

Reading comprehension

An Immigrant's Life

Read what the architect Bob Berlin has to say about his grandfather.

"My grandfather, Isaac Berlin, left his native town in Russia in 1890. He was the first of six brothers to leave home. He was going to America, the land of abundance, because he lived in terrible poverty, and also because there was religious persecution. After all, he *was* the son of a rabbi*.

With only the money for his ticket and his food, he took a train to Hamburg. Then he travelled by sea to Liverpool, where he boarded a transatlantic liner* bound for* New York.

At last, after twenty days they sailed into New York Harbour. Grandpa was only just seventeen. He cried with joy when he saw the Statue of Liberty, but before he was allowed into America, he was taken to Ellis Island, the immigration station. It was a morbid place filled with five thousand other immigrants like Grandpa. For three days the officials checked* his papers, gave him medical inspections and asked him questions.

Grandpa did not speak any English, so an interpreter was called to help the immigration officer.

Once it was all over, he got on a ferry to Manhattan. There a Jewish charity* took him to the Lower East Side, where he earned his living as a salesboy. At night he slept at the back of the shop on potato bags. He worked long hours for very little money.

Because he wanted to learn English, he bought *Shakespeare's Complete Works*, which he recited at night without understanding a word. He once told me that the music of the verse sounded like Russian to him.

Grandpa married my grandma, who was a hat maker, in 1906. They lived in a two-room apartment without any heating, so in winter they were often cold. However, they were very happy. In 1912 they both took American nationality.

When my father was born the following year, Grandpa and Grandma felt really American. They loved New York and Grandpa was fascinated by the great bridges and skyscrapers that were being built. He said to my father: "I want you to become an architect and build skyscrapers that reach for the sky. So you must study hard and go to the university."

And that's exactly what my father did, but he did not become an architect. He became a university professor instead, and he specialized in Shakespeare.

In the end it was I who became an architect, and who fulfilled Grandpa's wish."

A rabbi : a person who is trained to perform Jewish religious ceremonies, or to lead a Jewish congregation.

A liner : a ship. **Bound for** : going to... **Filled** : rempli. **To check** : vérifier.

A charity : une oeuvre de bienfaisance **A salesboy** : vendeur. **To fulfill** : réaliser.

Now do the activities :

/40

1. Bob Berlin is an immigrant True / False (entoure la bonne réponse) **0.5**
2. His grandfather was from(country) **0.5**
3. When he arrived in New York, Isaac **2**

a) could speak English	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) could read	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) was married	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) had no money	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Isaac emigrated during the century. **0.5**

5. Give the two reasons why he emigrated: **2**

a)

6.because he and his family were

7. How did he travel to the USA? **2**

.....

8. It took himdays to travel from(city). to(city). **1.5**

9. Find 2 elements (from line 1 to line 15) showing that he was **full of hope** and **believed** in the American Dream : **2**

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.....

10. Where did he go first? Did he choose to go there? **2**

.....

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11. Nobody understood him there True / False (entoure la bonne réponse) **0.5**

Justify : **0.5**

12. Was it a pleasant place ? (choose one word) **0.5**

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13. There were not many immigrants in that period. True / False (circle: entoure) **1.**

Justify :

14. Did he find any solidarity?explain **1.5**

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15. He had a good job and a home. YES ☐ NO ☐ **1**

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Show that he **wanted** to get integrated. **1.5**

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16. Bob's grandparents' living conditions were (1 adjective) **0.5**

justify : **1**

17. Did Isaac marry an American woman? 1

Justify :

18. Did Isaac regret coming to the States? Did he get integrated? Explain. (quote three elements)3

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19. Isaac's ambition for his son : he wanted him to 1.5

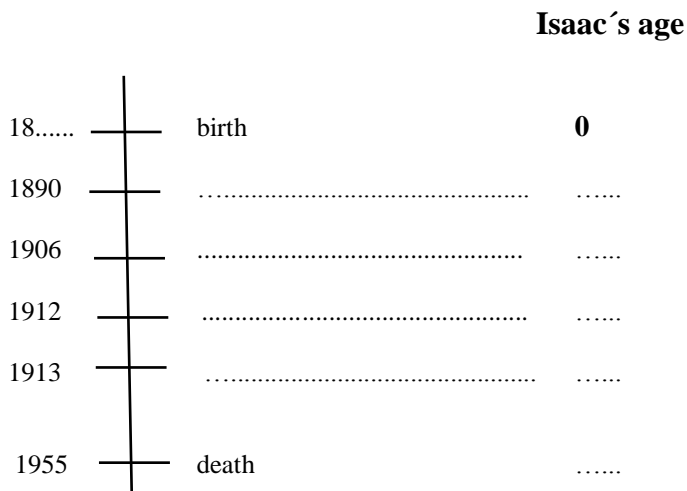
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20. Reformulez la conclusion de Bob Berlin en français. Dites ce que prouve cette histoire 2

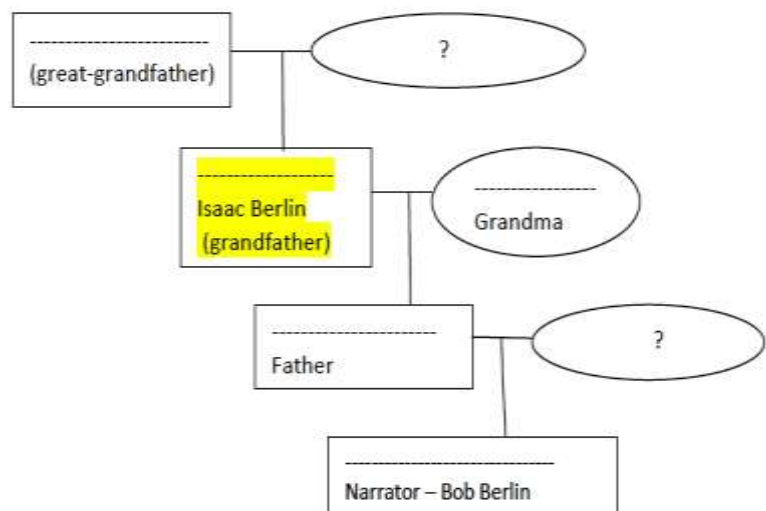
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II.

A. Read the text and complete Isaac's life line. 4.5



B. Fill in Bob Berlin's family tree. Find the characters' jobs. 2.5



B. Nommez les villes, pays de départ, étapes et destinations. Un élément par ligne 5.5

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1	2	3	4	5