



ANNUSHKA'S VOYAGE

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Annushka and her sister have a long trip ahead of them – they are leaving Russia and heading for New York City. They're a little scared, but they're also excited – and they can't wait to reunite with Papa in the New World. Turns out their Shabbat candlesticks have a role to play!

JEWISH CONCEPTS

Finishing their last *Shabbat* dinner in their little Russian town, Grandma gives one of her precious candlesticks to each of her granddaughters, to bring them good luck on their voyage to America. In the late 1800s, treatment of Jews in Russia was so harsh that many parents were willing to sacrifice much to protect their children. Often families would save for one ticket at a time to help their family members immigrate to the “Golden Land” of America. As far back as our ancestors in the *Torah* (the first five books of the Bible), some Jews have found it necessary to leave their homeland and their family to seek a better life.

At the core of Jewish life is *mishpacha* (family). This is exemplified by the very first commandment in the *Torah*: “Be fruitful and multiply” (Genesis 1:28). It is in the home and among family that Jewish learning and life begins and grows. Our ancestors passed on many values through their stories and heirlooms. In *Annushka's Voyage*, the transmission of family customs and history travels *l'dor vador*, from generation to generation, as well as through Grandma's *Shabbat* candlesticks. How have values, customs and history been transmitted in your family? What is precious to you now that might be special to pass on to the next generation?

USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

New young immigrants faced many challenges. Consider these questions as you try to understand what Anya and Tanya experienced:

- How would you feel if you had to leave your family and most of your belongings as you moved to another country? What would you take with you?
- What would it be like to attend a school taught in a language you don't understand?

Most early immigrants to the US came through New York Harbor. To experience the immigration process first-hand, make an actual or “virtual” Internet visit to Ellis Island, the Statue of Liberty, and the Tenement Museum in New York City.

Most people living in America have their roots in a different country. Speak with members of your extended family and ask them to tell stories that have been passed down through the generations. What heirlooms did your family inherit? Inquire about some of the challenges during the journey and the anticipation of coming to a new land. You may want to make a video or take pictures as they recount family adventures and folklore. Write your own family's story or make a scrapbook.