If Your Name Was Changed At Ellis Island

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If your name were changed at Ellis Island --Would everyone in your family travel together? --How long would you stay at Ellis Island? --Would your name be changed?

This book tells you what it was like if when Ellis Island was opened in 1892 as a center for immigrants coming to live in America.

How did people escape on the Underground Railroad? What was it like to land on Ellis Island?How did it feel to travel the Oregon Trail in a covered wagon? Ellen Levine has revealed worldsof fascinating adventure with her nonfiction books for young readers.

Although Ellen Levine enjoys reading and writing fiction, most of her books for young readershave been nonfiction. "Writing nonfiction lets me in behind the scenes of the story. I enjoylearning new things and meeting new people, even if they lived 200 years ago."

"Real heroes," Levine says, "aren't necessarily on TV or in the news. They can be ordinarypeople who are willing to take risks for causes they believe in. Nonfiction offers a way tointroduce young readers to real people who have shown tremendous courage, even when facedwith great danger. All of us have the potential. And one doesn't have to be a grown-up," sheadds.

When she's not writing, Levine likes to share the excitement of research and the importance of accuracy with young readers. "Many young people think research is dull; you go to anencyclopedia, copy information, give it a title, and call it a report." Using her books asexamples, Ellen explains how to get other, more interesting information. "I may not mention the exact words, but I talk to young people about primary and secondary sources. If I'm speakingwith third graders, I ask them, 'Where would I go if I wanted to find out what it's like to be athird grader?' Most will say, 'Read a book.' But when they say, 'Ask a third grader,' I knowthey've understood what I mean by a primary source of inspiration."

For If You Were an Animal Doctor, for example, Ellen witnessed an emergency operation on acow. While doing research in Wyoming for Ready, Aim, Fire!, her biography of Annie Oakley,she got to hold the gun Ms. Oakley is believed to have shot in the presence of the Queen of England. "It gave me such a strong feeling about this person," she says. "That's part of research,too."

Ellen Levine is the author of many acclaimed books, both fiction and nonfiction. Among them: If You Traveled West in a Covered Wagon, If Your Name Was Changed at Ellis Island, I Hate English!, If You Lived at the Time of Martin Luther King, and Secret Missions. Her recent book, Freedom's Children: Young Civil Rights Activists Tell Their Own Stories, was named one of the Ten Best Children's Books of the Year by The New York Times, and Best Book for Young Adults by the American Library Association.

Ellen divides her time between New York City and Salem. New York.Arranged in Q&A style. this survey of earlier immigrations asks: ``Did all immigrants come through Ellis Island?" (no); ``Did you have to have a job waiting for you?" (again, no; in fact, it was not allowed). It's evident that America has always been a polyglot magnet--even in 1643, 18 languages were spoken in one colonial area. It's also evident that there's been long-standing prejudice against certain immigrants (ability to read was required for entrance, and first and second class arrivals didn't have to sweat it out at Ellis Island). Perhaps most interesting here are the individual stories: the name change in the author's own family; the child who had never seen a banana and ate it whole; the ``six- second" medical exam. Levine (If You Traveled West in a Covered Wagon, 1986) gives multiculturalism an extra boost by ending with a sampling of words and other contributions from many heritages. Nostalgically warm impressionistic paintings, suffused with sepia, simultaneously signal suffering and hope. (Nonfiction. 7-10) -- Copyright [2] 1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. Other Books

Nikola Tesla for Kids, Nikola Tesla was a physicist, scientist, electrical engineer, and worldrenowned inventor whose accomplishments faded into oblivion after his death in 1943. Tesla was undeniably eccentric and compulsive; some considered him to be somewhat of a "mad" scientist. But in reality, he was a visionary. Many of his ideas and inventions that were deemed impossible during his lifetime have since become reality. He was the first to successfully use rotating magnetic fields to create an AC (alternating current) electrical power supply system and induction motor. He is now acknowledged to have invented the radio ahead of Marconi. Among other things, he developed the Tesla coil, an oscillator, generators, fluorescent tubes, neon lights, and a small remote-controlled boat. He helped design the world's first hydroelectric plant at Niagara Falls. Nikola Tesla for Kids is the story of Nikola Tesla's life and ideas, complete with a time line, 21 hands-on activities, and additional resources to better understand his many accomplishments.

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