



ACROSS THE SEA OF TIME

A Story of New York and the World

**TEACHER'S
RESOURCE GUIDE**

ACROSS THE SEA OF TIME

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Music by:
John Barry

Starring:
Peter Reznik

Synopsis

In the opening scenes of *Across the Sea of Time*, viewers are caught in the crosscurrents of two intertwined stories. Through black and white images and letters, we learn about Leopold Minton who arrived in America from Russia in 1904. In a contemporary setting, we meet his great grandnephew, Tomas Minton, who has arrived in New York City as a young stowaway.

Ellis Island, where both first set foot on American soil, offers neither tired traveler much comfort. Leopold tells of being caught in the bustle of hundreds of "seasick strangers," and of his fear of being sent back by officials who "treat us no better than cattle." Tomas finds an abandoned section of the island unwelcoming, too, and hides in fear of the guards who pass through, shining their bright lights in his direction. A ferry frees

them both from this place and takes them, each in his own time, to New York City.

Images of New York in the early 1900's are juxtaposed with modern-day scenes. Similarities and differences between each time period are apparent as we watch young Tomas follow in Leopold's footsteps. Unlike Leopold, who arrived knowing no one and unsure of the path he would take with his life, Tomas has a plan: to find his Great Aunt Julia, Leopold's widow. As a guide to her whereabouts, he studies Leopold's old photos and recalls the words in Leopold's letters home to Russia.

Tomas' journey takes him throughout many of New York City's most intriguing places, and at each place, he

learns something about America. His first stop is the Financial District, where he first shows his great uncle's pictures to a businessman and where he realizes that finding one person in such a big city will be no small task. In Chinatown, Tomas has his first taste of American culture, a hot dog given to him by a kindly vendor. At South Street Seaport, he becomes an entrepreneur, showing his antique photos in exchange for dollars. Then he's on to Coney Island, where he imagines a thrilling ride on the abandoned roller coaster. Next is Midtown, including Times Square, Broadway, and Central Park, over which Tomas soars in his imagination across the skyline rooftops and bridges. He even manages to catch a glimpse of a Broadway revue, the revival of an old-fashioned folly.

Wherever Tomas goes, he meets people who are friendly and helpful...people who appreciate the fact that he is a young boy on a great adventure. The entire city becomes Tomas' playground. But one evening, when his backpack filled with his great uncle's photos and letters is stolen, Tomas is heartbroken. He spends the remaining hours of the night asleep on the steps of the Fifth Avenue Library. He has only one photo of his treasure trove left — the one that shows the house where Leopold and Julia Minton had lived.

The new day brings him new hope of finding Great Aunt Julia, especially as he recalls Uncle Leopold's words about life not always being easy in America. With renewed purpose, he heads downtown and stumbles upon Pete's Tavern, a place to which Great Uncle Leopold had alluded in his letters. Tomas approaches the tavern owner and shows him the photo. Yes! The man recognizes the house. He points Tomas on his way.

Tomas sees the Minton home. He also hears familiar piano music coming from inside. He enters and finds Great Aunt Julia, now quite old, playing the piano. Tomas introduces himself, and she takes him into her arms and welcomes him to America.



Summary of Student Activities

Activity Sheet	Student Objective	Curriculum Focus	Move On Activity
Mini Poster: Citizenship	Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.	Social Studies Language Arts	(Extension Activity) Discuss the meaning of world citizenship.
1 On the Move!	Explain displacement.	Science Math	Create a chart showing changes in transportation over the years.
2 We All Come From Somewhere	Explain the impact of immigration on newcomers and on the country they enter.	Social Studies Language Arts	Create a family tree or write a family history.
3 Into the Melting Pot	Describe the contributions of various cultures.	Social Studies Language Arts	Write a description of a family cultural celebration.
4 Extra! Extra!	Describe the various methods of communication and the technology involved.	Science Social Studies Language Arts	Create a message for future generations to learn about each student's life and times.
5 When I Was Your Age...	Describe how lifestyles and costs have changed over this century.	Math Social Studies	Write a "visual snapshot" of daily life in an older person's youth.
6 Buildings and Bridges	Explain the physical science that allows tall structures to stand.	Science Math	Study the structure of your school building.
7 The Birth and Growth of a City	Describe how various towns and cities have grown.	Geography Social Studies Language Arts	Create an oral history of your town or city.
8 Preserving Culture	Explain the importance of preserving culture.	Social Studies The Arts	Create a tour guide of your town or city, naming and describing each stop.