



Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Grade 5

Answer Key

Ellis Island, 1907

Rosa had never seen so many people in one place. The great hall at Ellis Island stretched upward like the inside of a cathedral, its ceiling far above the heads of thousands of families waiting in long, winding lines. She gripped her mother's hand tightly, partly from fear and partly to make sure they would not be separated in the crowd of strangers speaking a dozen different languages at once.

They had spent eleven days crossing the ocean from Italy, packed into the crowded lower deck of a steamship with hundreds of other families, all hoping for the same thing: a new life in America. Rosa's father had come ahead of them two years earlier, working in a shoe factory in New York and saving every coin he could to bring his wife and daughter across the sea to join him. Rosa barely remembered his face anymore, though she remembered his letters, read aloud by her mother every week by candlelight.

At the front of the line, a doctor in a white coat looked into Rosa's eyes, checked her hands, and marked something on a card pinned to her coat. She did not understand the English words he spoke, but she understood his stern expression well enough to feel frightened. Her mother squeezed her shoulder reassuringly. Moments later, an inspector asked her mother questions through a translator: their names, where they were from, whether anyone waited for them in America. Rosa's mother answered each question clearly, though her hands trembled slightly as she held their papers.

When the inspector finally stamped their documents and waved them toward the ferry that would carry them to the mainland, Rosa's mother let out a breath she seemed to have been holding for the entire journey. "We are here," she whispered in Italian, tears sliding down her face. Rosa looked out at the unfamiliar skyline ahead of them, uncertain what waited beyond it, but for the first time since leaving Italy, she let herself imagine that

it might be something good.

Circle the Correct Answer

1. Where does this story take place?

Answer: b) Ellis Island, in New York

2. Why had Rosa's father traveled to America two years earlier?

Answer: a) To find work and save money to bring his family over

3. Why did Rosa feel frightened during the doctor's examination?

Answer: b) She did not understand English and found his expression stern

4. How does Rosa's mother react once their documents are stamped?

Answer: b) She lets out a breath of relief and cries

True or False

5. Rosa and her mother traveled from Italy by steamship.

Answer: True

6. Rosa clearly remembered exactly what her father looked like.

Answer: False

7. The journey across the ocean took eleven days.

Answer: True

Fill in the Blank

8. The great hall at Ellis Island stretched upward like the inside of a _____.

Answer: cathedral

9. An inspector asked Rosa's mother questions through a _____.

Answer: translator

Think and Explain

10. This story is historical fiction, meaning it uses invented characters set against a real historical event or time period. What details in the story help you understand the historical setting, even though Rosa and her family are not real people?

Sample answer: Accept reasonable answers citing details such as the Ellis Island immigration process, the steamship crossing, the medical inspection, and the presence of a translator, all of which reflect the real historical experience of immigrants arriving in the early 1900s.

11. How does Rosa's feeling change from the beginning of the story to the end? Use specific details from the text to support your answer.

Sample answer: Accept reasonable answers noting that Rosa moves from fear and uncertainty, gripping her mother's hand and feeling frightened during the inspection, to a cautious sense of hope by the end, as she looks at the skyline and allows herself to imagine something good ahead.