

The New Colossus

 Video link at thinkcentral.com

Poem by Emma Lazarus

Who Makes the Journey

Poem by Cathy Song

How does it feel to **START OVER?**

COMMON CORE

RL 1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL 2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is shaped and refined by specific details.

The United States has welcomed millions of people fleeing religious and political persecution, as well as those who simply wanted to make a better life for themselves and their families. In the following poems, Emma Lazarus and Cathy Song reflect upon the ideals and the reality of the immigrant experience.

DISCUSS If your family moved away from the United States, what challenges would you face? With a group of classmates, make a list of challenges and discuss how hard they would be to overcome.



● TEXT ANALYSIS: LITERARY PERIODS

Just as there are trends in fashion and music, there are trends in literature. For example, poems from the same **literary period** often have similarities in style. The opening lines of “The New Colossus” exemplify the formal tone and diction common in 19th-century poetry.

*Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;*

In contrast, the opening of “Who Makes the Journey” has a relaxed, conversational tone that is more typical of contemporary poetry.

*In most cases,
it is the old woman
who makes the journey;*

Contemporary poets are also less likely than poets from earlier periods to follow regular patterns of rhyme and meter.

As you read, note how the two poems differ in style and form, and consider how the poets’ attitudes toward their subjects may have been influenced by their literary periods.

● READING SKILL: ANALYZE SENSORY DETAILS

Each of the poems you will read has a vivid central image—a towering statue or an old woman crossing the street. To create these images, Lazarus and Song use **sensory details**, appealing to the senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell, or touch.

As you read, use a chart like the one shown to analyze sensory details in each poem.

“Who Makes the Journey”		
Detail	Sense	What It Suggests
“the stooped gnome figure” (line 30)	sight	small and worn down



Complete the activities in your **Reader/Writer Notebook**.

Emma Lazarus

1849–1887

Voice of Liberty

In her brief lifetime, Emma Lazarus (läz’är-əs) saw the United States being transformed by a surge in immigration. Although her family had been in America since the 1600s, she strongly identified with immigrants, especially fellow Jews who had left eastern Europe to escape violence and oppression. She wrote her poem about the Statue of Liberty, “The New Colossus,” in 1883 to raise funds to build a pedestal for the statue. The poem was later inscribed on the pedestal.

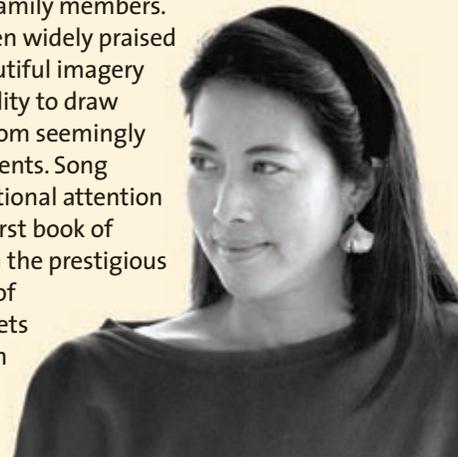


Cathy Song

born 1955

Family Ties

Born in Hawaii of Korean and Chinese ancestry, Cathy Song often writes about the experiences of her immigrant grandparents and other family members. She has been widely praised for her beautiful imagery and her ability to draw meaning from seemingly minor incidents. Song came to national attention when her first book of poems won the prestigious Yale Series of Younger Poets competition in 1983.



Authors Online

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The New **COLOSSUS**

Emma Lazarus



Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,¹ **A**
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
5 Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities² frame.
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!”³ cries she
10 With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost⁴ to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!” **B**

1. **giant of Greek fame:** the Colossus of Rhodes, a huge Greek statue of the sun god Helios.
2. **harbor . . . twin cities:** New York Harbor, where the Statue of Liberty is located. Brooklyn was a city separate from New York until 1898.
3. **storied pomp:** the splendor of your history.
4. **tempest-tost:** tossed by violent windstorms.

COMMON CORE RL.2

A ALLUSION

Allusions are references to a person, place, or event that is famous in literature or real life. In the first line of “The New Colossus,” Lazarus makes an allusion to an ancient Greek statue. Reread lines 1–2. Why do you think she includes this allusion? What impact does it have on the central idea of the poem?

B SENSORY DETAILS

What do the sensory details in lines 10–14 suggest about the experiences of some immigrants?

Who Makes the JOURNEY

Cathy Song

In most cases,
it is the old woman
who makes the journey;
the old man having had
5 the sense to stay
put and die at home.

You see her scurrying
behind her
newly arrived family.
10 She comes from the Azores¹
and she comes from the Orient.
It makes no difference.
You have seen her before: **C**

the short substantial
15 legs buckle
under the weight
of the ghost child
she carried centuries

ago like a bundle of rags
20 who now turns in front
of your windshield,
transformed in Western clothes.

The grown woman stops
impatiently
25 and self-consciously
to motion *Hurry* to her mother.

C LITERARY PERIODS
What words and phrases
in lines 7–13 help give
the stanza a casual,
contemporary tone?

1. **Azores:** a group of islands in the northern Atlantic Ocean.

Seeping into your side view
mirror like a black mushroom
blooming in a bowl of water,
30 the stooped gnome figure
wades through the river
of cars hauling

her sack of cabbages,
the white and curved,
35 translucent leaves of which
she will wash individually
as if they were porcelain cups. **D**

Like black seed buttons
sewn onto a shapeless dress,
40 those cryptic eyes
rest on your small reflection

for an instant. Years pass.
History moves like an old woman
crossing the street.



D **SENSORY DETAILS**

What do the sensory details in lines 33–37 reveal about the old woman?

◀ Analyze Visuals

How does the photograph reflect Song's description of the old woman?

Comprehension

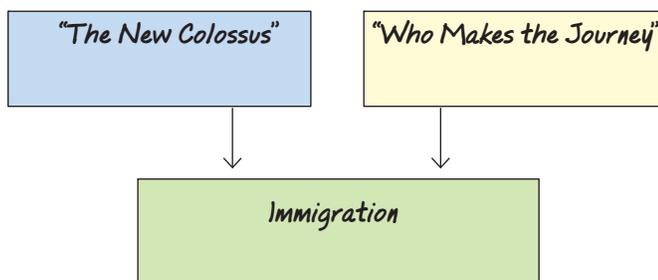
1. **Clarify** Who is being welcomed in “The New Colossus”?
2. **Recall** How does the old woman in “Who Makes the Journey” differ from her daughter?
3. **Clarify** What journey does the title of Cathy Song’s poem refer to?



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Text Analysis

4. **Compare and Contrast** In what ways is the Statue of Liberty unlike the ancient Greek colossus that Lazarus describes in lines 1–2 of “The New Colossus”? Cite evidence from the text.
5. **Analyze Literary Periods** How might Lazarus’s poem be different if she had written it today? Be specific.
6. **Interpret Figurative Language** A **simile** is figurative language that makes a comparison using *like* or *as*. Reread lines 43–44 of “Who Makes the Journey.” Explain the meaning of the simile at the end of Song’s poem.
7. **Identify Sensory Details** Review the chart you created as you read “Who Makes the Journey.” What details does Song include to help you visualize the old woman as if you were watching her from a car?
8. **Analyze Tone and Author’s Purpose** How would you describe the tone and purpose of “Who Makes the Journey”? Cite passages as evidence.
9. **Synthesize** On the basis of these two poems, what conclusion can you draw about the immigrant experience? Use a graphic organizer like the one shown to record your answer.



Text Criticism

10. **Biographical Context** During the early 1880s, Emma Lazarus met many Jewish refugees who had recently fled Russia to escape anti-Semitic massacres. What details in “The New Colossus” reflect this experience?

How does it feel to **START OVER**?

What challenges do immigrants face in the United States?