Return to the Valley

The Japanese American Experience After World War II, in the Santa Clara Valley and Central Coast of California

Teacher Viewing Guide with California State Standards
Farm family on the day of the evacuation in Salinas, California. They are waiting to board the bus for the trip to the Assembly Center at the Fairgrounds, April 1942. National Archives
Return to the Valley is a documentary and educational project that was produced and broadcast by KTEH, the Public Television (PBS) station for the Santa Clara Valley and Central Coast in 2003. It is the story of the Japanese American communities of the Santa Clara Valley (San Jose) and the Central Coast region after World War II. Please visit the website at www.returntothevalley.org and download the color version of the teacher guide.

Funding Credits:
www.returntothevalley.org website was originally funded in 2003 by grants from the California Civil Liberties Program (CCLPEP) administered by the California State Library, Hewlett Packard Company, and Lockheed Martin, and The Henri and Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation.

The 2008 website update and hosting, teacher workshops and educational materials including the hardcopy of this guide are generously funded by grants from the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program (CCL-PEP) and the George Masunaga Family Fund.
ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This Teacher’s Guide was written to provide teachers with a toolkit for the award-winning Return to the Valley documentary and education project. The documentary, originally broadcast on public television stations across the country, was adapted for educational use. It was hoped that the material would add to the growing body of books, documentaries, film, websites, research and writings about the Japanese American experience before, during and after World War II -- especially providing topics for classroom discussion about what happened to the vibrant farming and fishing communities after World War II. Although the teacher and student guide went on-line with the launch of the documentary, feedback from educators indicated that the material would be more useful if it was aligned to State Standards. With generous grants from the California Civil Liberities Public Education Program (CCLPEP) and the George Masunaga Family Fund, KTEH has been able to update and publish a new version of the Teacher’s Guide. The Guide is now available in two versions, hardcopy, which includes the material aligned to the California State Standards for history and social studies, along with some suggestions for classroom use -- and the online guide at www.returntothevalley.org. The on-line guide features all the thematic essays (see below) as well as photos, and resource lists. It can be downloaded at any school site at no cost.

The resources for this guide were selected by educators for classroom and research use. We have included both books for younger readers as well as older students and adults. Most of the DVD’s cited can be used for general audiences, however, several programs may contain complex topics and powerful images that may not be appropriate for elementary school aged children.

It should be noted, that resource materials included in this teacher’s guide are what were easily accessible for any classroom anywhere in the country at the time of printing. KTEH is aware that Japanese American history reflects a fluid archive of research and that new materials are being created every day. For some of the topics, there are numerous resources such as books, films, DVDs, and internet websites. In these cases, we have included a cross section of available materials. Other topics are just becoming areas of research and have less available material. This has been stated in the text entries.

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KTEH thanks the following contributors for their work in research and writing the thematic essays for this Teacher’s Guide:

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   Mike Honda, Congressman, US House of Representatives, San Jose

Photo Archives: National Archives, Personal collection of Mike Honda, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library
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Dear Friends,

I am pleased that a viewing guide for *Return to the Valley* is available for classroom teachers. The guide, linked with teacher training, will help educators provide quality standards-based instruction and enable students to learn from the past to understand today. Knowledge of history will help our youth make amends to the problems and injustices in our society.

We should not take our civil rights and civil liberties for granted — a lesson my family and I learned during the World War II Japanese American experience. By virtue of our heritage, we were incarcerated at Amache, Colorado, along with 120,000 other Japanese and Japanese Americans at ten War Relocation Authority camps. We must educate our youth to voice their opinions and speak out to challenge the injustices in our communities, especially in the civil rights arena.

I believe education is the backbone of a strong society. I commend KTEH and the Japanese American Museum of San Jose for their commitment to supporting teachers.

Sincerely,

Mike Honda
Member of Congress
Having been born in one of the War Relocation Authority camps, the topic of the WWII incarceration of Japanese Americans has always held a special significance for me. The questions it raised stimulated me to spend the majority of my academic career examining various aspects of the experience and the Japanese American community. However, beyond any individual’s interests, the experiences of this group, particularly the incarceration, provide important lessons for all Americans. Some of these relate to the common struggles to adapt to a new land which all immigrants face. Others speak to the impact of discrimination on the economic and social adaptation of groups as well as the psychology of individuals. Moreover, since ethnic groups are active participants in making their own history, we can learn about the importance of group efforts in shaping their accommodation to the country. These issues have great relevance for our post 9/11 world, particularly the ongoing struggle for civil rights as well as immigration and diversity.

Fortunately, our local public television station, KTEH, realized how important it was for the Japanese American story, particularly those who were personally uprooted in WWII, to be preserved and made available to students before they were gone. Their experiences are an important part of the South Bay’s history. What was needed was an educational program which would highlight these local stories, many of whom are our friends and neighbors. In particular, what was especially important to focus on was how these former incarcerees were able to reestablish themselves in our area after WWII. This effort was tirelessly spearheaded by the KTEH project, Return to the Valley. To obtain extensive community input, producers enlisted the dedicated volunteers of the Japanese American Museum of San Jose. They, in turn, were able to mobilize former incarcerees with many different experiences and perspectives. Moreover, they helped recruit both local community and academic historians to ensure historical depth and validity. This wide-ranging effort resulted in the award winning television production, Return to the Valley.

Making available outstanding teaching resources to accompany Return to the Valley was always viewed as a requirement. Thus, efforts have been made by KTEH and the Japanese American Museum of San Jose to continually develop these materials. The final product is an impressive package of engaging, accurate, well organized and simple to use classroom materials. Further, it has been specifically tailored to meet California state standards. All of us who have been involved in this effort hope that you will find this material to be an easy to implement and rewarding addition to your teaching efforts.

Dr. Stephen Fugita is the historical advisor for the Return to the Valley Teacher’s Guide, print version, and in a contributor for the online version.

Stephen Fugita, PhD, Distinguished Professor, Santa Clara University
TO THE TEACHER:

World War II and the complex events leading up to and following it are taught in depth in the middle and high school grades. Although the Return to the Valley online has resources for younger students, this teacher’s guide supports the following California Content Standards for grades 8, 11, and 12:

CALIFORNIA HISTORY-SOCIAL SCIENCE STANDARDS

GRADE 8
12.12 Students analyze the transformation of the American economy and the changing social and political conditions in the United States in response to the Industrial Revolution.

7. Identify the new sources of large-scale immigration and the contributions of immigrants to the building of cities and the economy; explain the ways in which new social and economic patterns encouraged assimilation of newcomers into the mainstream amidst growing cultural diversity; and discuss the new wave of nativism.

GRADE 11
11.7 Students analyze America’s participation in World War II.

5. Discuss the constitutional issues and impact of events on the U.S. home front, including the internment of Japanese Americans (e.g., Fred Korematsu v. United States of America) and the restrictions on German and Italian resident aliens; the response of the administration to Hitler’s atrocities against Jews and other groups; the roles of women in military production; and the roles and growing political demands of African Americans.

GRADE 12
12.2 Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.

1. Discuss the meaning and importance of each of the rights guaranteed under the Bill of Rights and how each is secured (e.g., freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, petition, privacy).

CALIFORNIA ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

GRADE 8
1.0 Listening and Speaking Strategies – Students deliver focused, coherent presentations that convey ideas clearly and relate to the background and interests of the audience. They evaluate the content of oral communication.

Analysis and Evaluation of Oral and Media Communications

9.9 Interpret and evaluate the various ways in which visual image makers (e.g., graphic artists, illustrators, news photographers) communicate information and affect impressions and opinions.
GRADES 11 and 12

1.0 Listening and Speaking Strategies – Students formulate adroit judgments about oral communication. They deliver focused and coherent presentations that convey clear and distinct perspectives and demonstrate solid reasoning. They use gestures, tone, and vocabulary tailored to the audience and purpose.

1.3 Interpret and evaluate the various ways in which events are presented and information is communicated by visual image makers (e.g., graphic artists, documentary filmmakers, illustrators, news photographers).

2.0 Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics) – Students combine the rhetorical strategies of narration, exposition, persuasion, and description to produce texts of at least 1,500 words each. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English and the research, organizational, and drafting strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0.

2.4 Write historical investigation reports:
   a. Use exposition, narration, description, argumentation, or some combination of rhetorical strategies to support the main proposition.
   b. Analyze several historical records of a single event, examining critical relationships between elements of the research topic.
   c. Explain the perceived reason or reasons for the similarities and differences in historical records with information derived from primary and secondary sources to support or enhance the presentation.
   d. Include information from all relevant perspectives and take into consideration the validity and reliability of sources.
   e. Include a formal bibliography.

Boy Scouts conducting the morning flag raising ceremony at Heart Mountain, WY, June 5, 1943. National Archives
INTRODUCTION TO RETURN TO THE VALLEY

Anyone driving down the streets of the Santa Clara Valley and parts of the Central Coast today, would never know that the region was once largely agricultural -- with many small family farms that flourished until the early 1960’s. What happened to the vibrant Japanese American farming and fishing communities that existed here before World War II? How did the impact of the internment affect these communities? Although there are many excellent books, films and television programs about the internment, what really happened after the War was over? The answers to those topics became the story of the documentary, Return to the Valley, the Japanese American experience after World War II. Working with the volunteers at Japanese American Museum of San Jose, Kizuka JACL Senior Center of Watsonville, and the JACL of Monterey, KTEH began a three year journey that eventually resulted in this award-winning documentary and educational project.

In 1945, as World War II was winding down, 120,000 men, women and children of Japanese ancestry were freed after three years of incarceration. Most residents from Northern and Central California had been assigned to remote internment camps in Poston, Arizona; Jerome, Arkansas and Heart Mountain, Wyoming. Given just $25 and a train ticket, several thousand Japanese Americans made the long trip back home to begin their lives anew.

Many of the Japanese Americans who returned to the Santa Clara, Salinas, and Pajaro Valleys and Central Coast region found their farms leased to others, their equipment gone and even their homes razed to make more space for planting. Japanese American fishermen, who had been forced to sell their boats and abalone diving gear for pennies on the dollar, could not afford new equipment to return to their livelihoods.

The interview participants, who are now senior citizens tell of unimaginable hard work, discrimination, and the continuing fight for civil rights and civil liberties as they rebuilt their lives. Interviews include first generation immigrants (Issei) Phillip Kobashi, a 99 year old retired strawberry farmer, Suenyo Inada, 101, possibly the last of the pioneer brides and several Nisei (second generation Japanese Americans, born in the United States). These participants include Dave Tatsuno, longtime owner of the San Jose’s Nichi Bei Bussan store, farmers Eichii Edward Sakauye, John Hayakawa, and Mits Koshiyama. In addition, Chizu Kubo, Helen Nitta Mito and Kay Izumizaki talk about changes in the family structure and the role of women. Ken Kashiwahara, award-winning journalist and former ABC News reporter, narrates.

Using a combination of archival and personal photographs, rare home movies, and newsreel film, the stories are brought to life, including glimpses of the Santa Clara Valley and Watsonville from the 1920’s through the 1960’s.
## Overview of the Documentary Film, A Guide for the Teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Suggested Questions</th>
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</table>
| **Arrival** *(1890s – early 1940s)* | Many Japanese immigrants who came to the US intending to return to Japan eventually make America their home.  
- Japanese Immigration  
- Migration of Japanese immigrants *(1890 – early 1900s)*  
- Issei *(1st generation immigrants)*  
- Nisei *(2nd generation born in US)* establishing Japanese American identity  
- Establishment of early Japantown’s  
- Depression’s effect on Japanese Americans *(JA)*  
- Discrimination/Alien land laws  
- JA life in the early-1940s *(pre-war)* | ➤ What were some reasons that Japanese immigrated to the Santa Clara (SC) Valley? What kinds of industries did they find work in?  
➤ What type of Japanese first immigrated? What were their initial goals?  
➤ How did single Japanese men find wives to marry?  
➤ How did the Alien Land Laws affect Japanese immigrants?  
➤ By the 1940s, what was life like for Japanese Americans? |
| **World War II & Incarceration** *(1941 – 1945)* | Racial prejudice and wartime hysteria result in the evacuation and incarceration of over 120,000 Japanese Americans *(2/3 were American citizens)*.  
- Pearl Harbor bombing—Dec. 7 1941  
- Reaction of USA / Franklin Delano Roosevelt *(FDR)*  
- Executive Order 9066  
- Internment Camps  
- Japan surrenders | ➤ Why were west coast Japanese Americans targeted as compared to Japanese Americans in other parts of the country?  
➤ What were the consequences of Executive Order 9066?  
➤ What was internment camp life like? |
| **Return** *(1845 – 1950s)* | After three years in the camps, Japanese Americans were allowed to “go home.”  
- Could return beginning on January 1945 when the west coast was open  
- Challenges facing Japanese Americans upon return to west coast  
- Issei situation following return  
- Lack of communication with Nisei | ➤ What type of discrimination did Japanese Americans face when WWII ended?  
➤ What obstacles did Japanese Americans face upon returning to the west coast?  
➤ What happened to the mentality and condition of Issei’s following internment? How were they affected? |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEGMENT</th>
<th>FOCUS</th>
<th>SUGGESTED QUESTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>REBUILDING</strong></td>
<td>Struggling to reestablish themselves economically, Issei step aside and let Nisei children rebuild the community</td>
<td>➢ How did Japanese American family structure change following WWII?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Challenges facing Japanese Americans in agriculture and fishing industries</td>
<td>➢ How did non-Japanese help Japanese Americans during and after WWII? Rebuilding?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Entry into professional jobs in Silicon Valley</td>
<td>➢ What obstacles did the Nisei face in trying to find jobs?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ How did the Nisei react and deal with these challenges?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Why did the Nisei start Japanese landscaping and gardening companies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ What were causes/reasons that Japanese Americans did not return to fishing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REMEMBRANCE</strong></td>
<td>Ways in which Japanese Americans embrace an identity that is both influenced by the ideals of this country and their Japanese American heritage.</td>
<td>➢ Why did Japanese Americans leave the agricultural and farming industries?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1970s – present)</td>
<td>• Farming coming to an end for many Japanese Americans in SC Valley</td>
<td>➢ What did Japanese Americans lives start looking like as they moved to the suburbs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Efforts of Sansei (3rd generation born in US)</td>
<td>➢ How were the Sansei a big part of the push for redress?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Move to suburbs</td>
<td>➢ What did redress/reparations mean to Japanese Americans? Why do many people feel it was too late for the Issei?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Civil Liberties Act (Redress)</td>
<td>➢ Why did some Japanese Americans feel they needed to prove that they were loyal Americans?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contributions of 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team and the Military Intelligence Service (MIS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lessons and culture handed down to younger generations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Map of the Ten Major Relocation Centers/Internment Camps

Relocation Centers/ Camps by State

Tule Lake, CA
Manzanar, CA
Poston, AZ
Gila River, AZ
Minidoka, ID

Topaz, UT
Heart Mountain, WY
Amache (Granada), CO
Rohwer, AR
Jerome, AR
Table 1: Location and Population of Assembly Centers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Assembly Center</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Dates Open, 1942</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Puyallup, Washington</td>
<td>7,390</td>
<td>April 28 to September 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland, Oregon</td>
<td>3,676</td>
<td>May 2 to September 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marysville, California</td>
<td>2,451</td>
<td>May 8 to June 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento, California</td>
<td>4,739</td>
<td>May 6 June 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanforan, California</td>
<td>7,816</td>
<td>April 28 to October 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockton, California</td>
<td>4,271</td>
<td>May 10 to October 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turlock, California</td>
<td>3,661</td>
<td>April 30 to August 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salinas, California</td>
<td>3,586</td>
<td>April 27 to July 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merced, California</td>
<td>4,508</td>
<td>May 6 to September 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinedale, California</td>
<td>4,792</td>
<td>May 7 to July 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresno, California</td>
<td>5,120</td>
<td>May 6 to October 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulare, California</td>
<td>4,978</td>
<td>April 20 to September 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Anita, California</td>
<td>18,719</td>
<td>March 27 to October 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomona, California</td>
<td>5,434</td>
<td>May 7 to August 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayer, Arizona</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>May 7 to June 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Manzanar was transferred to the War Relocation Authority for use as a relocation camp. Source: Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilian 1982:138

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Table 2: Location, Dates of use, and Population of Relocation Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Date Opened</th>
<th>Date Closed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topaz</td>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>8,130</td>
<td>September 11, 1942</td>
<td>October 31, 1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poston</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>17,814</td>
<td>May 5, 1942</td>
<td>November 28, 1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gila River</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>13,348</td>
<td>July 20, 1942</td>
<td>November 10, 1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granada</td>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>7,318</td>
<td>August 27, 1942</td>
<td>October 15, 1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Mountain</td>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>10,767</td>
<td>August 12, 1942</td>
<td>November 10, 1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerome</td>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>8,497</td>
<td>October 6, 1942</td>
<td>June 30, 1944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manzanar</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>10,056</td>
<td>June 1, 1942</td>
<td>November 21, 1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minidoka</td>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>9,397</td>
<td>August 10, 1942</td>
<td>October 2, 1945</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rohwer</td>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>8,475</td>
<td>September 18, 1942</td>
<td>November 30, 1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tule Lake</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>18,789</td>
<td>May 27, 1942</td>
<td>March 20, 1946</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Department of Interior, 1946:197
Return to the Valley: The Japanese-American Experience
After WWII Classroom Worksheet

Segment 1: Arrival
1. What were some reasons that Japanese immigrated to the Santa Clara Valley? What did they do for work?

2. By the 1940s, what was life like for Japanese Americans?

Segment 2: World War II & Incarceration
3. What were the consequences of Executive Order 9066? How did it affect Japanese Americans?

4. What was internment camp life like?

Segment 3: The Return
5. What obstacles did Japanese Americans face upon returning to the west coast?

6. What happened to the mentality and condition of Issei’s following internment?

Segment 4: Rebuilding
7. How did the role of Japanese American women change after WWII? How and why did it change?

8. What obstacles did the Nisei face in trying to find jobs? How did they react and deal with these challenges?

Segment 5: Remembrance
9. Why did Japanese Americans start leaving the agricultural and farming industries?

10. What was the Civil Liberties Act and how did it affect Japanese Americans?

11. How were the Sansei a big part of the push for redress in the 1970s and 1980s? Why do many people feel that redress/reparations was too late for the Issei?
CIVIL LIBERTIES ACT OF 1988

The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 or PL 100-383 was enacted by Congress and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan at a special ceremony in Washington, DC on August 10, 1988. The Act was a result of decades of lobbying by many Japanese American organizations, civil liberties groups and ordinary citizens. Although the Act is primarily known as the legislation that gave people of Japanese ancestry a formal apology and reparations for being forcibly evacuated and incarcerated during World War II in ten internment camps in the interior regions of the country, it also addressed the movement and hardships of the Aleut residents of the Pribilof Islands and the Aleutian Islands west of Unimak Island. Below are brief summary paragraphs of Act that affected Japanese Americans from www.civics-online.org. To see all fourteen pages of the Civil Liberties Act, please visit www.internmentarchives.org.

Title: Civil Liberties Act of 1988
Author: U.S. Government
Year Published: 1988
CIVIL LIBERTIES ACT OF 1988

Enacted by the United States Congress
August 10, 1988

“The Congress recognizes that, as described in the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, a grave injustice was done to both citizens and permanent residents of Japanese ancestry by the evacuation, relocation, and internment of civilians during World War II. As the Commission documents, these actions were carried out without adequate security reasons and without any acts of espionage or sabotage documented by the Commission, and were motivated largely by racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership. The excluded individuals of Japanese ancestry suffered enormous damages, both material and intangible, and there were incalculable losses in education and job training, all of which resulted in significant human suffering for which appropriate compensation has not been made. For these fundamental violations of the basic civil liberties and constitutional rights of these individuals of Japanese ancestry, the Congress apologizes on behalf of the Nation.” Based on the findings of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC), the purposes of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 with respect to persons of Japanese ancestry included the following:

1) To acknowledge the fundamental injustice of the evacuation, relocation and internment of citizens and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry during World War II;
2) To apologize on behalf of the people of the United States for the evacuation, internment, and relocations of such citizens and permanent residing aliens;
3) To provide for a public education fund to finance efforts to inform the public about the internment so as to prevent the recurrence of any similar event;
4) To make restitution to those individuals of Japanese ancestry who were interned;
5) To make more credible and sincere any declaration of concern by the United States over violations of human rights committed by other nations.


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After the Civil Liberties Act was signed, it took the US government some time to set up the application and reparations distribution procedure. The information was made widely available to every city and town in the country. In 1990, the government began issuing the Presidential letter of apology and reparation payment of $20,000 per person. Every man, woman and child, even those who had been born in the camps could qualify. However, by 1990, many of those who has lost the most -- the Issei -- had already passed away. The apologies and reparations took years to complete and stretched on from George Bush Sr.'s administration through Bill Clinton's two terms. Note the different styles of letters, reflecting the personalities of the two Presidents.
GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND PHRASES

Assembly Center: Temporary detention center to house evacuees while permanent relocation centers were being built.

Baishakunin: Marriage arranger or go-between. Individual who arranges marriages between families.

Concentration Camp: Guarded facility for detention and/or imprisonment of individuals

Executive Order 9066: President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the order that authorized the military to remove any or all persons from certain areas of the United States for government defense.

Gentlemen’s Agreement: A 1907-08 agreement between Japan and the United States to limit the immigration of Japanese laborers entering the United States.

“Go For Broke”: Motto of the Japanese American soldiers of the 100th Battalion and 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT). The term was adopted from an old gambler’s term, meaning “shoot the works” or to “go all out.”

Issei: First generation immigrant Japanese.

Japanese American Citizens League: Formed by Nisei (second generation), the JACL is oldest Asian American civil rights organization in the United States.


Shojiro Tatsuno (left) and son, Dave (right) in front of their Nichi Bei Bussan Store on Post Street in San Francisco, just one day before they had to evacuate for Tanforan Assembly Center. Shojiro Tatsuno, an Issei, had immigrated from Nagano, Japan and opened the store in 1902. Dave would reestablish the store in 1946 in the lower level of their nearby house. Shojiro Tatsuno did the honors by opening the doors and welcoming back their first customers. National Archives
Military Intelligence Service (MIS): Japanese Americans in the military that served as translators and interrogators.

Nikkei: Term used to describe a person of Japanese ancestry.


Sansei: Third generation, American born Japanese.

Nihonmachi: Literally, Japan-town.

Redress and Reparations: Movement to offer financial compensation or reparations to Japanese who were incarcerated or relocated during World War II.

Resettlement: The time period and the process that Japanese Americans went through following camp where they had to reestablish their homes, work, and community.

Sansei: Third generation, American born Japanese.

War Relocation Authority (WRA): The government body used to administer and manage the internment camps.


100th Battalion: Army unit comprised of Japanese American volunteers from the Hawaiian National Guard.

442nd Regimental Combat Team: All Japanese army unit comprised of volunteers from the mainland U.S. and Hawaii that fought in Europe during World War II.

This photograph may be one of the most famous images of the Japanese American internment. She was just three years old at the time and probably did not understand why her family was being forced out of California. This photo was made by Clem Albers, who along with other government contracted photographers such as Francis Stewart, Charles Mace, Dorothea Lange, Tom Parker, Fred Clark, Joe McClelland and Iwasaki Hikaru, documented the internment experience from pre-evacuation to resettlement. National Archives
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) When did the forced evacuation and internment occur?
The mass removal and incarceration took place in the Spring of 1942. Approximately 100 geographically based groups of Japanese Americans were sequentially moved, initially to so-called “assembly centers,” usually racetracks or fairgrounds. The first group forced from their homes was those who lived on Terminal Island in Southern California (February, 1942). The first group who were displaced and incarcerated were those from Bainbridge Island, Washington (March, 1942)

2) Why did some families choose on their own to move away from the coastal areas?
For a short period in March 1942, Japanese Americans were encouraged to move from their Pacific Coast homes to the interior of the country. A small number of families were able to take advantage of this and thus avoid incarceration. This small window in less than a month.

3) What was the War Relocation Authority?
The War Relocation Authority was a civilian government agency created to oversee the detention of Japanese Americans during World War II on March 18, 1942. It administered the so-called “relocation centers.” Milton Eisenhower was initially appointed its director but was soon succeeded by Dillon Myer.

4) What were the names and locations of the ten relocation centers?
Manzanar, California
Tule Lake, California
Gila River, Arizona
Poston, Arizona
Granada (Amache), Colorado
Topaz, Utah
Minidoka, Idaho
Rohwer, Arkansas
Jerome, Arkansas

5) How much did the WRA actually spend on food for the relocation centers?
With respect to the specific cost figures associated with mess operations, in the WRA’s own book, “WRA: A story of human conservation,” Vol. 9, pg. 102, it states “the purchasing of staple foods for relocation centers through designated depots of the Quartermaster Corps of the Army, expressly prohibited the purchase of “fancy grades” of food for the relocation centers, and stipulated that the menus for the centers should be based on a ration costing no more than 45 cents per person per day.” They also explicitly noted that the cost of incarceree’s rations should be less than those provided by the Army.

6) The Japanese American farmers were very successful at raising food crops in the camps. In fact, they often produced more than could be used at their site. What did the government do with the surplus?
Stephen Fugita at Santa Clara University states: I suspect that desert areas such as Manzanar probably “imported” certain agricultural items from other camps that had surpluses in particular crops. Places like Tule Lake and Gila River that were in agriculturally rich areas probably had surpluses in certain crops. According to WRA documents, able-bodied men started leaving the camps in 1943 and thus cramped the plans of the administration to produce great quantities of food.
According to WRA documents, $74,000 of food produced in the centers was sold to the open market. The WRA explicitly wanted to sell to the national Food-for-Freedom program. Roughly, $3,650,000 worth was consumed by the incarcerees. The WRA estimates that the incarcerees produced 14% of their own food.

7) What happened to California’s farming industry when the Japanese American farmers, sharecroppers, and laborers were in the camps?
When the evacuation orders were issued during the spring of 1942, most of the farmers had already planted the year’s crop. In fact, the strawberries were just about ready to harvest. Some farmers were able to pick some of the crops before leaving, others had neighbors or non-Japanese farm workers willing to tend the fields and bring in the harvest, but the majority had to leave the crops to rot in the fields.

State and regional officials realized that there would be a severe financial impact with thousands of acres of fruits and vegetables lost. At first, high school students were recruited to pick the crops as part of the “Victory Corps.” However, they were unused to the hard “stoop” labor needed to harvest strawberries and vegetables and things did not go smoothly. Eventually, they were replaced by more “Bracero” labor recruited from Mexico. For more information, check out the documentary, Forsaken Fields (description listed in the resource sections of the teacher guide.)

8) What happened to California’s fishing industry?
Most of the boats owned by Japanese Americans could not be sold at such short notice. Trawlers were quite specialized and expensive even in the 1940’s. Many fishermen who owned their equipment outright, had to just abandon their boats and gear and hope that brokers could auction them off. Others who still had outstanding loans lost the equipment to the banks, who also auctioned them off. In Monterey, the other large group of fisherman were mostly Italian, and they took over most of the fishing jobs during the Japanese American internment.

9) Almost all able-bodied adults (who were not in the military) had a job in camp. How much did they make in salary per month?
According to the WRA book “WRA: A story of human conservation, pg. 79: the “wages” were $12 for unskilled labor and persons undergoing vocational training; $16 for skilled labor and $19 for highly skilled and professional employees.

10) Who were the “no-nos” and how many were there?
In early 1943, the government decided to both form an Army unit made up of volunteers from the camps and Hawaii and establish a procedure to determine “loyalty” so that incarcerees could be resettled in the Midwest and East. Two questions asked about individuals’ willingness to serve in the Armed Forces and their allegiance to the U.S. Those who answered “yes-yes” to the questions were considered “loyals” and those who answered “no-no,” “disloyal.” In many instances, there was a great deal of confusion about the meaning of the questions and the consequences of answering in a particular way. In the end, about 11% or 7600 persons answered negatively or refused to answer, the rest affirmatively. The majority of these individuals were moved to Tule Lake which was converted to a segregation center.

11) Did some incarcerees become so disillusioned with the US that they decided to return to Japan after the War?
In 1944, Congress amended the Nationality Act of 1940 making it possible for citizens to renounce their citizenship. This was done to deal with “disruptive” incarcerees. There was considerable confusion about the consequences of renunciation. For example, some mistakenly thought it was the safest way to insure that the family would be kept together. Others were pressured by political factions to renounce. After the end of the War, 7100 were shipped to Japan. Ultimately, a heroic lawyer, Wayne Collins was able to individually restore the citizenship of the majority of renunciants and they were able to return to the US.
12) Were people of Japanese ancestry forcibly relocated and held in relocation centers in other countries? Japanese Hawaiians were not forced to relocate, probably in part that there were so many Japanese living in the islands and it would have been a logistical and financial burden. Hawaii was a US territory but did not become a state until 1959.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Candian Military did not believe the Japanese -- many of whom were citizens of Canada, posed any threat to the government. However, public hysteria after Pearl Harbor soon moved the government to forcibly evacuate 22,000 Japanese Canadians from the West Coast of British Columbia and send them to live in isolated mining towns and work camps in the interior of the country. Some were sent to harvest sugar beets. They were held but not in barbed wire compounds for the duration of the war. They were not allowed to return to BC until 1948. On September 22, 1988, Canadian Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, formally issued a governmental apology and reparations to the Japanese Canadians.

From 1941 to 1945, the US government, under agreements with Latin American governments, forcibly removed about 5,000 people of Japanese ancestry from various countries such as Peru. These families were relocated to a “camp” in Crystal City, Texas. Their story is a complex one. After the war, almost all were denied entry back into the Latin countries and most eventually settled in the United States. They continue to fight for equal apology and reparations.

13) Since the government allowed “loyal” incarcerees to resettle in the Midwest and East during the War from essentially 1943 on, what did this do to the geographic dispersion of Japanese Americans? Before WWII, the vast majority of Japanese Americans lived on the Pacific Coast. They were not allowed to return to the West Coast until 1945. However, “loyals” were allowed to resettle outside of the Pacific Coast from essentially 1943 on. Thus, many left the camps for cities such as Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, New York, Minneapolis, Colorado, Philadelphia and so on. Even when the majority of camps were closing in 1945, many who did not have property or other reasons to return to the Pacific elected to go east because they felt their reception there would be better. Ultimately, over the next decade, the majority returned to the West Coast, frequently not from rural areas where they were expelled from but cities which offered expanding economic opportunities.

Please check out the full Return to the Valley on-line guide at www.returntothevalley.org and download and print the essays, photographs and resource lists for FREE at your school site.

San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin, as it appeared in 1945. The church and the hall next door served as a hostel for many of the returning Japanese Americans. The church was completed in 1939 and dedicated in 1940. During the war, the property was left in the care of local attorney, Ben Peckham. The church and gardens are still in use today. The old hall was replaced by a more modern structure in the 1960’s. National Archives.