

Defining moments

from the past with lessons for a post-9/11 world...

Unit Lesson Plans

Overview/Objectives

To expose students to a troubling period in U.S. history, the internment of Japanese Americans during World War Two. The goal is for students to understand the how's and why's of our government's reaction to the Pearl Harbor attack. While the internment is a sub-topic of World War II history, several of the important themes of the War are addressed (changing views of human rights, attitudes on the American home front, and international politics of the era).

Students will learn through a combination of methods, including mock activities, visual learning projects, and lectures. Students will need to know how to take notes, and create a time line and flow chart. They will also develop research skills and learn to frame issues and make decisions (in particular by using a decision-making matrix). Learning will occur on all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy; all historical themes will be touched upon; most social studies (historical and decision making) content standards will be addressed.

Benchmarks Targeted

Most social studies (historical and decision making) content standards will be addressed, including some from civics, geography, and economics.

Procedure

Lesson One (1 day): Role-play experience of Internment evacuation through a careful and controlled removal of students from class.

Lesson Two (2 days): Lecture and supportive readings. Activity: Create timeline and flow chart.

Lesson Three (2 days): After watching the video, briefly discuss the economic issues Japanese Americans faced at the time of their removal, return and today. Also, examine the social and political issues that motivated the decision to intern American citizens.

Lesson Four (3-5 days): Hold a mock senate/house committee meeting investigating how and why the government came to such a decision in 1942. Alternate activity: hold a mock Supreme Court hearing to decide if reparations should have been granted to U.S. citizens who where interned during WWII.

Lesson Five (1 day): A general review discussion of what was learned during unit. Formulate essay-test questions (the suggested form of assessment) or prepare students for a multiple-choice test.

Integrated Lessons

Integrated Literature/English with Social Studies/History:

Have students read a book or excerpts of several sources about how kids their age experienced WWII. Use sources from several of the following groups: Japanese-American, Anglo-American, German, Eastern European Jewish, French, English, and Russian. Have a combined assignment where students write a short story using documentary evidence from Social Studies and ideas from Literature readings.

Integrated Art and Music with Social Studies:

Expose students to musical and artistic sources that convey how people (particularly Japanese Americans) experienced World War II. The Library of Congress website is a good place to begin. Have students write

a short essay explaining the significance of a particular piece and or have them create their own expression (musical lyrics, drawing, etc) inspired by what they've seen or heard.

Lesson One

NOTE: We strongly recommend that you obtain the approval of building administration before using this lesson. Role-play how Japanese American kids may have felt when they were evacuated. Be very careful and make sure this is a controlled action. **Only do this with administration approval.**

Order of events

At the beginning of class *casually* inform students (the illusion will be strengthened if you read from an official looking letter, perhaps on State of Michigan letterhead or from a declaration you can get from your Senator or Representative) that those students who live in such and such neighborhood will be moved tonight, along with their whole family, to a remote part of the state because of some arbitrary reason (whatever fits your school district).

Continue with the lesson you were teaching as if nothing were strange about the news. Crack down on the affected students while you are teaching; do not allow them to talk to their friends about this. During the lesson, keep dropping lines like "Oh, but those of you from such and such neighborhood need not worry about this, you won't be joining us again".

At some point they should become aggravated enough to interrupt you and demand an explanation. Calmly explain you have nothing to do with the decree, and act as if they should not be upset over this. Give them an attitude and say something like, "What's your problem?"

Get them going (upset) and convince them *this is happening*. Then reconsider and "help" them by talking about what they are going to pack, what they are going to miss, consequences for parents (worked hard to buy a house or build a deck, etc).

Either just before they get too upset, or within 15-20 minutes, stop the role-play and explain simulating what Japanese American kids went through and have a discussion of feelings over the event.

Lesson Two

Give a two-part lecture from which students must take notes by creating a flow chart and a timeline. The flow chart should describe the political motives that resulted in the attack on Pearl Harbor and, indirectly, the Internment. The timeline should detail the changing definition of human rights from beginning of Western/Euro history to today.

Day 1

1. If text has a section about the Internment Camps assign it the night before. If not, provide your own source. You may want to download or locate sources from the Library of Congress (www.loc.gov). Also, both *The Century* by Peter Jennings and Todd Brewster and *Don't Know Much About History* by Kenneth Davis have small sections referring to the camps. Be sure to draw students' attention to the fact that most texts only briefly mention the Internment Camps, if at all.
2. Review the reading and give lecture (see attached outline).

3. Have students take notes by creating a flow chart that describes the events that initiated WWII in Europe, and the series of events that led to the Japanese decision to attack the American Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor.

Day 2

4. Discuss how the decision to go to war is not solely a political one. Describe the human rights issues of war and the growing tendency against war at all costs.
5. Give second half of lecture (see attached outline).
6. Have students take notes by creating a time line that detail how the concept of human rights has changed over time.

Lesson Three

Your emphasis in this lesson will depend on your plan for Lesson Four (see below). For Lesson Three, you will want to emphasize the step (3 or 4) that complements your choice for Lesson Four so students are equally exposed to both themes of the video.

Day 1

1. Watch majority of video, as time permits.

Day 2

2. Finish video.
3. Describe and explain the economic issues that Japanese Americans faced as a result of their removal and at their return, and the controversies over government reparations today.
4. Review the social and political issues that motivated the decision to intern Japanese Americans.
5. In remaining time, introduce the next lesson.

Lesson Four

This lesson will enhance students' skills for group work, research methods, data analysis, and decision making, while also teaching our governmental structures (core democratic values). Students will work in small groups (committees) to conduct investigations into:

- how and why our government chose to intern all Japanese Americans during World War II
- whether Japanese Americans deserve financial restitution for their internment experience.

This lesson can model either a U.S. or State of Michigan Congressional Hearing or a Supreme Court Trial. The video addresses the courts system, but larger classes may not be able to adequately participate when modeling the Supreme Court hearing. Modeling congressional hearings works well if you are team teaching; one class can be the Senate and the other the House.

The entire activity can take from 3 to 5 days, depending on how you chose top structure it.

Mock Congressional Committee Hearing

Day 1

1. Explain how much time will be allowed for research and when presentations (committee sessions) will begin. At your discretion, you may want to require a certain number or type of resources. Explain what you will be looking for during the discussions, and if you prefer to, determine the number of times, each student must contribute.
2. Explain the basic structure of Congress and how most of the work is done through committees and subcommittees. Begin address each other formally, i.e. "Senator Jones."
3. Divide students into two equal groups, the Senate and the House. Have each group elect a Chairperson. Since the House and Senate often have different names for committees with the same interests, you may want to call one the "Committee on Safety and Security of U.S." and the other "Committee on Japanese American Internment."
4. Assign students to each group as committee members. This activity uses 16 to 18 students as committee members, plus chairpersons.
5. Begin research.

Day 2

6. Continue research.
7. Explain to your Chairpersons what their responsibilities will be during the hearings.

Day 3

8. If possible, use conference rooms at your school to keep the atmosphere as formal as possible. Otherwise, set room up to have two separate circles of desks.
9. Explain to the "legislators" how they must be recognized by the chair in order to speak and so forth. Also, tell students they must reach a decision with 10 minutes left of class.
10. Begin hearings simultaneously.
11. When decisions from each are made, have the Chairpersons report them and address why their Committees decided in the way they did. Have a class discussion about the outcomes, addressing differences or similarities between the two decisions.

Day 4

12. Using a decision-making matrix, assess with students the criteria they used to make their decisions. Address how the criteria (philosophy and social attitudes) might have been different in 1942. Work through a matrix that shows what the decision in 1942 was based upon and another to determine why or why not the same thing might be done today. (See attached handout).
13. This is also a great time (if you haven't already done so) to talk about how other ethnic groups experienced WWII in America. Address why German Americans were not put in internment camps. Describe other people who were held in custody during the war. Discuss African Americans' experiences in the military and at home, as well as the "Rosie the Riveter" phenomenon.

Mock Supreme Court Trial

Day 1

1. Explain how much time will be allowed for research and when presentations (trial) will begin. Use your discretion as teacher if you want to require a certain amount or type of sources. Explain what you will be looking for during the discussions, again you may want to assign a certain number of times each student needs to contribute.
2. Explain the basic structure of the Supreme Court. Begin addressing students formally, “Justice Smith” etc.
3. Assign or take volunteers to create a panel of justices (9 for US, 7 for Michigan). Then create two teams of at least two lawyers for each side of the argument. Divide the remaining students (4 to 6) between the two sides calling them “legal clerks.” This activity uses between 11 and 17 students, depending on the choice of Michigan or U.S. You can involve more students by allowing any that feel strongly about a certain argument to be presenters (the Supreme Court’s equivalent of witnesses/ official testimony).
4. Begin research.

Day 2

5. Continue research.
6. Talk to each group and explain what their responsibilities and proper conduct will be during the actual trial.

**Note: you may want to have the justice’s work on a parallel assignment while the lawyers are doing their research. When judges get together to deliberate, have the lawyers work on the parallel assignment.

Day 3

7. If possible, set up a conference room to simulate a courtroom in order to keep the atmosphere as formal as possible. If not, configure your classroom with a row of desks (judges) at the front and the remaining chairs separated into two sides, as in a courtroom.
8. Remind students of proper behavior in court and to address each other formally. Set limits on how much time each side gets to argue. Let the trial last the entire hour.

Day 4

9. Have judges discuss the two arguments, come to a decision, and write up their “opinion” (and a dissenting opinion if needed).

**This is the time for the lawyers to work on the parallel assignment.

Day 5

10. Using a decision-making matrix, lead students through a discussion of the criteria they used to make their arguments and reach their decisions.
11. This is also a great time (if you haven’t already done so) to talk about how other ethnic minorities experienced WWII. Address why German Americans were not put in internment camps. Describe other people who were held in custody during the war. Discuss African Americans’ experiences in the military and at home, as well as the “Rosie the Riveter” phenomenon.

Lesson Five

Conduct a relay game review that covers the concepts and discoveries of the unit. Finish by formulating/giving essay test questions. The teacher may give a multiple-choice exam, but an essay test is the best form of assessment for high-level analysis the unit encouraged.

Relay Game Instructions

1. Divide class into four groups. Let each group choose their team captain. Have a prize for the winning team (I use candy, giving all participants one piece and two to the winners).
2. Have students form four single-file lines, with the person at the front of the line holding a bell or flashlight to be used as a buzzer. The first team to buzz in and answer the teacher's questions correctly earns one point for student in position one, two for position two and so forth. After a student answers they pass the buzzer on and go to the end of the line. Each team gets one pass per rotation, and only the team captain can call it out. The pass allows a student to be skipped and go to the end of the line without answering or penalty. To make it easier to keep points, you may want to have each student wear a big tag on a string around their neck with their position/point number. The game can be played either to a certain number of points or for a length of time. Questions should begin easy and increase in difficulty. Limit time to begin answering to 30 seconds. If question is not answered correctly, put it back randomly into pile of questions. It is also fun to mark a few of the question cards with a bonus like extra points or extra rewards.
3. A few example questions:
 - Why did Japan attack Pearl Harbor?
 - What were two results of Japan's attacking Pearl Harbor?
 - What was the name of the main character from the video?
 - How many justices sit on the U.S. Supreme Court?
(or what are the two houses of Congress?)
 - Where were the internment camps located?
 - Why did Hitler begin annexing lands in Europe?
 - What was the philosophical idea behind the American and French Revolutions?
 - When was the League of Nations formed?
 - When was the United Nations formed?
 - Who suffered from the Great Depression?
 - What is "due process" of law?
 - What is the purpose of the United Nations?
 - What are human rights?
 - What human rights did putting Japanese Americans in camps violate?
 - Why did the government decide to put U.S. citizens in internment camps?
 - What did we decide we would have done to Japanese Americans during our mock committee hearings? (Or did we decide to grant reparations to Japanese Americans)
 - Why did we decide that?
 - How did you feel when we simulated being taken away?
 - Was Internment justified or not? Provide two specific supporting facts.
4. Stop the game with enough time left in class for you to and hand out the essay questions for the test. The more experienced teacher may want to guide the students through formulate the questions that will be on the test.

Supplemental Materials

Events that led up to WWII

Flow Chart Outline

1. Results of WWI-- Treaty of Versailles and Wilson's 14 Points/League of Nations.
2. Events in Europe during the late 20's and 30's—specifically Germany and Italy. Discuss the development of Fascism within the context of global Great Depression and racism.
3. Mutual aid treaties and agreements among European nations. American attitude of isolationism.
4. Japanese invasion of Manchuria.
5. Hitler's annexation of Austria in March '38, Czechoslovakia March '39, the invasions of Poland September '39 ...
6. How Italy and Japan got involved in the Axis.
7. Hitler's duplicity in dealings with Russia, resulting in the Soviet's finally siding with the Allies...
8. Japan's Attack on Pearl Harbor.

**This half the lesson should be given from the point of view that “war has a reason and place.”

The changing view of human rights

Time Line Outline

1. Begin around 1066 and describe rights of a citizen and life England (Anglo) under Normans.
2. Describe European life in the 16th Century under a monarchy; discuss the legal system and punishments.
3. American and French Revolutions to ensure personal liberties.
4. Living conditions at the turn of the 19th century, and how civil rights have been expanded over time.
5. Lessons from WWI and emerging Nationalism.
6. Development of Fascism and Communism due to human plight.
7. Atrocities of WWII including extermination of Jews and other “undesirables”, treatment of POWs on both sides, noting Japanese atrocities against POWs, and Internment here in U.S.
8. The motives behind intentions for forming the United Nations.
9. Recent United Nations involvement and non-involvement—Rwanda, Somalia, Kosovo, etc.

**This half the lesson should highlight human rights and include an antiwar point of view.

Decision Matrix

On a scale of 1 to 5, assign each box a number based on strength of decision, add up the column, column with highest number is your decision. For example, anger for the attack would not have been satisfied in 1942 by requiring Japanese Americans to carry identification papers, Jail for suspected would rate a 4 and Internment all a 5. Same with prejudice and suspected conspiracy (know now false) would rate high for Internment. Today in a significantly less prejudice world, the higher scores will be found in monitoring.

	Monitor suspect persons	Require carrying ID papers	Jailing or Internment of suspects	Internment of all Japanese Americans
Fear of attack on west coast				
Prejudice against non-Anglo				
Anger over Pearl Harbor sneak attack				
Presumptive role in conspiracy				