



FOUNDATIONS
and FUTURES

Asian American and Pacific Islander Multimedia Textbook

Lesson Plan



Incarceration of Japanese Americans During World War II

Module 2: Setting the Stage for Japanese American Mass Incarceration

Chapter Compelling Question

How can an entire racial group be unjustly incarcerated in a democracy?

Module Supporting Questions

- Why did people from Japan immigrate to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and how did they develop communities in the US?
- How were Japanese immigrants and their children treated in the United States, locally and nationally?
- What factors contributed to the decision to force Japanese Americans from their homes and incarcerate them?

Lesson Plan Description

In this set of learning experiences, students will learn about laws and policies that discriminated against Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans leading up to US involvement in World War II and Executive Order 9066. Despite this anti-Japanese discrimination and exclusion, Japanese Americans built thriving communities in the US. Students will document this in a collaborative “photo album” activity.

Learning Goals/Objectives

- Learn the laws and policies that violated Japanese Americans’ constitutional rights.
- Understand why Japanese people immigrated to the US and how they developed strong communities.
- Explore how Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans built and contributed to communities in the US despite racial discrimination.



 Skills Focus

- ☐ Written Communication
- ☐ Oral Communication
- ☐ Primary Source Analysis & Research
- ☒ Community Engagement
- ☒ Creative Arts
- ☒ Critical Thinking
- ☐ Additional Skills: Literacy; Academic Reading

 Ethnic Studies Framing & Pedagogy

- ☒ **Build a foundational understanding about Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders**, including the histories, perspectives, and contemporary experiences spanning the precolonial to the present day.
- ☐ **Develop literacy and the skills to communicate, understand, engage, and articulate different perspectives** through understanding multiple ways of knowing, including indigenous, ancestral, familial, and diasporic knowledge.
- ☒ **Nurture critical thinking and inquiry on fundamental assumptions** related to empire, capitalism, race and racism, gender and patriarchy, and other structures of power and inequality and how they shape society and the environment.
- ☐ **Cultivate holistic well-being amongst all and connections across difference** by strengthening historical empathy, self-worth and mutual respect, cultural expression, and cross-cultural understanding.
- ☒ **Grow wisdom and agency** to imagine and create new possibilities and solidarities for a more just, equitable, democratic, non-racist, compassionate, and sustainable society and world.



 Suggested Grade Level(s)

- ☒ 9
- ☒ 10
- ☒ 11
- ☒ 12
- ☐ 13-14

 Suggested Discipline(s)

- ☒ Arts
- ☒ English Language Arts
- ☒ Ethnic Studies
- ☒ History / Social Studies
- ☐ Other:

 Note About Content Standards

The following standards are based on the Common Core established by the California State Board of Education, as well as standards developed by the National Council for the Social Studies. Please check your own state's English Language Arts and History/Social Studies Standards for specific curriculum alignment.

 ELA Standards Alignment

- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.



History/Social Studies Standards Alignment

- Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Other Standards Alignment

The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework¹

- D2.Civ.3.9-12. Analyze the impact of constitutions, laws, treaties, and international agreements on the maintenance of national and international order.
- D2.His.3.9-12. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.
- D2.His.4.9-12. Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

Materials

- [Anti-Japanese Legal Actions and Discrimination Worksheet](#)
- [Cards for Critical Concepts Handout](#)
- [Yasui Photo Album Worksheet](#)

Modifications, Accommodations, Resources for Multilingual Students, SPED, & Newcomers

- Chunk text into smaller parts.
- Provide text digitally so that larger print text, audio-versions, and translations can be created.
- Arrange for peer support (such as pairs or small groups) for note-taking and discussion.

¹ National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), *The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards: Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History* (NCSS, 2013).



- Review glossary terms or any unknown words when reading.
- Give key indicators so that students know they have engaged in tasks effectively.
- Announce optional extension activities for students who finish the tasks before others.

CRITICAL CONCEPTS/KEY TERMS:



Alien Land Law of 1913

DEFINITION & RATIONALE for choosing this word, phrase, or concept

California passed the first law that prohibited “aliens ineligible to citizenship” from owning or leasing land, a law that targeted Japanese Americans. From this point on until 1923, many states (Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming) across the US passed similar laws and restrictions.



constitutional rights

DEFINITION & RATIONALE for choosing this word, phrase, or concept

Rights granted to Americans according to the US Constitution, such as the right to life, liberty, and property with equal protection of the laws. These rights cannot be taken away without due process.



Executive Order 9066

DEFINITION & RATIONALE for choosing this word, phrase, or concept

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave the US military the power to exclude anyone they saw as a threat from special “military areas.” Although Japanese Americans were not specifically mentioned, this led to them to be mass incarcerated.





Immigration Act of 1924

DEFINITION & RATIONALE for choosing this word, phrase, or concept

A federal law that denied immigration to the US from Japan and other Asian countries (except the Philippines, which was then a US colony).



Ozawa v. United States (1922)

DEFINITION & RATIONALE for choosing this word, phrase, or concept

A Supreme Court decision that determined Japanese people and other Asians were not allowed to become US citizens.

LESSON PLAN

C1: CULTURAL RITUAL/ENERGIZER [5-7 min]

Title of Cultural Ritual/Energizer: What does a community look like?

DESCRIPTION:

Instruct students to write a response to the following prompt:

- *What is a community? What do you think is important to have within a community or neighborhood? How do people help build or develop a community?*

Pair up students and have them share their responses with a partner. Then facilitate a discussion with the whole class on students' opinions about how communities develop and what makes them thrive.

C2: CRITICAL CONCEPTS [15 min]

Title of Direct Instruction: Anti-Japanese Discrimination and Exclusion

DESCRIPTION:



STEP 1: Review Critical Concepts/Key Terms

Review the definition of **constitutional rights** from the **Critical Concepts/Key Terms** section above. Tell students that Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans were supposed to be afforded certain rights according to the US Constitution, but unfortunately were not able to fully exercise them.

STEP 2: Set Students Up

Inform students that they will learn how the constitutional rights of Japanese Americans were violated through legal actions against Asian immigrants and Asian Americans. Distribute copies of the **Anti-Japanese Legal Actions and Discrimination Worksheet**, which students will use for note-taking.

STEP 3: Review Anti-Japanese Legal Actions

Present Card 1 to students (via slides or poster) from the **Cards for Critical Concepts Handout**.

Alien Land Laws

In 1913 California passed the first law that prohibited “aliens ineligible to citizenship” from owning or leasing land. At the time, this included Japanese Americans. From this point on until 1923, many states (Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming) across the US passed similar laws and restrictions.

Read this card with students and have them copy this on the handout. Explain that these laws used the phrase “aliens ineligible to citizenship,” which applied to Japanese immigrants. During this time, Asian people were not allowed to become citizens unless they were naturally born on US soil.



Present Card 2 to students (via slides or poster) from the **Cards for Critical Concepts Handout** and have them copy the definition on their handouts.

Ozawa v. United States (1922)

A Supreme Court decision that determined Japanese people and other Asian immigrants were not allowed to become US citizens.

Present Card 3 to students and have them copy the definition on their handouts.

Immigration Act of 1924

A federal law that denied immigration to the US from Japan and other Asian countries.

 STEP 4: Read part of the module

Have students read the subsection titled “Fear and Anger: Discrimination Against Japanese Americans” in Module 2 of the Japanese American Incarceration chapter. This section provides an overview of the legal actions and gives some examples of discrimination that Japanese Americans faced in their community. After they finish reading, direct students to answer question four on their handouts.

 STEP 5: Review Executive Order 9066

Inform students that this anti-Japanese campaign of legal actions set the foundation for the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans. Share the following definition with students:

Executive Order 9066

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave the US military the power to exclude anyone they saw as a threat from special “military areas.” Although Japanese Americans were not specifically mentioned, this led to them to be mass incarcerated.



Explain that after the US entered World War II and Executive Order 9066 was issued, the government forcibly removed over 120,000 Japanese Americans from their homes.

C3: COMMUNITY COLLABORATION/CRITICAL CULTURAL PRODUCTION [50–60 min]

Title of Main Activity: How Japanese Americans Built Thriving Communities

DESCRIPTION:

In the previous part of this lesson, students studied exclusionary laws and legal actions that did not allow Japanese Americans to exercise their full constitutional rights.

During this activity, students will read parts of Module 2 to learn how Japanese Americans developed thriving communities before they were forced from their homes. Students will use the story of the Yasui family to illustrate examples of community building.

STEP 1: Set Up the Activity

Tell students that they will follow the story of the Yasui family to learn how Japanese Americans developed thriving communities despite discrimination and exclusion. As they read parts of Module 2, they will find examples of how the Yasui family immigrated and resettled in the US. Distribute copies of the **Yasui Photo Album Worksheet**.

STEP 2: Document Japanese Immigration through the Yasui Family

Read the directions on the **Yasui Photo Album Worksheet** with students.

Explain that there are two parts on the worksheet: Immigration and Community Development. Each has its own question prompt. For the “Immigration” part, students should keep this question in mind as they read the subsection titled “Go East, Young Man!” in Module 2.



After students read the text and review the historical photos, they should select two examples of the Yasuis' immigration experiences. Then have students draw two images and write accompanying captions on the worksheet. Students can also use a separate sheet of paper.



STEP 3: Document Community Development through the Yasui Family

For the “Community Development” part of the worksheet, instruct students to read two subsections in Module 2 titled “Building Communities” and “Vibrant Communities.” Remind students to keep the question prompt in mind while they read.

After they find two examples of how the Yasui family helped others and contributed to their community, have students draw two more images for the “photo album” and write accompanying captions on the worksheet.

C4: CLOSING [5–7 min]

DESCRIPTION:

Have students reflect on the life of the Yasui family and anti-Japanese exclusion leading up to Executive Order 9066. Then tell them to write a response to the following question:

How do you think the Yasui family was able to thrive despite racial discrimination? How do you see people doing this today?

Pair students up so they can take turns sharing their responses. Then conduct a class discussion or invite 2–3 students to share their reflections with the whole class.



Links to Resources and Notes:

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