In 1892, Ellis Island opened in New York harbor. Arriving immigrants were inspected here before being given final clearance to enter America. Inspections were everything. If you passed you could stay. If you failed you would be sent back to your home country, which often meant horrible circumstances. The Memory Coat by Elvira Woodruff tells the story of one boy’s journey to America and his time at Ellis Island. Students will use the documents in the DBQ to explore the immigrant arrival experience at Ellis Island.
**Document-Based Question**

**Directions:**
You will read *The Memory Coat* by Elvira Woodruff. This project is based on your ability to work with historical documents. Look at each document attached below A – M and answer the question or questions after each document. The Library of Congress Primary Sources Analysis Tool included in this packet will guide you with analyzing the documents. Use your answers to the questions and your analysis tool for each document to help you write your essay.

**Historical Background:**
In the late 1800’s and early 1900’s almost 30 million people came from Europe to the United States. Ellis Island was the main processing center for these immigrants.

**Guided Questions for Book reading:**
1. Are all immigrants treated equally?
2. Why would a person travel to America with no guarantee of being able to stay?
3. Why are inspections important?

**Task:**
Using the information from the documents and your knowledge of the topic, answer the questions that follow each document in Part 1.

Your answers to the questions will help you to write the Part 2 essay, in which you will be asked to:

**Discuss the immigrant experience beginning with the decision to come to America and ending with the time spent at Ellis Island.**

**Explain how determinations were made about which immigrants were allowed to enter the United States and which were sent back. Do you agree with the procedures used at Ellis Island? Why or why not?**
Part 1
Short-Answer Questions

Directions:
Carefully analyze the following documents (A-M) and answer the questions that follow each document.

Document A

Large scale map of Russia in Europe 1918
http://www.loc.gov/item/2003627052/

What is the most direct route an immigrant could take from Russia to America?

List the countries and bodies of water the route contains.
For what reasons could a person be declared ineligible to land?
Based on the photograph, describe what an immigrant would have seen on approach to the Ellis Island immigration station.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of America’s immigration processing station being located on an actual island (Ellis Island)?
What did the Statue of Liberty symbolize for immigrants arriving to America?
A Happy New Year (postcard created between 1900-1920)
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004672480/

What objects do you see in the postcard?

Describe the symbolism you see.
Welcome to all!

http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002719044/

According to the political cartoon, what are five reasons immigrants want to come to America?

Explain why each reason is important.
What does the photograph reveal about the personal belongings immigrants brought with them on their journey to America?
Recently arrived persons at Ellis Island, N.Y.  
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2012646346/

Describe the clothing of the immigrants in the photograph.

Does clothing reveal clues about social class? Why or why not?
Immigrants at Ellis Island
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ggb2004008804/

Describe the clothing of the immigrants in the photograph.

Does clothing reveal clues about social class? Why or why not?
Physical examination of female immigrants at Ellis Island, New York City
http://loc.gov/pictures/item/95506353/

Describe the interactions depicted in the photograph.
According to the chart, what region were most immigrants from?

What was the average dollar amount brought in by each immigrant in 1903?

How many immigrants arriving over the age of 14 were illiterate in 1903?
What is the title of the act that was approved on March 3, 1855?

According to the bill, list the only people authorized to board a newly arrived immigrant vessel and interact with the passengers?
What are the authorities criticized for?
Part 2
Essay

Historical Context:
In the late 1800’s and early 1900’s almost 30 million people came from Europe to the United States. Ellis Island was the main processing center for these immigrants.

Directions:
In your own words, write a well-organized essay that includes an introduction, several paragraphs, and a conclusion. Use the documents, the answer to the questions in Part 1, your analysis tool sheets, and your knowledge of the topic to complete the essay.

Your essay should cover the following:

- Discuss the immigrant experience beginning with the decision to come to America and ending with the time spent at Ellis Island.

- Explain how determinations were made about which immigrants were allowed to enter the United States and which were sent back. Do you agree with the procedures used at Ellis Island? Why or why not?
Directions:

For each document A – M complete a separate Library of Congress Primary Source Analysis Tool. List your name and the document title on the top of each sheet. Additional copies and an online interactive copy can be found at:

http://www.loc.gov/teachers/primary-source-analysis-tool/

Name____________________

Document Title____________________

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS TOOL

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<th>OBSERVE</th>
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FURTHER INVESTIGATION