



Name _____

Room To Grow

Directions: Read the passage below about life in a tenement for early immigrants in New York City. Then answer the compare-and-contrast questions that follow. Write in complete sentences.

Tenement Living Then and Now

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, many immigrants arriving through Ellis Island moved into crowded city neighborhoods. They lived in tenements, which were tall buildings divided into small apartments. Families often shared one or two rooms with no running water, limited light, and poor ventilation. Streets were noisy, and garbage sometimes piled up because there were so many people living close together.

Today, city life for immigrants is still busy, but housing and living conditions have improved in many ways. Apartments usually include heat, electricity, and clean running water. Safety rules and building codes help protect families from danger. Even though space can still be tight and rent expensive, many families have better access to schools, transportation, and jobs than immigrants in the past did.

Compare and Contrast Questions

1. Describe one living condition that immigrants in tenements faced in the past.
2. Describe one way city life today is different from life in tenements long ago.
3. How are the challenges of city living similar for immigrants then and now?
4. Which era do you think offered more opportunities for immigrants? Explain your opinion using evidence from the passage.