



## **JFSJ Recommended Books: Immigration to the United States**

### **Non-fiction**

***Mollie's Job: A Story of Life and Work on the Global Assembly Line*, by William Adler.**

*A global story goes personal: The story of three young women who successively hold the same factory job in New Jersey, Mississippi, and Mexico*

***Guarding the Golden Door* by Roger Daniels**

*A concise and readable history of American immigration policy*

***Lives on the Line* by Miriam Davidson**

*Portraits of individuals living on or near the Mexico border who are affected by immigration policy*

***Triangle: The Fire That Changed America*, by David von Drehle.**

*An analysis of the aftereffects of the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory, which led to the growth of the garment workers' union*

***Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* by David G. Gutierrez**

*A readable history of the way in which Mexican immigration has transformed the social, political, and ethnic landscape of America*

***World of Our Fathers: The Journey of the East European Jews to America and the Life they Found and Made* by Irving Howe**

*The classic history of Eastern European Jewish immigration to the United States*

***Arguing Immigration: Are New Immigrants a Wealth of Diversity. . . Or a Crushing Burden* by Nicolaus Mills**

*Essays reflecting both sides of the immigration debate*

***Immigrants and the American City* by Thomas Muller**

*An examination of the impact of immigrants on urban centers*

***Still the Golden Door: The Third World Comes to America* by David Reimers**

*A history of the immigration of third-world immigrants and refugees and of the effect of American policy on these migrations*

***Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America* by Daniel J. Tichenor**

*A comprehensive history of immigration policy in America*

***Translation Nation* by Héctor Tobar**

*Vivid portraits of Spanish-speaking communities and individuals, mixed with personal history and commentary on current debates*

***Fresh Blood: The New American Immigrants* by Sanford J. Ungar**

*Compelling portraits of new immigrants and immigrant communities; an argument that today's immigrants are similar to earlier generations of immigrants*

***The Devil's Highway* by Luis Urrea**

*The story of fourteen men who died trying to cross the Arizona desert and the twelve men in their party who survived*

## **Fiction**

***Mr. Sammler's Planet* by Saul Bellow**

*An elderly Holocaust survivor offers wry observations on life in New York*

***The Tortilla Curtain* by T.C. Boyle**

*The lives of two Californians—one white and American-born, and the other an illegal immigrant—collide, transforming both parties*

***Rise of David Levinsky* by Abraham Cahan**

*The classic story of a young immigrant's rise from garment worker to successful businessman*

***Breath, Eyes, Memory* by Edwidge Danticat**

*The story of four generations of Haitian women in America*

***Across a Hundred Mountains* by Reyna Grande**

*The story follows a young Mexican girl and a young American woman as their lives crisscross across the American-Mexican border*

***Typical American* by Gish Jen**

*Three Chinese immigrants try to attain the American dream without letting go of their heritage*

***The Interpreter of Maladies* and *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri**

*Stories of first and second-generation South Asian immigrants*

***Call it Sleep* by Henry Roth**

*A Jewish Ulysses, this book traces the adventures of a young Jewish immigrant boy on the Lower East Side*

***The Russian Debutante's Handbook and Absurdistan* by Gary Shteyngart**

*Two novels about the absurd adventures of Russian immigrants adjusting to life in America, trying to secure visas, and involving themselves in U.S. business dealings*

***In America* by Susan Sontag**

*A Polish immigrant in the nineteenth century tries to establish a Utopian community in California*

***Growing Up Latino* edited by Ilan Stavans**

*Autobiographical and fictional accounts of growing up Latino in the United States*

***The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan**

*The story of four Chinese immigrant families in San Francisco*

***Bread Givers and Hungry Hearts* by Anzia Yeziarska**

*Novels and short stories by the woman sometimes called the first American Jewish writer*

**Children's books**

**Picture books**

***A Day's Work* by Eve Bunting**

*A boy acts as a translator for his grandfather, who has recently arrived from Mexico. The boy lies in order to get his grandfather a job, and his grandfather teaches him a lesson in honesty.*

***Molly's Pilgrim* by Barbara Cohen**

*The classic story of a Russian-American girl who learns to see her own immigration story within the context of American Thanksgiving celebrations*

***Si Se Puede/Yes We Can!* by Diana Cohn and Francisco Delgado**

*A boy learns to be proud of his mother, a janitor who is on strike*

***A Very Important Day* by Maggie Rugg Herold**

*Indian, Greek, and Chinese families celebrate together on the day that they become U.S. citizens*

***Mendel's Accordion* by Heidi Smith Hyde**

*A klezmer musician comes to America where he has children and grandchildren who like different kinds of music; three generations later, his great-grandson finds the old accordion and falls in love with klezmer*

***Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez* by Kathleen Krull**

*The story of Chavez's fight to earn better working conditions for migrant workers*

***Coming to America* by Betsy Maestro**

*A history of immigration in America and the stories of some of the people who immigrated*

***A Place to Grow* by Soyung Pak**

*A father uses a garden to explain to his daughter why he immigrated to America*

***My Diary from Here to There/Mi diario de aquí hasta allá* by Amada Irma Pérez**

*A girl writes a diary of her family's journey from Mexico to the United States*

***First Day in Grapes* by L. King Pérez**

*A boy moves around America with his parents, who are migrant workers*

***What Zeesie Saw on Delancey Street* by Elsa Okon Rael and Marjorie Priceman**

*A Jewish girl living on the Lower East Side in the 19<sup>th</sup> century watches her parents and neighbors organize to support other immigrants*

***My Name is Yoon* by Helen Recorvits**

*Unhappy with the way that her name looks in English, a Korean girl tries out different names—like cat and cupcake—until she finds her place in her new country and learns to love her name again.*

***América is Her Name* by Luis Rodríguez**

*A young girl living in Chicago finds solace in her writing when others tease her because of her Mixteca background and her family's poverty*

***Annushka's Voyage* by Edith Tarbescu**

*Two sisters leave their grandparents in Russia to start a new life in New York with their father. Includes historical essay and real life stories in back*

Chapter books

***Kids Like Me* by Judith Blohm**

*First-hand accounts by contemporary American immigrant children; includes discussion questions and activities*

***The Colors of Freedom: Immigrant Stories* by Janet Bode**

*A hodgepodge of writings by immigrant kids, background information, recipes, drawings, and more*

***Immigrants in America—Jewish Americans* by Laurel Corona  
(other books in this series follow other ethnic groups)**

*Stories of how families decided to come to the United States*

***Behind the Mountains* by Edwidge Danticat**

*A girl and her family leave Haiti because of political violence there and find themselves struggling to make a new life in Brooklyn*

***Immigrant Kids* by Russell Freedman**

*Stories of immigrant children in 19<sup>th</sup> century New York*

***Born Confused* by Tanuk Desai Hidier**

*An Indian teenager tries to integrate her family's heritage with her own New York life, while also negotiating the dating scene*

***The Jewish American Family Album* by Dorothy Hoobler  
(other books in this series follow other ethnic groups)**

*Pictures, articles and primary sources about the Jewish community from the first settlements through today*

***Any Small Goodness* by Tony Johnston**

*An eleven-year-old boy struggles to retain a sense of his heritage in his move from Mexico to Los Angeles*

***My America* series by Katherine Lasky and others**

*A series of "diaries" written by Italian, Jewish, and other immigrant girls*

***Stella: On the Edge of Popularity* by Lauren Lee**

*A seventh grader needs to choose between being part of the popular crowd and staying true to her family's Korean traditions*

***America: the Jewish Experience* by Sondra Leiman and Jonathan Sarna**

*A history, written for elementary and middle school students, of American Judaism from the first settlements through today*

***Miriam's Journey: Discovering a New World* by Robin K. Levinson**

*A ten year old girl and her family leave Czarist Russia for America, but find their new life harder than expected*

***Nothing Here but Stones: A Jewish Pioneer Story* by Nancy Oswald**

*A Jewish families flees Russia in the nineteenth century and helps to establish a new settlement in Colorado*

***Tangled Threads: A Hmong Girl's Story* by Pegi Deitz Shea**

*After spending ten years in a refugee camp, a girl and her grandmother travel to the United States to join their only living relatives there*