LI: To define new vocabulary in context from The Matchbox Diary.

**I will be successful if…**

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| I can identify unknown vocabulary and look/ask for clarification. |  |
| I can use a dictionary to find the meaning of a word in context. |  |
| I can record new vocabulary with the correct definition to use in my own writing. |  |

Read through the WAGOLL, highlight any words you do now know and then find out the definition. Make sure you find the correct context by reading each definition.

**The Matchbox Diary**

Many years ago when I was a young boy, I lived in the barren countryside of Italy. Life was hard. No floor in our house, just dirt. No heat in winter except the fire under the cooking pot. Sometimes not enough food. When I’d tell my mother I was hungry, she’d give me an olive pit to suck on. It helped.

My father, who had gone to work in America, would often send us money that he had earned to try and eradicate our poverty. However, with four older sisters, my mother and me, this was barely possible. The years felt long, it was as if time stood still. A year with no rain. No wheat. No macaroni. However, we still stayed hopeful that someday our lives would change.

A long time later, we received a letter with tickets to sail to America. I was filled with a mixture of emotions. Elated, anxious and then dejected. I sat on our old, rickety horse and cart with a lump in my throat and fought back the tears as my grandmother cried in the road watching us leave.

The journey was long and uncomfortable to Naples but we eventually arrived at a steamship station. It was cold and cramped which reminded me of the house we had just left behind. Would we ever escape this life?

After three nights of sleeping on the floor, we were allowed to board our ship. We were in the bottom, where the motion was worst. People were seasick, moaning. My sisters took me up on deck where I found a beautiful, golden hairpin. Looking up, we saw rich ladies in big hats on the upper decks. I thought my mother and sisters would look like those women soon.

We headed for Ellis Island (New York) through a furious storm, maybe even a hurricane. The boat bucked like a horse whilst a bunch of sailors prayed together. People threw Saint Christopher medallions into the water just to give them hope of survival. That wasn’t the only terrifying incident of the journey however. Someone told me that waiting on the other side of the ocean were the buttonhook men ready to stick hooks in our eyes!

After three days, the waters calmed and we docked on Ellis Island. Cautiously, we made our way towards the daunting buttonhook men. It was then I found out that the ‘hooks’ were used to check for any diseases in our eyes. After speaking to an Italian doctor about my red eyes from crying, we were allowed to pass through.

My father met us, we all cried and I smelled his moustache to see if it was really him. It had been so long but the moment was over in a flash. Our lives became so fast paced, consisting of moving around the country, wherever we could find work. Canning fish, sorting peaches, shelling peas. Anything to make money.

After settling in jobs and finding an apartment to live in, life gradually became easier. I started school and learned to read and write. What they taught me during the day, I taught my sisters at night. I learnt typesetting, became a printer and after thirty years, opened a bookshop. I often reminisce of my life back in Italy as a boy and question if leaving grandma was the right thing to do but then I look around my bookshop and realise…I am happy.