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Upper Intermediate Student’s Book

Life

Immigration

**Part 1**

**00.03–00.23** Every day, a massive number of aeroplanes, cars and ships cross America’s borders, bringing people from other lands.

Some 430 million passengers arrived in 2004 alone, and as has been the case for centuries, many of the people who come to the United States end up staying.

**00.24–00.41 Lavinia Limon** America is by its nature more diverse, more welcoming to immigrants, less discrimination, more opportunities for their children. They choose to come here and I think, you know, not only have we by policy had more immigration, but by our very nature we’re more welcoming to people.

**00.42–01.07** Great waves of immigration have broken on American shores since the early part of the 19th century. Fleeing economic and political hardships, many millions left their homelands in Europe and Asia in search of a better life.

Europeans including Irish, Germans, Italians and others, settled in the eastern half of the United States. Immigrants from Asia and from Mexico tended to settle in the west and southwest.

**01.08–01.45** During the period between 1892 to 1924, Ellis Island in New York harbour opened its doors to some 17 million immigrants. In 1907 alone, as many as 11,000 people flowed through its Great Hall on a single day. And today, four out of every ten Americans can trace part of their family history directly back to this one point of entry.

Virtually all of these immigrants faced hardships. Many of them settled on the Lower East side of Manhattan.

The Tenement Museum shows how harsh their living conditions could be.

**01.46–02.11 Philip Cohen** It was pretty much just three rooms, 325 square feet, partitioned into three rooms. You had the front room, which was the only room with direct access to light and air. The centre room was typically the kitchen. And then you had a smaller room in the back, which was typically, you know, from our records of this building, families as large as eleven people living. So, you know, when night fell, every room became a bedroom.

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**02.12–02.30** Meanwhile, on the west coast, immigrants passed through a point of entry called Angel Island in California’s San Francisco Bay. Here, they had to contend with immigration laws that were especially strict for Asians.

But despite the conditions, immigrants continued to arrive by the thousands.

**Part 2**

**02.31–02.48** The United States remains open to new settlers today with about a million new legal immigrants each year.

A large number of immigrants also enter the United States illegally. This situation presents a challenge to the nation and especially for states on the US–Mexico border.

**02.48–03.12** Despite these challenges, America’s long history of immigration has clearly strengthened the nation. Foreign-born citizens have brought with them education, technical skills, a great desire to work and succeed and personal connections to other countries. One reason the United States is such a dominant power in the world economy is that it has an ever-growing force of immigrant labourers and professionals.

**03.13–03.18 Lavinia Limon** We’re in a much better position because we have maintained our immigration flows.

**03.19–03.37** More than two hundred years of immigration to the United States has shown that even immigrants who keep their language, their way of dress and their own customs often share very similar values to the people already living here. Values that will eventually help make them successful members of American society.

**03.38–03.58 Lavinia Limon** The immigrants who come here, they have chosen. They have made an incredible leap to leave everything they know, everything that gives them self-identity and self-respect to come here. And they have bought into, they, you know, believe in American independence, freedom and democracy.

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