



***Injustice: Japanese Internment and Citizens' Rights***

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:  
Social Studies 6-8

**Keywords:** Democracy, Minorities, Rights, Injustice, Japanese Internment, WWII

**Teaching Standards:** [Appendix 1](#) addresses the teaching standards in this curriculum unit.

**Synopsis:**

This unit uses fiction and nonfiction to teach scholars about democracies and how minority groups exist within a democracy. Looking at Asian American experiences, this unit will inform students about injustices Japanese Americans have faced in the United States specifically. The fiction component comes from historical fiction studies and the nonfiction component comes from the DBQ Project and its DBQ essays that relate to citizenship, why the attack on Pearl Harbor happened. The unit includes film and music as an arts component. Scholars will learn how to become advocates for themselves and others who have faced and will continue to face injustices in our country because of their status as a minority group.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 300 students in IB Fiction and Nonfiction in Social Studies 6-8.*

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## **Introduction**

My rationale for teaching this lesson is based on noticing that many of my scholars have learned about WWII, but the focus is more on the European aspects of the war, with little to no information being taught about the war in the Pacific. I feel it is important for my scholars to learn about WWII from all aspects, especially what was going on in our own country to our own citizens. I plan to show them that people who were born here and had rights as citizens were seen as a threat to national security and had their rights taken away just because of their ancestry. I intend to emphasize the fact that it was only Japanese people who were seen as the enemy, while Italian and German Americans were not rounded up and placed in internment camps – a fact I have always found fascinating. It shows the level of systematic racism that exists in our country even today. This unit is part of a larger unit on injustice throughout our history, specifically aimed at minority groups in the United States.

It's important as teachers of Social Studies to not gloss over atrocities, to teach students about mistakes that have been made through history, and to hopefully have them learn from them so we do not repeat it. It was not until I was in college that I learned of some of the terrible things in our history, and that was because of the transparency of my professors. I am fortunate enough to be teaching an elective class to assist our International Baccalaureate scholars in better understanding the world and to hopefully become advocates for themselves and others. Having difficult conversations, making my students aware, and letting them see all the information and make their own decisions is something that I wish all my teachers had the privilege to do when I was younger. I feel it is my responsibility to empower my students to be better than the previous generation, to change the world that their children will grow up in, and ultimately, to make our country a better place to live for all.

I always felt that learning from music and film was something I wanted to incorporate into my teaching. I do not have a degree in music or film, but I feel that using these platforms to teach make students who need visuals understand content better. Also, highlighting the fact that film and music are up for interpretation is important in understanding why certain topics are talked about, and why others aren't. I found one song about Japanese internment and a handful of movies; meanwhile, there are plenty of films about the Holocaust, the Civil Rights Movement, and about Native Americans. I have always been intrigued by Japanese internment, actually shocked that it occurred in the United States, and felt that it would be a great introductory lesson to my students about injustice.

## **School Demographics**

Ranson IB is a Title 1 Project Lift school in CMS. The ethnic makeup of our scholars is 72% African American, 20% Hispanic, 3% White, 2% Asian. The teacher to student ration is 20:1. Our scholars almost exclusively receive free or reduced lunch, with 97% coming from low-income families. Some scholars are MCV (McKinney-Vinto) which means that they are classified as homeless or without a stable living situation. The scholars who I teach are in the International Baccalaureate program and have scored 4 or higher on their ELA EOG. These scholars are some of the brightest in the school and need rigorous education in order to keep them engaged. I plan on using this curriculum to draw a more personal aspect to learning, as well

as teach them about other groups who have been marginalized in the past. This will be the second year this course is offered as an elective and it will also be the Arts component for IB.

## **Content Research**

The Making of Asian America by Erika Lee has two amazing chapters full of information about Japanese Americans and Japanese people in North America during WWII. I was surprised to find out that not only were Japanese Americans on the west coast of the United States sent to internment camps, but Japanese Peruvians were sent from Peru to the United States, labeled “illegal aliens” and were put in camps as well. Many of them had nowhere to go after WWII because Peru did not want them, the United States claimed they were there illegally even though they were the ones who extradited them, and many of them did not want to go to Japan (although many did).

Another interesting fact was how many Japanese Americans were asked to join the war effort, to fight for a country that saw them as the enemy, and some of them did. One group in particular was the most decorated Battalion during WWII and another liberated a Holocaust Concentration Camp. A lot of Japanese Americans were asked to take a loyalty questionnaire which asked a range of questions “designed to determine Americanness versus Japaneseness” (*The Making of Asian America*, pg. 238). For those second generation Japanese (Nisei), their allegiance to the United States was easy since they were US citizens by birth, but for the Issei (first generation Japanese), the questions were difficult in that they did not want to renounce Japan which was their homeland, but also were barred from becoming US citizens; they were about to become people without a country to call “home”. Many struggled with the questionnaire since it also asked if they would be willing to fight for the United States if called upon. “Over 1,200 men volunteered for the US Army. Many had been forcibly removed from their homes because they and their immigrant parents were considered security risks. Despite the mistreatment, they volunteered or were willingly drafted to fight for democracy and freedom and abroad and to redeem their place in the United States. In the meantime, their parents and families remained incarcerated behind barbed wire by the same government” (*The Making of Asian America*, pgs 241-242).

Understanding the DBQ Project is imperative in order to successfully execute this unit. I have attended 2 trainings with the company which gave me an advantage, but almost all of the information you need is on their website. CMS has graciously purchased the DBQ Project digitally which can be found on the Clever page of the my.ncedcloud.org site. I have also been told that each school has some hard copy versions of the DBQ’s, although they vary by grade levels. For the first DBQ, I printed out the documents and their questions for my scholars to get them used to writing on the physical documents and because I did not have enough chromebooks for all of my scholars at that time. Some of the pitfalls of doing it this way is that it wastes paper and students misplaced their documents (which they took home with them after class). Having the documents digitally greatly helped with the second DBQ because I could see the work scholars did in a streamlined manner – and the risk of them losing the documents was nonexistent.

The topics which I used for this DBQ project came from the World History Vol. 1 (Citizenship in Athens and Rome) and American History Vol. 2 (Why did the Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor?). There is a teacher toolkit for each DBQ as well as literacy strategies for teachers to use. I differentiated with some of my scholars in that I know they like to have actual paper copies of the documents in order to mark them up with annotations. The online platform is great as well since scholars can create text boxes, highlight, and underline directly on the screen using the toolbar on the website. The questions for each document are under the teacher view on the website and I went in and copied and pasted them into a google doc for my scholars, who then made a copy of the document in order to put their own answers in which I found was the easiest way and saved paper, but you could also print out the questions and have them handwrite their answers as well. Again, differentiating this process is relatively easy and allows for different types of learners to be successful at the DBQ process.

Important vocabulary for scholars to know are as follows: Issei (first generation), Nisei (second generation Japanese Americans born before WWII), Sansei (third generation Japanese Americans born during or after WWII), Manzanar (internment camp for Japanese Americans in Owens Valley, California), Executive Order 9066 (signed by President FDR, created military areas in the western states for the incarceration of Japanese people on the West Coast), internment (the state of being confined as a prisoner, especially for political or military reasons), citizen (a legally recognized subject or national of a state or commonwealth, either native or naturalized), democracy (a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives).

### **Instructional Implementation**

Strategy One: The DBQ Project (analyzing documents and writing essays)

- Scholars will learn the 6 steps of the DBQ process through note-taking and videos.
- Scholars will understand each step and how they will assist them in answering the historical question for each DBQ
- Scholars will learn how to write essays using textual evidence to prove their thesis and answer the historical question

Strategy Two: Cornell Notes

- Scholars will learn how to take Cornell Notes using the framework adopted by the teacher
- Scholars will have their notes in a chronological order-based notebook for ease of finding previous notes and using notes for review

Strategy Three: Blended Learning

- Scholars will engage in “blended learning” lessons which will involve note-taking from powerpoints, as well as note-taking from videos.
- Scholars will be allowed to self-pace their note-taking (differentiation) by having the resources on their own devices.
- Scholars will be responsible for their own learning due to the self-pacing of the blended learning lessons

Strategy Four: Media Analysis

- Scholars will look at film and music, analyze the media, and create work which shows their analysis and relevance to the curriculum.
- Scholars will compare what they have learned through notes and readings to what they learned from film/music and compare/contrast.
- Scholars will be able to understand that film/music are alternative ways to learn about history, but should not be the only way in which they learn about history.

#### Strategy Five: Socratic Smackdown

- Scholars will be able to use textual evidence to engage in classroom discussions
- Scholars will understand teamwork and how to successfully prove their point using textual evidence
- Scholars will be able to listen to others points of view, challenge their classmates' ideas, and learn from one another

#### Overview of Strategies

Utilizing the DBQ Project (which is available digitally through CMS) I have curated DBQs which talk to the specific topics we will be learning about. In order to successfully have scholars complete a DBQ, the process in which to complete one must be taught. This took my scholars about 2 weeks to learn the steps and to then complete them with fidelity. According to the DBQ Project website, there are five steps to be completed in order to successfully answer a Document Based Question; The Hook Exercise, The Background Essay, Understanding the Question, Analyzing the Documents, Bucketing, and Writing the Essay. While these are great ways of breaking up the steps, I personally broke them down differently to better suit my students.

The first step is Understanding the Questions (What is the question asking you? What time in history are they referring to? What is the question NOT asking you?). Narrowing down the scope of the questions helped my scholars to better understand what to look for while they worked on step 2. Step 2 is Annotating the Documents. There are 2 different annotating strategies which I taught my students, differentiating the ways to suit each grade level. The first was APPARTS which stands for Author, Place and Time, Prior Knowledge, Audience, Reason, The Main Idea, and Significance. This acronym helped my 7th grade high flyers and my 8th graders annotate their documents in a more effective and thorough way. For my 7th graders who were struggling and my 6th graders who had never really annotated primary and secondary source documents before we used SOAPS which stands for Subject, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, and Speaker. This acronym is asking essentially the same information as APPARTS with the exception of prior knowledge and purpose. This has allowed my 6th graders especially to streamline their annotations to better analyze the documents in order to answer the essential question for the DBQ. I found some great videos on YouTube which explained each part of the process to me, which I then created worksheets for and showed the videos to my students.

Combining the videos with daily Do Nows asking the steps helped my scholars memorize each step and better comprehend the entire process. Step 3 is Bucketing the Documents, this is just a fancy way of grouping and categorizing like documents together. Usually, there are three "buckets" which documents will be grouped into. This step allows for scholars to streamline their thinking by having all the documents grouped and labeled. Step 4 is Writing Your Thesis,

which is essentially the answer to the essential question. The thesis can be written in many ways but the way in which I have found most beneficial for scholars is called a “chicken foot”. This model allows for scholars to write the sentence stem (the question being asked) and then two/three other lines which is where they write the categories from their buckets from the previous step. This then allows them to have their thesis statement written, which in turn allows them to move on to step 5. Step 5 is Writing the Outline. This step is where scholars put their information from steps 1-4 on paper.

Personally, I have realized that my scholars are more effective at writing their essays when they first put all their information on paper. Writing with pencil and paper not only has allowed my scholars to make mistakes (which can easily be erased), but gives them a visual of what their paper will contain. Showing them how to create their outline requires some heavy lifting on the teacher’s part, but the finished product is always worth the blood, sweat, and tears. Creating the outline with the introduction (which includes background information about the topic being discussed, the question, and then ends with the thesis). The next three parts are where scholars write their information from their documents in the order in which they mentioned it in their thesis.

The last part is their conclusion, which is where they summarize what was spoken about in the essay and restates their thesis. Once the outline is completed, scholars move on to the last step, Writing the Essay. The guidelines which I have for their essays are relatively simple. I require them to write in 12pt font, double spaces, and to cite which document they got their information from within the essay. I accept two different methods of citation, Stating the document title used directly in the sentence with the information or putting the document title in parenthesis at the end of the sentence. Scholars must use information from all the documents provided and also use them to prove their thesis. Guaranteed there are some DBQ’s that have a right answer, but I tell my scholars that as long as they can use textual evidence to prove their thesis and meet all the other guidelines, then they will get full credit. This entire process from introducing the DBQ Project to completion of the essay took me about 2 ½ weeks, seeing each class every other day. For first time DBQ essay writers and my 6th graders, there was a lot of modeling and scaffolding done in order for them to get each step and concept. I then chose a DBQ which would introduce the ideas of democracy, citizenship, and rights of citizens to my scholars. The first one which will be used is “Citizenship in Athens and Rome: Which Had the Better System”. This DBQ introduces the idea of citizenship as well as early democracy to give scholars background information which will help them once we begin learning about the United States and its government structure. The second DBQ to be used is “Why did the Japanese Bomb Pearl Harbor” which will give scholars the background information to go along articles about Japanese Internment from [NEWSELA.com](http://NEWSELA.com).

After this DBQ, I utilized iCivics.org and its lessons “Who Rules?” and “You’ve Got Rights”. Although there are multiple parts to the lessons PDF, I tweaked them in order to make them more streamline and be engaging for my scholars. I also had them complete both during the 90 minute period, which allowed for us to debrief after and discuss what was learned. These lessons have readings as well as activities to help scholars better understand concepts which will help them realize issues with majority rule and minorities rights. When having my scholars read any type of passage, I ask them to annotate it. Annotations can be something as simple as

highlighting or creating a #hashtag to summarize a paragraph. I modeled this in the beginning of the school year with our background essay for our first DBQ. Being in the 21st century, I felt it was relevant to have them use a #hashtag since they use them on social media almost daily. They were to annotate the readings first before moving on to the activities.

“Who Rules?” is a lesson which talks about the different types of government which have existed/exist in the world. The reading is at grade level for 6-8 grade in my opinion. The reading gives in depth information about democracy, explaining the different types (direct and representative) and gives examples of countries which have each type of government. The activities which follow the reading are a short answer match the type of government to the country, a true or false with examples or reasoning why, a crossword puzzle, and an informal assessment asking scholars to pick A or B to the government type that is being described. This then allowed my scholars to better understand not only democracy, but all types of government since we spoke about a Monarchy, a Dictatorship, and a Theocracy in this unit as well (speaking about Japan and Germany in relation to WWII).

The second activity was “You’ve Got Rights” which speaks about the creation of the US Constitution as well as the Bill of Rights. I chose this because making the correlation between what rights US citizens have and what rights were taken away from Japanese Americans during WWII is important for scholars to understand and see the injustice which occurred. The reading also talks about other significant amendments (13, 14, 15, 19, and 26) which also correlate to the rights Japanese American citizens did have once they were born in the United States. The activities which followed the reading were to categorize the different rights with what type of right they were (individual freedom, limits of government, rights of the accused, voting rights, and natural rights), Federalists vs. Anti-Federalists (a venn diagram where scholars put which rights go with which group), and No Rights For You! (a fill in the blank for scholars to think of what would happen if we did not have the 6th, 4th, 8th, or 1st amendments, respectfully). Once they all completed both packets, we debriefed with what they learned, some questions and answers, and then our Exit Ticket (what type of government does the United States have? what is the document which gives individuals rights in the United States?).

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dCIc3JvydC23LP0r1qKM8ooYx6Dm42yM/view?usp=sharing>  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1c9wKOxUow20a3N07fcdpNgkw1f\\_e-owq/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1c9wKOxUow20a3N07fcdpNgkw1f_e-owq/view?usp=sharing)

Scholars will then complete a webquest called Japanese Americans and World War II from the Smithsonian American History Museum’s website on their exhibit on Japanese Internment. This in depth website will give scholars information about Japanese Americans before WWII, during WWII, and after WWII. I stumbled upon the website while searching for museum exhibits in Washington, DC. I realized that it spoke not only about the causes of Japanese Internment, but also had readings and visuals of what the camps were like to give them background information before we began our book study. Scholars had 2 class periods to explore the website, writing at least 2 sentences summarizing each page (18 pages total) as well as their final thoughts on Japanese Internment. I have referenced this activity many times since they completed it when speaking about Japanese expansion in the Pacific, as well as what the camps were like in comparison to the book study. The link for the website is <http://americanhistory.si.edu/righting-wrong-japanese-americans-and-world-war-ii>. Their final thoughts were definitely something that I found interesting in that many of them couldn’t believe

this happened in the first place. Correlating it to the fact that they could possibly have their rights taken away based on race or ethnicity was something which they all reflected on.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SdHL9CcETJnqZESZn2MWwAxeSm30IXtt1L12bgWeoxM/edit?usp=sharing>

To inform scholars about how Japanese Americans rights were taken away during WWII, they will read and annotate a reading along with the Bill of Rights, match the citizen's rights violation with the amendment it matches, and then answer response questions in a packet from the National World War II Museum. The first part of this assignment was a reading about Japanese American Internment, including dates, key terms, Korematsu vs. US court case, as well as the aftermath of Japanese American Internment (including reparations and the reasoning the government gave for interning Japanese Americans). The second part is the Bill of Rights. I had my scholars annotate both the reading and the Bill of Rights to better comprehend them. Part three was titled "Amendment Violation" matching activity. This activity had five injustices towards Japanese Americans on the left and the 10 amendments from the Bill of Rights on the right. Scholars then drew lines to match the injustice/violation to the appropriate amendment(s). Finally, there were six reflection questions that were short answer (what was one way Japanese Americans resisted internment, how did Executive Order 9066 bring about the internment of Japanese and Japanese Americans, provide one example of how Japanese internment violated the Bill of Rights, should non-citizens (aliens) be granted the same rights and protections as citizens and explain your answer, what are some modern day examples of how the rights of the Constitution are violated, and if you could pass one amendment to the US Constitution what would it entail).

<https://tinyurl.com/amendmentviolations>

Scholars then annotated the articles from NEWS.ELA.com and engaged in a "Socratic Smackdown" which is a new means of having insightful class discussions while using textual evidence to prove a point. The guidelines can be found at <https://www.instituteofplay.org/learning-games>. Socratic Smackdown is another strategy I learned attending The DBQ Project's professional development. It allows for scholars to use textual evidence to prove a point to their classmates and makes a traditional Socratic Seminar more engaging and similar to a game. Scholars are split into 2 teams with a captain for each team, there are 2 scorekeepers who are unbiased, and a moderator (the teacher in this case). Each team has 20 minutes to pulling talking points from their articles/documents. Half of the team goes first again half of the other team, the rest of their teammates sit behind them with sticky notes and their documents. The key is that the ones who are not sitting in the front cannot speak to their teammates, only write ideas/thoughts/talking points on sticky notes and pass them to those in front of them. This took a lot of modeling and trial and error since middle school children sometimes have a difficult time with impulse control, especially in a competitive setting. The team captain cannot speak to the teammates either, just watch and reflect on what went well and what can be done the next time. Scorekeepers were responsible for listening to each person's points, noting if they cited an article/text while speaking, and also noting if a speaker interrupted another speaker/was distracting/etc. Once the 10 minutes is up, the scorekeepers tell everyone their scores and we have a "winner". I believe that giving students a chance to speak about text, whatever text that may be, can give them a better understanding of the material as well as help their classmates who might have a misconception.



[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Pap9-X--079P9nVRc8\\_LZ0Zcuvod-tCQOnzGBeXMI2M/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Pap9-X--079P9nVRc8_LZ0Zcuvod-tCQOnzGBeXMI2M/edit?usp=sharing)  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-PrbHhU2h03OAo1GV2kmXWUty1\\_FQ2wjdu0SR8eJKvI/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-PrbHhU2h03OAo1GV2kmXWUty1_FQ2wjdu0SR8eJKvI/edit?usp=sharing)  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1muT6n8bAPSbvQITq8DyKbGie5ix8kCXKkUpNSKDpJnA/edit?usp=sharing>

After completing the DBQ, scholars will watch “Attack on Pearl Harbor” DVD which shows the events leading up to Pearl Harbor and the aftermath of the attack. This 2 disc documentary highlights what was going on in Asia prior to the Pearl Harbor attack, how the United States was assisting in the war effort without being actually involved in the fighting, and ultimately, how the Japanese Army decided to attack Pearl Harbor. While scholars watched the documentary, I paused at certain parts I felt were beneficial to speak to them about in depth (Nanking Massacre, Island Hopping, Oil Embargo, etc).

Teachers should use their own discretion when showing the documentary as there are some scenes (specifically the one in the unit The China Incident) that might be a little too graphic for younger scholars. I prefaced it with the fact that these were real events which happened and that showing them that portion was not to upset anyone or make them feel uncomfortable, but to make them understand that tragedies happen all the time in history and how we can learn from these tragedies. I personally believe in being transparent with my scholars and have built relationships with them to foster this mindset. Many of them I taught last year, which has helped build those relationships even more. I know not every teacher has that luxury, but being able to at least create a culture in your classroom where you can have those difficult conversations is key.

I will also be playing the song “Kenji” by Fort Minor which is about their lead singer’s family experience in a Japanese Internment camp. Scholars will listen to the song, interpret the lyrics, and have discussions about what it would have been like to be forced to a camp during WWII. Once the novel is completed, we will watch *American Pastime* (a 2007 film about Japanese Internment and how baseball helped those in the internment camps deal with the harsh conditions and anti-Japanese sentiment in America). Scholars will compare the book to the film and talk about differences, similarities, and ultimately what they learned about this time in American History.

## **Implementation Schedule**

- 1) What is a democracy? Scholars will be taught what a democracy is, how they are created, and what happens when a democracy is put into place (people’s rights in a democracy). This introduction will be done through readings, note-taking, and blended learning. Giving students strong knowledge of what democracy is and how the United States protects the individual citizen’s rights is something they will need to know in order to see that Japanese Internment was an injustice to Japanese Americans.

- 2) History of democracy in our country: I began teaching my scholars about democracy through Cornell Notes. Scholars had access to a powerpoint I created online, where they could go and copy the notes on their own computers, while I did whole group instruction on the whiteboard. Scholars learned about Cornell Notes in our AVID class as well as I did a tutorial during our notebook set up at the beginning of the year. The title of the slides is written on the left hand side of the paper, while the content of the slides is written on the right hand side. Scholars either draw a line to separate the page or they fold the paper to create a line. The slides of the powerpoint included democracy definition, types of democracies (with a diagram), majority rule and individual rights, who was considered a citizen when the US was created, and who was considered “non-white” through our history (with information about the different waves of immigration into the United States). We had class discussions after taking notes about how is it “all men are created equal” when we had slavery, you needed to own land to vote, and treatment of women and immigrants during our history.

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1vNklNc0H2gjtywlreVlzOwzjC\\_5XR-4vgZhW8Zs0M\\_I/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1vNklNc0H2gjtywlreVlzOwzjC_5XR-4vgZhW8Zs0M_I/edit?usp=sharing)

I incorporated a blended learning lesson to teach scholars about democracy. This approach is student paced, allowing them to pause the videos they are watching to take notes. There were four YouTube videos which totaled 40 minutes run time. The expectation was that scholars were taking at least one full page of notes while watching the videos to better understand democracy and the roles of citizens in a democracy (specifically the United States). The first video was titled “Democracy- a Short Introduction” which was similar to a PowToon cartoon that explained the origins of democracy and how democracies function. The second video was by Crash Course Government, an online web series which talks about different components of governments around the world. This web series is an extension of the Crash Course History web series by author John Green. I used his videos when I was in college to help me easily understand different events in history. Crash Course Government is narrated by Craig and the synopsis of this episode “Civil Rights and Liberties” is as follows:

Today, Craig is going to give you an overview of civil rights and civil liberties. Often these terms are used interchangeably, but they are actually very different. Our civil liberties, contained in the Bill of Rights, once only protected us from the federal government, but slowly these liberties have been incorporated to protect us from the states. We’ll take a look at how this has happened and the supreme court cases that got us here.<sup>1</sup>

The ability to pause this web series is very important since there is scrolling text as well as Craig speaks a little fast. His explanation of the differences between civil rights and civil liberties is something I felt was important for my scholars to understand in order to better comprehend democracy in the United States. The third video titled “The Citizen” is by the NCLS and the Trust for Representative Democracy. This video is a “journey to learn about our republic and the roles and responsibilities of citizens. The video is a mix of real people and cartoons (which my scholars loved) and helped them understand citizenship, rights, and responsibilities of citizens in the United States. The video also speaks about the Korematsu Vs. US court case, giving students a little background on Japanese Internment. The fourth video was from Democracy It Is! a PBS

series which talks about Democracy from the point of view of teenagers. This specific episode, Activism and Social Justice, speaks about 3 instances when teens in a community advocated for themselves and others. I felt this was important for my scholars to see how even people their own age can make changes in their community. The feedback from my scholars as well as their growth on Do Nows stemming from this lesson showed me that a blended learning approach is an excellent way to engage scholars and allow for them to pace the lesson to their own needs.

Democracy - A short introduction <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6jgWxkbR7A&t=1s>

Civil Rights & Liberties: Crash Course Government #23 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbwsF-A2sTg>

The Citizen <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UBr3pFleh5U>

democracy it is! | Activism & Social Justice <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46KNz0j-F5g>

The information about Asian Americans coming to the US (why and where they settled, racism they faced, etc) was covered in the analysis of a chronology in the beginning of *Farewell to Manzanar*". And finally, Japanese Internment (when, why, where, who, issues, etc) was covered in article analysis, a webquest, and class discussions.

- 3) Nonfiction DBQ: After teaching scholars the steps of the DBQ process and before jumping into Japanese Internment, they will work on the first DBQ "*Citizenship in Athens and Rome. Who had the Better System*". This DBQ will give scholars the chance to complete the steps of the DBQ process, as well as learn about citizenship and the foundations of democracy. After completion of this, scholars will move onto a DBQ that correlates with this unit. The DBQ Project has a great document based question for this unit, "*Why Did the Japanese Bomb Pearl Harbor?*". Scholars will annotate and analyze documents, create a thesis statement, and cite evidence from the documents to prove their thesis in a coherent essay. This essay will teach them persuasive writing skills, as well as using textual evidence to answer an overarching question. Scholars will be responsible for grouping like documents together, creating a thesis statement to answer the historical question, and finally pull evidence from the text to prove their thesis and answer the historical question. This process will help them when they move on to high school as well as college and give them the skills needed to write a thoughtful, factual essay.
- 4) Japanese American experiences in the US using literature: Scholars will be reading one memoir (*Farewell to Manzanar*) for this unit. *Farewell to Manzanar* is the story of Jeanne Wakatsuki and her family who, because of their Japanese ancestry and living in California, are sent to Manzanar internment camp shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. The story begins with Jeanne and her mother watching her fisherman father and brothers leaving for a fishing trip. They then realize that the boats are turning around, and hear a man from the docks yell that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. Jeanne's father, who is a Japanese immigrant, is arrested shortly after and taken to Fort Lincoln with other Japanese men who the FBI have convicted of aiding the Japanese. Her father was accused of selling oil to the

Japanese off the coast of California, but this claim was unwarranted and he was then sent to Manzanar to be with the family after almost a year.

Jeanne speaks candidly about the time leading up to Manzanar, how she feared other Japanese people since her family was the only one in her neighborhood, how when she moved to another area full of Japanese people she was treated differently since she didn't know how to speak Japanese, and how she felt hostility from Caucasians during this time as anti-Japanese sentiments had grown after the Pearl Harbor Attack. Jeanne and her family are sent to Manzanar camp in Owens Valley, California a few weeks after her father is sent away. She describes the conditions in detail, right down to the open latrines and food issues. Jeanne then speaks about how the camp essentially became her home, living there for 3 ½ years all the while having her rights as a US citizen taken away simply because her father and mother were Japanese.

Jeanne talks about her experiences with her family at the camp, how the camp changed the way her family dynamic worked, ultimately leading to its demise. Her father became an alcoholic due to being sent to Fort Lincoln (even beating her mother in a drunken rage), her brothers and sisters moved to other camps or other areas inland in order to find work and get out of the camp, and her life was changed forever. In the foreword of the book, she talks about why she decided 30 years after the fact to write the memoir. Her reasoning was that although it was a “dead issue”, an injustice had been done and she wanted to tell people what it was really like inside of the camps. She says that she had heard the camps compared to “concentration camps and they weren't like that at all.” This memoir is one of the first that I have found which tells the true story of time in the internment camps, from the point of view of a 7 year old Japanese-American girl.

While reading, scholars will complete worksheets asking them to analyze what they have read for each chapter. There are also writing prompts which scholars will complete (interpretive, critical, and personal writing). Scholars will then, after reading, have Socratic Seminars based on certain topics talked about in the book. Using textual evidence, scholars will compare what they have read about in *Farewell to Manzanar* to what they have read prior to beginning the book (news articles and website information). Scholars will develop in depth and thoughtful commentary on their specific group's experiences. Giving students a platform to speak about what they have read and hear the ideas of other students will allow for them to think outside of their own minority group's experiences.

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZRmghJWTCCpaIXnZPfgW3Q5MBSnJ9jb8\\_Df0NPQYSTI/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZRmghJWTCCpaIXnZPfgW3Q5MBSnJ9jb8_Df0NPQYSTI/edit?usp=sharing)

### Writing prompts for *Farewell to Manzanar*

#### *Interpretive*

1. From what point of view is the novel written? How does this affect your understanding of the story?
2. Discuss the theme of overcoming prejudice as it is presented in the novel.
3. Discuss Jeanne's emergence as a person, and the roles that Mama, Papa, and her friends and teachers had in her development.

4. What are the main conflicts in the story? How are they resolved?
5. How important is the setting to the story?
6. Discuss the use of the pear tree as a symbol in the novel.
7. In the book, Jeanne compares her father to a slave set free after the Civil War. How do you respond to this comparison? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
8. Why did Papa burn his flag and papers?
9. Jeanne says that her life really started at Manzanar. What does she mean?
10. In Chapter 13, Jeanne describes the way Reiko and Mitsue treated her. Why do you think they did this?

### *Critical*

11. How does the title fit with the themes in the book?
12. How did Jeanne change over the course of the book? Were the changes for the good?
13. How did Papa change over the course of the book? Were the changes for the good?
14. What was the overall mood of the book? Give examples to support your answer.
15. Discuss the imagery used in the book. How vivid is it? How effective is it?
16. During the course of the book, Jeanne strays from the straight sequence and gives some of the background on her parents. How does this organization affect your understanding and enjoyment of the book?
17. The book ends with a flashback to the day the family left Manzanar. How effective is this ending? How else might the authors have ended the book?
18. Jeanne mentions several other family members but does not go into detail about them. Does this lack of description add to or take away from the book?

### *Personal Response*

19. Did you enjoy reading Farewell to Manzanar? Why or why not?
20. Farewell to Manzanar had several tragic or difficult circumstances. Which was the hardest, and why?
21. Which of the characters did you like, and why? Which did you dislike, and why?
22. This book is a memoir, written in first person. How do you think you would respond differently if the book were written in third person?
23. Which scene or event in the book did you like most? Why?
24. Which scene or event in the book was most upsetting or disturbing? Why?
25. Before you read the book, did you think it would be possible to live in an internment camp? What do you think after reading Farewell to Manzanar?
26. Did Jeanne's experiences change the way you look at yourself? How?
27. Does the author's presentation of the situation make it real for you?
28. Have you read any other stories similar to Farewell to Manzanar? If so, tell about them.
29. Would you recommend this book to another student? Why or why not?
30. If you could change one thing about the book, what would it be?
31. What questions would you like to ask the authors?

5.) RAFT activity: Scholars also completed a RAFT (Role, Audience, Format, Topic) activity to take on different characters from this time period. The RAFT exercise was introduced to me in my AIG certification course. It is yet another way of differentiating but with the product created, rather than content or concept. Scholars were given 4 different roles, which had their own

audience, format, and topic. One example was FDR having a conversation with Eleanor Roosevelt about why he signed Executive Order 9066. The other examples were a neighbor of a Japanese American family writing to their uncle in New York on what they thought about the situation with Japanese Americans, a young Japanese American girl or boy writing a poem to future generations of Americans about why people should be judged on their merit, not their race, religion, or the way they look, and finally a guard at an internment camp writing in a personal diary describing daily life in the internment camps. One addition I thought of after the activity was completed was a Japanese fighter pilot speaking to his commander about attacking Pearl Harbor. You could add different roles if you wanted to, these are just the ones in which I felt covered almost all of what we learned in the unit. This exercise gives scholars multiple viewpoints to look at the same time in history and helps them better understand all the pieces that fit together to make history.

**Research Basis:** The more often students write, the more proficient they become as writers. RAFT is a writing strategy that helps students understand their role as a writer and how to effectively communicate their ideas and mission clearly so that the reader can easily understand everything written. Additionally, RAFT helps students focus on the audience they will address, the varied formats for writing, and the topic they'll be writing about. By using this strategy, teachers encourage students to write creatively, to consider a topic from multiple perspectives, and to gain the ability to write for different audiences. In the book, *Strategic Writing*, Deborah Dean explains that writing for differing purposes and audiences may require using different genres, different information, and different strategies. Developing a sense of audience and purpose in writing, in all communication, is an important part of growth as a writer. RAFT assignments encourage students to uncover their own voices and formats for presenting their ideas about content information they are studying. Students learn to respond to writing prompts that require them to think about various perspectives:

- **Role of the Writer:** Who are you as the writer? A movie star? The President? A plant?
- **Audience:** To whom are you writing? A senator? Yourself? A company?
- **Format:** In what format are you writing? A diary entry? A newspaper? A love letter?
- **Topic:** What are you writing about?

**Strategy in Practice:** Explain to your students the various perspectives writers must consider when completing any writing assignment. Examples of different roles, audiences, formats, and topics can be found in a list of [Picture Book RAFTs](#) by [Doug Fisher](#) and [Nancy Frey](#).

- Decide on an area of study currently taking place in your classroom for which you could collaborate with the students and write a class RAFT. Discuss with your students the basic premise of the content for which you'd like to write, but allow students to help you pick the role, audience, format, and topic to write about.
  - For instance, if students are reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, you may have students respond to the issues in the story as various characters to different audiences in multiple formats.
- Have a class think-aloud to come up with ideas for the piece of writing that you will create as a group. Model on a whiteboard, overhead projector, or chart paper how you

would write in response to the prompt. Allow student input and creativity as you craft your piece of writing.

- Give students another writing prompt (for which you have already chosen the role, audience, format, and topic) and have students react to the prompt either individually or in small groups. It works best if all students follow the same process so the students can learn from the varied responses of their classmates.
- Choose a few students to read their RAFT aloud. Have a class discussion about how each student created their own version of the RAFT while using the same role, audience, format, and topic.
- As students become comfortable in reacting to RAFT prompts, give students a list of options for each component and let them choose their role, audience, format, and topic.
- Eventually, students may choose a role, audience, format, and topic entirely on their own. Varied prompts allow students to compare and contrast multiple perspectives, deepening their understanding of the content when shared. “  
(<http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/using-raft-writing-strategy-30625.html>)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GVNIYzHcm5JpnEN2kUoxHhIy60fqHGDtjNVkXCB9ESU/edit?usp=sharing>

6.) Film (Arts component): Scholars will watch film which depicts the lives of Japanese Americans during WWII. *American Pastime* is the film that will be used in this unit (but there are other options as well which talk about Japanese Internment and the experiences in the camps). Scholars will watch the film,” The dramatic impact W.W.II had in the home-front as U.S. Japanese families were uprooted from their daily lives and placed in internment camps in western States in the early 1940s.” (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0825225/>). This film was created in 2007 and is set in the Topaz War Relocation Camp in Utah during WWII. The film is a dramatic narrative but is based on the true events of Japanese Internment. The main characters are the Noruma family which consists of Japanese born parents and two American born sons. After Executive Order 9066, the Noruma family is forced to leave their house in Los Angeles, California and is relocated to Utah. Mr. Noruma was a professional baseball player and being a baseball league inside the camp (giving the movie its titular line American Pastime). With actual footage and pictures from the Topaz internment camp and reenactment footage, the film shows perseverance in the face of racism during this pivotal time in our history. Once the film is completed, we will have Socratic Seminars after to speak about instances of racism or discrimination as well as how Japanese Americans were portrayed in the film (in comparison to their white counterparts). Scholars will then write a reflective paper (2 pages) about the film and its portrayal of Japanese Americans.

7.) Review: Scholars will play a Kahoot! game with key vocabulary and events being asked. Some of the questions will be: What date was the attack on Pearl Harbor? Where is Japan located? Which of the following is NOT a reason Japan bombed Pearl Harbor: Japan’s New World Order, Oil Embargo, US assisting England during WWII, or US expanding fleets of ships? What is the name of the first generation of Japanese immigrants? What is the name for the first generation Japanese Americans? What was the name of the second generation Japanese

Americans? True or False: Many of the people in the internment camps were US citizens? What was Pearl Harbor? Who was in charge of the attack on Pearl Harbor? What was Executive Order 9066? What was the name of the camps which Japanese and Japanese Americans had to go to after Executive Order 9066? How long were most people interned during WWII? What is the name of a person who is not a citizen of the country they live in? What was the rationale for interning Japanese and Japanese Americans during WWII?

8.) Culminating project: Scholars will complete a choice board on Japanese Internment which will give them multiple means in which to teach others about Japanese Internment. Some choices are Prezi presentations about Japanese Internment, writing a narrative as if they were a Japanese American during/after WWII, and other digital media to depict the experiences of Japanese Americans during this time period. These choice boards will be presented in class and scholars will complete peer review forms for 3 of their classmates. These peers reviews will be anonymous and it is anticipated that scholars will be constructive in their responses.

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<sup>i</sup> "Civil Rights & Civil Liberties: Crash Course Government #23," available on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbwsF-A2sTg&list=PLJ9prB4kBUYncPHfgLgw70KpkcKzryCl&index=10>

## **Appendix 1: Teaching Standards:**

12.H.1.3 Analyze primary sources in terms of the creator's perspective, purpose, the overall historical context in which each was produced, and their significance to the struggle for freedom and equality.

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12.H.2.2 Analyze 20th Century legislation, executive orders and court interpretations by the U.S. government in terms of their origins, development and impact on American freedom and equality.

12.H.3.4 Analyze how various individuals and/or disadvantaged groups strategized, organized, advocated and protested regarding freedom and equality.

12.H.4.2 Analyze the use of power and authority by community, business, and government leaders to deny freedom and equality.

12.H.5.1 Analyze the relationship between United States participation in various world wars and perceptions of freedom and equality.

12.C.1.3 Analyze how movement and settlement in the United States impacted the cultural identity of individuals and groups.

12.C.1.4 Use examples of literature and the arts to examine the paradox of identifying one's self through cultural differences and a shared belief in ideals such as freedom and equality.