

# The New Colossus

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By Emma Lazarus, 1883

**Emma Lazarus** (1849 - 1887) American poet born in New York City of Portuguese Jewish parents. Lazarus wrote 'The New Colossus' in 1883 for the occasion of an auction to raise money for the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. The statue and her poem were placed at the harbor of Manhattan in 1903. Sadly, 'The poet of the huddled masses' died of cancer, when she was only 38 years old.



## Pre-reading

1. 'The New Colossus' was engraved on a bronze plaque at the Statue of Liberty. The poem is a *sonnet*: a classical poetic form which has 14 lines, subdivided through its rhymes into two parts: I = 8 lines, an *octave*, rhyming *abbaabba*, and II = 6 lines, a *sestet*, rhyming *cdcdcd* (or *cdecde*). This is the *Petrarchan* or *Italian sonnet*; Shakespeare created his own version which has slightly different rhymes. The *meter* is an *iambic pentameter* (da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM).
2. The 'old' Colossus  
Find information about the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and the Colossus of Rhodes. Share your findings in class.
3. The Statue of Liberty  
Find information about the Statue of Liberty. Share your findings in class.

**Not** like the brazen giant of Greek fame,  
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;  
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand  
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame  
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name  
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand  
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command  
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.  
'Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!' cries she  
With silent lips. 'Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!'

en'grave *vb* indgravere  
plaque *sb* mindeplade  
subdivide *vb* under-  
inddele  
brazen *adj* messing-  
agtig  
conquer *vb* erobre  
a'stride *adj* overskrævs,  
skrævende over  
torch *sb* fakkelt  
beacon *sb* signalblus  
ancient *adj* ældgammel  
storied *adj* minderig  
pomp *sb* pragt  
huddle *vb* sammen-  
stimle  
yearn *vb* længes  
wretched *adj* ulykkelig  
refuse *sb* affald  
teem *vb* myldre  
tempest-tost *adj* kastet  
af stormen (gl.dags)