

Decision Tracker Reflection

Guiding Question: How do immigrants balance their commitment to family, cultural, and religious traditions with their desire to assimilate or explore the new opportunities in America?

Decision Tracker Reflection

After completing all parts of the mission, reflect on your journey in the game by answering the following questions:

1. **Reflection: What value(s) did you prioritize?**
 - Which of the four values—maintaining traditions and family, making money and succeeding in America, fighting for fairness and change, or assimilating—did you choose to prioritize? Explain why you chose them.

2. **Reflection: Did you act according to the values you chose in the game?**
 - How successful were you in putting those values you chose into action?
 - What other factors guided your decisions in the game?

3. **Reflection: What factors influence your choices in your life today?**

Given the time and place that Lena lived, the choices she faced in her life are different in many ways than the choices we face in our lives today. Yet, in other ways, the influences and pressures she experienced may also be very similar to our own.

 - What feels most similar between the choices Lena faced and the choices you face in your life?
 - What feels most different?

4. **Discussion: How well can we understand Lena?**

Time: At least 20 minutes

Instructions

In this activity, students reflect on their decisions as Lena throughout the game, reflect on the complexity of decision-making, and practice historical empathy.

The Decision Tracker Reflection provides a series of questions for students to respond to after completing the Decision Tracker documents from Parts 1, 2, and 3 of *City of Immigrants*.

Consider giving students time for independent reflection and/or partner discussions in response to Questions 1-3. Since those questions ask students to consider their own values and experiences, they may not be comfortable sharing their responses with the whole group. Question 4 is designed for a whole class discussion.

Notes:

- This Decision Tracker Reflection takes the place of the Decision Tracker handout that appears in previous sections of this Teacher Guide. Since Lena continues to experience tension between the four values students choose from the Part 2-Part 3 Decision Tracker,

Lena was a poor, Jewish immigrant from Russia living in a tenement and working in a factory at the start of the 20th century in one of the most crowded communities in the world. Your world is very different.

- What makes it *hard* to understand the experience of an immigrant like Lena—how she thought and felt, and why she made the decisions she did?
- What makes it possible for you to understand a turn-of-the-20th-century immigrant's experience despite all the differences?

you might choose to have students continue recording and analyzing specific decisions while they play Parts 4 and 5. If so, simply provide them another blank copy of the Part 2-Part 3 handout. You could give students the option to choose a new value to prioritize in their decision making for Parts 4 and 5.

- Question #2 asks students how successful they think they were in putting the values they chose to prioritize into action during the game. Keep in mind that many students may have played with *other* motives in mind (e.g., trying the most extreme choices, trying to make other characters angry, trying to “break” the game, or just choosing randomly). Therefore, #2 also asks students what other factors guided their choices. It's good to acknowledge that games allow players freedom in how much they identify with characters.
- Question #4 asks students to consider both the importance and the limits of historical empathy. We hope that students will emerge with the conclusion that it is hard but still worthwhile to try to understand the experience of a turn-of-the-century immigrant like Lena (and others from the past). Here are some reasons students may give:
 - Lena had to grow up much faster than most American kids today;

	<p>it's hard to know what it was like to be in such a different world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• She was still a young person who wanted what most teens want—acceptance, connection to family, growing independence, fun.
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