

# Armenian Heritage Park

on The Greenway, Boston

Remembering. Honoring. Celebrating.

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## GEOMETRY AS PUBLIC ART: TELLING A STORY

*Coming Together on Common Ground*



Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway

eter Vanderwarker photo 2012

## CURRICULUM

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September 2023

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## **BACKGROUND**

At the outset several arts, ethnic and community organization were provided the opportunity to submit a proposal to develop, construct and fund a parcel on the depressed Central Artery, soon to be named the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway. Key themes were that “Boston was the port of entry for immigrants, and their influence and contributions of the multi-ethnic migrations to our Massachusetts shore”.

Spearheaded by then Massachusetts House of Representatives Peter Koutoujian and Rachel Kaprielian, clergy and representatives from 45 Armenian American parishes and organization within Massachusetts came together to establish the Armenian Genocide Memorial and Heritage Foundation, a (501)(c)(3) non-profit organization. The goals were to secure designation of a parcel and raise the necessary funds to both construct the Park and endow funds should proposed design be approved.

With approval and designation of parcel 13 and appreciation extended to the North End and Rowes Wharf communities for their leadership and commitment in support of the proposed Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway being “praised for its innovative design” (The Boston Globe), planning was underway.

Funds were raised to construct Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway and its endowment includes Endowed Funds to support the Annual Reconfiguration of the Abstract Sculpture, Park’s year round Care & Maintenance, Programs at the Park and Lecture on Human Rights at Faneuil Hall. The Park and endowed funds are a gift from the Armenian American community to the City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In 2012, the year of the Park’s opening, Jane Whitehead wrote in Forget Me Not in ArchitectureBoston, the publication of the Boston Society of Architects:

*“Luckily, the project had a designer, Don Tellalian, AIA...who was sensitive to the imperatives of civic space...the design uses abstract, geometric forms...evokes the broader historic struggles of all immigrants...offers multivalent possibilities for interpretation shaped by visitors’ own histories...”*

Noteworthy as well, Joanna Weiss wrote in The Boston Globe, in 2015:

*“On the Greenway, public art that feels alive...It might well be the gem of the Greenway so far: an example of public art that is both permanent and alive.”*

Kathleen Musser, Founding Director, Labyrinth Guild of New England in a letter to the Park’s designer/architect wrote in response to an earlier article in The Boston Globe:

*“We are delighted that the labyrinth is such an integral part. The ancient pattern of the labyrinth has crossed time, cultures and religions throughout history and has become a universal metaphor of peace, harmony, contemplation and healing...an imaginative and creative device for people of all ages, abilities and background...that offers us all opportunities for reconciliation and wholeness and hope.*

Soon after the Park opened, Gary Moukhtarian, Senior Vice President, Webster Bank scheduled a visit to the Park with his team.

*“During these visits to the Park, team members are inspired in learning about the significance of the Abstract Sculpture and are prompted to share their own or their families’ immigrant experience and walk the Labyrinth. The experience provides an extraordinary opportunity for all of us to get to know one another, to build relationships, so critically important to effectively working as a team.”*

That same year, second grade students and their teachers from The Advent School in Beacon Hill scheduled a visit to the Park to meet with the Park’s architect/designer. While speaking about the significance of the Annual Reconfiguration of the Abstract Sculpture, a student, new to this country, turned to her teacher saying, “He’s talking about me!”

That was the spark to develop this curriculum.

## **OVERVIEW**

**Geometry as Public Art: Telling a Story**, the innovative curriculum is inspired by the design and geometric features of Armenian Heritage Park that tell the story of the immigrant experience, one that unites and connects us, welcoming all coming together on common ground.

The curriculum was developed by the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers of The Eliot K-8 Innovation School, Boston Public School in partnership with educators among the Friends of Armenian Heritage Park.

The intent of the curriculum is to:

- Spark awareness of geometric shapes, and their creative expression of ideas and thoughts, and
- Engage students in sharing their own, families' or ancestors' experience and in doing so, celebrate what unites and connects us, building common ground and community.

The multi-disciplinary curriculum creatively integrates geometry, art, language and social studies while promoting cross-cultural understanding and respect.

The three-lesson curriculum includes:

**Lesson One: Classroom: Discover Geometric Shapes Surrounding Us**

Introduce Curriculum (view the Introductory power point) and the About My Family questionnaire to guide students in speaking with a family member or friend to learn about the first person in their family who came to this country or were Indigenous People.  
Discover various geometric shapes in the classroom.

**Lesson Two: Park: Geometric Features Telling the Story of the Immigrant Experience**

Students visit the Park and experience first-hand how the geometric features - Abstract Sculpture, split rhomboid dodecahedron (solid, Euclidian geometry), Labyrinth (plain) and Reflecting Pool (circle) - tell the story of the immigrant experience and of Indigenous People.  
The Park's architect/designer engages the students about the design and process, responding to questions.  
Students are also introduced to the health benefits of walking the labyrinth.  
All walk the labyrinth together.  
Students play the *One Step Forward* Game ultimately all arriving at the center of the circle together, realizing all that connects and unites us.

**Lesson Three: Classroom: I AM Poem with Portrait & Geometric Illustration**

Students create their I AM Poem told in the voice of the first person incorporating the information from the About My Family questionnaire (first lesson).  
Students illustrate their I AM Poem with portrait of the individual and a geometric illustration.  
They share their work.

*"The curriculum serves three major goals: to spark awareness of geometric shapes in our everyday lives, to engage students in telling their families' immigrant experiences and to prompt academic discovery by deepening student thinking. Students take ownership of their own learning by first completing an 'About My Family' interview.*

*"The three thoughtfully planned lessons take educators and students on a path of self-discovery and storytelling, intertwine interactive classroom lessons and the hands-on nature of visiting the Park. The culmination of celebrating the immigrant experience is just as heart-warming and thought-provoking as the rest of the unit as students share proudly their I AM poetry." - Morgan Atkins, Coordinator of Culture and School Climate*

*"This curriculum is an exciting and engaging way for students to learn more about their family heritage and reflect on the American immigration experience. The curriculum is a wonderful way for teachers to learn about and better understand their students and for the students to learn about one another." - Brianna Greene, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher*

*"The pride just exudes from my students as they draft and revise their 'I AM' poems; being able to dive deep into their family's arrival to America is so worthwhile." - Roxanne Emokpae, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher*



*“Implementing the curriculum in our classrooms at the beginning of the year is a great way to welcome students to 4th grade and to introduce our larger social studies immigration unit.” - Alyssa Kotsiopoulos, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Educator*

*“This is a great opportunity for students to spend time with their families, learning the story of their own culture and experience and sharing that experience.” - Emily Roberts, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Educator*

The curriculum is also adapted as virtual program as well as one-hour program for corporations and organizations.



## ABOUT ARMENIAN HERITAGE PARK ON THE GREENWAY, BOSTON

**Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway** graces public space with a design and key geometric features that tell the story of the immigrant experience and the start of new lives, one that unites and connects us, welcoming all coming together on common ground.

The **Abstract Sculpture, a split rhomboid dodecahedron** (solid geometry) made of steel and aluminum, commemorates the immigrant experience. Annually, the Sculpture is reconfigured, symbolic of all who pulled away or were forced to pull away from their country of origin and came to these Massachusetts shores, establishing themselves in new and different ways. **In early Spring, a crane lifts, pulls apart and reconfigures the two halves to create a new sculptural shape.**



Matt Conti photos except for 2012 Peter Vanderwarker

*"...the Abstract Sculpture shows how public art becomes a part of the city...an example of public art that is both permanent and alive..." - Joanna Weiss, The Boston Globe*

**The Abstract Sculpture sits atop a Reflecting Pool.** The Sculpture is dedicated to lives lost during the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923 and all genocides that have followed.

The water of the **Reflecting Pool** washes over its side and re-emerges as a single jet of water at the Labyrinth's center, representing hope and rebirth.

**The Labyrinth, a winding path of concentric circles** (plane geometry), is symbolic of life's journey. There is one path leading to and from its center. The waters of the Reflecting Pool wash over its sides and reemerge at the Labyrinth's center, representing hope and rebirth. **Art, Service, Science, Commerce** are etched around the Labyrinth's circle in tribute to contributions made to American life and culture.



## **CURRICULUM: OVERVIEW**

**Geometry as Public Art: Telling a Story** is inspired by Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway and its geometric features - Abstract Sculpture (solid geometry) and Labyrinth (plane geometry) that tell the story of the immigrant experience.

### **MISSION**

*The mission is to:*

Spark awareness of geometry as a creative expression of ideas and thoughts and how geometric features – solid and plain geometry - are telling the story of the immigrant experience, one that unites and connects us, welcoming all coming together on common ground.

### **GOALS**

*The primary goals are to:*

1. **Increase greater awareness of geometric shapes** in everyday living and as a **creative expression** of ideas and thoughts.
2. **Engage students to share their own or their families' or ancestors' experience.**
3. **Build common ground** with the realization that our stories are unique, yet similar,
4. **Promote academic standards** through **artful projects prompting discovery and organized thoughts.**

**SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL:** Grades 4-6 and up, modified

### **LESSONS**

*The series of three lessons is organized to:*

1. Reinforce awareness of **geometry in everyday living.**
2. Spark the student's imagination to **express ideas and thoughts creatively.**
3. Share the **experience** of the student or his/her family or ancestor.

#### **Lesson One: Classroom: Discovering Geometric Shapes in the Classroom.**

Review **About My Family questionnaire** with the students in preparation for the student to speak with a family member or friend to learn about the first person in their family to come to this country or were Indigenous People.

#### NOTES:

If the student is unable to complete the About My Family Questionnaire with family or friend, student may create a fictional first person imagining what that experience must have been like to leave one's country and come to a new country to live for the first time.

There are many reasons why people leave one's country of origin. They came to start a new life or they were forced to leave either due to unrest, unsafe conditions or were enslaved.

4th grade teachers of Josiah Quincy School have suggested students engage the Seniors in the nearby Senior Center to complete the questionnaire together. This also provides the opportunity for students to read their I AM Poems to the Seniors and ongoing exchanges. (The InterGenerational Project)

#### **Lesson Two: Park: Geometric Features Telling the Story of the Immigrant Experience.**

At the Park, students see first-hand how the geometric features tell the story of the immigrant experiences, noting that the Park is built on the land of Indigenous People.

Students are also introduced to the benefits of walking the labyrinth, an ancient tradition to relax the mind, and to reduce and manage stress.

All walk the labyrinth together, taking a moment at the center to come together and to reflect on the experience of walking on the same path together.

Culminating Activity: Each class plays the *One Step Forward* Game when ultimately all students have stepped forward, all coming together in one place.

#### **Options if unable to visit Park as a Class**

**Classroom:** Watch the *About the Park* video, introduced to ‘meditative breathing’ (*note*

**Visit the Park with a Parent or Guardian.** Option to schedule a day/time to meet with a Greeter be introduced to the Park. To schedule day/time, email [hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org](mailto:hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org)

#### **Lesson Three:**

**Classroom: Students create I AM Poem** told in the voice of the first person in their family to come to this country or of the indigenous individual(s) based on the About My Family questionnaire (First Lesson). Students illustrate their poem with portrait of the individual and geometric illustration. Students share their work.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

*The learning outcomes include:*

1. **Engaging students in new ways of thinking and learning** about geometry, problem solving and personal expression to enhance the “Student Learning Outcomes” (SLO) for both “arts and academic standards”.
2. **Encouraging creative, artistic and verbal expression** of personal ideas and experiences.
3. **Empowering** students to understand and share their own identity and to celebrate cultural similarities.
4. **Connecting** students, their families and faculty to foster personal expression, inclusion, civility, mutual respect and cross-cultural understanding while building confidence and self-expression.
5. **Fostering** deeper thinking.
6. Introduced to a way to quiet and relax the mind, **mindful meditation**.

### **LESSON ONE: INTRODUCTION & DISCOVERY**

#### **GOALS**

*The primary goals are to:*

1. Introduce **Curriculum**. Show video (*Geometry As Public Art: Telling A Story - About the Park*)
2. Engage student to speak with a family member or guardian to learn about who the first person in their family or an ancestor was to come to the United States to live or were Indigenous People. (Review **About My Family worksheet**)
3. Identify **geometric shapes** in the classroom, as part of our everyday lives

#### **MATERIALS**

About My Family: questions to learn about the first person in their family to come to these shores or if they were indigenous (copies)

Introductory Power Point: *Geometry as Public Art: Telling A Story*

Construction paper, magic markers, scissors, glue sticks



## APPROACH

*The suggested approach is:*

1. Introduce curriculum by showing the power point– Geometry as Public Art: Telling A Story - that speaks about the Park’s design and geometric features that tell the story of the immigrant experience.
2. During your visit to the Park, we will see how the **two geometric features the tells the story of the immigrant experience.**

The **Abstract Sculpture, a split rhomboid dodecahedron** (solid geometry) is annually reconfigured, symbolic of all who pulled away from their country of origin and came to these shores, establishing themselves in new and different ways.

In early Spring, a crane lifts, pulls apart and reconfigures the two halves of the split rhomboid dodecahedron, made of steel and aluminum, to create a new sculptural shape.

### NOTES:

What makes the United States unique is that except for Indigenous People, those who have lived here for hundreds of years, at one time in all our family’s history, there is a first person to come to this country to live. They came either to start a new life or were forced to leave their country of origin either due to unrest, unsafe conditions or were enslaved.

### Indigenous People and Enslaved Individuals

“Indigenous People from various tribes have inhabited what we call Greater Boston for at least 100,000 years. Despite centuries of ill treatment, social marginalization, and acculturation, the complex nature-based spiritual traditions of nearly thirty distinct tribes and bands survive in New England today. The more than 6,000 Native Americans who call Greater Boston home are active through a range of social and community organizations. Throughout the year, a variety of Native ceremonies, rituals and pow wows attract anywhere from a few dozen to several hundred participants.” Source: The Pluralism Project, Harvard University

### Enslaved Individuals in Colonial and Revolutionary Massachusetts

“Historians estimate that between 1755 and 1764, the Massachusetts slave population was approximately 2.2 percent of the total population, The slave population was generally concentrated in the industrial and coastal towns.

Enslaved People in Massachusetts usually lived with their owners and had more direct contact with family members than the way of life we associate with plantation slavery in the West Indies and later in the American south. Source: <https://www.masshist.org/features/endofslavery/trade>

Most Africans who arrived in these states, came as enslaved individuals, as early as 1619. Slavery was abolished in 1865 with the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution.

From 1910-1970, the Great Migration was the movement of 6 million African Americans out of the rural Southern United States to the urban Northeast, Midwest, and West for a better life.

In recent decades, the number of African immigrants has increased dramatically.

The coming together of individuals from various ethnic and cultural origins for various reasons and circumstances is deeply woven into the fabric of this country’s creation and makes this country unique. Let us celebrate all that unites and connects us, building community, all coming together on common ground.

The **Labyrinth** (plain geometry) is a circular winding path and **tells the story of the journey of life.** A journey that many share. There is one path leading to the center and the same path out.

3. As Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway tells the story of the Immigrant experiences – an experience many share –
  - a. Do you know when the first person in your family came to the United States? If yes, do you know the country of origin? Or were your ancestors' Indigenous People?
  - b. In preparation for our visit to the Park, we would like you to interview a family member or guardian. (Distribute About My Family and review the questions.)

**About My Family** (Appendix)

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
First Person in My Family to Come to the United States \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship \_\_\_\_\_  
Country of Origin \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) Are you a descendant of Indigenous People? If yes, please share with us what you know about your family?
- 2) Who is the first person in your family to leave their country and come to the United States? Their relationship to you. (father, mother, grandmother, guardian)
- 3) Why did they leave their country and come to the United States? (for opportunity, safety or were enslaved individuals)
- 4) Did they come alone or with family?
- 5) What else can you tell us about this person?

NOTE: If student is unable to complete About My Family with family or friend, student may create a fictional first person to create a poem imagining what that experience must have been like.

4. **Look around the classroom and find a geometric shape.**

*"Does the shape trigger a memory?" or "Does the shape remind you of something in your life?"*

- a. **Draw the shape and write** about the experience or memory – it can be one or a few words.

5. **OPTIONAL Introduce Mindful Meditation**

*There are many who visit the Park to walk the labyrinth, an ancient device for relaxation, contemplation and to calm the mind.*

*Let me briefly explain so that when we visit the Park you may walk the labyrinth, and practice mindful meditation.*

Before you begin to walk the labyrinth, take a deep breath.

*Imagine a hot bowl of steaming soup in front of you. First, take a deep breath as if to smell the soup. Then, slowly release your breath as if to cool the soup. Relax. Focus on each breath. Breathing in as if to smell the soup; and breathing out to cool down the soup. If your mind wanders, that's OK. Just refocus on your breathing. At the center, pause for a moment. Take a deep breath and relax. Then walk out on the same path, focused on your breathing. This is called 'Mindful Meditation'.*

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

The learning outcomes include:

1. **Increasing understanding** of the **fundamentals of geometry** and of **geometric shapes** in everyday living and as devices in the creation of design, art and architecture.
2. **Prompting discovery and interest** in the “**immigrant experience**” of one’s family, guardian and friends.
3. **Instilling greater understanding, respect and confidence** by building **common ground**.
4. **Introducing *Mindful Meditation*** by walking the labyrinth to relax and quiet the mind.

## LESSON TWO: AT THE PARK – GEOMETRY TELLING A STORY

### GOALS

The primary goals are to:

1. Experience the Park and its **geometric features** that tell a universal story of the immigrant experience and acknowledge that Park is built on the land of Indigenous People.
2. Walk the labyrinth together symbolic of the journey of life, a journey we all share.
3. **Recognize contributions made in Art, Science. Service and Commerce**, words etched around the Labyrinth’s Circle, and contributions we each made each day.
4. **Celebrate what unites and connects us, build common ground.**

### MATERIALS

Game Directions: *One Step Forward* (for teachers)

Two-sided card: Reconfigurations, to date and About the Park (for students)

### APPROACH: PARK

The suggested approach:

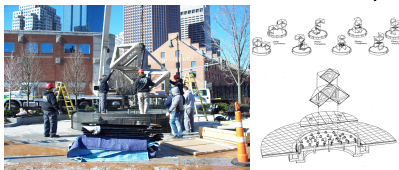
1. When students arrive, explore the Park.
2. All come together in front of Abstract Sculpture for **WELCOME & ABOUT THE PARK**.
3. Breakout: One class at **ABSTRACT SCULPTURE UP CLOSE** & One class **WALKS THE LABYRINTH**. Assign time-keeper (10 mins). Then switch.
4. All come together in front of Abstract Sculpture for instructions to play the game, *One Step Forward*. Then each class is assigned a location at the Park to play the game.
5. At end, all come together in front of Abstract Sculpture or another spot to extend appreciation.  
*“Today, you have seen the Park’s geometric features that tell the story of the immigrant experience, an experience we all share, one that connects and unites us Thank you for joining us, Visit the Park with your family and friends anytime, the Park is reached by public transportation.*

### DETAIL:

1. **TOGETHER: WELCOME & ABOUT THE PARK - GEOMETRIC FEATURES THAT TELL A STORY**

The **Abstract Sculpture**, a split rhomboid dodecahedron made of steel and aluminum, an example of **solid geometry**, tells the story of the **immigrant experience**.

Annually, the Abstract Sculpture is reconfigured, symbolic of all who pulled away or were forced to pull away from their country of origin and came to these Massachusetts shores, establishing themselves in new and different ways. In early Spring, a crane lifts and pulls apart the two halves of the split rhomboid dodecahedron to create a new sculptural shape.



Source: Sculpture Book, prepared by Architect



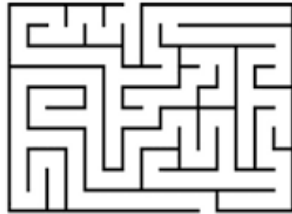
The **Abstract Sculpture sits atop a Reflecting Pool**; its waters wash over its sides and re-emerge as a single jet of water at the Labyrinth's center representing hope and rebirth.

**Labyrinth (plane geometry) - Telling the Story of the Journey of Life**

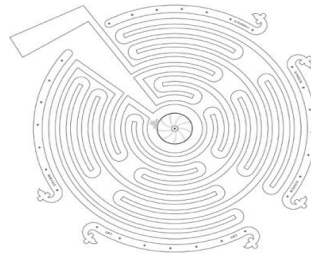
The **Labyrinth**, an example of **plane (flat) geometry**, celebrates the journey of life. The circular, winding path leads to and from the center. At the Labyrinth's center is a single jet of water representing hope and rebirth.

Etched around the labyrinth's circle - Art, Science, Commerce, Service - in celebration of contributions made by all to American life and culture.

- a. *Have you walked a labyrinth before? Where?*  
Labyrinths are found on woven baskets of Indigenous People, in churches and cathedrals world-wide, hospitals, schools and colleges.
- b. *How is a Labyrinth different from a Maze?* A Maze is a complex system of paths with dead ends designed as a puzzle through which one needs to find the way out. A labyrinth has one path leading to the center and the same path leading out.



Maze



Park's Labyrinth

**2. BREAK OUT SESSIONS: ABSTRACT SCULPTURE & LABYRINTH**

One class at **ABSTRACT SCULPTURE UP CLOSE** with model and Annual Reconfiguration Book.

One class: **WALK THE LABYRINTH**

Gather at the entrance of the labyrinth for a brief introduction. Then line up, pace students so that there is space between each student

*Together, we are going to walk the labyrinth. The Park's labyrinth 'celebrates the journey of life', a journey we are all on together. There is one path, concentric circles, leading to the center and the same path leading out. As you walk, notice your breathing and the world around you.*

*People have walked labyrinths for centuries to quiet the mind, reflect and relax.*

*After you walk the labyrinth, walk around the Labyrinth's Circle, find the words etched in the Circle in tribute To contributions made.*

**Introduce "mindful meditation"**

*Be aware of your breath and breathing. Imagine a hot bowl of steaming soup in front of you. First, take a deep breath as if to smell the soup. Then, slowly release your breath as if to cool the soup. Relax. Focus on each breath. Breathing in as if to smell the soup; and breathing out to cool down the soup. If your mind wanders, that's OK. Just refocus on your breathing. At the center, pause for a moment. Take a deep breath and relax. Then walk out on the same path, focusing on your breathing.*

3. **ALL COME TOGETHER IN FRONT OF ABSTRACT SCULPTURE: FOR INSTRUCTIONS TO PLAY THE GAME "ONE STEP FORWARD"** (Appendix)

We are playing this game to illustrate, to show, how much we share in common. We are Indigenous People who have always been here for thousands of years, or we have come to this country from somewhere else to start a new life or were forced to leave. Whatever the circumstance, for most of us there is that first person in our family to come to these shores.

Each class plays the game in a different area of the Park. Students and their teacher stand in a circle. Students listen to the statement and respond by either stepping forward or staying in place.

***Let's try a few examples to understand how the game works.***

Step forward - if you go to sleep by 8pm.

Step forward - if you go to sleep by 9pm.

Step forward - if you go to sleep at or after 10pm

What did you notice about all of us?

*Yes, everyone eventually goes to bed. No matter what time, everyone eventually does.*

*OK, now step back, one more example.*

Step forward - if you walk to school.

Step forward - if you take a car to school.

Step forward - if you take a school bus or city bus to school.

Step forward - if you take a train to school.

What did you notice about all of us?

*Yes, everyone gets to school. Our methods of travel might be different but we all eventually get to school.*

***Now, let's play STEP FORWARD with questions that are about us and the Park.***

*The United States, except for Indigenous People who were living on these lands for thousands of years, is a nation of immigrants. People who left or were forced to leave their country of origin and came to the United States to live.*

*For many of us, there is the first person or persons in our family to come from another country to live in the United States.*

*Now, Let's Play "Step Forward" again. Soon we will discover that perhaps some of us are indigenous people. For many of us, there is the first person in our family - sometimes one of us - to come to this country from another country to live.*

***Step Forward***

*Step Forward - If your ancestors are Indigenous People.*

*Step Forward - If you are the first person to come to this country.*

*Step Forward - If your parent or parents are the first to come to this country.*

*Step Forward - If your grandparent or grandparents are the first to come to this country.*

*Step Forward - If your ancestors are the first to come to this this country.*

*Step Forward - If you don't know who the first person was to come to this country*

When all students have stepped forward, ask all to step back to form a circle, then engage.

- 1) *What do you notice about all of us?* In most every family, most all of us have come from another country.
- 2) *Do you know why the first person in your family came to this country?*  
By choice to start a new life or were they forced to leave either due to unsafe conditions or were enslaved. There was a reason why the first person came.
- 3) *If you don't know who the first person was, can you imagine what it would be like to leave one's country and come to a new country to live?*

There are people, all ages, coming from another country to live in Boston. How can we help to make people of all ages feel welcomed?

How do we make a new student in our classroom feel welcome?

How do we make one another feel welcome? We're respectful of one another

- 4) Now, let's share our thoughts and write a wish on a ribbon and tie the ribbon on **THE WISHING TREE**.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

*The learning outcomes include:*

1. **Experiencing the Park** and its key geometric features, the Abstract Sculpture and Labyrinth.
2. **Building common ground** by realizing how our experiences are similar, yet unique to the circumstance.
3. **Realizing all what unites and connects us.**

### OPTION: CLASSROOM If unable to visit the Park.

The suggested approach:

1. **Watch Video: About the Park**

Discuss the geometric features and how each is used to tell a story of the immigrant experience, an experience we all share. Why? All of us – perhaps us, our families, our ancestors- have all come from another country to this country.

2. **If a student has visited the Park – perhaps they would share their experiences. Perhaps student(s) would like to share his/her own, family or ancestors' experience of coming to this country.**
3. **Play the One Step Forward Game, outside or modified for classroom** Stand in line or circle around desks  
In the Classroom: All stand. Please sit if your answer is "yes" to the questions. Ultimately all are sitting.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

*The learning outcomes include:*

1. **Learning about the Park** and its geometric features, the Abstract Sculpture and that tell a story.
2. **Building common ground** by realizing how our stories are so similar, yet unique to the circumstance.
3. **Celebrating what unites and connects us.**

## LESSON THREE: OUR STORIES - SHARING THE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE

### GOALS

*The primary goals are to:*

1. **Build common ground** with the understanding that we are **a nation of immigrants.**
2. Prompt the **realization and respect for both similarities and differences.**

### MATERIALS

I AM Poem template (Appendix)

Construction paper, magic markers, scissors, glue sticks

### ACTIVITIES

*The suggested activities include*

1. **Create an I AM Poem** told in the voice of the first person in their family to come to the United States from another country or are descendants of Indigenous People, and create a **portrait** of that person and **geometric illustration.**
2. **Share I AM Poems with Portraits and Geometric Illustration with classmates.**  
What are the similarities and differences? (a better life? opportunity?)
- 3, **What are ways we can make people feel welcome?**

How do we make one another feel welcome in the classroom? Discuss ways how we each contribute to a “welcoming” classroom and community, a “civil society”

*“We believe that when people share their stories, a connection is made. People begin to understand one another and feel empathy...”* – Eve Bridburg, founder and executive director, GrubStreet

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

*The learning outcomes include:*

1. Engaging with **academic standards** through **artful projects prompting discovery and organized thoughts**.
2. **Sharing stories** of the “immigrant experience”, noticing how our stories are similar, yet unique and that immigration is deeply woven into the fabric of our country’s creation.
3. **Building common ground** with greater understanding and respect.

### OPTIONAL CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. **Share I AM poems and art work with the school community and families.**
2. **Research and celebrate contributions made by immigrants in Art, Science, Service, Commerce,** as etched around the Labyrinth’s Circle.
3. **Participate in World Labyrinth Day: Walk as One at 1pm on the first Saturday of May at the Park.**
4. **Create a journey,** a visual data representation, **showing the counties of origin represented by each student.** Materials: world map, push pins (large), string
  - a. Teacher places push pins at the school location (state).
  - b. Each student, working in pairs, places a push pin in their partner’s country of origin. Then, each measure with the string the distance from the country of origin to the state and cuts the string with extra string to tie to both push pins.

## ABOUT MY FAMILY

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

First Person in My Family to Come to the United States \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Country of Origin \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you a descendant of Indigenous People? If yes, please share with us what you know about your family?
2. Who is the first person in your family to leave their country of origin and come to this country to live?
3. Why did they leave their country and come to the United States?
4. Did they come alone or with family?
5. What more can you tell us about them?

# I AM

I am \_\_\_\_\_

I wonder \_\_\_\_\_

I hear \_\_\_\_\_

I see \_\_\_\_\_

I want \_\_\_\_\_

I pretend \_\_\_\_\_

I feel \_\_\_\_\_

I touch \_\_\_\_\_

I worry \_\_\_\_\_

I cry \_\_\_\_\_

I understand \_\_\_\_\_

I say \_\_\_\_\_

I dream \_\_\_\_\_

I try \_\_\_\_\_

I hope \_\_\_\_\_

I am \_\_\_\_\_

## LET'S PLAY - ONE STEP FORWARD

All gather in a circle.

Students listen to the statement and respond by either stepping forward or staying in place.

At end, all will have stepped forward, illustrating common ground. We've all come from someplace else except for Indigenous People on whose land we are now standing.

### *Let's try a few examples to understand how the game works.*

Step forward - if you go to sleep by 8pm.

Step forward - if you go to sleep by 9pm.

Step forward - if you go to sleep at or after 10pm

What did you notice about all of us?

*Yes, everyone eventually goes to bed. No matter what time, everyone eventually does.*

*OK, now step back, one more example.*

Step forward - if you walk to school.

Step forward - if you take a car to school.

Step forward - if you take a school bus or city bus to school.

Step forward - if you take a train to school.

What did you notice about all of us?

*Yes, everyone gets to school. Our methods of travel might be different but we all eventually get to school.*

### **Now, let's play STEP FORWARD with questions that are about us and the Park.**

*The United States, except for Indigenous People who were living on these lands for thousands of years, is a nation of immigrants. People who left or were forced to leave their country of origin and came to the United States to live. For many of us, there is the first person in our family to come from another country to live in the United States.*

*Now, Let's Play "Step Forward" again. Soon we will discover that perhaps some of us are Indigenous People. For many of us, there is the first person in our family - sometimes one of us - to come to this country from another country to live.*

### **Step Forward**

*Step Forward - If your ancestors are Indigenous People.*

*Step Forward - If you are the first person to come to this country.*

*Step Forward - If your parent or parents are the first to come to this country.*

*Step Forward - If your grandparent or grandparents are the first to come to this country.*

*Step Forward - If your ancestors are the first to come to this this country.*

*Step Forward - If you don't know who the first person was to come to this country*

When all students have stepped forward, ask all to step back to form a circle, then engage.

1) *What do you notice about all of us?* In most every family, most all of us have come from another country.

2) *Do you know why the first person in your family came to this country?*

By choice to start a new life or were they forced to leave either due to unsafe conditions or were enslaved. There was a reason why the first person came.

3) *If you don't know who the first person was, can you imagine what it would be like to leave one's country and come to a new country to live?*

There are people, all ages, coming from another country to live in Boston. How can we help to make people of all ages feel welcomed? How do we make a new student in our classroom feel welcome?

How do we make one another feel welcome? We're respectful of one another

### **What do you notice about all of us?**

Most of us – at one time in each of our family's history – have come from other countries to live in the United States. That's what unites and connects us, all together on common ground.

If time permits, perhaps a student(s) would like to share their own or their family's history.



# Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston

*Remembering. Honoring. Celebrating.*

**Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway** in the heart of downtown Boston with an innovative design and key features, welcomes and engages all in celebration of what unites and connects us, all coming together on common ground.

The **Abstract Sculpture**, a split rhomboid dodecahedron made of steel and aluminum, commemorates the immigrant experience.

Annually, the Abstract Sculpture is reconfigured, symbolic of all who pulled away or were forced to pull away from their country of origin and came to these Massachusetts shores, establishing themselves in new and different ways.

**In Spring, a crane lifts, pulls apart and reconfigures the two halves of the split rhomboid dodecahedron, to create a new sculptural shape, symbolic of a new life.**

*"... the Abstract Sculpture shows how public art becomes a part of the city...an example of public art that is both permanent and alive..." - Joanna Weiss The Boston Globe*

**The Abstract Sculpture sits atop a Reflecting Pool.** The Sculpture is dedicated to lives lost during the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923 and all genocides that have followed.

The water of the **Reflecting Pool** washes over its side and re-emerges as a single jet of water at the Labyrinth's center, representing hope and rebirth.

The **Labyrinth**, a circular winding path paved in grass and inlaid stone, celebrates life's journey.

**Art, Service, Science, Commerce** are etched around its circle in tribute to contributions made to life and culture.

Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway is between Faneuil Hall Marketplace and Christopher Columbus Park. The Park is gift to the City of Boston and the Commonwealth from Armenian-Americans.



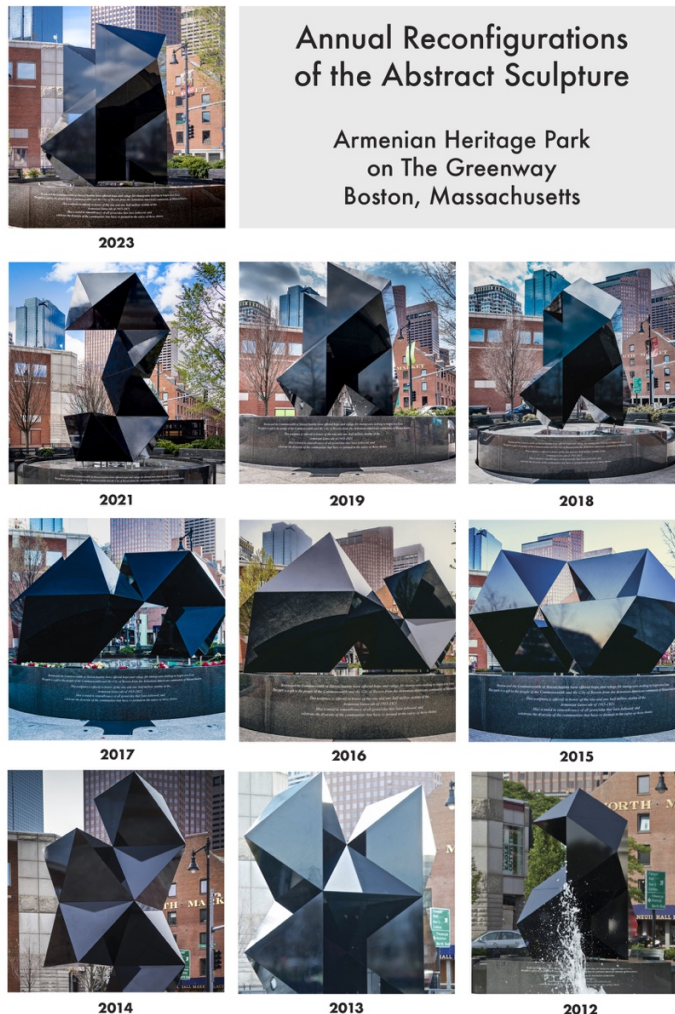
# Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston

*Remembering. Honoring. Celebrating*

The **Abstract Sculpture**, a split rhomboid dodecahedron made of steel and aluminum – SOLID GEOMETRY- commemorates the immigrant experience.

Annually, the Abstract Sculpture is reconfigured, symbolic of all who pulled away or were forced to pull away from their country of origin and came to these Massachusetts shores, establishing themselves in new and different ways.

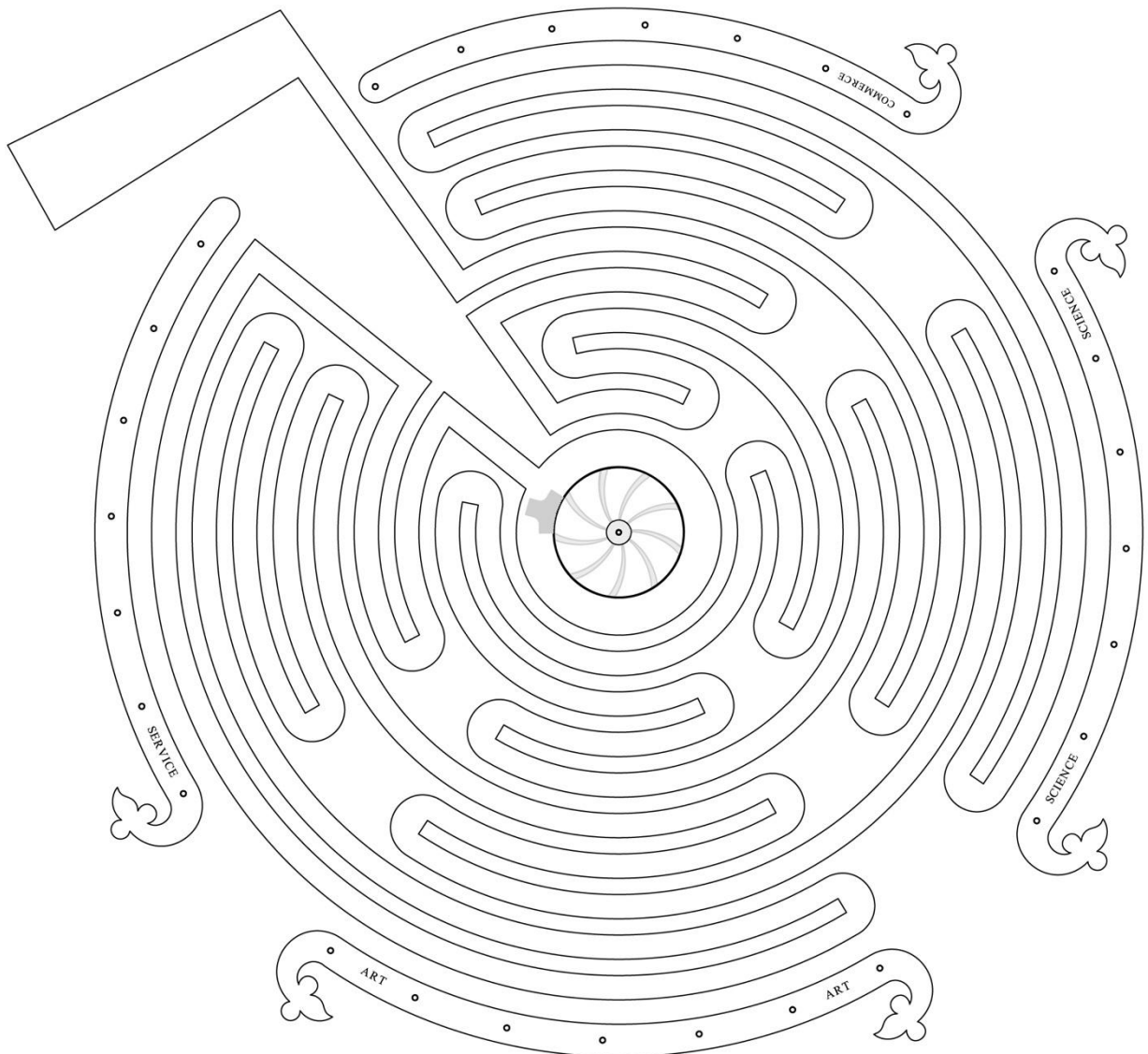
**In Spring, a crane lifts, pulls apart and reconfigures the two halves of the split rhomboid dodecahedron, to create a new sculptural shape, symbolic of a new life.**



## Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston

*Remembering. Honoring. Celebrating.*

The **Labyrinth – PLANE GEOMETRY**, a circular winding path paved in grass and inlaid stone, celebrates life's journey. **Art, Service, Science, Commerce** are etched around its circle in tribute to contributions made to American life and culture. A **single jet of water at its center** represents hope and rebirth.



# Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston

*Remembering. Honoring. Celebrating.*

## **Inscription on The Reflecting Pool**

*“Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have offered hope and refuge for immigrants looking to begin new lives.  
This park is a gift to the people of the Commonwealth and the City of Boston  
from the Armenian American community of Massachusetts.*

*This sculpture is offered in honor of the one and one-half million victims of the  
Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923.*

*May it serve in remembrance of all genocides that have followed, and  
celebrate the diversity of the communities that have re-formed in the safety of these shores.”*

## LESSON PLANS: At A Glance

### LESSONS

**Lesson One:** **Introduce the curriculum. Watch the Introduction to the Park** (power point) together that “will tell us about the curriculum”. Engage students in discussion and also reading slides.  
**Distribute and review: About My Family** questionnaire with questions to guide students in speaking with a family member to learn about the first person in their family to come to this country.

NOTE: If a family member prefers not to participate, student may ask a friend who recently came to this country or can imagine what the experience was like.

Explain that once completed About My Family, after the visit to the Park. the student will for create I AM Poem told in the voice of the first person. A template will be provided at a later date to create the I AM Poem

If a family member prefers not to participate, you may ask a friend who recently came to this country or you can imagine what the experience was like

Ask student to plan a visit to the Park with parent or guardian within two weeks– if school visit not scheduled. On Saturdays in October from 11am – 2pm Park Ambassadors at the Park to welcome and introduce student and their parent, family member and/or guardian to the Park.

Due Date: **About My Family**, prior to visit to the Park and Schedule **Visit to the Park** (both within two weeks.

Then discover and identify the geometric shapes in the classroom

**Lesson Two:** **Visit the Park:** either with class or with family or guardian

If visiting with parent or guardian: Park Ambassadors will be at the Park every Saturday in October during, 11am-2pm to speak about Park and answer questions.

Map of The Greenway (Appendix)

**Lesson Three:** **I AM Poem, Portrait and Geometric Illustration**

Distribute and review I AM Poem template.

Each student using their completed About My Family questionnaire completes the sentence in the I AM Poem template, creating an I AM Poem told in the voice of the first person to come to this country. Students illustrate their poem with portrait of the individual and a geometric illustration.

Note: three class sessions are required to complete. Share examples (Appendix)

Due Date: Set a date with two weeks.

**Share.** Students share their I AM Poems, portraits and geometric illustration

## Q&A

The following responses were provided by the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers, The Eliot K-8 Innovation School. We welcome your feedback, thoughts and suggestions as well. Note: Adjust the timing below according to your schedule.

**Q1: What's the timeline of scheduling the lessons?**

**A1:** Lesson One was the day prior to the visit to the Park and Lesson Three was the day following.

**Q2: During Lesson One do the teachers and students take turns reading the Introduction to the Park (powerpoint)**

**A2:** Yes, to reinforce and review

**Q3: How soon after the visit to the Park is Lesson Three scheduled?**

**A3:** Lesson Three is scheduled within 1-2 days after the visit to the Park

**Q4: How many class sessions to complete Lesson Three?**

**A4:** Up to three sessions within two weeks.

**Q5: How much time do you give students to complete About My Family:**

**A5:** We give students a week or so (5-8 school days) depending on how easily they can chat with family) to complete interview.

**Q6: If family member is not available or prefers not to be interviewed- what do you suggest to the student?**

**A6:** Perhaps the student can interview a family friend or classmate, or imagine what the experience must have been like for someone who left or was forced to leave their country.

**Q7: Do you introduce breathing exercises for meditation in classroom?**

**A7:** Some teachers incorporate mindful meditation daily in the class. Some introduce at the first lesson others at the Park – focused on breathing.

**Q8: At the start of Lesson Three, do you show the students examples of I AM Poems, Portraits and Geometric shapes to tell the story of the first person**

**A8:** We show them an example to give them inspiration and then they get started.



EXAMPLES of I AM Poem with Portrait and Geometric illustrations

*I am afrian*

I wonder what these men will do with me

I hear the water sloshing under the boat

I see the metal

I want to be free

*I am africian*

I pretend I am with mommy

I feel nervous

I touch my cheeks

I worry about these men

I cry for a good life

I understand the danger

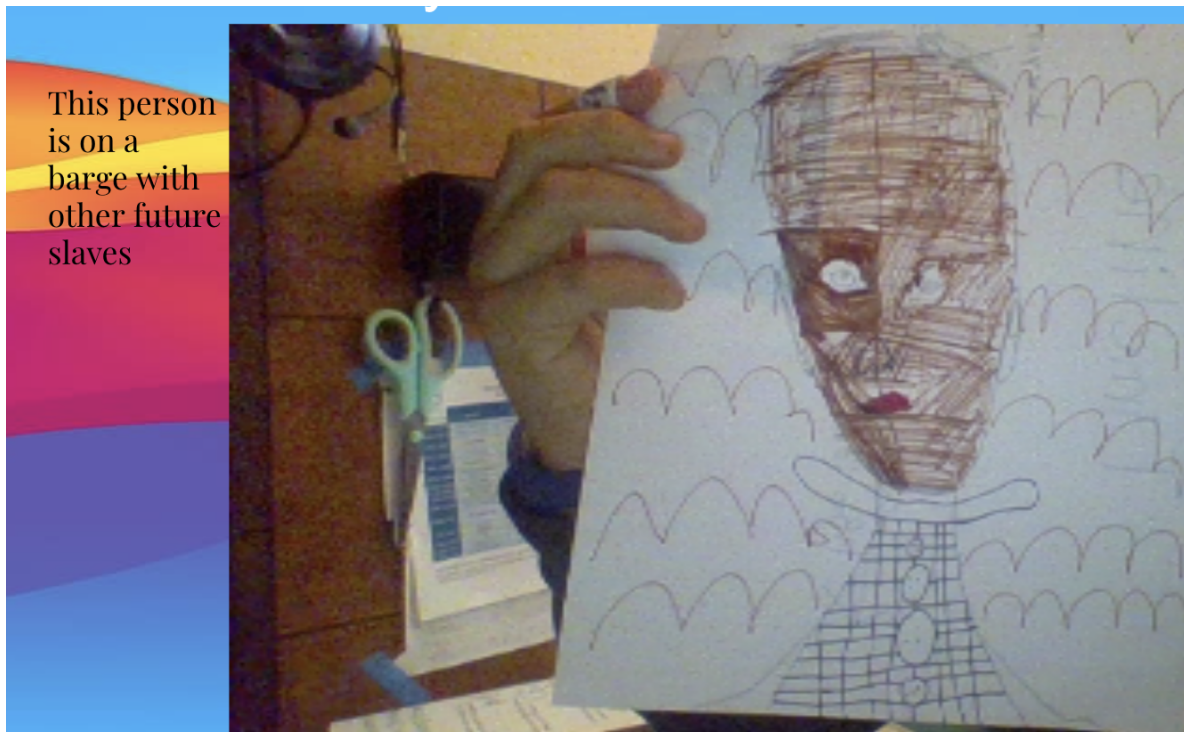
I say where are you taking me

I dream I am rich

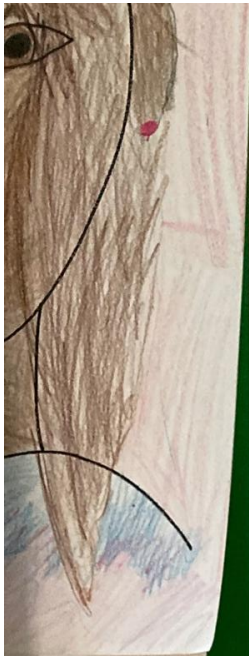
I try to stay calm

I hope to stay calm

*I am afrian*

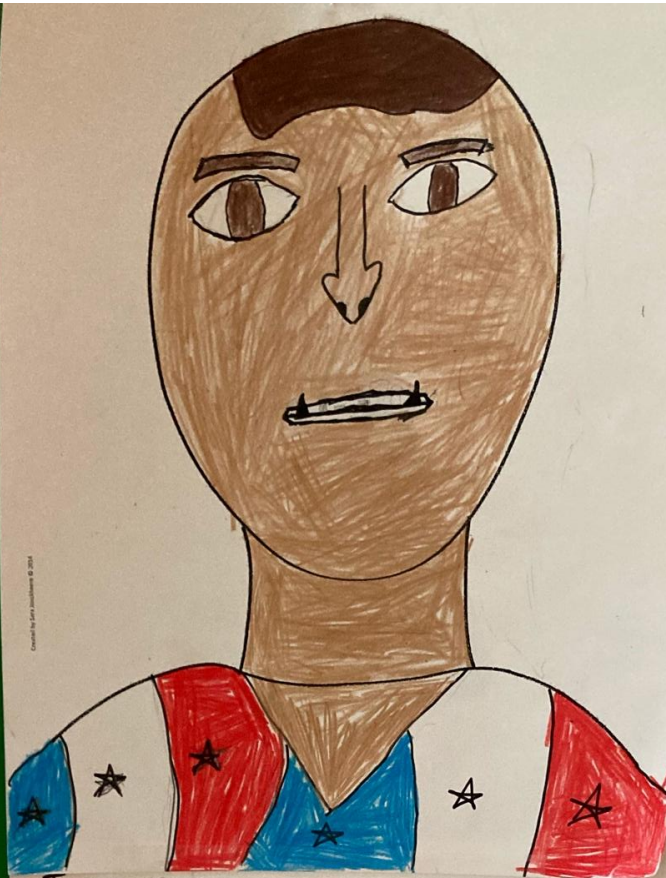






friends.  
y.

a sickness.  
USA  
d.



I am Cuban

I wonder how much better my family will be

I hear the motorcycle coming to drop us off

I see the open water out of the glass

I want to live in a place where there are no food limits

I am very joyed

I pretend that I won't miss my old home

I feel hopeful

I touch the cold wall of the plane

I worry that people will take stuff from my family again

I cry because I am scared

I am hopeful



Willa

I am Italian

I wonder if I can get better

I hear the many languages

I see my wife beside me

I want to make it safely

I am determined

I pretend that I'm rich but

I feel scared

I touch the cold window

I worry I will have nowhere

I cry in hope

I am ready

I understand no one speaks

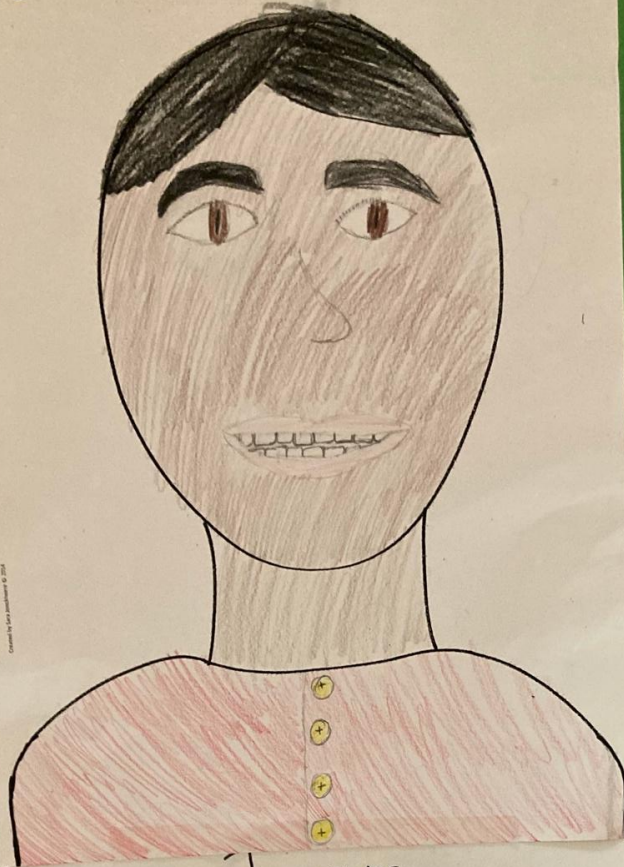
I say "I am hungry" no one







My dad



I am aman By: Nala Lynn Manchanda

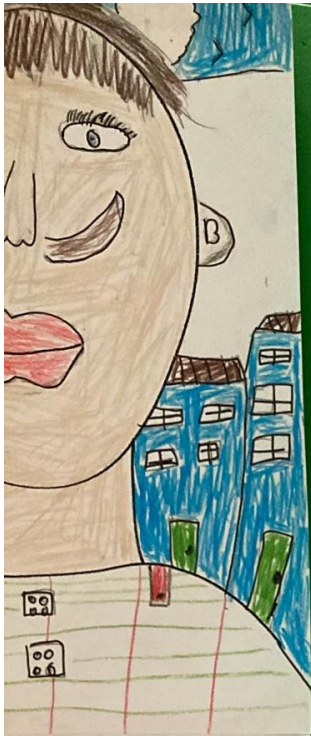
I am Indian  
 I wonder if america is better?  
 I hear that america is better  
 I see the empire state building  
 I want a better life  
 I am Aman  
 I pretend I am going to a better India  
 I feel the rumble of the plane  
 I touch the window as I see the glistening ocean  
 I worry america will be worse than India  
 I cry for my dad with my brother  
 I am with family  
 I understand america is better  
 I say i'm going to be brave  
 I dream of seeing my dad again  
 I try to imagine a good life in america  
 I hope america is better  
 I am Aman Manchanda

I am Irish  
 I wonder If  
 I hear Bullie  
 I see Hard  
 I want Pea  
 I am Harry

I Pretend I  
 I feel nerv  
 I touch my  
 I worry If  
 again

I cry wi  
 I am worr  
 I underst  
 I say my  
 I dream i  
 I try not t  
 I hope i see  
 I am from





et better work  
 nguages of people heat me  
 de me  
 - Safety

rich but I have no money  
 window  
 nowhere to go

he speaks my language  
 ry no one understands me  
 friends and family  
 be happy

By: AIL

School



I Am poem

I am Chinese...  
 I wonder what it's like in America...  
 I hear that school in America is  
 good...  
 I see that America is safe.  
 I want to learn better...  
 I am Chinese...  
 I pretend to not be scared  
 I feel sad to leave home  
 I touch the walls in the  
 motel.  
 I worry for my safety  
 I cry to say good bye  
 I understand that the USA is safe.  
 I say "goodbye many sai"  
 I dream that I did not have to go  
 I try to be safe...  
 I hope that one day I can go home  
 I am Chinese.

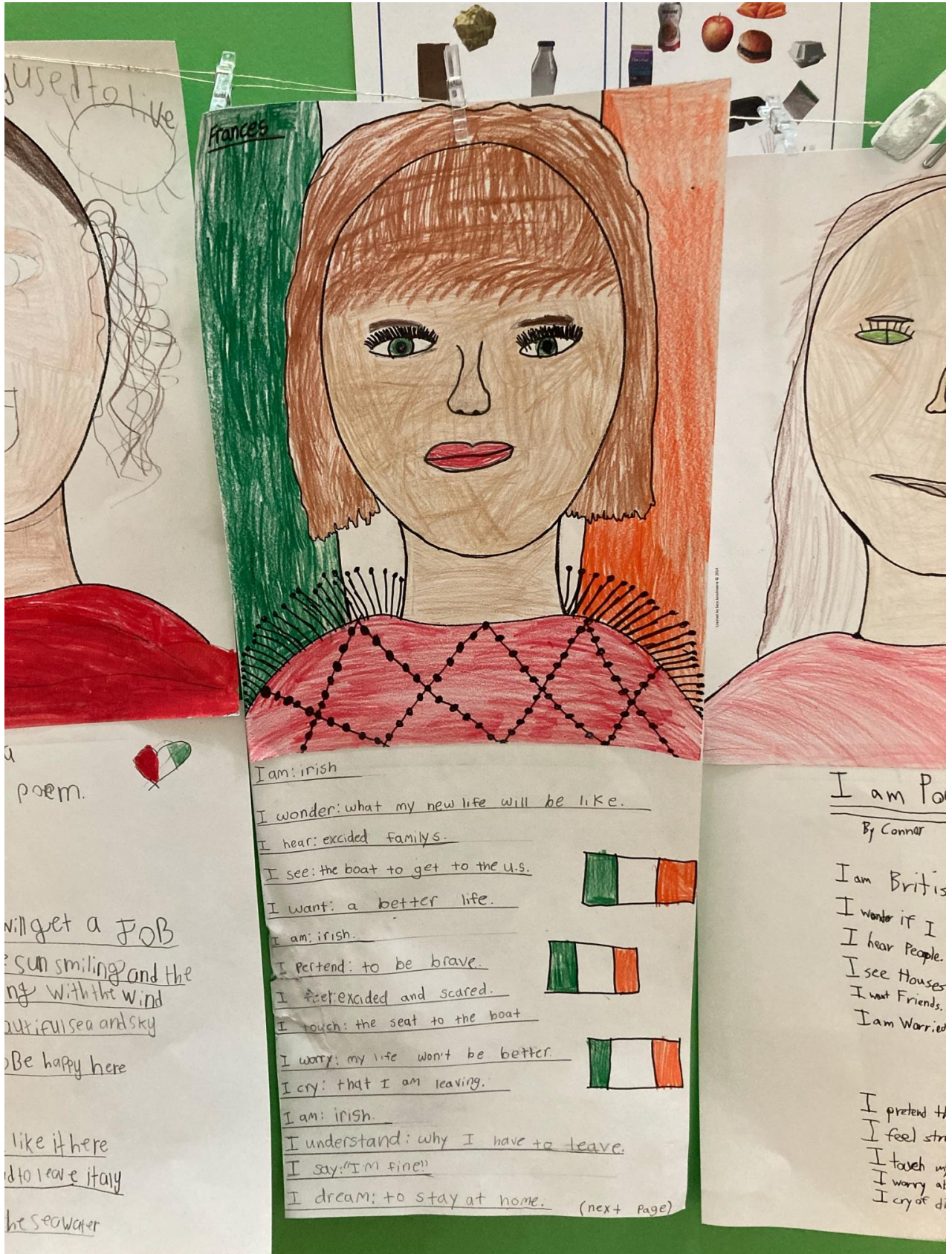


Will c I am English

I am English

I wonder what's it gonna be like  
 I hear the starting boat as I shiver  
 I see open water only seconds after  
 I want to be with my parents in my  
 I am scared  
 I pretend that it's a short ride around  
 I feel my heart thumping in fright  
 I touch the wheel and look at all the  
 I worry that they will be mean  
 I cry in my sleep thinking of things that  
 I am feeling sad  
 I understand that it's a better chance  
 I say what if it's not good  
 I dream that I will have a great life on  
 I try to stay calm  
 I hope that it will be amazing  
 I am here





used to live

Frances

a poem.

will get a job  
sun smiling and the  
ng with the wind  
auric sea and sky  
Be happy here  
like it here  
d to leave italy  
he seawater

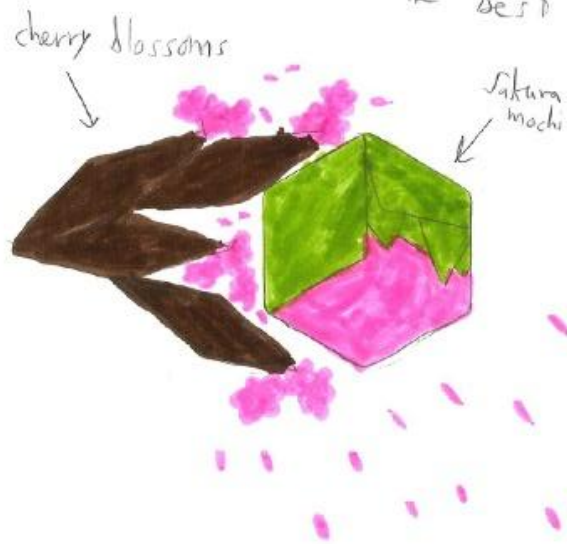
I am: irish  
I wonder: what my new life will be like.  
I hear: excited families.  
I see: the boat to get to the u.s.  
I want: a better life.  
I am: irish.  
I pretend: to be brave.  
I feel: excited and scared.  
I touch: the seat to the boat  
I worry: my life won't be better.  
I cry: that I am leaving.  
I am: irish.  
I understand: why I have to leave.  
I say: "I'm fine!"  
I dream: to stay at home. (next Page)

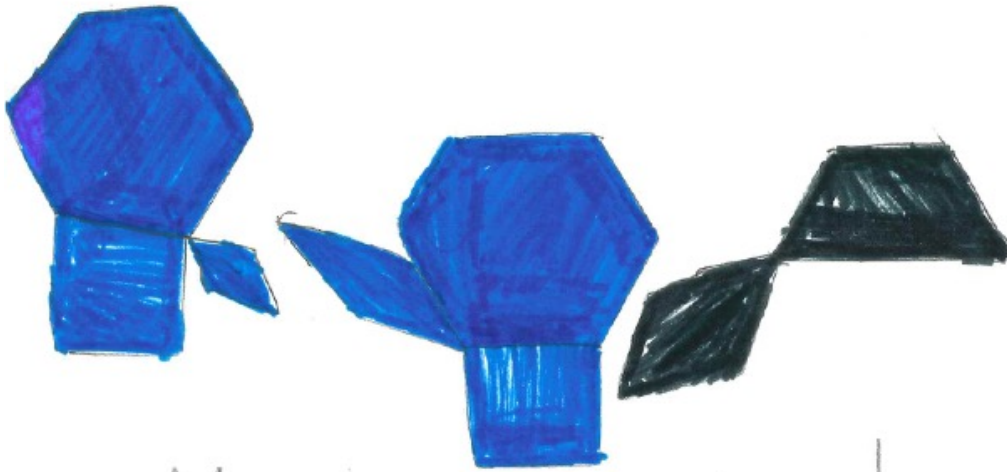
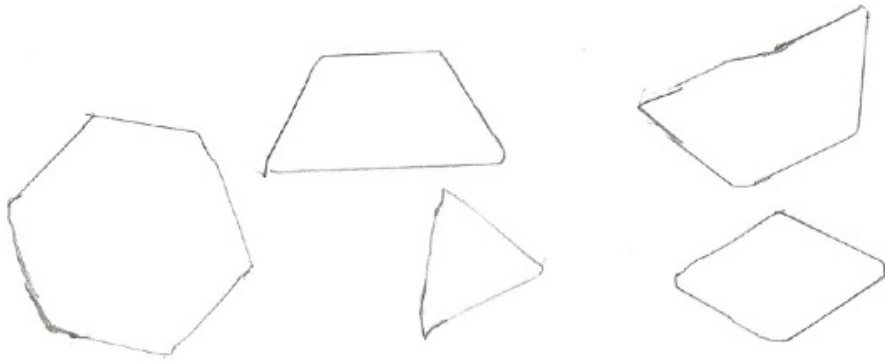


I am Po  
By Connor  
I am British  
I wonder if I  
I hear People.  
I see Houses  
I want Friends.  
I am Worried  
I pretend th  
I feel str  
I touch my  
I worry at  
I cry of di

Candy Zhu's

I like Sakura Mochi  
because they're pretty as  
cherry trees, and they're japanese.  
I love all japanese stuff. Sakura  
Mochi is the best food.





Me laving China!  
Zijle Li

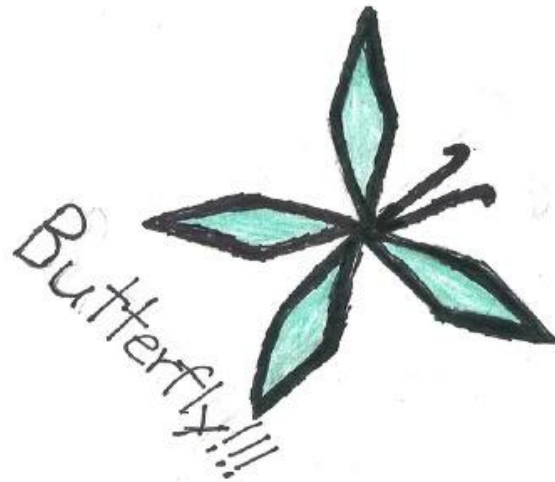


Jason

this is a  
people.

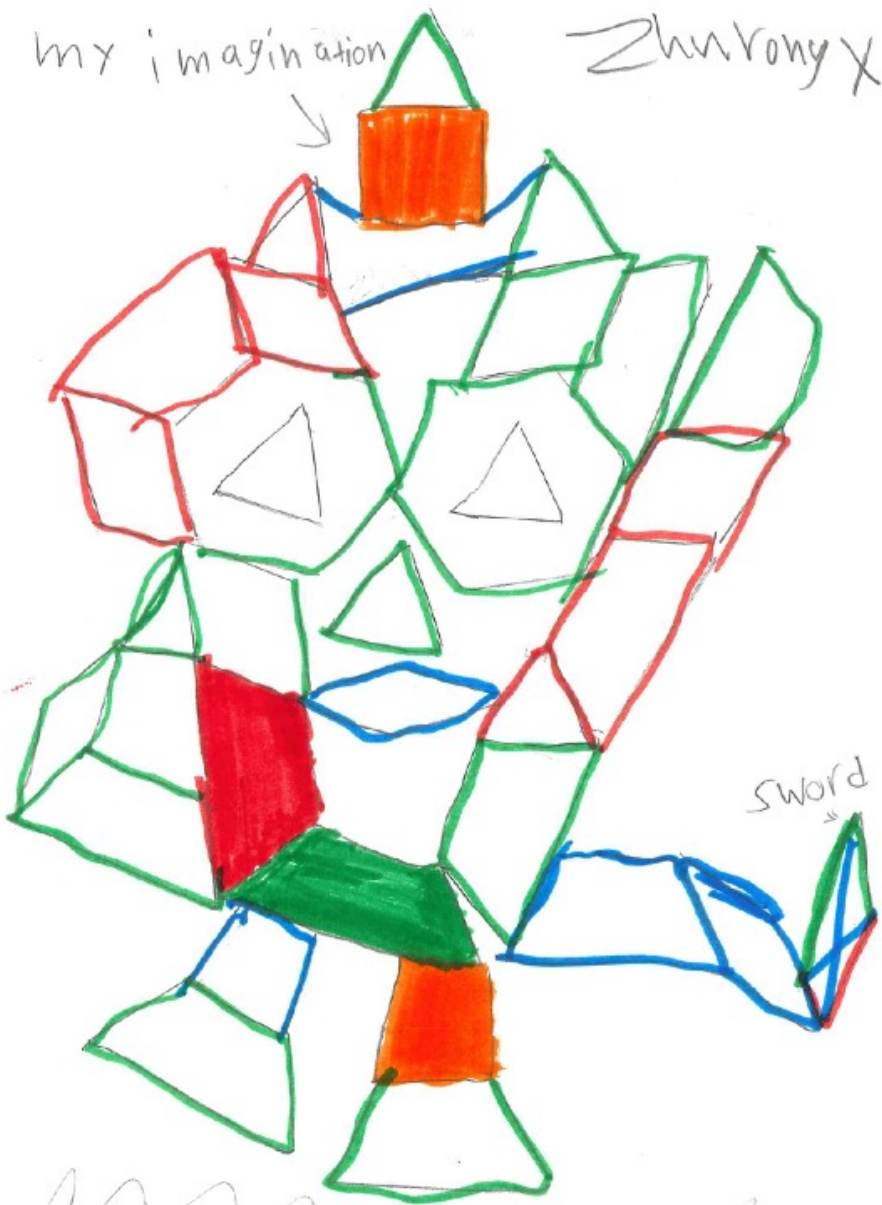


Vicky Mei



my imagination

Zhu Rong Xu



sword



## **EVALUATION**

Students and educators both evaluate the curriculum.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### **Questions for Students (written):**

1. What did you learn that was new about yourself?
2. How do you feel more connected to your classmates?
3. What is the “common ground” that we all share?

### **Questions for Educators**

1. What did you learn about your students that you didn’t know before?
2. How has “sharing experiences” changed the students’ relationships with one another?

We value learning from your evaluation, so please call or email with suggestions/comments.

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## THANK YOU!

### City of Boston

#### Office of the Mayor

Rebecca Grainger, Senior Advisor for Youth and Schools

Jisca Philippe, Director, Youth and Schools

Amira Madison, Supporting Indigenous communities

#### Office of Arts & Culture

Karin Goodfellow, Director of Public Art

#### Age-Friendly Boston (*The InterGenerational Project pilot*)

Andrea Burns, Executive Director

### Boston Public Schools

#### BPS Arts

Anthony Beatrice, Executive Director

Amy Wedge, Visual and Media Arts Content Specialist

### Boston City Council

Counselor Julia Mejia

### EdVestors

Marinell Rousmaniere, President & CEO

Alia Verner, Equitable Improvement

Shay McIntosh, Manager, School Based Investments

*"We are excited to work alongside you and see how this project continues to blossom and impact students."*

- Alia Verner, Director of Strategic School Support, EdVestors

### Mass Cultural Council

Michael Bobbitt, Executive Director

### Northeastern University

David Isberg, Assistant Vice President, City & Community

With appreciation to: **Marchelle Raynor**, Boston School Committee, (former member)

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In collaboration with The Eliot K-8 Innovation School, Boston Public School:

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Emokpoe, Maggie Driscoll, Alyssa Kotsiopoulos, Emily Roberts

Reviewers: Diana K. Topjian, Teacher (retired), Wakefield and Reading Public Schools, Lead Reviewer; Joseph

Cahaly, former Student, Wellesley High School; Susan Deranian, Teacher (retired), Danvers Public Schools

Tom Dow, Math Tutor, Teacher (retired), Landmark School; Ann Zacarian, CEO, Motion Play Ventures

Chiara Meghigian Zenati, Veriditas Certified Labyrinth Facilitator and Video, *Join us! We're on our way to Armenian*

*Heritage Park*; Elizabeth Cahaly, Student, Wellesley High School; Tom Cahaly, Student, Wellesley High School,

## RESOURCES

ArmenianHeritagePark.org

For photos and video <https://www.armenianheritagepark.org/video-about-the-park>

Boston Public Schools

Arts Guide to Effective Partnerships for Schools and Arts Organization, 2016-2017

EdVestors

Driving change in urban schools. [edvestors.org](http://edvestors.org)

Carnegie Mellon

[cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/basics/formative-summative.html](http://cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/basics/formative-summative.html)

Carnegie Corporation of New York

Great Immigrants; Great Americans

[carnegie.org/programs/great-immigrants/](http://carnegie.org/programs/great-immigrants/)

Harvard School of Education

[gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/14/12/education-immigrant-children](http://gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/14/12/education-immigrant-children)

New York Times Immigration explorer

[nytimes.com/interactive/2009/03/10/us/20090310-immigration-explorer.html](http://nytimes.com/interactive/2009/03/10/us/20090310-immigration-explorer.html)

Immigration data

[teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/immigration\\_data/](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/immigration_data/)

Immigrant Experiences

[teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/young\\_immigrants/](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/young_immigrants/)

[teacher.scholastic.com/activities/asian-american/angel\\_island/](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/asian-american/angel_island/)

<https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/immigration/african/journey-in-chains/>

Labyrinth

[veriditas.org](http://veriditas.org)

[lessons4living.com/101%20Ways%20Labyrinth.PDF](http://lessons4living.com/101%20Ways%20Labyrinth.PDF)

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