



Lesson 4: Internment Experiences

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

Activity 3: Identities

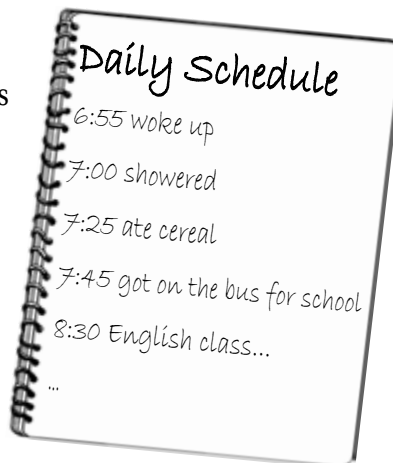
How did the identities of Japanese Americans shape their internment experiences?

Objective:

Students learn about Japanese American internment by reading individual stories of people who were at Manzanar and other camps.

Procedure:

- ✔ Distribute and assign different individual ID (identification) booklets which are available in .pdf format on the Educator Resources disc or visit www.nps.gov/manz. The stories of over sixty individuals are represented so that each student can explore a different experience.
- ✔ Students independently read the ID booklets in class to learn the unique story of an individual affected by internment.
- ✔ Divide students into groups of four to discuss their ID booklets and answer questions on the Discussion Groups worksheet (located in the Lesson 4 Activity 3 Resources section).
- ✔ Students share the conclusions from the group discussion with the entire class. Explore recurring themes in the ID booklets and class discussion.
- ✔ Students are given the Writing Assignment handout (located in the Lesson 4 Activity 3 Resources section). Have them choose one writing assignment from this handout. Depending on the ability of the class, students can be given one to two weeks to complete one of the writing assignments (possibly for homework). Provide the Letter Assignment handout (located in the Lesson 4 Activity 3 Resources section) to students who choose assignment 1.
- ✔ Ask students to journal a day in their lives. They should take their journal with them everywhere they go to log all their activities for one day. For instance, they should record what time they wake up, times for school classes, band or drama practice, chores, sports, etc.



Grade Level: 10 & 11

Time: 2 hours (class)
1 week (home)

Materials:

- ID Booklets
- Discussion Groups Worksheet
- ID booklet writing assignment
- ID booklet scoring sheet
- Letter Assignment handout
- Student journals

Concepts Covered:

- Summarize** biographical information.
- Compare & contrast** information from primary sources.
- Relate** primary source material from a historical period to today's world.
- Understand** the elements that comprise characterization.
- Develop** interview techniques.
- Use** vivid diction and figurative language (metaphor, simile, symbolism, etc.) in original compositions.

CDE Standards:

10th Grade

English/Language Arts

Reading

2.3 2.4 2.5

Writing

1.3 1.4 1.5 2.1

Written & Oral English Language Conventions

1.1 1.2 1.3

History/Social Science

10.8.6

11th Grade

English/Language Arts

Reading

2.4 2.6

Writing

2.1 2.4

Listening & Speaking

2.2

History/Social Science

11.7.3 11.7.5



Activity 3: **Identities**

How did the identities of Japanese Americans shape their internment experiences?



Lining up for a meal at a Manzanar mess hall. Ansel Adams, 1942

Procedure (continued):

- ✓ Ask students to review their recorded day and discuss the following questions: *Do your recorded activities represent a typical day of your life? Do your activities represent your identity in America? If someone read your daily log would that person know that you live in America or could these same activities take place in another country?*
- ✓ Conduct a classroom discussion with the following questions:

 - Have you ever treated someone differently due to their identity?*
 - How can you ensure that we treat everyone fairly and respectfully?*
- ✓ Have students write final reflections in their journal.

Assessment:

1. Involvement in class discussions.
2. See that each group is working cooperatively and evaluate the quality of shared material during whole class discussion.
3. Individual grades based on writing assignments.

Extension:

1. Refer to education DVD, **MANZANAR: Desert Diamonds Behind Barbed Wire**, "Manzanar Scrapbook".
2. Have students compare their daily log with the day in the life of a Japanese American internee. They can do this by reviewing the War Relocation Center newspapers or by listening to oral history interviews. Both can be found on Densho's website www.densho.org. They may also read a memoir from a former internee or camp employee.



ID Booklet Writing Assignment Scoring Sheet

Student Name: _____

	Possible Points	Points Earned
<i>Following Directions</i>		
1. Assignment turned in on time	5	_____
2. Follows directions for chosen assignment	5	_____
<i>Content</i>		
3. Uses information from ID booklet	10	_____
4. Shows insight into internment camp experience	10	_____
<i>Technique</i>		
5. Grammar, Spelling, and Syntax	10	_____
6. Presentation	10	_____
TOTAL:	<u>50</u>	_____

Student Name: _____

	Possible Points	Points Earned
<i>Following Directions</i>		
1. Assignment turned in on time	5	_____
2. Follows directions for chosen assignment	5	_____
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5. Grammar, Spelling, and Syntax	10	_____
6. Presentation	10	_____
TOTAL:	<u>50</u>	_____

Activity 3: **Identities****ID Booklets: Discussion Groups**

Directions: Read the ID booklet you received. Then in groups of four or five, answer the questions below:

1. Have each person in your group summarize the life story of the person in their ID booklet.
2. What similarities and differences did your group find in the experiences of each person?
3. Was there anything about a particular person's experience that your group found surprising or especially significant? Any unusual differences?
4. Did you connect emotionally to the person's story in your ID booklet? Why or why not?
5. What made the biggest impression on your group members?
6. If one of your booklets profiles a child of a WRA (War Relocation Authority) staff member, describe the differences between staff children and internee children.
7. How many different perspectives on the camp experience were reflected in your group's ID booklets? What were they?
8. How did the identities of the individuals affect their opportunities and/or lack thereof in America?
9. How are the stories in the ID booklets relevant to our lives today?
10. Describe any additional findings or thoughts that your group noted. Be prepared to report your findings to the class tomorrow.



Writing Assignments

Directions:

Read your ID booklet carefully. The booklets contain real stories from people who experienced Japanese American internment. Some of the people wrote their card themselves, other cards were written by their friends and families. After you have read your card, complete one of the following writing assignments.

Your assignment is due on _____.

Assignment 1

Imagine you are the person in the ID booklet. Write a letter describing internment. In paragraph one, explain the internment experience. In the next paragraph, write about the advice you think this person would want to share with students today. Refer to specific information in the ID booklet. Your letter should include all five parts of a friendly letter (heading, salutation, two to three body paragraphs, closing, and signature).

Assignment 2

Imagine that you could interview the person in the ID booklet. Write a list of questions you would like to ask (you should have at least 5 questions). In a well-written paragraph, describe how you feel about the person in your ID booklet.

Assignment 3

Imagine you are the person in the ID booklet. Try to express your feelings and experiences during the war. You may write a short story, a poem, a series of diary entries or a descriptive passage. Try to include some imagery (metaphor, simile, symbolism, allusion, etc.) and vivid vocabulary. Make your reader “see” and “feel” what you saw and felt during the war.

Assignment 4

If you have a relative or friend who lived through internment or another experience that violated people’s civil or human rights (the Holocaust, the Armenian Holocaust, escape from Vietnam, or prisoner of war) create an ID booklet biography for him/her. You may want to conduct an interview to get more information. If you have a photograph, copy it and place it next to the biography.



Activity 3: **Identities**

Letter to You from a Fictitious Former Internee

(Fill in the blanks with your own creative writing)

_____, California

Date: _____

Dear _____:
(your name)

I'm glad to hear that you are studying about the Japanese American internment in your class this year. I hope that the booklets help you understand something about our experiences, during World War II. In the camp, I learned many things...

Forty-three years after we left camp, the U.S. government apologized for putting us there. They realized you cannot take people away just because they look or act differently. After the terrible events of September 11, 2001, I hope that Arab and Muslim Americans or anybody else are not viewed as "the enemy" and subjected to racial profiling. It is important that after this tragedy, we learn from the mistakes of the past. We should...

Thank you for your interest in my life, and I hope that you have learned how tragic prejudice and racism can be for all of us.

Sincerely,
