

JAPANESE AMERICAN INTERNMENT

Between 1942 and 1945, thousands of Japanese Americans were, regardless of U.S. citizenship, required to evacuate their homes and businesses and move to remote war relocation and internment camps run by the U.S. Government. This proved to be an extremely trying experience for many of those who lived in the camps, and to this day remains a controversial topic.



Japanese-American child who will go with his parents to Owens Valley.
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa1998003545/PP/>

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A Date Which Will Live in Infamy...

"Yesterday, December 7, 1941 - a date which will live in infamy - the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan," declared President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his address to a joint session of Congress.

The repercussions of this event in the U.S. were immediate. In cities and towns up and down the West Coast, prominent Japanese Americans were arrested, while friends and neighbors of Japanese Americans viewed them with distrust. Within a short time, Japanese Americans were forced out of their jobs and many experienced public abuse, even attacks.

When the president issued Executive Order 9066 in February 1942, he authorized the evacuation and

relocation of "any and all persons" from "military areas." Within months, all of California and much of Washington and Oregon had been declared military areas. The process of relocating thousands of Japanese Americans began.

Relocation

The relocation process was confusing, frustrating, and frightening. Japanese Americans were required to register and received identification numbers. They had to be inoculated against communicable diseases. They were given just days to divest themselves of all that they owned, including businesses and family homes. Bringing only what they could carry, they were told to report to assembly centers: large facilities like racetracks and fairgrounds.

These centers became temporary housing for thousands of men, women and children. Stables

and livestock stalls often served as living and sleeping quarters. There was no privacy for individuals – all their daily needs were accommodated in public facilities. Internees waited, for weeks that sometimes became months, to be moved from the assembly centers to their assigned war relocation centers.



Hog farm
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/manz/item/2002695989/>

Life in the Camps

These hardships continued when internees reached their internment camp. Located in remote, desolate, inhospitable areas, the camps were prison-like, with barbed wire borders and guards in watchtowers. Many people, not always family members, shared small living spaces and, again, public areas served internees' personal needs.

Eventually, life in the camps settled into routines. Adults did what they could to make living quarters more accommodating. Schools were established for the educational needs of the young. Residents performed the jobs necessary to run the camps. Self-governing bodies emerged, as did opportunities for gainful employment and for adult teaching and learning of new skills. Evidence of normal community living appeared as newspapers, churches, gardening, musical groups, sports teams, and enclaves of writers and artists emerged. The barbed wire and watchtowers, however remained in place.

Serving Their Country

Despite this treatment, Japanese Americans did their best to get through the internment experience and serve their country during a time of war. More than 30,000 Japanese American men enlisted in

the armed forces. The all Japanese American 442nd Regiment became the most decorated unit of its size in U.S. history.

After the War

First generation Japanese immigrants were hardest hit by the internment. Many lost everything - homes, businesses, farms, respect, status and sense of achievement. Their children and grandchildren also experienced disruptions to their lives, but they emerged after the war with lives that, while changed, were not destroyed. These second- and third-generation Japanese American citizens began to shoulder responsibility for leadership in the Japanese American community.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

Select and analyze one image of life in a relocation center. What can be learned from the image? What questions does the image raise? Analyze additional images from the set to see what questions can be answered, and what new questions come up. Students might organize their thinking into categories such as living conditions, recreation, or work. If time permits, select one or two questions for further research using primary or secondary sources.

Ask students to study a selection of items related to life in a relocation center and form a hypothesis about how the people shown reacted to being interned, and then list details from one or more primary sources to support the hypothesis. Alternatively, give students a hypothesis, a selection of items from the set, and ask some students to find evidence to support the hypothesis, and others to find evidence that refutes it.

Compare photographs by two or more photographers. Consider purpose, style, intended audience, and the impact of each image.

Watch the oral history clip from Norman Ikari. Ask students to write a brief retelling of the oral history in their own words, and then allow time for students to compare their writing with a partner's. What aspect of the oral history did each student emphasize? What is the significance of this oral history? Ask students to think about how this oral history supports, contradicts, or adds to their understanding of the period or events. How does encountering this history firsthand change its emotional impact? (For more questions and ideas, consult the Teacher's Guide: Analyzing Oral History.)

This primary source set also provides an opportunity to help students understand that different times shape different cultural values and mores. The set may also provide impetus for discussions that compare and contrast the unfair treatment of other segments of the U.S. population, in America's past and today.



Girl and volley ball
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2001704618/>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



American Memory Timeline: Great Depression and World War II - Japanese American Internment

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/depwwii/wwarii/japanam.html>



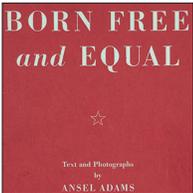
Immigration Feature – Japanese Immigrants: Behind the Wire

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/immigration/japanese4.html>



Ansel Adams's Photographs of Japanese-American Internment at Manzanar

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/manz/>



Born Free and Equal This special presentation reproduces the book Born Free and Equal, which was published in 1944

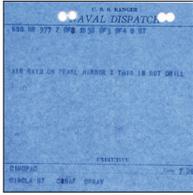
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/manz/book.html>



Japanese American Internment

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/fear/index.html>

PRIMARY SOURCES WITH CITATIONS



Naval dispatch from the Commander in Chief Pacific (CINCPAC) announcing the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, 7 December 1941. Document. December 7, 1941. Library of Congress, *Words and Deed in American History: Selected Documents Celebrating the manuscript Division's First 100 Years. John Balentine Papers.*

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mcc:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(mcc/002\)\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mcc:@field(DOCID+@lit(mcc/002)))



Lange, Dorothea. "Oakland, Calif., Feb. 1942." Photograph. February 1942. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/2001705924/>



Lange, Dorothea. "Civilian exclusion order #5, posted at First and Front streets, directing removal by April 7 of persons of Japanese ancestry." Photograph. April 1942. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/2001705937/>



Lange, Dorothea, photographer. "Oakland, Calif., Mar. 1942. A large sign reading "I am an American" placed in the window of a store, at 13th and Franklin streets, on December 8, the day after Pearl Harbor. ...The owner, a University of California graduate, will be housed with hundreds of evacuees in War Relocation Authority centers for the duration of the war." Photograph. March 1942. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/2004665381/>



Lee, Russell. "Santa Anita reception center, Los Angeles, California. The evacuation of Japanese and Japanese-Americans from West Coast areas under U.S. Army war emergency order." Photograph. April 1942. Library of Congress, *America from the Great Depression to World War II: Photographs from the FSA-OWI, 1935-1945.*

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa1998003578/PP/>



Lee, Russell. "Los Angeles, California. Japanese-American evacuation from West Coast areas under U.S. Army war emergency order. Japanese-American child who will go with his parents to Owens Valley." Photograph. April 1942. Library of Congress, *America from the Great Depression to World War II: Photographs from the FSA-OWI, 1935-1945.*

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa1998003545/PP/>



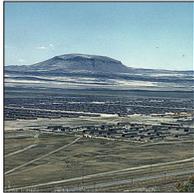
Adams, Ansel, photographer. "Tojo Miatake [i.e., Tōyō Miyatake] Family, Manzanar Relocation Center." Photograph. 1943. Library of Congress, *Ansel Adams's Photographs of Japanese-American Internment at Manzanar.*

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/2002695405/>



Adams, Ansel, photographer. "Mess line, noon, Manzanar Relocation Center, California." Photograph. 1943. Library of Congress, *Ansel Adams's Photographs of Japanese-American Internment at Manzanar*.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/2002695984/>



Lee, Russell. "Japanese-American camp, war emergency relocation, Tule Lake Relocation Center, Newell, Calif." Photograph. 1942 or 1943. Library of Congress, *Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information Color Photographs*.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa1992001467/PP/>



Adams, Ansel. "School children, Manzanar Relocation Center, California." Photograph. 1943. Library of Congress, *Ansel Adams's Photographs of Japanese-American Internment at Manzanar*.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/2002697874/>



Adams, Ansel. "Roy Takeno reading paper in front of office." Photograph. 1943. Library of Congress, *Ansel Adams's Photographs of Japanese-American Internment at Manzanar*.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/2002696030/>



Adams, Ansel. "Sumiko Shigematsu, foreman of power sewing machine girls, Manzanar Relocation Center, California." Photograph. 1943. Library of Congress, *Ansel Adams's Photographs of Japanese-American Internment at Manzanar*.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/2002695109/>



Lee, Russell. "Japanese-American camp, war emergency evacuation, [Tule Lake Relocation Center, Newell, Calif.]" Photograph. 1942 or 1943. Library of Congress, *Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information Color Photographs*.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa1992001464/PP/>



Bureau of Public Relations, U.S. War Department. "'And this,' says a lieutenant of the Japanese-American 442nd Combat Team anti-tank company, 'is what you look through to see what you're going to shoot.'" Photograph. June 1943. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/00652072/>



Adams, Ansel, photographer. "Detail of work-offer board, Manzanar Relocation Center, California." Photograph. 1943. Library of Congress, *Ansel Adams's Photographs of Japanese-American Internment at Manzanar*.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/2002695982/>



Adams, Ansel, photographer. "Pictures and mementoes on phonograph top: Yonemitsu home, Manzanar Relocation Center, California." Photograph. 1943. Library of Congress, *Ansel Adams's Photographs of Japanese-American Internment at Manzanar*.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/2002695978/>



U.S. Army Corps. "Kauai District, Territory of Hawaii. Herbert Kondo, an AJA volunteer, with his father and mother. The elder Kondo is a veteran of World War I." Photograph. March 1943. Library of Congress, *Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information Black-and-White Negatives*.

<http://loc.gov/pictures/item/owi2001046276/PP/>



"Back to the States; visits with his family; an unusual assignment, which he refused." Video clip. From Norman Saburo Ikari Collection Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.10680/>