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### Angel Island: Gateway to Gold Mountain

Maryn Wheeler

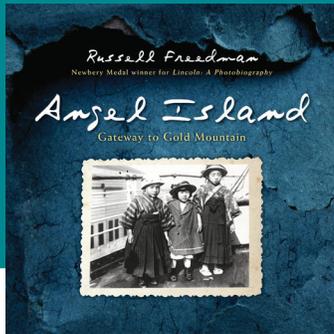
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## Book Review

# Angel Island: Gateway to Gold Mountain

### Author

Russell Freedman

### Reviewer

Maryn Wheeler

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### Rating

Excellent

### Level

Intermediate,  
Young Adult

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### Pages

81

### Year

2013

### ISBN

9780547903781

### Publisher

Clarion Books

In the early twentieth century, Angel Island Immigration Station became the entrance point to America for most Asian immigrants. There they underwent medical examinations, interviews, and were detained in small barracks for weeks or months before entrance or deportation. The Chinese poems inscribed on the walls highlight the immigrant experience. Because of difficult living conditions and strict immigration laws, many had a tough time and experienced a harsh welcome to the American dream. After a building fire on Angel Island, it was shut down and soon exclusion laws were repealed. Visitors may tour Angel Island now as a reminder of the challenging journey of immigrants.

Freedman masterfully captures the history of Angel Island, from its early inhabitants, to immigration, to the rediscovery of abandoned barracks detailing the immigrant journey, and the restoration efforts in preserving that history. The historical and political context of the early immigrants and their families highlights the personal experiences of many as well as the greater impact of Asian immigrant influence in the west. Graphics throughout the book include black and white illustrations, photographs, political cartoons, and artifacts. Back matter includes source notes, a bibliography, and an index. The interesting story of Angel Island is an important and applicable lesson in history that should not be soon forgotten.