

## ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

### Packet 3: “Reminiscences from the Life of Athanasius Karlin”: The Trip to America

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Sequence</b>
1. Let’s talk about the trips you have taken. How does your train or boat ride compare to those taken by the Volga Germans? In what ways was their journey different from yours?	Mainly discussion will center around accommodations and how the traveling conditions were much more primitive than they are today. This is fine and quite true. But it should also be brought out that their motives for traveling were very different from ours today, in general. They were fleeing from an oppressive government (as they saw it) and were almost desperately traveling to an unknown land where they could make a new home for their families. Generally when we take a trip it is for pleasure or sometimes work.
2. Pretend you are one of the Volga Germans on the ship for 18 days to America. Make a list of the things you could have done on the boat to occupy your time.	There was really very little for children – or anyone – to do on the boat. They should remember that they would probably have been sick a good bit of the time and when not ill, would have had to help their mother tend the younger children.
3. What sorts of things would you consider a necessity? If you had only one small trunk in which to pack everything you owned, what things would you take?	You might suggest that they make a list of everything they would like to take and then begin to eliminate those things which were not important. Point out that this process was a form of survival for the immigrants.
4. Do you think it would be easy or difficult to choose land for a whole group of people as the Volga Germans did? Why were they so determined to do this?	The group wanted very much to stay together because they were not just neighbors but also good friends and in many cases relatives. Having the same people live next door to them in America as in Russia would make their new home seem less unusual and they would not feel so alone. Choosing that land for a group of individuals would be very difficult. But in this case the difficulty was tempered by a common interest in good farm land, the desire to live just as they had in Russia, the relief of being out from under the thumb of the Czar, and the joint ownership of the land to be purchased.