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“Marie’s Dolls” Worksheet and Discussion Guide

Packing for camp

Background

During World War II, Japanese Americans were forced to leave their homes, and they had very little time to prepare. Often, they could only bring as many bags as they could carry, and so many items had to be left behind. There wasn’t much room for kids to pack toys, because families needed room for clothing, pots and pans, and other necessities.

Watch

Visit <https://www.buildinghistoryproject.com/video-maries-dolls1> and watch the video called “Marie’s Dolls.”

Recall

1. When Marie Tajima was a child and her family was forced to leave their home, what did she do with her doll collection?
2. Marie was about 13 years old in 1942, when her family was sent to an incarceration camp. In the video, she is celebrating her 88th birthday. How long has it been since she has seen her dolls?

Interpret

3. Visit the [Building History Timeline](#). Identify two U.S. laws enacted before 1942 that showed discrimination against Japanese immigrants.
4. On the same webpage, can you find the number of the executive (presidential) order that led to Japanese Americans’ incarceration during World War II?
5. Visit the [Building History Map](#). On the map, can you find the incarceration camp where Marie and her family were sent?

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Apply

6. If you knew that you had to go on a long journey and pack only the items that were most important to you, what would you choose to bring? List five items. What makes them important to you?
7. Of the items that you listed, would you be able to pack all of them in a single backpack? Are there any that are too big or too heavy?
8. List three things that are important to you that you would have to leave behind, if you could only pack five items.

Analyze

9. There were some items that Japanese Americans were told that they would not be allowed to pack and bring with them to the incarceration camps. Among other things, these included radios, cameras, and pet animals. Why do you think that some of these things were now allowed in the camps?
10. There were no cell phones during World War II--they hadn't been invented yet! If there had been cell phones, do you think that Japanese Americans would have been allowed to bring them to the incarceration camps? Why or why not?

Extension

Minecraft activity: Visit [Building History's Minecraft activities](#) and install the Suitcase Activity on your device. (You can play alone or with a friend on a separate device!) What items in the box will you pack? What items in the box would have been against the rules at a Japanese American incarceration camp?

Historical document: Visit [this resource from Densho](#) and read the evacuation orders that were posted in 1942. What items were Japanese Americans told that they needed to pack and carry with them to the incarceration camps? How would you feel if you found a poster like this in your neighborhood?