

***Farewell to Manzanar***  
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## **I. Lesson Summary**

### **Summary**

This lesson is designed to give students a glimpse into the life of a young Japanese American girl who spent time in an internment camp during World War II. Students will read about her experience through her own eyes. Then, students will compare her story with the well known story of Anne Frank during the Holocaust. Both girls were similar in age and faced hardship during the same war, although on opposite fronts and with vastly different outcomes. Students will compare their stories and will then seek to decide for themselves, with the help of the DBQ, as to whether the United States was justified in putting Japanese Americans in internments camps during the war.

### **Objectives**

This lesson follows the following SSS Benchmarks...

SS.A.5.4.5 – Know the origins and effects of the involvement of the United States in World War II.

### **U.S. History Event or Era**

This event takes place during World War II.

### **Grade Level**

I teach middle school, and our curriculum doesn't allow for much time to be spent on this topic. I would suggest this be used at the high school level. Please make any changes that need to be made in order to make the lesson more age appropriate.

### **Materials Needed**

- Class set of *Farewell to Manzanar*, by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston
- Japanese Internment DBQ, by Nicole Maassen (found on TAH website)
- Venn Diagram

### **Lesson Time**

This lesson should take roughly two weeks, depending on class time and reading ability of your students.

## **II. Lesson Procedures**

### **Procedures**

Week One:

1. Read the book *Farewell to Manzanar* with your students. You will most likely need to have students read in class, since you'd be using a classroom set. If your school doesn't have a set, speak with your Media Specialist and administration about ordering a set. It is a fantastic look into the life and mind of a young girl in a Japanese Internment camp.
2. There are numerous activities that you could use to go along with the book. I suggest comparing it to Anne Frank's account of her experience during the Holocaust. Many students are familiar with Anne Frank, but are unaware that Japanese Americans were imprisoned in the United States while U.S. troops were fighting to stop the injustices of the Holocaust. Of course, it is not an easy comparison to make, since the United States was not committing genocide against the Japanese Americans. Still, it makes for an interesting discussion.
3. Depending on time, you may need to finish reading the book during the first part of Week Two.

Week Two:

- 1.) Hand out the DBQ entitled "Japanese Internment."
- 2.) Walk the students through the directions, essay question, and historical background.
- 3.) Students will individually look at each document and answer the questions that go with it. Encourage them not to spend too much time on the questions. The important thing is for them to have time to write their essays.
- 4.) Depending on the number of times your students have actually done DBQs, you may or may not need to spend extra time explaining the process. If some students don't quite finish, you can allow them extra time to finish the essay at home.

### **III. Activities**

- Read *Farewell to Manzanar*, by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston
- Comparison of *Farewell to Manzanar* to *The Diary of Anne Frank*
- DBQ: “Japanese Internment”

### **IV. Assessment**

The DBQ is this lesson’s assessment. Any further assessment for this activity is optional. Personally, I would include a few questions on a unit test or quiz. You may also judge their essays as a class grade. It is up to your discretion.

### **V. Resources**

- *Farewell to Manzanar*, by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston
- Various resources from the coordinating DBQ