

WATCH

The Fight for Justice

Procedures

Tell students that they will watch a short video that further explores the Japanese American Redress Movement. In particular, it focuses on the role of former U.S. Congressman Norman Mineta, who was imprisoned as a 10-year-old boy during the Japanese American incarceration. Divide the class into small groups of two to three students. Assign one of the following topics to each group and ask them to consider it as they watch the video:

- purpose of the redress movement and H.R. 442
- testimonies of those who were incarcerated
- key dates and events in the redress movement
- challenges faced during the redress movement
- significance of Japanese American military service during World War II to the redress movement
- significance of the friendship between Congressman Norman Mineta and Senator Alan Simpson to the redress movement

Play the video "[The Fight for Justice](#)" for students. After the viewing of the video, allow student groups to discuss their topics. Ask a student representative from each group to provide a two- to three-minute summary of its discussion.

You may want to share that on August 10, 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which granted redress of \$20,000 and a formal presidential apology to every surviving U.S. citizen or legal resident immigrant of Japanese descent who was incarcerated during World War II. The legislation, also known as H.R. 442, stated that government actions concerning the incarceration were based on "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership."

Some additional discussion points are listed below.

Discuss

1. In what ways are the survivor testimonies similar? In what ways are they different?
2. Concerning redress and reparations for those who were incarcerated, do you think it was appropriate for the U.S. government to issue an apology and to pay reparations? Explain your reason.
3. Concerning other groups that have had their constitutional rights violated, do you think they are deserving of apologies and/or redress? Which group(s) are these (and for what reasons) and why do you think they should (or should not) be entitled to apologies and redress?
4. What are your thoughts on the following quotes from the video?
 - Tetsu Saito: "Our lives, stability, foundation as a family was overturned. My husband, who was our pillar, and my eldest daughter both died."
 - Secretary Norman Mineta: "The biggest thing we had going for us was the valor and the dedication of the men and women in the Armed Services during World War II who, despite what happened to them, were proving their patriotism."
 - Dr. Mitchell Maki: "...Yes, it was about constitutional issues. Yes, it was about America's promise. But more than anything it was about individuals, it was about family..."
 - Senator Norman Mineta: "How many countries [in the world] really admit a wrong they've done and then...correct it?"
5. The video uses the term "prisoner" in its description of the Japanese Americans who were incarcerated. As noted in [How Language Shapes Perceptions](#) [teacher version] in the "Civil Liberties & Equity" lesson, terms such as evacuation, internment, assembly center, relocation center, and internee have regularly been used. The term "concentration camps" (also used in the video) was used originally by the U.S. government to describe the places where Japanese Americans were detained during

World War II. Later, the term “relocation centers” was used. Discuss the importance of terminology in this context. Which terms do you feel are most accurate and why?

6. The video mentions other key people who were involved in the redress movement, including Senator Daniel Inouye, Senator Spark Matsunaga, and President Ronald Reagan. What specific roles did they play? (Note: This would require outside research.)
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Note

- Be advised that the video “The Fight for Justice” contains language, including a racial slur and mild profanity at [06:00], that is not suitable for all students. We recommend that you preview the film before assigning to students. It is recommended that students have already read [Case Study: The Japanese American Redress Movement](#) [student version] prior to watching the video.