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English 1101-D403

Discussion Questions

1. What is Yezierska’s intial impression of America? How does she compare it to her life in Russia?

Anzia’s intial impression of America is the “land of living hope, woven of dreams, aflame with longing and desire” whereas in Russia, there is oppression. Overall she feels lucky because she has a chance to be in America.

1. What does she aspire to do when she first arrives in America? What must she do first?

Anzia aspiration was to work when she first arrived to America. Her work would be the living job of fullest self-expression.

1. Do you think her “Americanized family” treats her fairly? Why or why not?

I think Anzia’s “Americanized family” does not treat her fairly. This is because they cheated her wages. All the work she put in as a servant did not mean anything to them. To them she was not worth anything because she did not know any English. They even say “Wait till you’re worth any money”.

1. What was the best part of her second job on Delancey Street? Why did she end up losing it?

The best part of her second job was that it prepared her to be a trained worker in a regular factory. She ended up losing her second job because she wanted evenings to herself. She did not want to exchange that for a glass of tea or a slice of herring over black bread.

1. What kind of work does Anzia prefer to do? What is stopping her?

Anzia is only working with her hands but she prefers to do something with her head and her feelings. What is preventing her from this is learning English. If she knew the language she would have more opportunities to choose from.

1. Do you agree with the author’s argument that immigrants should receive free room and board? Why or why not?

I agree with the author’s argument that immigrants should receive free room and board. This is because immigrants work really hard for such low wages to support themselves. Room and board is a way to support them as they start their lives in a new country. Once they become successful they can get their necessities on their own without depending on free room and board.

1. What lessons did she learn from the Pilgrims? How did this knowledge transform her idea of what it takes to succeed in America? Do you agree with her assessment?

Anzia learned that the Pilgrims and she were a bit similar. They both left their native country and landed in an unknown country. The difference was that Anzia wanted to find America ready made.

1. How does the author utilize the concepts of “hunger” and “appetite” to bring out her thesis?

The author utilizes the concepts of “hunger” and “appetite” to bring out her thesis by putting hunger as her lowest. Anzia could not seem to control her hunger and was always hungry. She also puts darkness with it. For appetite, Anzia could only sharpen her appetite for real food.