



# Lesson 4: Remembering Manzanar

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

## Activity 8: What is Freedom and Who Will Guarantee It? How did Japanese Americans' identities shape their internment experiences?

### Objective:

Students draw conclusions about internment and explain how the lessons learned are important for our future.

### Procedure:

- ✓ Place the 1990 apology letter written by President George H.W. Bush for the class to see (located in the Lesson 4 Activity 8 Resources).
- ✓ Break down the words and meaning of this letter. Talk about such phrases as:
  - "We can never fully right the wrongs of the past."*
  - "...Rectify injustice and uphold the rights of individuals."*
  - "...Recognize that serious injustices were done to Japanese Americans during World War II."*
  - "...Offering a sincere apology, your fellow Americans have in a very real sense renewed their traditional commitment to the ideals of freedom, equality and justice."*
- ✓ Ask your students to journal answers to the following questions:
  - What does this letter promise that our government will do for the citizens of America?*
  - What role do you play in providing freedom, equality and justice to America and its people?*
  - How do freedom, equality and justice affect your identity in America?*
  - Are freedom, equality and justice only offered to certain cultures or identities? Why?*

**Grade Level:** 4th

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials:**

Student journals

Overhead projector or LCD

1990 apology letter from

President George H.W. Bush.

### Concepts Covered:

**Discuss** meaning of abstract words and theories i.e. "freedom."

**Discuss** meaning of identity and the role identity plays.

### CDE Standards:

#### 4th Grade

#### English/Language Arts: Writing

2.2 2.2.a 2.2.b

#### History/Social Science 4.5.1



5th grade class at Manzanar, Dorothea Lange 1942



Activity 8: **What is Freedom and Who Will Guarantee It?**  
 How did Japanese Americans' identities shape their internment experiences?



THE WHITE HOUSE  
 WASHINGTON

A monetary sum and words alone cannot restore lost years or erase painful memories; neither can they fully convey our Nation's resolve to rectify injustice and to uphold the rights of individuals. We can never fully right the wrongs of the past. But we can take a clear stand for justice and recognize that serious injustices were done to Japanese Americans during World War II.

In enacting a law calling for restitution and offering a sincere apology, your fellow Americans have, in a very real sense, renewed their traditional commitment to the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice. You and your family have our best wishes for the future.

Sincerely,

GEORGE BUSH  
 PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 1990

**Assessment:**

1. Review completed journals.
2. Level of class discussion and participation.

**Extension:**

1. Refer to education DVD, **MANZANAR: Desert Diamonds Behind Barbed Wire**, "Day In Their Shoes."

**Procedure (continued):**

- ✓ Bring the class back for a discussion on their journal answers.
- ✓ State the Essential Question:

*How does my identity shape my experience in America?*

Ask students to take time to read over their journal, which may help them answer the Essential Question. Write answers on the board.

Activity 8: **What is Freedom and Who Will Guarantee It?****1990 Letter of Apology**

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

A monetary sum and words alone cannot restore lost years or erase painful memories; neither can they fully convey our Nation's resolve to rectify injustice and to uphold the rights of individuals. We can never fully right the wrongs of the past. But we can take a clear stand for justice and recognize that serious injustices were done to Japanese Americans during World War II.

In enacting a law calling for restitution and offering a sincere apology, your fellow Americans have, in a very real sense, renewed their traditional commitment to the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice. You and your family have our best wishes for the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be "G. H. W. Bush".

GEORGE BUSH  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 1990