



**WELCOME TO
AMERICA**

TEACHERS' HANDBOOK

Summary

ELLIS ISLAND

During this scene Luca Ricci, who has arrived in America from Italy, is questioned by the Immigration Officer on [Ellis Island](#).



The questions he is asked are the real questions the authorities asked new arrivals in America:

OFFICIAL

And can you read and write, Mr Ricci?

LUCA

In Italian I can. English it is not so easy. I am learning.

OFFICIAL

How much money do you have?

LUCA

25 dollars.

OFFICIAL

What is your job?

LUCA

My job?

OFFICIAL

Your occupation. What do you want to do in America?

LUCA

I'm a cook.

Luca wants to find the American Dream. He hears a song in his head:

MUSICAL NUMBER: THE AMERICAN DREAM (from "Miss Saigon")

What's that I smell in the air... The American dream?

Sweet as a new millionaire... The American dream?

Pre-packed, ready-to-wear... The American dream?

Fat, like a chocolate éclair, as you suck out the cream.

Luca tells the Official that his dream is written in the [American Constitution](#):

LUCA

It says, "... all men are created equal"; it says that all people have the right to "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness".

He knows that [Abraham Lincoln](#) was born poor yet he became the President.

Luca says he wants to open his own restaurant in New York.

The Official gives him his documents allowing him to leave Ellis Island and enter America.

The Narrator talks to the audience.

NARRATOR

This is the beginning of Luca's American adventure. The year is 1922. More than 4 million Italians came to live in America before Luca. He left a small Italian town and is now about to enter an enormous American city: New York, home to 3 million people.



He talks about all the Italians who have arrived and how many live in [Little Italy](#) in New York where they speak, dress and eat as though they were still in Italy.

Luca leaves the office and sees the [Statue of Liberty](#).

The Statue of Liberty

The Statue of Liberty was the first thing that Luca saw from the boat when he arrived, and she holds the American Declaration of Independence in her hand.

The Statue of Liberty speaks to Luca who is having doubts.

LUCA

This is too much for me. I come from a small Italian town. There are too many people here, it is too far from home, everything is too... big!

He is 6,000 kilometres from home and he is scared.

The Narrator speaks to the Statue saying that they should help Luca believe that his dream can come true.

NARRATOR

Let's show him America. America in his time –
1922 – and America now... my time.

STATUE

A tour?

NARRATOR

Yes, a tour! He can see what America is, and
what it will become. For good and for worse.

STATUE

The successes...

NARRATOR

And the failures... Come on Luca. Smile. Things
will be ok.

STATUE

Luca... Welcome to America!

NARRATOR

Welcome to New York!

MULTIMEDIA TOUR: NEW YORK

We are introduced to New York - the sounds and the sights - while the scene changes.

LITTLE ITALY

The Godfather, [Vito Corleone](#), is eating lunch in Ciro's Trattoria in Little Italy. He phones [Al Capone](#) in Chicago.



AL
Godfather! How's Little Italy?
VITO
Fine, fine. And the [Windy City](#)?
AL
Chicago's just great Vito.
VITO
Business?
AL
Ok. But it could be better.
VITO
It can always be better Al... I've got a plan.

Al Capone says that he organised gambling and sells alcohol - both illegal in the early 1930s.

VITO
Illegal whisky! Illegal gambling! The
old-fashioned mafia. I have an idea for a modern
mafia.

They agree to meet for dinner to discuss business.

The next day at *Ciro's Trattoria*:

AL
Tell me your idea.
VITO
Well, Al, I think you can help me.
AL
And why should I help you?
VITO
Friendship.

MUSICAL NUMBER: FRIENDSHIP (from "Anything Goes")
If you're ever in a jam, here I am,
If you're ever in a mess, SOS,
If you ever feel so happy you land in jail, I'm your bail,
It's friendship, friendship,
Just a perfect blendship¹,
When other friendships have been forgot, ours will still be hot.

Vito explains his plan.

¹ blendship is a made-up word!

VITO

You know Harry Winston, the jewellers on Fifth Avenue? They have a diamond necklace in the window worth 30,000 dollars. I want that diamond necklace.

Al is now interested. But when Vito explains his plan it is all legal: he wants to pay for the necklace.

AL

I don't get it. Why do we give the jewellers the money?

VITO

Well they're not going to give us a diamond necklace if we don't pay for it, are they!

AL

No... that's why we steal it!

VITO

Steal it? But that's illegal! You can't steal things, Al. It's wrong. Times have changed... we've modernised.

AL

Look Vito, we go in there with a gun...

VITO

A gun? Are you crazy? Guns are dangerous! This is the modern mafia.

To pay for the necklace Vito explains that they could both get a job in a bank:

AL

I understand. We work at the bank and after a few weeks we blow up the safe and steal all the money.

VITO

No. After a few weeks, they give us an envelope with money inside: it's called a wage packet... busta paga.

Al can't believe that the mafia boss doesn't want to do anything illegal. He asks the waiter for a whisky. Vito reminds him the drinking alcohol is illegal and orders sparkling water.

Al drinks the water and starts choking. Vito turns the bottle of water round and on the back is the label: "Poison". Al collapses on the floor.

VITO

Oh Al... the modern mafia?

Vito exits laughing.

MULTIMEDIA TOUR: AMERICAN MUSIC

A montage of American popular music moving from the black music of spirituals to jazz to rap; country music; pop music from Frank Sinatra to Katy Perry; finishing with the King of Rock and Roll, Elvis Presley.

AT THE DINER

The 1960s in an American Diner. [Elvis Presley](#) is King and his music is playing on the jukebox.

Horace, who is dressed like Elvis, sits at a table by a jukebox. Horace never speaks, all his words are sung by Elvis.

“All Shook Up”
A well I bless my soul
What’s wrong with me?
I’m in love
I’m all shook up!

The waitress, Doris, goes to his table. She has a cardboard smile that she places over her mouth after every sentence.



DORIS

Good evening Sir, welcome to The Happy Diner.
Would you like to see the menu?

Horace presses another button on the jukebox:

“It’s Now or Never”²
It’s now or never,
Come hold me tight
Kiss me my darling,
Be mine tonight
Tomorrow will be too late,
It’s now or never
My love won’t wait.

Every time Doris tries to take his order he sings that he is in love with her. Doris gets angry, but her cardboard smile is always the same!

DORIS

Please Sir, we’re very busy today. I need to take your order.

“Don’t Be Cruel”
Don’t be cruel to a heart that’s true.
I don’t want no other love,
Baby it’s just you I’m thinking of.

DORIS

(shouting angrily) Stop it! I need your order!
What would you like? We have hamburgers,
cheeseburgers, chicken burgers?

Horace orders every filling possible.

DORIS

Right, so that’s a hamburger, medium-rare, with lettuce, bacon, tomato, onion, pickles and cheese, with mustard, mayonnaise, ketchup and relish. And what would you like to drink?

“Shake, Rattle And Roll”
Well I said shake, rattle and roll,
I said shake rattle and roll.

DORIS

Ok, so that’s one milkshake. Flavour?

² To the melody of “O sole mio”.

“Tutti Frutti”³

**Tutti Frutti, aw rooty, tutti frutti, aw rooty⁴,
Wop-bop-a-loom-a-boom-bam-boom!**

Doris gets his order from the kitchen. Horace presses a button on the jukebox and drops to his knees in front of Doris.

“You Don’t Have To Say You Love Me”

**You don’t have to say you love me
Just be close at hand
You don’t have to stay forever
I will understand.**

Doris is fed up, so she starts replying in song. They press the buttons on the jukebox rapidly.

“Down With Love”

**Down with eyes
romantic and stupid,
Down with sighs, down
with cupid.
Brother let’s stuff that
dove,
Down with love!**

This goes on until Horace touches Doris’ hand and she changes immediately.

“He Touched Me”

**He touched me,
He put his hand near mine
And then he touched me.**

Horace can’t believe it:



³ Tutti Frutti milkshakes and icecream contain multicoloured candied fruits.

⁴ aw rooty is a made-up word meaning “ok”.

“All Shook Up”

She touched my hand what a chill I got
Her lips are like a volcano that’s hot
I’m proud to say she’s my buttercup
I’m in love, I’m all shook up!

Doris and Horace press the same button on the jukebox and they both sing:

“Love Me Tender”

Love me tender,
love me dear,
tell me you are mine.
I’ll be yours through all the years,
till the end of time.

MULTIMEDIA TOUR: NATURE

We see a film compilation of the American landscape: Niagara Falls, Yellowstone National Park, the Mississippi river, deserts, mountains, lakes. We finish in the desert near the Grand Canyon and see images of Native American Indians, cowboys, gold-diggers, and an old Western town.

COWBOYS

John and Gary are two bankers from San Francisco who are visiting a Ghost Town in Arizona. There is a large cactus, a saloon etc.

JOHN

Well, here we are!

GARY

Where?

JOHN

Stone Creek.

GARY

And why are we here again?

JOHN

We talked about this.

GARY

Remind me, because right now it doesn’t seem
a good idea.

JOHN

We’ve left the city and come to Stone Creek to
remind ourselves how life was for the early

pioneers in America: no running water, no television, rattlesnakes...

GARY

Sounds a bad idea John.



John has found some cowboy clothes in the saloon which they put on.

GARY

It seems dangerous to me.

JOHN

Dangerous? No one lives here, that's why it's called a Ghost Town. It's abandoned.

GARY

Then why is smoke coming out of that chimney.

JOHN

It's stuff they do for the tourists. See that cactus? It's just plastic. See that rock? It's made of polystyrene.

GARY

It looks real to me.

JOHN

Well, of course it looks real, stupid.

Gary wants to go to Las Vegas where there is electricity, taxis and restaurants. John reads his guidebook:

JOHN

“Stone Creek was a mining town from the 1860s...” Are you listening Gary? “There’s gold in them thar hills!”

GARY

Will you please stop doing that ridiculous cowboy accent?⁵

JOHN

“There was a bank, a hotel, a general store, and a saloon. The saloon served miners, fur-trappers, gamblers and cowboys.” That’s us.

GARY

No John, that’s not us. We are two bankers from San Francisco.

JOHN

“The town was abandoned in 1940 after the gold ran out.” You see, there’s no one here but us.

Gary walks backwards into the cactus and yells... it is not plastic! He then sees a snake which starts making a rattling sound. John tells him it is made of plastic and for the tourists.

JOHN

(reading) “Rattlesnakes rarely bite unless provoked or threatened; if treated promptly, the bites are rarely fatal.”

GARY

Fatal!

JOHN

And plastic snakes never bite, so calm down.

They find some tin cans. John lines them up to do target practice. He gets a gun from the saloon. Gary points the gun at the tin cans. His hand shakes. We hear the rattling noise again, and the snake appears on the cactus, by Gary’s head.

GARY

What’s that noise?

JOHN

It’s your hand shaking.

GARY

⁵ He puts on a southern accent. “There’s gold in them thar hills!” is a famous phrase used in Western Films.

It sounds like the plastic snake.

JOHN

Concentrate!

The rattling gets louder and Gary slowly turns and is face to face with the snake. His gun goes off and there is a scream offstage. The snake disappears.

John tries and hits a can. Gary tries again. The snake appears from the cactus again, Gary backs away towards the saloon. An arrow flies across the stage, close to Gary's head, and sticks into the wall of the saloon, Gary turns and sees it and his gun goes off into the saloon. There is a yell. John says the arrow is for the tourists too.

GARY

John, that is not for tourists, and it's not plastic.

That is a real arrow. I'm getting out of here.

There are Indians nearby.

Voices come from the saloon:

COWBOY 1

Where are my clothes? My boots?

COWBOY 2

Who's stolen my gun?

COWBOY 1

Who tried to shoot us?

Gary picks up a sign lying on the ground. It says "Welcome to Death Hollow".

JOHN

"Welcome to Death Hollow". So we're not in Stone Creek? (he opens his guide book) That's funny, I must have turned off the road too soon...

GARY

This is no time for looking at the map. That's a real arrow, that's a real snake, and I shot a real bullet at a real Indian (he points past the cactus) and real cowboys (he points at the saloon) ...and we are wearing their clothes.

JOHN

And you've got one of their guns! (Gary yells and throws the gun to John, who throws it back)

There is panic as the cowboys shoot from the saloon, Indians fire arrows from behind the cactus, and John and Gary quickly take off the cowboys clothes and run off.

A cowboy, in his underwear, comes on stage.

COWBOY

Hahaha... I love fooling tourists.

The cowboy picks up the plastic snake and goes into the saloon, roaring with laughter.

MULTIMEDIA TOUR: BROADWAY MUSICALS

A short montage starting with Oklahoma and other Western musicals, followed by clips of some of the most famous American shows.

INTERVAL

ACT TWO

MULTIMEDIA TOUR: HISTORY TOUR

We see Christopher Columbus discovering America, and other important historic events, finishing with Martin Luther King making his “I have a dream” speech in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC.

NARRATOR

[Martin Luther King](#) was a leader of the African-American Civil Rights Movement, and in front of the Lincoln Memorial – Abraham Lincoln was the President who abolished slavery – he said,

(we see a film clip)

LUTHER KING

“I have a dream... It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream: “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.” I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today.”



The Narrator explains that when he made the legendary speech in 1963, John F Kennedy was President. They were both trying to obtain the same goals: that all people should have an equal chance in life.

100 years before, in 1863, President Lincoln gave his famous Gettysburg Address. In that speech Lincoln reminded his listeners of the Declaration of Independence which states that all men are created equal, and therefore slavery must end he said... and it did.

THE WHITE HOUSE

NOTE: This seems a complex scene in the script because it is very visual; in the theatre it is very simple to follow.



A modern President is meeting his staff to finalise plans for the White House Open Day on 4 July, [Independence Day](#). He illustrates what he is saying with a slide-show presentation.

PRESIDENT

Good morning everyone. I've called this meeting to explain to you all what we're going to do on the Fourth of July here at the White House and in Washington DC. As you know and we are expecting many important guests. We want this to be an thrilling experience for each one of them and I have many exciting plans!

He puts on a tall hat and a jacket.

I, for example, will be Abraham Lincoln! And Mrs Jones will be Mary, Lincoln's wife.

Mrs Jones has been working in the White House for eighty years. She is very old, very slow, a little deaf and her hands have a tremor.

PRESIDENT

So I will be dressed as Lincoln, Mrs Jones as Mary, and we will be here in the Oval Office and talk about how Abraham Lincoln brought the American Civil War to an end and abolished slavery.

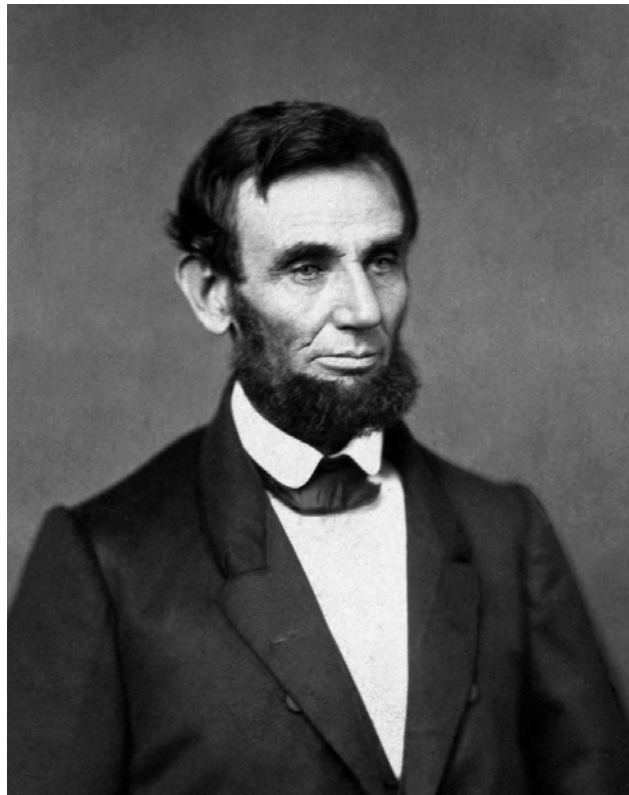
While he speaks Mrs Jones makes lots of noise with pieces of paper, cups, biscuits and so on.

PRESIDENT

I thought I'd start with the opening of the historic Gettysburg Address, which Lincoln read in 1863 honouring the soldiers who had died at the Battle of Gettysburg:

He reads the very words of Lincoln's speech and dresses like Lincoln too:

"Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."



As he speaks, and Mrs Jones goes slowly from one side of the stage to the other with tea and so on, we see the President's slideshow with photos of Lincoln, the Civil War, the freeing of the slaves and so on. He then reads the last line of the speech:

“...This nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”



Throughout the scenes the President imparts some important historical facts, but Mrs Jones' antics give some comic relief.

PRESIDENT

Peter will wear a George Washington costume and greet visitors by the Washington Monument and explain how there was rivalry between the North of America and the South, so the first President of the United States, George Washington, decided to create a new city to be the capital city of America.

This new city was not in a State, but between two States and he called this area the District of Columbia. Why Columbia? Because it was named after Christopher Columbus. The city was called Washington, after the first President, and that's why we call it "Washington D.C."!



This is all illustrated. The last section is in front of the government building, the [United States Capitol](#).

PRESIDENT

Anne, dressed as the Statue of Freedom, can tell our visitors about why we celebrate the Fourth of July. It was on that day, in 1776, that America declared its independence from Great Britain.

The President explains that after the firework display everyone will return to the White House for a party. When he finds out that Mrs Jones is responsible for the catering, he shakes his head:

PRESIDENT

Oh no! It will be the longest party in the history of the United States!

He exits with all his staff. Mrs Jones sees that she is alone, and she becomes very energetic as she sings and dances.

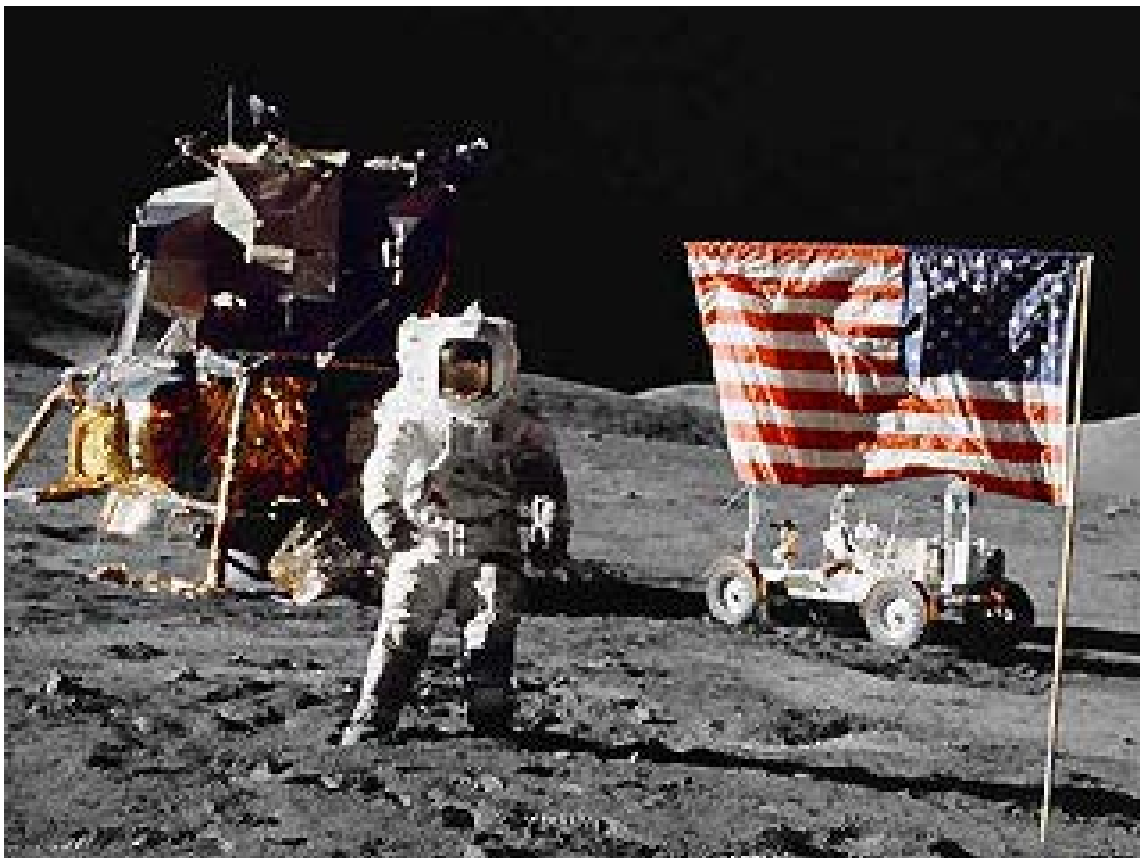
MUSICAL NUMBER: Thank God I'm Old (from "Barnum")
When you see the shape the world is in,
When the way it is ain't what it's been,
When folks just care for gold,
Thank God, I'm old!

MULTIMEDIA TOUR: AMERICAN CITIES

A film compilation of American cities is shown: Washington, San Francisco, Las Vegas etc, finishing in Houston in Texas at the NASA Headquarters. We see the 1969 film of Neil Armstrong stepping onto the moon, and he says his famous phrase: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

FIRST MAN ON THE MOON

It is 1969. At first, it seems as though [Neil Armstrong](#) is on the moon surface: coming out of the [Eagle Lunar Module](#), walking in slow motion to plant the American flag. However, it is just a set for astronaut practice.



The Director of [NASA](#) walks past him at normal speed.

DIRECTOR

Still practising Neil? Go to bed. Tomorrow's the big day!

NEIL

I know.

DIRECTOR

And on 21 July 1969, you'll be the first man to walk on the moon.

Neil is worried that he won't do everything properly.

NEIL

It's the thought of all those people watching on television.

DIRECTOR

Half a billion people.

NEIL

Don't remind me.

So the Director asks him what he is going to say when he becomes the first man on the moon.

NEIL

"Yeah, I made it!"

DIRECTOR

Neil, you say, "Yeah, I made it!" when you catch the last train home... you say, "Yeah, I made it!" when get indoors just before a thunderstorm... you don't say, "Yeah, I made it!" when you've travelled 240,000 miles and landed on the moon! Try again.

NEIL

(pause as he thinks) "Wow, it's lonely up here!"

DIRECTOR

Great... why don't you just say, "Where are the Martians?"

NEIL

But it's the moon, Sir; Martians are on Mars.

DIRECTOR

Neil, it was a joke.

Neil doesn't have any good ideas, so the Director tells him to get back in the lunar module and come out again; maybe he'll find inspiration.

DIRECTOR

Ok, now come out (Neil opens the door), and walk down the steps (he does so) and put your foot on the surface of the moon. Ok, now what do you say...

NEIL

Ow, I've got cramp! That's a giant step.

DIRECTOR

No it's not; you missed one.

NEIL

Oh sorry... (he comes down a step) That's better.

DIRECTOR

So now take the last step down on to the moon, and then say something.

NEIL

Right, so I take one small step, and then I'll say something.

DIRECTOR

Yes! That's it! That's one small step for you, but it's a giant leap for mankind. That's what you can say when you step onto the moon.

The Director has been inspired, but Neil doesn't understand. The Director explains:

DIRECTOR

You are a man, and you're stepping on the moon, it's only a small step for you, yes, but for mankind it's a giant leap: after years of research and experiments we've finally done it, put a man on the moon!

Neil steps down and we see the film of the real Neil Armstrong stepping on the moon and we hear the famous phrase:

“That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”



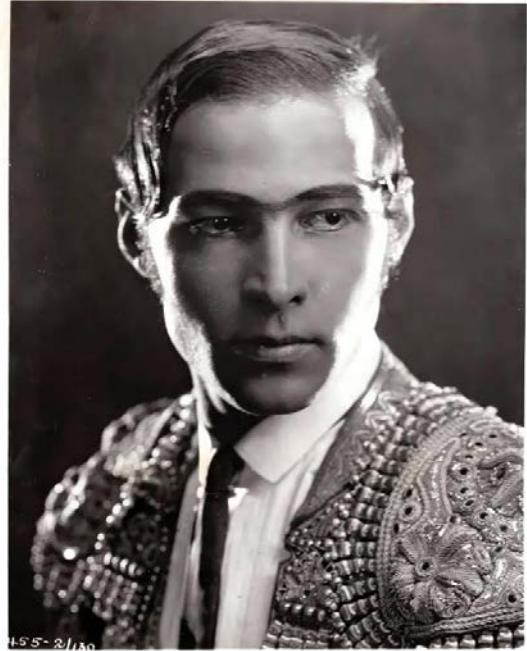
MULTIMEDIA TOUR: AMERICAN ICONS

We see a montage of American Icons: the American Bald Eagle, Uncle Sam, the Dollar Bill, Baseball, and so on, finishing with movie images (Marilyn Monroe and her white dress etc), and the Hollywood sign.

HOLLYWOOD

We are on a film set in Hollywood in 1922 where the Italian heartthrob, [Rudolph Valentino](#), is filming one of his greatest hits, "Blood and Sand". His co-star Nita and director Fred are on set with him.

Valentino is very temperamental and everyone is waiting for him to come out of his dressing room.



VALENTINO
I don't like my costume. I feel ridiculous.

FRED
Why?

VALENTINO
Look at the jacket...

FRED
...too flashy?

VALENTINO
Not flashy enough! It needs more gold, more sparkle. And look at the trousers...

FRED
...too tight?

VALENTINO
Not tight enough.

Fred assures him that he's looking great. So Valentino walks on to the film set. Fred yells, "Action!"

VALENTINO
Stop! I cannot do it. I don't look good today.

FRED
Don't look good? Don't look good?! Don't be foolish. I don't look good, not you. Every woman is in love with Rudolph Valentino: you are the most handsome movie star in the world.

VALENTINO

Well, what do they think?

FRED

Who?

VALENTINO

Them. (he points at the audience) The audience.

They are Italian, they have good taste.... *buon gusto*.

Fred talks to the audience. Here there is a lot of audience participation.

FRED

They said you look good.

VALENTINO

I heard a 'no'!

FRED

That was just someone being funny.

VALENTINO

Well, it's not enough. I am Rudolph Valentino, the most handsome movie star in the world. I need to be more than good.

Again Fred talks to the audience.

FRED

They all think you're handsome, especially that teacher in the third row.

VALENTINO

(Valentino looks at the teacher) Are you sure?

She thinks I'm handsome?

FRED

She thinks you're very handsome.

VALENTINO

But it is still not enough. No, I am Rudolph Valentino, the original [Latin Lover](#)⁶, I need to be more than handsome.

Valentino starts shooting a romantic scene with Nita. As they are about to kiss he walks off set again.

VALENTINO

I can't kiss Nita. Her breath smells. (he points at the teacher in the third row) I want to kiss her.

FRED

You can't.

⁶ The term "latin lover" was invented for Valentino.

VALENTINO

Why not?

FRED

She's a teacher. She's not in the play. You've got to kiss Nita. It's in your contract.

VALENTINO

Contract... blah, blah, blah. All right, I'll do it (to the teacher) but I'll be thinking of you!

Once again Valentino and Nita film the scene, just as he's about to kiss her he turns to look at the teacher and Nita slaps him. They dance a passionate tango, and slowly they dissolve into the black and white film.

RETURN TO ELLIS ISLAND

Luca is watching the Valentino film.

LUCA

Valentino! I've seen his photo in the newspaper. He's Italian like me. I've never seen a movie. There isn't a cinema in my town.

NARRATOR

This is nothing Luca, in a few years there will be sound, then colour, and 3D.

Luca picks up his bag and the document he received from the Customs Official. He's ready to go to New York and start a new life.

LUCA

Thank you for showing me America.

NARRATOR

Go and find your dream, Luca.

LUCA

I will... and I'll go to the movies too.

NARRATOR

Movies are all about dreams.

The Narrator steps into the light of the cinema projector.

NARRATOR

It's all fiction. Just play. Dreams projected on a white screen...

MOVIE FINALE

We see short tributes to the most famous American movies of all time: Gone with the Wind, Titanic, Star Wars, Singin' in the Rain, Psycho, Wizard of Oz, Raiders of the Lost Ark, E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial, The Lion King, Ben-Hur, The Sound of Music, Avatar, Pirates of the Caribbean, etc.

NARRATOR

You see Luca, in the cinema, anything's possible. Fantasy... Dreams... Now go and find your dream.

Luca with his bag and permit leaves the Ellis Island. The Statue of Liberty comes in to view, the Declaration of Independence in her hand, and says:

**“We hold these truths to be self-evident,
that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain
unalienable Rights,
that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”**

THE END



THE AMERICAN DREAM

"I am the American Dream. I am the epitome of what the American Dream basically said. It said you could come from anywhere and be anything you want in this country. That's exactly what I've done."

Whoopi Goldberg

Welcome to America contains the phrase "The American Dream" several times. The dream was to find a life where hard work would be rewarded, and success wasn't related to who your parents or friends were or knew. Abraham Lincoln is an excellent example of a man, born to a poor family, who became the most powerful man in the United States. Millions of immigrants from Europe arrived in the 'New World' to find a better life for their families, believing in the words of the Constitution which, as they approached Ellis Island, they saw in the hands of the Statue of Liberty.

Wikipedia says,

The American Dream is a national ethos of the United States, a set of ideals in which freedom includes the opportunity for prosperity and success, and an upward social mobility achieved through hard work. In the definition of the American Dream by James Truslow Adams in 1931, "life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement" regardless of social class or circumstances of birth.

The idea of the American Dream is rooted in the United States Declaration of Independence which proclaims that "all men are created equal" and that they are "endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights" including "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

FACT FILE

ELLIS ISLAND

Ellis Island opened in 1892 as a federal immigration station, a purpose it served for more than 60 years (it closed in 1954). Millions of newly arrived immigrants passed through the station during that time—in fact, it has been estimated that close to 40 percent of all current U.S. citizens can trace at least one of their ancestors to Ellis Island.

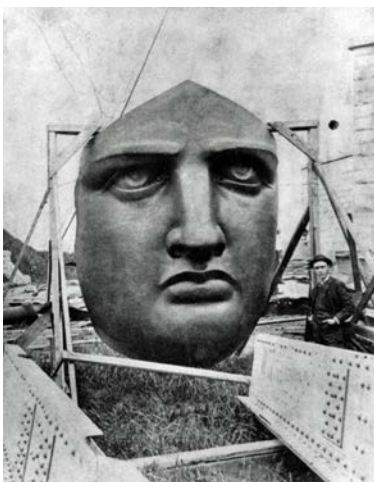
When Ellis Island opened, a great change was taking place in immigration to the United States. As arrivals from northern and western Europe—Germany, Ireland, Britain and the Scandinavian countries—slowed, more and more immigrants poured in from southern and eastern Europe. Among this new generation were Jews escaping from political and economic oppression in czarist Russia and eastern Europe (some 484,000 arrived in 1910 alone) and Italians escaping poverty in their country. There were also Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Serbs, Slovaks and Greeks, along with non-Europeans from Syria, Turkey and Armenia. The reasons they left their homes in the Old World included war, drought, famine and religious persecution, and all had hopes for greater opportunity in the New World.

Ellis Island opened to the public in 1976. Today, visitors can tour the Ellis Island Immigration Museum in the restored Main Arrivals Hall and trace their ancestors through millions of immigrant arrival records made available to the public in 2001.

THE STATUE OF LIBERTY

The Statue of Liberty (Liberty Enlightening the World; French: La Liberté éclairant le monde) is a colossal neoclassical sculpture on Liberty Island in the middle of New York Harbour.

The statue, designed by Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi and dedicated on October 28, 1886, was a gift to the United States from the people of France. The statue is of a robed female figure representing Libertas, the Roman goddess of freedom, who bears a torch and a tabula ansata (a tablet evoking the law) upon which is inscribed the date of the American Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776. A broken chain lies at her feet. The statue is an icon of freedom and of the United States: a welcoming signal to immigrants arriving from abroad.



Bartholdi completed the head and the torch-bearing arm before the statue was fully designed, and these pieces were exhibited for publicity at international expositions.

Publisher Joseph Pulitzer started a drive for donations to complete the project that attracted more than 120,000 contributors, most of whom gave less than a dollar. The statue was constructed in France, shipped overseas in crates, and assembled on the completed pedestal on what was then called Bedloe's Island. The statue's completion was marked by New York's first ticker-tape parade and a dedication ceremony presided over by President Grover Cleveland.

AMERICAN CONSTITUTION

The U.S. Constitution established America's national government and fundamental laws, and guaranteed certain basic rights for its citizens. It was signed in 1787 by delegates to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, presided over by George Washington. The Bill of Rights—10 amendments guaranteeing basic individual protections such as freedom of speech and religion—became part of the Constitution in 1791. To date, there have been a total of 27 constitutional amendments.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Abraham Lincoln is regarded as one of America's greatest heroes due to both his incredible impact on the nation and his unique appeal. His is a remarkable story of the rise from humble beginnings to achieve the highest office in the land; then, a sudden and tragic death at a time when his country needed him most to complete the great task remaining before the nation.

Lincoln's distinctively human and humane personality and historical role as savior of the Union and emancipator of the slaves creates a legacy that endures. His eloquence of democracy and his insistence that the Union was worth saving embody the ideals of self-government that all nations strive to achieve.

LITTLE ITALY

Little Italy on Mulberry Street in New York was a slum district. Once, Little Italy was like an insular Neapolitan village, with its own language, customs, and financial and cultural institutions.

Little Italy was not the largest Italian neighborhood in New York City, as East Harlem (the Italian Harlem) had a larger Italian population, but in 1910 Little Italy had almost 10,000 Italians; which was the peak of the community's Italian population.

VITO CORLEONE

Vito Corleone (1891 – 1955) (born in Sicily) is a fictional character in Mario Puzo's novel *The Godfather* and in Francis Ford Coppola's first two films, where he was portrayed by Marlon Brando in *The Godfather* and, as a young man, by Robert De Niro in *The Godfather Part II*.

AL CAPONE



Al Capone (1899 – 1947) was an American gangster who attained fame during the Prohibition era. His seven year reign as crime boss ended when he was 33 years old.

Born in New York City to Italian immigrants, Capone moved to Chicago in his early twenties becoming bodyguard and trusted factotum for Johnny Torrio, head of a criminal syndicate illegally

supplying alcohol, and politically protected through the Unione Siciliane.

He expanded the bootlegging⁷ business through increasingly violent means, but his mutually profitable relationships with mayor William Hale Thompson and the city's police, meant Capone seemed safe from law enforcement.

However, the Saint Valentine's Day Massacre damaged Chicago's image, leading influential citizens to demand action from central government. The federal authorities became intent on jailing Capone and prosecuted him for tax evasion in 1931. Capone was convicted and sentenced to a then record breaking 11 years in federal prison. Already showing signs of syphilitic dementia early in his sentence, he became increasingly debilitated before being released after 8 years. In 1947 he died from cardiac arrest after suffering a stroke.

PROHIBITION

Prohibition in the United States was a nationwide Constitutional ban on the sale, production, importation, and transportation of alcoholic beverages that remained in place from 1920 to 1933.

Prohibition supporters, called dries, presented it as a victory for public morals and health. Anti-prohibitionists, known as wets, criticized the alcohol ban as an intrusion of mainly rural Protestant ideals on a central aspect of urban, immigrant, and Catholic life. Criticism remains that Prohibition led to unintended consequences such as the growth of criminal organizations, including the modern American Mafia.

THE MAFIA IN AMERICA

The American Mafia, commonly known as the Italian Mob, is an Italian American criminal society. Similar to the Sicilian Mafia, the Italian-American Mafia is a secret criminal society without a formal name. Its members usually refer to it as Cosa Nostra. The press has also coined the name "National Crime Syndicate" to refer to the entire network of U.S. organized crime, including the Mafia.

The Mafia emerged in New York's East Harlem, Lower East Side and Brooklyn during the late 19th century and early 20th Century following waves of Italian immigration, especially from Sicily. It has its roots in the Sicilian Mafia, but is a separate organization in the United States.

There are five main New York City Mafia families, known as the Five Families: the Gambino, Lucchese, Genovese, Bonanno and Colombo families. At its peak, the Mafia dominated organized crime in the U.S. While each crime family operates independently, nationwide coordination is provided by the Commission, which consists of the bosses of each of the strongest families.

⁷ make, distribute, or sell (illicit goods, especially liquor, computer software, or recordings) illegally

Law enforcement still considers the Mafia the largest organized crime group in the United States. Today most of the Mafia's activities are contained to the Northeastern United States and Chicago where they continue to dominate organized crime despite the increasing numbers of street gangs and other organizations that are not of Italian origin.

ELVIS PRESLEY



Elvis Presley was born in a two-room house in Mississippi in 1935. The family moved to Memphis, Tennessee, when he was thirteen.

Elvis' musical influences were the pop and country music of the time, the gospel music he heard in church and at the all-night gospel sings he frequently attended, and the black R&B he absorbed as a Memphis teenager.

In 1954 he made his first record and by 1956 he was an international sensation. He became the leading figure of rock and roll after a series of network television appearances and chart-topping records. His energized interpretations of songs and sexually provocative performance style, combined with a singularly potent mix of influences across colour lines that coincided with the dawn of the Civil Rights Movement, made him enormously popular—and controversial. He also starred in 33 successful films.

Globally, he has sold over one billion records, more than any other artist. Among his many awards were 14 Grammy nominations (3 wins) and the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award which he received at age 36.

Known the world over by his first name, or 'The King', he is regarded as one of the most important figures of twentieth century popular culture. Elvis died at his Memphis home, Graceland, in 1977.

DINER

A diner is a prefabricated restaurant building characteristic of American life. Diners are characterized by offering a wide range of foods, mostly American, a casual atmosphere, a counter, and late operating hours. Classic American Diners are often characterized by an exterior layer of stainless steel—a feature unique to diner architecture.

JUKEBOX

A jukebox is a partially automated music-playing device, usually a coin-operated machine, that will play a patron's selection from self-contained media.

The classic jukebox has buttons with letters and numbers on them that, when entered in combination, are used to play a specific selection.

AMERICAN MUSIC

The music of the United States reflects the country's multi-ethnic population through a diverse array of styles. It is a mixture of music influenced by West African, Irish, Scottish, Mexican, and Cuban music traditions among others. The country's most internationally renowned genres are hip hop, blues, country, rhythm and blues, ragtime, jazz, barbershop, pop, experimental, techno, house, dance, boogaloo, salsa, and rock and roll.

The United States has the world's largest music market. Since the beginning of the 20th century, some Forms of American popular music have gained a near global audience.



Beginning in the 17th century, immigrants from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Spain, Germany and France began arriving in large numbers, bringing with them new styles and instruments. African slaves brought musical traditions, and each subsequent wave of immigrants contributed to a melting pot. Much of modern popular music can trace its roots to the emergence in the late 19th century of African American blues and the growth of gospel music in the 1920s. The United States has also seen documented folk music and recorded popular music produced in the ethnic styles of the Ukrainian, Irish, Scottish, Polish,

Hispanic and Jewish communities, among others.

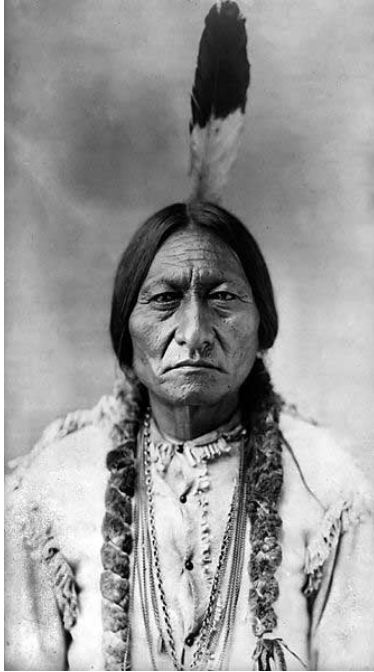
COWBOYS

A cowboy is an animal herder who tends cattle on ranches in North America, traditionally on horseback. The historic American cowboy of the late 19th century arose from the vaquero traditions of northern Mexico. In addition to ranch work, some cowboys work for or participate in rodeos.

GHOST TOWN

A ghost town is an abandoned village, town or city, usually one which contains substantial visible remains. A town often becomes a ghost town because the economic activity that supported it has failed, or due to natural or human-caused disasters such as floods, government actions, uncontrolled lawlessness, war, or nuclear disasters.

Some ghost towns, especially those that preserve period-specific architecture, have become tourist attractions.



NATIVE AMERICANS - AMERICAN INDIANS

Native Americans within the boundaries of the present-day United States are composed of numerous, distinct tribes and ethnic groups, many of which survive as intact political communities. According to a 1995 U.S. Census Bureau set of home interviews, most of the respondents with an expressed preference refer to themselves as "American Indians" or simply "Indians".

Since the end of the 15th century, the migration of Europeans to the Americas has led to centuries of conflict and adjustment between Old and New World societies. Many Native Americans lived as hunter-gatherer societies and told their histories by oral traditions; Europeans therefore created almost all of the surviving historical record concerning the conflict.

The differences in cultures between the established Native Americans and immigrant Europeans, as well as shifting alliances among different nations of each culture through the centuries, caused extensive political tension, ethnic violence, and social disruption. Native Americans suffered high fatalities from contact with Eurasian diseases to which they had not acquired immunity.

Expansion of European-American populations to the west after the American Revolution resulted in increasing pressure on Native American lands, warfare between the groups, and rising tensions. In 1830, the U.S. Congress passed the Indian Removal Act, authorizing the government to relocate Native Americans from their homelands within established states to lands west of the Mississippi River.

Over time, the United States forced a series of treaties and land cessions by the tribes and established reservations for them in many western states. U.S. agents encouraged Native Americans to adopt European-style farming and similar pursuits, but European-American agricultural technology of the time was inadequate for often dry reservation lands. In 1924, Native Americans who were not already U.S. citizens were granted citizenship by Congress.

Contemporary Native Americans have a unique relationship with the United States because they may be members of nations, tribes, or bands with sovereignty and treaty rights. Cultural activism since the late 1960s has increased political participation and led to an expansion of efforts to teach and preserve indigenous languages for younger generations and to establish a greater cultural infrastructure.

BROADWAY

Broadway is a road in New York best known for the portion that runs through Manhattan. Broadway is known worldwide as the heart of the American theatre industry.

MARTIN LUTHER KING



Martin Luther King Jr. was born in 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. King, both a Baptist minister and civil-rights activist, had a seismic impact on race relations in the United States, beginning in the mid-1950s.

Through his activism, he played a pivotal role in ending the legal segregation of African-American citizens in the South and other areas of the nation, as well as the creation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

King received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, among several other honours. King was assassinated in April 1968, and continues to be remembered as one of the most lauded African-American leaders in history, often referenced by his 1963 speech, "I Have a Dream."

JOHN F KENNEDY

Born in 1917 in Brookline, Massachusetts, John F. Kennedy served in both the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate before becoming the 35th president in 1961. As president, Kennedy faced a number of foreign crises, especially in Cuba and Berlin, but managed to secure such achievements as the Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty and the Alliance for Progress.

On November 22, 1963, Kennedy was assassinated while riding in a motorcade in Dallas, Texas.

THE WHITE HOUSE

The White House is the official residence and principal workplace of the President of the United States, located at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. It has been the residence of every U.S. president since John Adams in 1800.

The house was built between 1792 and 1800 of white-painted Aquia Creek sandstone in the Neoclassical style.

In 1814, during the War of 1812, the mansion was set ablaze by the British Army in the Burning of Washington, destroying the interior and charring much of the exterior. Reconstruction began almost immediately.

Because of crowding within the executive mansion itself, President Theodore Roosevelt had all work offices relocated to the newly constructed West Wing in 1901. Eight years later, President William Howard Taft expanded the West Wing and created the first Oval Office which was eventually moved as the section was expanded.



Today, the White House Complex includes the Executive Residence, West Wing, East Wing, the Eisenhower Executive Office Building—the former State Department, which now houses offices for the President's staff and the Vice President—and Blair House, a guest residence. There is also a library, bowling alley, movie theater, swimming pool, and basketball court.

THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

In November 1863, President Abraham Lincoln was invited to deliver remarks, which later became known as the Gettysburg Address, at the official dedication ceremony for the National Cemetery of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania, on the site of one of the bloodiest and most decisive battles of the Civil War.

Though he was not the featured orator that day, Lincoln's 273-word address would be remembered as one of the most important speeches in American history. In it, he invoked the principles of human equality contained in the Declaration of Independence and connected the sacrifices of the Civil War with the desire for "a new birth of freedom," as well as the all-important preservation of the Union created in 1776 and its ideal of self-government.

4 JULY - INDEPENDENCE DAY



Independence Day, also commonly known as the Fourth of July, is a federal holiday in the United States of America commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, declaring independence from Great Britain.

Independence Day is commonly associated with fireworks, parades, barbecues, carnivals, fairs, picnics, concerts, baseball games, family reunions, and political speeches and ceremonies, in addition to various other public and private events

celebrating the history, government, and traditions of the United States. Independence Day is the National Day of the United States

WASHINGTON DC

Washington, D.C., formally the District of Columbia and commonly referred to as Washington or simply D.C., is the capital of the United States. The signing of the Residence Act in 1790 approved the creation of a capital district located along the Potomac River on the country's East Coast. The U.S. Constitution provided for a federal district under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Congress and the District is therefore not a part of any U.S. state.

The states of Maryland (in the north) and Virginia (the south) each donated land to form the federal district, which included the preexisting settlements of Georgetown and Alexandria. Named in honor of George Washington, the City of Washington was founded in 1791 to serve as the new national capital.

Columbia comes from the surname of the explorer Christopher Columbus: the meaning is "Land of Columbus".

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

Explorer and navigator Christopher Columbus was born in 1451 in the Republic of Genoa.

He made four trips across the Atlantic Ocean from Spain: in 1492, 1493, 1498 and 1502. He was determined to find a direct water route west from Europe to Asia, but he never did. Instead, he accidentally stumbled upon the Americas. Though he did not really "discover" the New World – millions of people already lived there – his journeys marked the beginning of centuries of trans-Atlantic conquest and colonization.

AMERIGO VESPUCCI

Explorer Amerigo Vespucci was born in 1451 in Florence.

On May 10, 1497, he embarked on his first voyage. On his third and most successful voyage, he discovered present-day Rio de Janeiro and Rio de la Plata. Believing he had discovered a new continent, he called South America the New World.

In 1507, America was named after him. He died of malaria in Seville, Spain, in 1512.

NEIL ARMSTRONG

On July 20, 1969, American astronaut Neil Armstrong stepped off the lunar landing module Eagle, and became the first human to walk on the surface of the moon. Nearly 240,000 miles from Earth, Armstrong spoke these words to more than a billion people listening at home: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." Armstrong died in 2012 at 82.

NASA

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is the United States government agency that is responsible for the civilian space program as well as for aeronautics and aerospace research.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower established NASA in 1958 with a distinctly civilian (rather than military) orientation encouraging peaceful applications in space science.

Since that time, most U.S. space exploration efforts have been led by NASA, including the Apollo moon-landing missions, the Skylab space station, and later the Space Shuttle.

RUDOLPH VALENTINO



Rudolph Valentino, born in 1895, was an Italian-American film actor.

After immigrating to the United States in 1913, Valentino moved to Hollywood, taking up small film roles until he landed his breakout role as Julio in *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (1921). Idolized as the Latin Lover of the 1920s, he starred in several romantic dramas, including *The Sheik* (1921), *Blood and Sand* (1922) and *The Eagle* (1925). His star status was evident after his sudden death in 1926 - at just 31 years old, the actor

suffered a ruptured ulcer, causing fans to grieve worldwide.

Perhaps not a great actor, Valentino had a magical and elusive quality that made him a legend. He possessed a tremendous charisma that shined through his appearances on the big screen. And his early death has only fueled his status as a revered pop icon.

HOLLYWOOD

Hollywood is a district in the central region of Los Angeles, California.

It is notable for its place as the home of the entertainment industry, including several of its historic studios. Its name has come to be a metonym for the motion picture industry of the United States.



LANGUAGE

The spelling throughout the text of *Welcome to America* is in British English - so “colour” and not “color” - which follows European practice and guidelines (Wikipedia, European Union etc).

Accents used are mainly neutral, with a little more emphasis being placed on the ‘r’ at the end of a word (rhoticity) and the use of unrounded vowels in words like “lot” and “cod” (“laht” and “cahd”). These are sounds found in parts of Britain today in rural or northern areas - in fact some modern American pronunciation is far more like British English sounded two-hundred years ago than ‘BBC’ English heard today. In the cowboy scene the characters joke with a ‘drawl’ on some famous cowboy words and phrases; the waitress in the diner has a slight

southern accent, and when the President imitates Abraham Lincoln he uses a high-pitched southern accent too.

As with all our shows the language used is conversational and natural. As this text is intended for 12 year-olds and older, there is little repetition of phrases (as is our practice with texts for the younger students), and the rhythm is faster. Pronunciation is clearer and speed slightly slower than natural speaking, as happens in all theatrical productions and the actor is speaking into a large space: this further aids a full understanding of the text.

Grammatical constructions are generally simple and straightforward, though there are passages where some of the grammar will not yet have been covered in the classroom. This mirrors what happens in real life, where the fact that part of a conversation isn't understood shouldn't throw the listener into confusion. As always, gesture and facial expression help the less able students follow the scenes without feeling excluded.

THEMES AND MORALS

Many of Arcadia's theatrical productions have obvious morals, for example, *Frankenstein*.

In *Welcome to America* there is far less of this type of content as there is no true story. However, the American Dream and the American Constitution are used to convey the basis of America's ideology (and the basis of all democratic societies) that all people are created equal and should have the same opportunities in life and should not be discriminated against for their race, sex or religion. Lincoln, Kennedy and others fought for this.

In his first State of the Union Address in January 1961, President Kennedy said,

"The denial of constitutional rights to some of our fellow Americans on account of race - at the ballot box and elsewhere - disturbs the national conscience, and subjects us to the charge of world opinion that our democracy is not equal to the high promise of our heritage."

In 1961, Kennedy signed an Executive Order requiring government contractors to "take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed and that employees are treated during employment without regard to their race, creed, colour, or national origin."

Welcome to America also illustrates the diversity of American life as it is a true ethnic and cultural melting pot: from cowboys to Rudolph Valentino, from skyscrapers to the Grand Canyon, it's all part of America.

"There is not a liberal America and a conservative America - there is the United States of America. There is not a black America and a white America and Latino America and asian America - there's the United States of America."

Barack Obama

“When I was growing up, I don’t remember being told that America was created so that everyone could get rich. I remember being told it was about opportunity and the pursuit of happiness. Not happiness itself, but the pursuit.”

Martin Scorsese

“I look forward to a great future for America - a future in which our country will match its military strength with our moral restraint, its wealth with our wisdom, its power with our purpose.”

John F. Kennedy

