian-held Poland. Although almost half the Jewish population of the Russian Empire was still confined to the Pale, they no longer lived in shtetls. Shtetl life, however, had flourished in eastern Europe for several hundred years. That life, through powerful spiritual ties, through the common language of Yiddish and the sacred language of Hebrew, and through a sense of shared history, had firmly molded Jewish values and behavior. Even when they left their small towns, Jews carried with them much of their shtetl culture.

The shtetls of eastern Europe were typically crowded villages with cobblestones, alleys, narrow lanes, and wooden houses. The marketplace was the center of the village where merchants sold everything from fish to vegetables. Religious study was central to the Jews of the shtetl. Scholarship was one of the important pathways to God and to the future. Scholarship also set Jews apart from surrounding peoples. Religious education was formally the domain of the boys and men, who often spent ten hours a day in

the Yeshiva. The women and girls kept the house and did the shopping. The Jewish families of the shtetl depended on each other. The job of the men and boys was to study and be religious; the job of women and girls, to keep the household, cook, and sometimes even support the family.

Life in the shtetl was not easy. The Russians did not believe in religious freedom. They tried to force the Jews to become Christians and many people were anti-Semitic. As a result, the Jews of the Pale were frequently victims of pogroms, violent massacres or persecutions. The tsars encouraged these pogroms against the Jews. Most of the Jews of the shtetls suffered from heavy taxes and restrictions on their right to marry, find jobs, and set up households. In Russia, conditions for Jews worsened toward the end of the nineteenth century. The pogroms increased and many Jews were thrown out of their villages.

The Jews of eastern Europe began to emigrate to the United States in large numbers during the late nineteenth century. The trip across the Atlantic was often uncomfortable and could last up to 45 days. Most immigrants crowded together under the deck of the ship in the steerage area. Steerage was dark and dirty. There was often one bathroom for one hundred people. By 1884, at the entrance to New York harbor, stood the welcoming figure of the Statue of Liberty on Liberty Island. But Liberty Island was not the only island in the harbor. There was also Ellis Island.

At Ellis Island, the immigrants went through a processing center and then a medical examination. Their fate was to be determined at a later time. With the help of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) these

immigrants were given shelter and aide. One of the first major institutions in America set up and administered by eastern European Jews on their own was the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS). On Ellis Island, HIAS agents distributed Yiddish bulletins containing information about the services available from the society, as well as a great deal of useful advice. Perhaps most important, HIAS representatives at Ellis Island and at other important points of entry in Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore mediated between immigration officials and the newly arriving masses of Jews. If no problems arose, it took the average person about a day to pass through Ellis Island.

In 1878, there were 300,000 Jews in the United States, and by 1895, there were that number in New York City alone. In 1910, a 1.5 square-mile area of New York's Lower East Side was home to more than half a million Jewish immigrants. But New York was not the only place that Jewish immigrants called home. There were points of entry in Baltimore, Galveston, and New Orleans. Jews moved across the country and settled in Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Louis, and San Francisco.

American Jewish life in all regions of the United States was not characterized primarily by struggles against anti-Semitism but was shaped by mobility and the rhythms of the great American balancing act- the need for acculturation on the one side and the desire to retain something of a Jewish world on the other. This dynamic was a central and defining experience for both German and eastern European Jews everywhere in America.

Beyond New York City and other large American metropolitan centers, adventurous eastern European immigrants joined and ultimately outnumbered German Jews. In every place, newcomers created problems for the Jewish establishment, but over time they were accommodated and integrated. Indeed, in many areas the new immigrants, with their penchant for residential and business clustering and their strong Jewish identity, resuscitated the Jewish community. The confluence of Jewish stores, institutions, workplaces, and residences transformed the public character of the neighborhood streets wherever significant numbers of Jewish immigrants settled. Less densely populated than the Jewish communities of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore- and perhaps less culturally diverse than the Lower East Side, Jewish communities in small cities and towns remained manifestly Jewish. In the American interior, where Jews were more involved with commerce, business enterprise led more frequently and easily to success than in the Northeast urban corridor, where the majority of immigrant Jews were workers. Those who were successful sometimes changed their neighborhoods, but rarely their cities. They repeated the process of clustering in such locations in Cleveland, Atlanta, Chicago, Cincinnati, Columbus, Detroit, Providence, Portland, and Milwaukee. The new settlements were different from one another as well as from the original settlements, but all over the United States immigrant Jews continued to transplant and nourish a recognizable Jewish culture.

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### BOOKS:

Kenvin, Helene Schwartz. This Land of Liberty. New Jersey: Behrman House, 1986.

This text book provides three hundred and fifty years of American history through Jewish eyes. This book contains spotlights on authentic family records of generation after generation of America's Jews. There are more than 500 contemporary drawings, prints, and vintage photographs in this book. The teacher's guide provides many suggestions for activities as well as a bibliography for the teacher's use.

Leiman, Sondra. America: The Jewish Experience. New York: UAHC Press, 1994.

This text book begins with the Colonial Period and continues through modern times. The book's fourteen chapters include such features as: "Links in History," sections that integrate Jewish history with key currents in American history; "People to Know," major Jewish personalities; "In Their Own Words," original letters, speeches, and newspaper clipping of the time; historical fiction, an original short story that dramatizes the key theme of the chapter; and "Checkup," review activities and discussion questions. The teacher's guide provides additional resources for both the student and the teacher, as well as lesson plans for each chapter.

Sagan, Miriam. Tracing Our Jewish Roots. New Mexico: John Muir Publications, 1993.

Tracing Our Jewish Roots provides a wonderful overview of Jewish life in America during the 1800's through the early 1900's. This book has many photographs and personal stories about life during this time period. The book has key concepts, words, and information highlighted for each chapter.

Suhl, Yuri. An Album of the Jews in America. New York: Franklin Watts, 1972.

In this book about American Jewry from 1492 until the 1900's, Suhl provides many photographs and information about life in America. The pictures are a wonderful aid to help students better understand life in the United States during those years.



**MEDIA:**

All videos and filmstrips are available through the Bureau of Jewish Education in San Francisco, (415) 751-6983.

The Golden Age of Second Street

67 minutes

Produced by Arthur Cantor

Hershel Bernardi hosts an entertaining history of the various golden ages of Yiddish theater along New York's Second Avenue. Clips from Yiddish films along with archival footage chronicle life in Jewish New York.

Gefilte Fish

15 minutes

Produced by Karen Silverstein

A hilarious look at making this traditional food. Three generations of Silversteins share their views on making gefilte fish and how this tradition does or does not play a role in their lives today.

Jewish American

26 minutes

Produced by National Communication Foundation

At the turn of the century many Jewish immigrants came to New York's Lower East Side. Authentic period photo capture their arrival at Ellis Island and their schools, workshops, tenements, and factories. Elderly Jewish immigrants reminisce about the past with new Puerto Rico immigrants who wonder what the future holds for them.

Hebrew Union College- Jewish Institute of Religion

55 frames

Produced by JEC, N.Y.

Traces the historical development and purpose of the Hebrew Union College's Jewish Institute of Religion Seminary in Reform Judaism. Depicts various responsibilities of rabbinic study.

Jews in America: 1860-1954

39 frames

Produced by JEC, N.Y.

Traces the development of the American Jewish community through 1954.

This Golden Land

61 frames

Produced by Hadassah

Reviews Jewish contributions to American life.

Three Hundred Years: Memorable Events in American Jewish History

45 frames

Produced by UAHC

Summarizes three hundred years of Jewish contributions to American history.

Your Federation

48 frames

Produced by JEC, N.Y.

Analyzes the activities of Federation institutions in meeting community needs.

Jewish Immigrants to America, Part 1

13 minutes

Produced by Sunburst Communication

Discusses the various factors which caused European Jews to immigrate to America, from the Middle Ages to the present.

Jewish Immigrants to America, Part 2

13 minutes

Produced by Sunburst Communication

Describes the contributions made by first-generation Jewish Americans to all aspects of life in the United States.

A Letter to David: My Days in the Factory

14 minutes

Produced by The Jewish Museum

David's grandmother recount her experience working in a factory and the rise of unions.

A Letter to David: My Journey to America and The Lower East Side

16 minutes

Produced by The Jewish Museum

David's grandmother continues her life story, focusing on her new life in America.

A Letter to David: My Life in the Shtetl

16 minutes

Produced by The Jewish Museum

David's grandmother uses her family history to relate shtetl life in Jewish history.

The Shtetl

12 minutes

Produced by Behrman House, Inc. and Ruby G. Strauss

Describes life in the shtetl, the small Jewish community once common in Eastern Europe.