Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Questions -**

**Journeys Personal Narrative Essay**

**Directions**: *Answer as many of these questions as you can. If you cannot answer a question by yourself, you need to ask/interview your parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, or any other family members who are older than you to find out the answer.*

*Remember who your audience is. Your personal narrative essay will be read by many Americans who have never been through this experience. You will have the opportunity to read it to your teachers and other Americans. Be as honest and open with them as you feel comfortable. This is your opportunity to share with them what it means to be an immigrant or refugee. Your stories are powerful and they will listen. You will change the lives of many people. They will have a better understanding of what you have been through in your lives and as a result, they will be able to support you and your families better. Also, many of our Juniors and Seniors have used these essays as their college entrance essay. It will save you a lot of work in the future.*

**INTRODUCTION**

1. What is your name?

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1. Where you were born?

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1. What language/s do you speak at home?

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1. When did you come to the United States?

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1. How old were you when you came to the United States?

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**BODY – My Native Country**

1. What is your family’s native country?

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1. What year did your family leave the native country?

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1. How old were you (or were you not born yet)?

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1. Why did your family leave the native country?

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**BODY – My Journey to the United States of America**

*In this paragraph, you will describe your journey to the United States.*

*Think about these questions to help you brainstorm. You don’t need to answer all of the questions. Only answer the questions that would make an interesting story. Remember, we don’t want to write a boring essay. You want your essays to be so interesting that the readers would prefer to read your essay instead of watching TV! If you don’t have enough space on the lines provided, you can write your answers on a separate sheet of paper as well.*

**Before you left:**

1. What was the immigration process like for your family? (You will probably want to ask your parents for help with this question.)

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1. How did you or your family feel during the immigration process? (Ask them)

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**During the trip to the United States:**

1. While traveling to the United States, how did you feel? Were you excited, scared, concerned? What were you thinking about?

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1. How did your parent(s) and other family members feel during the trip? Were their feelings the same as yours or different? (*Ask them)*.

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1. What family did you leave behind? How did you feel about that?

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1. On the plane and in the airports, could you understand what people were saying around you? How did you feel about that? (If you don’t remember, ask your parents.)

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1. Were you missing your friends? Who?

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**BODY – My New Life in the United States**

*In this paragraph, you will describe what it was like when you first came to the United States.*

*Think about these questions to help you brainstorm. You don’t need to answer all of the questions. Only answer the questions that would make an interesting story. Remember, we don’t want to write a boring essay. We want our essays to be so interesting that the readers would prefer to read our essay instead of watching TV!*

1. What was your first experience in an American school like? Describe your first day or week. What happened? How did you feel?

For example: Had you ever seen a water fountain before? Had you ever used a locker before? Did you know how to open your locker? Did the teachers and students act differently than you expected?

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1. What was your new house like? How was it different than your other house? Think about the kitchen – stove, refrigerator, sink. Think about the bathroom – toilet, sink, tub. Think about electricity, furniture, telephone, etc.

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**OPTIONAL BODY PARAGRAPHS**

***\*\*\*If your family did not go directly from the native country to the United States, you may want to add one or two body paragraphs to tell about that experience. If so, answer these questions:***

***(Optional) BODY – Journey to the First Place of Refuge***

1. What country did your family go to? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. How did they get there? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Describe what happened during the trip. Who helped them? Did they have any problems? Was it dangerous?

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***\*\*\*(Optional) BODY – Life in the First Place of Refuge***

1. How long did you live in their first place of refuge? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Describe what it was like to live in this place. Write about the problems and/or successes while living there.

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