

# THE NEW COLOSSUS

By Emma Lazarus (1883)

**Prompt:** Using Colorin Colorado's text engineering strategy, scaffold the text of "The New Colussus" for Spanish-speaking English learners at a 5<sup>th</sup>-grade reading level. Include user-friendly definitions, synonyms, and cognates.

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/teaching-ells/ell-classroom-strategy-library/text-engineering>

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46550/the-new-colossus>

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**About This Poem:** Emma Lazarus wrote this poem to help raise money for the Statue of Liberty. The poem is now on a bronze plaque inside the statue. It welcomes immigrants (people coming to live in America) to the United States.

## CHUNK 1: The Old Colossus vs. The New Colossus

**What is this section about?** This part compares an old Greek statue to the new Statue of Liberty.

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,  
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;

- **brazen** (BRAY-zen) = made of bronze metal; also means bold | *Cognate: bronze* (bronze)
- **giant** (JY-ant) = a very large statue | *Cognate: gigante*
- **Greek fame** = the famous Colossus of Rhodes, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World
- **conquering** (KON-ker-ing) = defeating and taking control | *Cognate: conquistar*
- **limbs** = arms and legs
- **astride** (uh-STRIDE) = with legs on both sides; standing over

**What does this mean?** The Statue of Liberty is NOT like the old Greek statue that stood like a warrior with its legs spread across the land.

## CHUNK 2: What the Statue of Liberty Looks Like

**What is this section about?** This describes the Statue of Liberty as a powerful woman with a torch.

Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand  
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame  
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name  
Mother of Exiles.

- **sea-washed** = cleaned by ocean water; surrounded by water
- **sunset gates** = the entrance (gates) to America where the sun sets (in the west)
- **mighty** (MY-tee) = strong and powerful | *Cognate: poderoso*
- **torch** = a light that you carry; a flame on a stick
- **flame** = fire; burning light | *Cognate: flama*
- **imprisoned** (im-PRIZ-oned) = trapped; captured | *Cognate: aprisionado*
- **lightning** = the bright flash during a storm | *Cognate: relámpago*
- **Mother of Exiles** (EX-iles) = a caring mother for people forced to leave their countries | *Cognate: exiliados*

**What does this mean?** In New York Harbor stands a powerful woman statue holding a bright torch. She is called the Mother of Exiles because she welcomes people who had to leave their home countries.

## CHUNK 3: The Statue Welcomes Everyone

**What is this section about?** This tells how the statue's light and appearance welcome people from all over the world.

From her beacon-hand  
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command  
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

- **beacon** (BEE-kun) = a light or signal that guides people
- **beacon-hand** = the hand holding the torch that guides ships
- **glows** = shines with light; gives off light
- **world-wide welcome** = welcoming people from everywhere in the world
- **mild** = gentle and kind | *Cognate: suave*
- **command** = to control; to watch over | *Cognate: comandar*
- **air-bridged** = connected by air (you can see across)
- **harbor** = a safe place for ships; a port | *Cognate: puerto*
- **twin cities** = two cities (New York and Brooklyn were separate cities in 1883)
- **frame** = to surround; to form the edges of

**What does this mean?** The torch in her hand glows to welcome people from everywhere. Her kind eyes watch over the harbor between the two cities.

## CHUNK 4: The Statue's Message to Old Countries

**What is this section about?** The statue speaks! She tells old countries to keep their proud ways.

**"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she  
With silent lips.**

- **Keep** = hold onto; don't send us
- **ancient** (AYN-shent) = very old | *Cognate*: *antiguo*
- **lands** = countries; nations
- **storied** = famous; with many stories
- **pomp** = fancy ceremonies; showing off wealth and power
- **cries** = calls out; shouts
- **silent lips** = not speaking out loud (the statue's message is written, not spoken)

**What does this mean?** The statue says to old countries: "You can keep your fancy ceremonies and your proud displays of power!"

## CHUNK 5: The Famous Welcome Message

**What is this section about?** This is the most famous part! The statue asks for tired, poor, and struggling people.

**"Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.**

- **tired** = exhausted; very sleepy and weak | *Cognate*: *cansado*
- **poor** = people without money | *Cognate*: *pobre*
- **huddled masses** (HUD-dled MASS-ez) = large groups of people crowded together | *Cognate*: *masas*
- **yearning** (YERN-ing) = wanting very much; longing for
- **breathe free** = to live in freedom
- **wretched** (RECH-ed) = miserable; very unhappy and suffering
- **refuse** (REF-yoos) = unwanted things; trash
- **teeming** (TEEM-ing) = very crowded; full of people
- **shore** = the land along the edge of the ocean | *Cognate*: *costa*

**What does this mean?** The statue says: "Send me people who are tired and poor. Send me the large groups of people who want to be free. Send me the suffering people that other countries don't want."

## CHUNK 6: The Final Welcome

**What is this section about?** The statue ends by welcoming homeless people and offering hope.

**Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"**

- **homeless** = people without homes; people with nowhere to live
- **tempest-tost** (TEM-pest TOST) = thrown around by storms; having difficult troubles | *Cognate: tempestad* (storm)
- **lamp** = light; the torch | *Cognate: lámpara*
- **golden door** = the entrance to America; a symbol of opportunity and hope

**What does this mean?** The statue says: "Send me people who have no homes and who have been through hard times. I hold up my light next to America's door of opportunity!"

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think the poet called the Statue of Liberty "Mother of Exiles"?
2. What does the "golden door" represent?
3. How is the Statue of Liberty different from the old Greek Colossus?
4. What message does this poem send to immigrants?

## VOCABULARY PRACTICE

**Cognates (words that look similar in English and Spanish):**

English	Spanish
giant	<i>gigante</i>
flame	<i>flama</i>
ancient	<i>antiguo</i>
poor	<i>pobre</i>
masses	<i>masas</i>
liberty	<i>libertad</i>
exiles	<i>exiliados</i>
statue	<i>estatua</i>

## Key Academic Words:

- **welcome** = greeting people in a friendly way
- **symbol** = something that stands for an idea
- **immigrant** = person moving to a new country
- **opportunity** = a chance to do something better
- **freedom** = liberty to make your own choices