



# THE AJAI!

## THE ASSOCIATION OF JAGUARS AGAINST ILLITERACY



## Going for Gold, Winter Olympics 2026

By Lillian Foster

The 2026 Winter Olympics took place February 6th through February 22nd in Italy. The Olympics are a sports competition between different countries. 92 countries sent athletes to compete in 16 different sports. Some of the sports were ice hockey, figure skating, speed skating, snowboarding and ski jumping. There were around 3,500 different athletes and 116 different events at this year's olympic games. Norway, the US and the Netherlands won the most medals. America won 33 total medals, 12 gold, 12 silver and 9 bronze.

I liked watching women's hockey and snowboarding. The mascots for the Olympics were Milo and Tina, two stoats. The first Winter Olympics were held in 1924 in France. The sports were bobsledding, curling, ice hockey, skating and skiing. The next Winter Olympics will be in 2030 In France again.



# Where in the World, Geography Spotlight

By Avromy Chein

Hello everyone, today we will talk a little about Italy. Italy is a country in southern Europe. Italy is next to France, Switzerland, Austria and Slovenia. Italy is a boot-shaped peninsula. The population of Italy is 58.8/59 million. The three biggest cities in Italy are Rome, Milan and Naples. Rome is the capital of Italy with a population of 2.7 million. Next, comes Milan, with a population of 1.3 million and lastly, Naples with a population of 900,000. Italy covers about 301,225 square kilometers (116,300 square miles). It is bordered by the Alps. The Apennine mountains form its backbone which runs 1,200 km down the center of the peninsula. Italy has the Po river valley, a very fertile plain and active volcanoes like Mt. Vesuvius near Naples. It has a Mediterranean climate. Italy also has two islands which are named Sicily and Sardinia.



# Animal Spotlight: Ermine/Stoat

BY Zalman Slonim



Hello, I am going to talk about ermines. In the summer, ermines are called stoats, I will explain why later. The reason that I am doing an animal spotlight on ermines, is because they are the winter olympic mascot this year! Woohoo! The ermine is around 5-12 inches in length. It weighs less than 0.66 pounds! They eat birds, eggs, frogs and invertebrates. They also change color and their name from summer to winter. In the summer they are brown with a white belly and in the winter they are all white. But, in both the summer and winter it has a little black part at the end of its tail. So now we know things can change.



# INSIDE THE SPORT OF ICE HOCKEY

BY Jonah Kaminsky

Ice hockey is a fast paced (and somewhat dangerous) sport played by men and women. When playing hockey you will need a hockey stick, helmet, gloves, jersey, ice skates, chest plate, shoulder pads, mouth guard, shin pads, and elbow guard. Hockey is a team sport with 5 people on the ice including the goalie. Hockey is played on ice and in a rink. Some rules in hockey are: 1) no hurting people. 2) hurt somebody and go to the penalty box for 2,4, or 5 minutes. 3) if the puck goes into the opposing team's goal, your team gets a point. 4) if you cross the middle line before the puck, you go to the penalty box for icing (not cake icing) 5) your stick has to stay below the waist. You win by having your team score the most points in 3 20 minute periods. Fun fact: the USA won in men and women's hockey.



# INSIDE THE SPORT OF CURLING

Today we will talk about the Olympic sport curling. Curling is played on ice with two teams of four players. Each game has 6-10 ins. An in, is when the 2 teams each curl their 8, 40 pound stones, to the house. The house is a big bullseye at the end of the ice. The players have to throw the stone 150 feet on the ice. Other team members use brooms to sweep and help direct the stones. This sport was played in Cortina D'Ampezzo at this year's olympics. The players wear comfortable clothes that you can stretch in. When they play, they start with handshakes and then you flip a coin to see who goes first. The teams take turns throwing 8 granite stones. The team with the most points after 10 ins, wins. To score points, you either have to get the most stones in the center of the bullseye or your team has to have more stones near the center. The captain is called "skip".



# INSIDE THE SPORT OF CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

BY Zalman Slonim

It all started many years ago. People needed a way to get around in the snow, and found cross country skiing. Many years later, in the first winter Olympics in 1924 they had the first cross country skiing event.

One difference between downhill and cross country skiing is that in cross country skiing, only the top part of your boot is connected to the ski. This allows your ankle to lift off the ski. In downhill skiing your whole boot is connected to the ski.

There are not that many rules in cross country skiing. In the beginning the skiers stand 15 seconds away from each other so they don't get tangled. You win by being the fastest, or the first person to pass the finish line.



# Immigration Day at Hillel Academy

Written by the 2nd and 3rd Grade Class

We have been learning about immigration and Mrs. Derkowski set up an Immigration Simulation where we went to Ellis Island as immigrants to experience the process they went through over a hundred years ago.

Gittel reported that, "Today my class immigrated to America. We sat on a bench that was a pretend boat." Monroe added, "On the boat ride we talked a lot. It felt like 10 days, but it was only 10 minutes. The boat was kind of squishy. We didn't have that much room." It was just like being lower class immigrants.

Once we got off the boat, we entered the Great Hall on Ellis Island. Monroe stated, "It was a little scary, it was so quiet and everyone was staring at us. I felt a little scared because I did not know what to do." Then we went on the Stairs Of Separation. The stairs were really another test. It's when you have to go on rocks (stairs) while the doctors check to make sure that you are not stumbling because that could show you are too weak to stay in America. If you stumble while you go on the rocks, then you are sent to quarantine to get checked more carefully. Sammy said, "I really liked the Stairs of Separation. They were colorful and you got to balance on them."



# Immigration Day Continued



After we made it up the Stairs of Separation, then we went to the different stations. Rae said, “My favorite thing about immigration day was that my mom was there and it was fun to dress up as immigrants and do the stations. My mom's job was a mental health inspector. We had to figure out a code with pictures then there was a paper where there were faces and we had to tell her what emotion that the face was showing to make sure we were empathetic to others.”



Monroe’s favorite station of immigration day was Patriotism and Loyalty because, “I liked the Patriotic symbols. Since I didn’t know all of them, I had to go to detention and study them before I passed.” Next, the medical health inspection was pretty quick. Dr. Maren checked your temperature and looked in your mouth. Rae had whooping cough and then was checked for lice and to see how her eyesight was.



## Closing remarks:

Monroe: “I loved the experience of being an immigrant going through Ellis island... I learned so much about immigration!”

Sammy: “I felt like I actually was moving to America it was fun and I felt like the immigrants that actually went through Ellis Island!”

Meir: “I felt scared when I pretended to immigrate to America.”

Gittlel: “I loved it and I really understood how it felt for the immigrants who were coming to America. I was very nervous when I went for all of the tests and I also think the immigrants felt that way too.”

Rae: “I felt kind of scared and happy and it was really fun.”

2nd & 3rd grade classes wrote this article together.

# A Tale of Two Immigrants

By Jonah Kaminsky

Hello everybody, on February 12th a woman named Lonna Peirce came and told us a bit about the voyage of her grandparents coming from Russia. After we found our seats, Lonna started off by singing a song that her grandpa sang after he drank too much beer. Then she told us about how her grandfather came. Her grandfather came by boat and when he arrived he said he would get enough money to bring Lonna's grandmother. Her grandfather and grandmother both came in steerage which is the lower level of the boat where the non wealthy people would come in. Lonna's grandfather worked in the mines while her grandma rolled tobacco leaves. Lonna's grandma got a job which involved putting feathers in other women's hats. When her grandparents had children they worked for Endicott Johnson. Then Lonna showed us 2 objects her grandmother brought: a stained glass cup and a Russian prayer book. In the end we were able to look at all of the items on the table and ask a few questions.



# FUN PAGE

Why do bees have icky sticky hair?

They use honey comb!



*"I am greatness, and this is my moment"*

*~Alex Ferreira  
(Team USA halfpipe skier to himself before winning gold)*

Buttered bread topped with sprinkles is a popular breakfast in the Netherlands



YYUR  
YYUB  
ICUR  
YY4ME

What does that mean?



# A NEW OLYMPIC SPORT by Avromy

This event is an Olympic snow ball fight. To win you have to get the entire other team on the ground.

