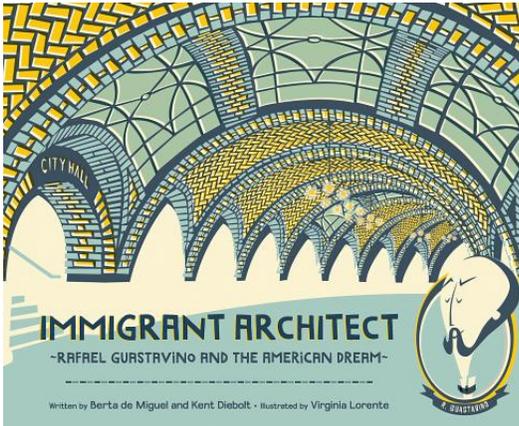


# ACTIVITY GUIDE



## IMMIGRANT ARCHITECT: RAFAEL GUASTAVINO AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

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*Immigrant Architect: Rafael Guastavino and the American Dream* is an illustrated history and biography of Rafael Guastavino and the Guastavino Fireproof Construction Company. Includes many examples of the tiled vaults and domes built by the company.

## FOUR ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 6 AND UP

1

### BUILD A TIMELINE

Most spreads include a timeline of the lives of Guastavino Senior and Junior.

- Show the children how a timeline is built by creating one using key dates of the school year.
- Talk about how a timeline works, then have them create their own timeline of their life in their notebook.
- Then, if space allows, have the children arrange themselves in a timeline based on their birthdates. If space does not allow, incorporate a whiteboard or large piece of paper to arrange them from oldest to youngest.

## 2

### VAULTS AND DOMES

- Discuss what a dome is and how Guastavino Senior's idea of using bricks was a new way of thinking in the United States. Mention a few famous domes and show pictures of them. Then talk about how the shape can handle weight.
- A famous example of a geodesic dome is Spaceship Earth at EPCOT in Walt Disney World, Florida. These domes are made of interconnected triangles. Have the children create their own domes using one of three methods: toothpicks and gumdrops, straws with pipe cleaners, or struts made from rolled up pieces of paper. Directions abound for all three methods online.
- Next, talk about how fragile the eggshell appears and but how strong it is. Then have eggshells available to create an eggshell bridge. Take four half eggshells roughly the same height and place them on the ground curved edges up. Then start placing objects on top, we recommend books. See how high you can go before the eggshells crack further.

## 3

### ELLIS ISLAND

Guastavino Junior was asked to design and build the vault that would cover the main hall on Ellis Island. This was important to him as it was the first space that many immigrants would see as they entered the country. As an immigrant himself, he wanted to make this space welcoming. What does it mean to immigrate? Divide your class into four parts:

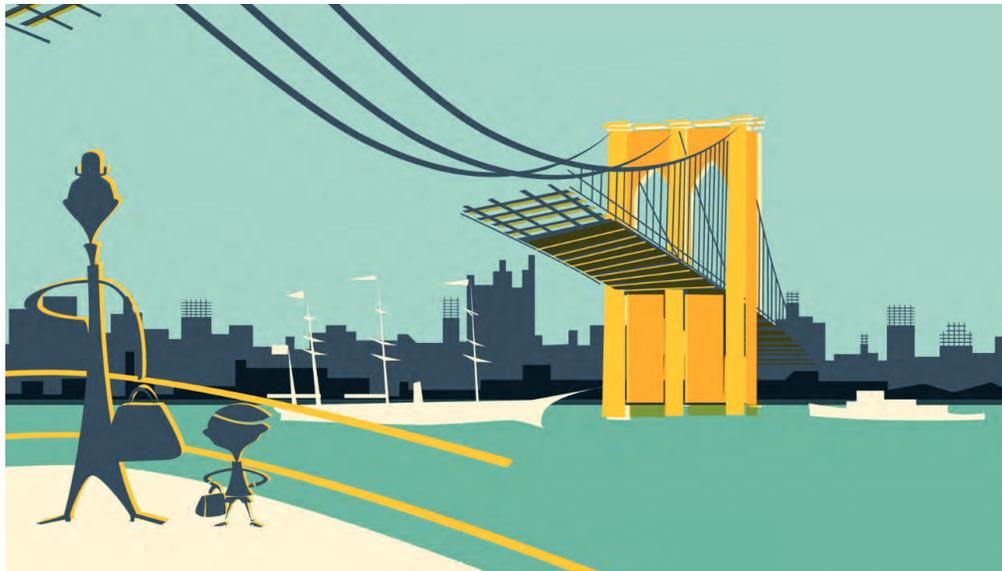
- Have some children play the role of immigrants preparing to leave the old country and explain why they are leaving.
- Have some children play the role of immigrants during travel and talk about those hardships.
- Have some children play the role of immigrants entering Ellis Island and imagine what it would be like to see America for the first time.
- Have some children play the role of immigrants starting their new life in a country where they don't speak the language.

# 4

## IMMIGRANT INVENTIONS

There are many items that were invented by immigrants to the United States. Between the years 2000-2010 there were 194,600 immigrants with patents, more than any other country in the world.

- What are some well-known examples from our past? (cheat sheet: blue jeans (Levi Strauss), donut machines (Adolph Levitt), basketball (Dr. James Naismith), and the telephone (Alexander Graham Bell)
- What other inventions do you know of that were created by immigrants? Tell us a little about them.
- What items would you invent? What problem would it solve? What does it look like?



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