



### Pre-reading Task

**Think about the following questions before you read.**

1. Have you ever visited or lived in another country?
2. Why do people sometimes leave their home countries and move to a new place?

### Reading

#### United Nations of New York

With 8,550,405 people, New York City is the largest city in the United States: more than twice as big as Los Angeles, the second largest. More than 3 million New Yorkers were born in other countries, and more than a quarter of those have arrived in New York since 2000. More than 200 languages are spoken in New York, and half of all New Yorkers speak a language other than English at home. With this mix of cultures and ideas, New York City has become one of the world's leading business and banking centers, and with the headquarters of the United Nations, the "capital of the world."

However, if history had been different, New York would not have become the greatest city in the USA. Immigrants from other countries could have moved to Boston, Philadelphia, Charleston, or any of the other large towns on the Atlantic coast. If New York had not started as a community that is open to all people from all nations, it would not have been so successful.

New Yorkers have always had a unique, multicultural identity. In the 1600s, immigrants from the Netherlands, Scandinavia, England, and West Africa mixed with the native Lenape people to build the Dutch trading post of New Amsterdam on Manhattan Island. By the time the English took the town and renamed it New York, it had already become known as a place of great openness and business opportunity. In the 1800s, immigrants from all over the world came to New York to make it the largest and most important city in North America.

Nevertheless, life has not always been easy for New York's immigrants. Large groups of people from nations like Ireland, Germany, Russia, Italy, China, and Iraq would never have come to New York if there had not been difficult situations in their home countries. New York and its famous Statue of Liberty may have welcomed the immigrants, but adjusting to a new country is very hard. Many new New Yorkers wished they had never left home. To help each other, New York's immigrants often created their own communities in the city, where people shared the same culture and language. Many of New York's most famous neighborhoods, such as Chinatown and Little Italy, started as immigrant communities. Together, the communities make New York the "capital of the world."