

TEACHER'S GUIDE  
SECONDARY LEVEL



NIKKEI FOR CIVIL RIGHTS & REDRESS  
VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

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NIKKEI FOR CIVIL RIGHTS & REDRESS (NCRR), formerly the Los Angeles Chapter of the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations, was founded in 1980. NCRR is a nonprofit civil rights group that was instrumental in obtaining redress and reparations for Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II. NCRR's mission includes educating the public to prevent the occurrence of future U.S. concentration camps, and it has supported many other groups in their struggles against injustice, racism, and racial profiling.

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VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS is the premier Asian Pacific American media arts center in the United States. Founded in 1970 by filmmakers, community activists, and educators, its mission is to promote intercultural understanding through the preservation, production, and presentation of the history and culture of Asian Pacific Americans. The organization is dedicated to using the power of the media arts to organize and empower communities, to build connections between generations, to challenge prevailing perspectives, and to encourage the critical thinking necessary to build a more just and humane society.

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**STAND UP**  
**FOR JUSTICE**  
*The Ralph Lazo Story*





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## STAND UP FOR JUSTICE

### The Ralph Lazo Story

**S***Stand Up for Justice* is a compelling, engaging 30-minute drama about Ralph Lazo, a Mexican American teenager who leaves his own family in Los Angeles to enter an American concentration camp with his Japanese American classmates during World War II. It is the perfect vehicle to transport your students back to a period of United States history that holds important lessons for today's youth.

Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japan on December 7, 1941, chaos and confusion gripped the Los Angeles Japanese American community. Almost immediately, the FBI took many Japanese American leaders away to destinations unknown. When mainstream newspapers ran unsubstantiated stories about "fifth column" and "espionage" activities in the Japanese American community, some non-Japanese began to distance themselves from their former Japanese American friends, and others displayed racial hatred toward Americans of Japanese ancestry. By April 1942, Japanese Americans were ordered into concentration camps and forced to sell their possessions at a fraction of their value.

*Stand Up for Justice* recreates the uncertainty and fear that Japanese American families faced in the early months of 1942. Over 110,000 Japanese Americans were removed from their homes and incarcerated in concentration camps scattered in desolate areas of the United States. Against this backdrop, Ralph Lazo remained a true friend to Jimmy Matsuoka, a fictionalized character created for *Stand Up for Justice*.<sup>\*</sup> In the film Ralph watches as Jimmy is attacked by a bigoted youth and the Matsuoka family is humiliated as they attempt to sell their personal belongings. Motivated by loyalty and a sense of outrage at the injustice suffered by Jimmy and his family, Ralph boards the train to Manzanar, the concentration camp to which Jimmy and many of his classmates are sent. The two years at Manzanar are, for Ralph, a period of personal growth and understanding of the corrosive effects of incarceration on a people and, more positively, a time for the development of lifelong friendships.

*Stand Up for Justice* powerfully addresses the violations of civil liberties that Japanese Americans faced during World War II and reveals the unique, true story of how one person's actions earned the undying gratitude of a community.

<sup>\*</sup>All characters in *Stand Up for Justice*, except for Ralph, are composite characters drawn from real people and their experiences. Ralph identified himself as Mexican American, although he was of Mexican and Irish ancestry.



Manzanar High Yearbook, 1944



## MESSAGE TO THE TEACHER

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**S***tand Up for Justice* is a film meant to bring hope and inspiration to students. Young people are being taught lessons—whether in the classroom or from their own experiences or study—that there are many injustices in this world. As they learn more and more about these injustices, they often become frustrated or cynical, for they feel they can do nothing to stem the cycle of injustices. They are usually not taught effective and accessible ways to counter and resolve these problems. Even when teachers try to expose them to these ways, it can be, at times, very difficult to engage and inspire students. *Stand Up for Justice* is intended to inform students about the unique challenges faced by Japanese Americans during World War II and to encourage them to think critically about history and take positive action against injustice.

To Ralph, joining his friends in a concentration camp was a straightforward act. But to his Japanese American friends and, hopefully, to students who view the film, what Ralph Lazo did was truly inspirational and uplifting. Ralph's many friends in the Japanese American community will never forget how Ralph did his utmost to make life behind barbed wire as bearable as possible. To them, his actions were a testament to how people can rise above accepting what is politically expedient or just going along with the prevailing attitudes of the time.

In 1983, the federal Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC), after investigating the Japanese American incarceration, concluded that the causes of the forced removal and incarceration were "race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership." Ralph Lazo's story demonstrates to today's students that they too can fight injustice in their own modest yet powerful ways. They need only remember the findings of the CWRIC and understand that the prejudice, hysteria, and political expediency that caused the injustice that Japanese Americans suffered can also lead to similar injustices. Their actions might not be quite as dramatic as Ralph's, and the immediate effects might not seem earth-shattering or popular, but if they stand by their convictions, they will find that their acts can be an inspiration for everyone around them.

This curriculum guide contains one- and two-day lessons based on California content standards, worksheets, activity cards, and homework. The appendix contains valuable resource materials, such as a chronology, primary documents, concentration camp information, and articles written about Ralph Lazo. In this guide, the term *Japanese American* includes all persons of Japanese ancestry—citizen and noncitizen alike. We encourage you to review the materials, which will assist you in answering questions that may arise, enrich the lessons, and enable you to expand the study of America's concentration camps.

Nikkei for Civil Rights & Redress and Visual Communications are organizations that have worked to change stereotypic views and images of Asian Pacific Americans. The perspective presented in this guide on the topic of the World War II forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans is supported by the federal commission report *Personal Justice Denied*, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, and by numerous scholars and historians.





## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

In 1942 the lives of all Japanese Americans were thrown into turmoil by an executive order issued by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Over 110,000 Japanese Americans were imprisoned by the U.S. government in detention centers, internment camps, temporary assembly centers, and concentration camps. Thousands lost their jobs and homes. Students had to leave schools and colleges. The mass exclusion and incarceration and the deprivation of the civil and constitutional rights of innocent men, women, and children by their own government were unprecedented in modern American history.

### The Immediate Aftermath of December 7, 1941

The arrest of persons of Japanese ancestry began shortly after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Within days of the bombing, over 2,000 Japanese, mostly Japanese immigrants with permanent residency status, were arrested and detained by the FBI. Community and business leaders, Japanese-language school teachers, newspaper editors, and Buddhist priests were among those arrested. The families of the detained often did not know where their loved ones had been taken. For some, it was years before they were reunited.

### Executive Order 9066

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which authorized and directed the secretary of war and designated military commanders “to prescribe military areas from which any or all persons may be excluded.” The order states that the action was necessary as “protection against espionage and against sabotage to national-defense material...” There is no direct mention of Japanese Americans in the order. However, the order was the culmination of discussions by the Roosevelt administration and military leaders about how to deal with Japanese Americans and was clearly directed at them.

On March 2, just weeks after EO 9066 was issued, Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt issued Public Proclamation No. 1, which created Military Areas 1 and 2. Military Area No. 1 included the western portions of California, Oregon, and Washington and the southern part of Arizona. The other portions of the states were designated Military Area No. 2. At first all Japanese Americans were to be removed only from Military Area No. 1; later the government decided to remove them from the entire state of California. Japanese Americans were imprisoned in local, temporary (*assembly*) centers and then in concentration camps (*relocation centers*). The inmates were surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by military police. \*

### Reasons Given for Removal

The reason given for removal was “military necessity.” This claim was spelled out by Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, who was commanding general of the Western Defense Command, with responsibility for West Coast security. In his recommendations to the Roosevelt administration, DeWitt portrayed Japanese Americans as poised to be disloyal to the United States. He claimed that all Japanese Americans, whether American-born citizens or their immigrant parents, were “potential enemies.” He later said, “A Jap’s a Jap. There is no way to determine their loyalty.” DeWitt claimed that there were signs that Japanese Americans would commit sabotage and were therefore a danger to U.S. military efforts. This idea of danger became known as the “military necessity” to remove Japanese Americans from the military areas on the West Coast.

### Some Moved Inland to Avoid the Camps

In order to avoid incarceration, almost 5,000 Japanese Americans gathered what few possessions they could take and moved inland before the anticipated order to report to *reception centers* was received. As *voluntary evacuees*, these individuals and families faced the hardships of beginning a new life in often-hostile communities. They lived as farm workers, sharecroppers, domestics, and laborers in states such as Colorado, Utah, and Idaho.

### The Concentration Camps

In all, there were ten major War Relocation Authority (WRA) concentration camps scattered in remote regions of California, Colorado, Arizona, Utah, Arkansas, Idaho, and Wyoming. The camps were built to house between 8,000 and 20,000 inmates each. The inmates tried their best to create a livable environment in extremely harsh conditions. Enduring freezing winters and scorching summers, poor food and medical care, Japanese Americans also suffered the painful humiliation of being stripped of their freedom and constitutional rights.

### The Closing of the Camps in 1946

The last WRA concentration camp closed in March 1946. When Japanese Americans were finally released from the camps, they faced an uncertain future, with no jobs to return to. Most had no homes to return to either. Many encountered intense discrimination and racism as they attempted to reestablish themselves in hostile communities.

\* Italicized words are euphemistic terms that were used by the U.S. government.

### Department of Justice Internment Camps

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

### The Beginning of a Redress Movement

It was not until the mid-1970s, however, that a viable movement began to seek redress for the unconstitutional acts that had occurred in 1942. Individuals and organizations such as the Japanese American Citizens League and the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations began to actively campaign for redress legislation and to organize the Japanese American community, which was overwhelmingly in favor of redress and reparations (monetary compensation). The National Council for Japanese American Redress initially fought for redress legislation, then in 1983 filed an unsuccessful multibillion-dollar class-action lawsuit against the United States.

### The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC)

In 1979, the Japanese American members of Congress pressed for and won passage of a bill to establish the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. The commission, composed of nine members appointed by President Jimmy Carter, started its work in 1981. Its mission was to review the effects of the incarceration on Japanese Americans, to investigate the role of the military in the incarceration, and to recommend remedies.

In addition to extensive research done by the Commission, public hearings were held in six cities throughout the United States. Hundreds of Japanese Americans attended these hearings and spoke bitterly—many for the first time—of their experiences in camp. Many demanded redress and reparations for their tremendous losses and suffering.

### The CWRIC's Findings

In 1983, the commission issued its report to Congress. It concluded that "Executive Order 9066 was not justified by military necessity, and the decisions that followed from it—exclusion, ending detention and ending exclusion—were not driven by analysis of military considerations. The broad historical causes which shaped these decisions were race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership." It recommended an official apology, a presidential pardon for those who were convicted for protesting their loss of rights and the discriminatory treatment they had suffered, the establishment of an educational foundation, and a fund to provide individual monetary compensation of \$20,000 to each of the surviving persons excluded from their residence pursuant to Executive Order 9066.

### The Civil Liberties Act of 1988

The CWRIC report was followed five years later by the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which provided a governmental apology for the exclusion, removal, and incarceration and authorized individual restitution of \$20,000 to those who were alive on the date that President Ronald Reagan signed the legislation. The Civil Liberties Act also established an education fund to inform the American public about the incarceration experience in hopes of preventing the recurrence of any similar event in the future. The act led to the establishment of the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund (CLPEF). Later, California established the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program (CCLPEP). Both programs have funded many unique and valuable educational projects about the incarceration.

### *Stand Up for Justice*

In 1997 the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations (now known as Nikkei for Civil Rights & Redress) and Visual Communications received a grant from the CLPEF to develop a script for *Stand Up for Justice*, a film based on the inspirational true story of Ralph Lazo. Lazo, a 17-year-old Mexican American, voluntarily accompanied his Japanese American classmates to the Manzanar concentration camp during World War II.

In 2002, after additional funding from CCLPEP, filming of the 30-minute short drama *Stand Up for Justice* began. It is hoped that *Stand Up for Justice* will continue the process of educating the public about the concentration camps and that young people will learn that, like Ralph Lazo, one can and should reach out across racial, ethnic, and religious lines to support those who face injustice.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1) Why were Japanese Americans put into camps?

The reason given by the U.S. government was that they were thought to be a potential threat to military security. However, there were no acts of espionage or sabotage by Japanese Americans uncovered. In 1983 the commission appointed by the president concluded that the incarceration was motivated largely by “race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership.”

### 2) Since the United States was also at war with Germany and Italy, weren't Americans of German and Italian descent put into camps?

There were German and Italian immigrants who were incarcerated but not en masse. Racial prejudice against Asians had been widespread since the turn of the century. For example, unlike their European counterparts, Japanese immigrants could not become naturalized citizens until 1952.

### 3) Weren't the camps justified because Japan bombed Pearl Harbor?

Japanese Americans had nothing to do with Pearl Harbor. Two-thirds of those incarcerated were American citizens by birth. Their parents, not allowed to become citizens, had lived as permanent U.S. residents for the previous 20 to 40 years.

### 4) But in a time of war, doesn't everyone suffer?

The incarceration of innocent citizens was a gross violation of civil rights promised to every American under the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Those laws are supposed to be constant for all people at all times. If the Constitution and Bill of Rights are conditional and subject to those in power and the mood of the times, the rights of all Americans are imperiled.

### 5) Why didn't Japanese Americans protest?

The FBI had rounded up the leaders in the community immediately after Pearl Harbor. Many families were left without their fathers, and the second-generation Nisei were young and inexperienced. Nevertheless, several individuals did protest. Gordon Hirabayashi and Minoru Yasui challenged the curfew orders imposed on Japanese Americans; Fred Korematsu and Hirabayashi challenged the actual exclusion orders.

### 6) Did anyone speak out or support them?

Except for the American Friends (the Quakers) and some individual attorneys like Fred Okrand and Wayne Collins, few people spoke out against the incarceration of Japanese Americans. Neighbors and friends showed their support in different ways, visiting at the assembly centers, writing letters, and storing possessions for their Japanese American neighbors.

### 7) What happened to their homes and possessions?

When they were forced from their homes, Japanese Americans were told that they could bring only what they could carry. Some abandoned their property, many hurriedly sold possessions at a great loss; a few were able to find non-Japanese American friends to care for their houses and businesses during the war. The financial losses were incalculable.

### 8) Did the U.S. government ever acknowledge that the concentration camps were wrong?

Yes. After a united campaign by the Japanese American community, Japanese American legislators, and other supporters to seek redress and reparations, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan. It acknowledged that the incarceration was a terrible injustice. For these fundamental violations of the basic civil liberties and constitutional rights of Japanese Americans, the President apologized on behalf of the nation, and Congress paid \$20,000 reparations to each surviving individual, and established an education fund to educate other Americans about the camps.

### 9) Why call them “concentration camps”?

The term *concentration camps* was used by U.S. officials at the time. Representative John Rankin said on December 15, 1941, “I’m for catching every Japanese in America, Alaska, and Hawaii now and putting them in concentration camps.” U.S. Attorney General Francis Biddle said on December 30, 1943, “The present procedure of keeping loyal American citizens in concentration camps on the basis of race for longer than is absolutely necessary is dangerous and repugnant to the principles of our government.”

### 10) But didn't the government call them “relocation centers”?

The U.S. government quickly began to use euphemistic terminology to make the incarceration appear more acceptable. Even Supreme Court Justice Owen J. Roberts declared in December 18, 1944, “An ‘assembly center’ was a euphemism for a prison ... so-called ‘relocation centers,’ a euphemism for concentration camps.” *Evacuation* was used for the forced removal. This extensive and persistent use of euphemisms not only worked to sidetrack legal and constitutional challenges but also functioned to garner the cooperation of its victims as well as gain the support of the American and worldwide public.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 11) Why does the Japanese American community organize visits or pilgrimages to former concentration camps such as Manzanar?

Although very little remains today of the actual buildings at the former concentration camps, the Japanese American community organizes pilgrimages to the camps to remember those who were incarcerated, to teach others about the injustice and to draw lessons for the present. In 1969 a coalition of community activists organized the first Manzanar Pilgrimage, and it continues today on the last Saturday in April, with hundreds attending an interdenominational religious, cultural and educational program. Designated a California Historic Site in 1973 and a National Historic Site in 1992, Manzanar is now administered by the National Park Service which has brought back some of the original buildings and created an Interpretive Center with exhibits and information about the history of the concentration camp. It is located 210 miles from Los Angeles between the towns of Lone Pine and Independence in the Owens Valley of Inyo County, on Highway 395.

### 12) Why should we learn about the World War II American concentration camps?

The events following September 11, 2001, remind us how easy it is for the rights of certain groups to be threatened during times of national crisis. Japanese Americans have the opportunity to teach the lessons from their experiences in the concentration camps and to encourage others to guard against these same injustices. We can learn from people who lived through the camps and to keep alive those lessons so that we do not make the same mistakes again.

Modified from *Interactions* Teacher's Guide, Once upon a Camp Series, UCLA Asian American Studies Center and the Japanese American National Museum in association with Alhambra School District

Note: See Activity Cards for more information on these topics.



# LESSONS



**STAND UP  
FOR JUSTICE**  
*The Ralph Lazo Story*



## FOR THE TEACHER

Select either Lesson A (one class period—film and discussion) or Lessons A and B (two class periods—film, discussion, and Photo/Activity Cards).

### Critical Teaching Points

- During World War II, soon after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, Japanese Americans who lived in California, western Oregon and Washington, and southern Arizona were forcibly removed from the West Coast and incarcerated in American concentration camps by the U.S. government. Japanese Americans, who had nothing to do with the bombing of Pearl Harbor, were unfairly blamed for Pearl Harbor. Their imprisonment was also the culmination of a long history of anti-Asian policies by all levels of government.
- The U.S. government stated that “military necessity” was the reason for this mass removal. They said that Japanese Americans could not be trusted to be loyal to the United States, and would therefore be guilty of espionage and sabotage despite evidence to the contrary (the Munson report), which was disregarded. In 1983 a federal commission determined that “Executive Order 9066 was not justified by military necessity” and that the root causes of the removal and incarceration were “race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership.” (See the appendix, p. 55.)
- Many constitutional rights were denied to the more than 110,000 Japanese American inmates, although over two-thirds of them were American citizens. Their parents, Japanese immigrants, were prohibited by law from becoming American citizens until 1952. Some of the rights denied to Japanese Americans as a result of the forced removal and incarceration were
  - \* the freedom of religion;
  - \* the freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures;
  - \* the right to equal protection under the law;
  - \* the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.(See the appendix, pp. 51–54.)
- Ralph Lazo’s support of Japanese Americans during the war shows the importance of multicultural friendships and the power of one person’s actions. In this way, Ralph stood up for justice. (See the appendix, p. 59, Activity card #13.)
- During the 1980s the Japanese American community worked together in a campaign to win redress and reparations from the U.S. government. Joined by many other communities, organizations, and churches, Japanese Americans wrote thousands of letters, made hundreds of phone calls, and went to Washington, D.C., to lobby congressional members. In August 1988, President Reagan signed the legislation that provided an apology and monetary reparations to the surviving former inmates and others forced to leave the West Coast. Ralph contributed \$1,000 toward a class action lawsuit. In this way, he again stood up for justice. (See the appendix, p. 59.)

In this guide, the term *Japanese American* includes all persons of Japanese ancestry—citizen and noncitizen alike.



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## LESSON A STANDARDS

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### History–Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools

- Grade 8**      **United States History and Geography: Growth and Conflict**
- 8.2      Students analyze the political principles underlying the U.S. Constitution and comprehend the enumerated and implied powers of the federal government.
6.      Enumerate the powers of government set forth in the Constitution and the fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights.
- 8.3      Students understand the foundation of the American political system and the ways in which citizens participate in it.
6.      Describe the basic lawmaking process and how the Constitution provides numerous opportunities for citizens to participate in the political process and to monitor and influence government (e.g., function of elections, political parties, interest groups).
- 

- Grade 11**      **United States History and Geography: Continuity and Change in the Twentieth Century**
- 11.7      Students analyze America’s participation in World War II.
5.      Discuss the constitutional issues and impact of events on the U.S. home front, including the internment of Japanese Americans (e.g., *Fred Korematsu v. United States of America*).
- 

- Grade 12**      **Principles of American Democracy and Economics**
- 12.2      Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.
1.      Discuss the meaning and importance of each of the rights guaranteed under the Bill of Rights and how each is secured (e.g., freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, petition, privacy).
- 12.7      Students analyze and compare the powers and procedures of the national, state, tribal, and local governments.
5.      Explain how public policy is formed, including the setting of the public agenda and implementation of it through regulations and executive orders.
- 12.8      Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the influence of the media on American political life.
1.      Discuss the meaning and importance of a free and responsible press.
-

## LESSON A

**Time:** One class period, including viewing the film.

### Objectives

Students will be able to

1. identify the reasons why Ralph Lazo stood up for the incarcerated Japanese Americans;
2. state reasons why it was wrong to incarcerate Japanese Americans during World War II;
3. discuss possible similarities between the situation Japanese Americans faced during World War II, and the experience of other groups, e.g., Muslim Americans, after the events of September 11, 2001.

### Purpose

To learn about a Mexican American high school student who stood up for justice for his Japanese American friends during World War II.

### Materials

Historical Overview, pp. 5–6  
 Who's Who chart, p. 25  
 Background Information, p. 26  
 DVD: *Stand Up for Justice*

### Procedure

1. Introduction to the lesson (can be done in 5–10 minutes the day before the film is shown)
  - Vocabulary words to introduce:
    - concentration camp*—a camp where prisoners of war, enemy aliens, or political prisoners are confined
    - incarcerate*—to imprison, place in confinement
    - inmates*—prisoners
    - internees*—used to describe those placed in the concentration camps
    - internment camp*—a camp administered by the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and/or the Army
    - Japanese Americans*—includes all persons of Japanese ancestry, citizen and noncitizen alike
    - redress*—to make remedies or to correct and compensate
  - Ask the students, “What do you already know about the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II?”
  - Ask the students to read “Background Information” (p. 26) to the students as a short introduction to the incarceration.
2. Anticipatory set/ warm-up class discussion (5 minutes)
  - Have you ever been in a situation where you or someone with you was treated unfairly because of race, religion, gender, or some other reason? How did it make you feel?
3. Introduce *Stand Up for Justice* and view the film (35 minutes)
  - The film is based on the true story of Ralph Lazo, a 17-year-old Mexican American who attended Belmont High School in Los Angeles. He was the only non-Japanese American (not married to a Japanese American) to live as an inmate at the Manzanar concentration camp during World War II. (See the appendix, p. 59, Activity card #13.)
  - Ask students to watch for the reasons that Ralph went to Manzanar voluntarily and to think about the treatment of Japanese Americans.
4. Class discussion (see p. 14) (10–15 minutes)
  - Use questions for class discussion.

## LESSON A

### DISCUSSION

QUESTIONS	POSSIBLE RESPONSES
<p>1. In what ways did Ralph support his Japanese American friends? Why did he do it?</p> <p>How do you think Ralph's friends felt about his joining them in camp?</p> <p>Do you think Ralph did the right thing?</p>	<p>- He defended Jimmy in Jimmy's absence when friends joked about Tojo (Japan's prime minister and minister of war). He felt Jimmy was just as American as he was.</p> <p>-They were happy and surprised when Ralph joined them on the train to Manzanar.</p> <p>- Jimmy was happy to see Ralph in camp.</p> <p>-Answers will vary.</p>
<p>2. Were the Japanese Americans treated fairly?</p> <p>Was the government right or wrong in putting Japanese Americans into concentration camps?</p>	<p>-They lost homes, jobs, property, pets, businesses. Refer to the appendix (Bill of Rights violations, p. 51, FAQ, p. 7.)</p> <p>-The government violated their constitutional rights.</p> <p>-The government disregarded evidence supporting the loyalty of Japanese Americans to the United States.</p> <p>-Students might say, "It was for their protection."</p>
<p>3. Are there any similarities between what happened to Japanese Americans and what has happened to South Asian, Muslim, and Arab Americans after Sept. 11, 2001?</p>	<p>-After September 11, 2001, some were detained, questioned, and imprisoned.</p> <p>-Many were victims of acts of racism, including beatings, burnings, and verbal taunts.</p>

#### Closure (1 minute)

Tell the person next to you one or two new things you learned about the Japanese American incarceration.

#### Homework

1. If your friends were rounded up and taken away, how could you support them? Explain your answer.
2. Is there any other group today or in the past that has been treated unfairly by the government? How is that group's treatment similar to or different from the Japanese American experience?

**Student Projects and Activities:** See p. 24.

## LESSON B STANDARDS

### History–Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools

- Grade 8**      **United States History and Geography: Growth and Conflict**  
 8.3      Students understand the foundation of the American political system and the ways in which citizens participate in it.  
             7. Understand the functions and responsibilities of a free press.

*(In addition, include Standards 8.2.6. and 8.3.6 from Lesson A.)*

- Grade 11**      **United States History and Geography: Continuity and Change in the Twentieth Century**  
 11.7      Students analyze America’s participation in World War II.  
             3. Identify the roles and sacrifices of individual American soldiers, as well as the unique contributions of the special fighting forces (e.g., the Tuskegee Airmen, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the Navajo Code Talkers).

*(In addition, include Standard 11.7.5 from Lesson A.)*

- Grade 12**      **Principles of American Democracy and Economics**  
 12.2      Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.  
             2. Explain how economic rights are secured and their importance to the individual and to society (e.g., the right to acquire, use, transfer, and dispose of property; right to choose one’s work; right to join or not join labor unions; copyright and patent).  
 12.3      Students evaluate and take and defend positions on what the fundamental values and principles of civil society are (i.e., the autonomous sphere of voluntary personal, social and economic relations that are not part of government), their interdependence, and the meaning and importance of those values and principles for a free society.  
             2. Explain how civil society makes it possible for people, individually or in association with others, to bring their influence to bear on government in ways other than voting and elections.  
 12.6      Students evaluate issues regarding campaigns for national, state, and local elective offices.  
             4. Describe the means that citizens use to participate in the political process (e.g., voting, campaigning, lobbying, filing a legal challenge, demonstrating, petitioning, picketing, running for political office).  
 12.7      Students analyze and compare the powers and procedures of the national, state, and tribal and local governments.  
             5. Explain how public policy is formed, including the setting of the public agenda and implementation of it through regulations and executive orders.

*(In addition, include Standard 12.8.1 from Lesson A.)*

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## LESSON B

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**Time:** One class period, after viewing the film.

### Objectives

Students will be able to

1. identify the reasons why Ralph Lazo stood up for Japanese Americans;
2. state reasons why Japanese Americans were incarcerated during World War II;
3. give examples of how being incarcerated affected Japanese Americans;
4. discuss possible similarities between the situation Japanese Americans faced during World War II and the experience of other groups, e.g., Muslim Americans, after the events of September 11, 2001;
5. discuss the ways that Japanese Americans challenged the incarceration and sought remedies.

### Purpose

To learn about America's concentration camps and how they affected Japanese Americans.

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### Materials

Activity Cards (16 available) with pictures and information  
Reproducible worksheet for students, worksheet with answers for the teacher  
Group discussion or Question B from Activity Cards (p. 21)  
See the appendix for supplemental resources

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### Procedure

1. Anticipatory Set/Introduction  
Can you imagine having to leave your home with only the items you can carry, and being sent to an unknown location, just because you looked like the people of a nation at war with the United States? What three things would you take? (5 minutes)
  2. Divide the class into groups, each with one Activity Card (16 cards available, not all cards have to be used). Ask the students to look at the card and read the information on the back. (5 minutes)
  3. Hand out a worksheet to each student. Have each individual group discuss Question A (located at the bottom of each Activity Card) and write their response on the worksheet. (5 minutes)
  4. Have each group orally report to the class its answer to Question A. Students fill out their worksheets as each group reports. (20–30 minutes)
- 

### Closure (3 minutes)

Question: What are the lessons from the film that we can apply today?

Optional question: What do you think would have happened if more people had stood up for the Japanese Americans?

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### Homework

Question B (located at the bottom of each Activity Card) is designed to stimulate and guide the discussion. A list of these questions is located on p. 21.

Have the students copy Question B from their Activity Card and respond in essay form. These questions are evaluative, analytical, and/or application questions that challenge students to use the information given and synthesize it with personal, reflective, and/or speculative responses.

**Student Projects and Activities:** See p. 24.

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## STUDENT WORKSHEET: QUESTION A

**Directions:** Write a response below to Question A (located on your Activity Card).

Question	Answer
1. What was Executive Order 9066? How did it affect Japanese Americans?	
2. How did the media describe Japanese Americans before and during World War II?	
3. What is a euphemism? What were some of the euphemisms used by the government about the Japanese American incarceration?	
4. What reason did the government give for removing Japanese Americans? What did the government conclude after its later study about the causes of the incarceration?	
5. What kinds of losses were suffered by Japanese Americans due to removal and incarceration?	
6. Which groups had strong prejudices against Japanese Americans during the war?	
7. What were some of the laws passed against Asians in America before World War II?	
8. How did the Japanese Americans feel about being forced from their homes? Where were they taken from, and where were they moved to?	

## STUDENT WORKSHEET: QUESTION A

Question	Answer
9. Who helped the Japanese Americans during this difficult time, and how did they help?	
10. What kind of conditions existed in the camps? What did the Japanese Americans do to make living in the camps more bearable or "normal"?	
11. What did the Nisei soldiers do to help win/end the war against Germany, Italy, and Japan?	
12. What constitutional rights did the government violate when it removed Japanese Americans from the West Coast and held them in concentration camps? How did the Japanese American inmates respond to the military draft?	
13. How did Ralph support Japanese Americans during and after World War II?	
14. What did the Munson report say about the loyalty of Japanese Americans during World War II?	
15. After the war, what difficulties did the Japanese Americans face during resettlement?	
16. What did Japanese Americans do to "right the wrong"? How did the government respond?	

## WORKSHEET KEY: QUESTION A

### For the Teacher

Question	Answer
1. What was Executive Order 9066? How did it affect Japanese Americans?	EO 9066 was the order by President Roosevelt to remove “any and all persons” from certain areas on the West Coast. It did not directly mention Japanese Americans, but it was the outcome of discussions about what to do about Japanese Americans. The lives of over 110,000 Japanese Americans were dramatically changed. They were treated like the enemy: stripped of their rights and homes, removed, imprisoned, humiliated, and frightened.
2. How did the media describe Japanese Americans before and during World War II?	On the West Coast, many newspapers had for years contributed to anti-Japanese sentiment before World War II, calling the Japanese a “yellow peril” and labeling them as sneaky, dangerous, and spies during the war.
3. What is a euphemism? What were some of the euphemisms used by the government about the Japanese American incarceration?	<i>Euphemism: the substitution of a mild, indirect or vague expression for one thought to be offensively harsh or blunt.</i> “alien”—belonging to another country or people, foreign ( <i>Webster’s New World College Dictionary</i> ). “reception center”— suggests a friendly, welcoming place. In reality it was a temporary jail for the inmates.
4. What reason did the government give for removing Japanese Americans? What did the government conclude after its later study about the causes of the incarceration?	The U.S. government said that Japanese Americans were potentially disloyal and might sabotage U.S. war efforts. It said that Japanese Americans were a danger to national security and that there was a “military necessity” to remove them from military areas on the West Coast. A government commission concluded in 1983 that the removal and incarceration were not due to military necessity, but rather were a result of “race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership.”
5. What kinds of losses were suffered by Japanese Americans due to removal and incarceration?	In 1942, the Federal Reserve Bank estimated that the total property losses for the inmates were approximately \$400 million (this would amount to billions of dollars today). People lost jobs, businesses, homes, education, pets, cars, and more.
6. Which groups had strong prejudices against Japanese Americans during the war?	Groups such as the Asiatic Exclusion League and the Native Sons of the Golden West pushed for the removal of all Japanese Americans. Influential leaders such as Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, Secretary of War Henry Stimson, and U.S. Representative John Rankin also advocated for the mass removal.
7. What were some of the laws passed against Asians in America before World War II?	Early laws prohibited Asian immigrants from owning land and Asians from marrying whites. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 specifically targeted Chinese, but later organized labor and the Asiatic Exclusion League pushed for the Gentlemen’s Agreement to limit the immigration of Japanese. The 1924 Immigration Act ended all immigration from Japan as well as all other Asian nations.
8. How did the Japanese Americans feel about being forced from their homes? Where were they taken from, and to where were they moved?	They didn’t understand why the government was treating them like that. Over 110,000 Japanese Americans were removed from Washington, Oregon, California and Arizona and placed in ten concentration camps and other detention centers in desolate parts of the country.



## WORKSHEET KEY: QUESTION A

Question	Answer
9. Who helped the Japanese Americans during this difficult time, and how did they help?	Quakers spoke out against the camps. They helped Japanese Americans leave camp early to finish college. They helped many find jobs and housing. Some visited the camps with gifts and necessities. Miss Breed, a librarian, corresponded with children. Attorneys Wayne M. Collins, Fred Okrand, and Ernest Besig helped Japanese Americans challenge the constitutionality of the camps.
10. What kind of conditions existed in the camps? What did the Japanese Americans do to make living in the camps more bearable or “normal”?	The camps were surrounded by barbed wire and guard towers. The Japanese Americans lived in 20’x16’ rooms in barracks, shared communal showers and toilets, ate in mess halls, and had very little privacy; there was a shortage of medical care and not enough milk, meat, and eggs for the children. The inmates organized schools, churches, clubs, and sports.
11. What did the Nisei soldiers do to help win/end the war against Germany, Italy and Japan?	They fought in North Africa and Italy, saved the Texas “Lost Battalion,” freed French towns from the Nazis, and helped to liberate the Jewish prisoners at Dachau. Nisei soldiers, serving in the Pacific, translated maps and messages and questioned Japanese prisoners of war. The 100th/442nd received over 18,000 medals for bravery—the most highly decorated unit of its size in U.S. military history.
12. What constitutional rights did the government violate when it removed Japanese Americans from the West Coast and held them in concentration camps? How did the Japanese American inmates respond to the military draft?	Many rights were violated, most importantly the right to “due process”—the right to know the charges against the oneself and the right to a speedy and public trial. In addition, their property was taken away and their homes were searched without search warrants. Some Japanese Americans volunteered to serve in the military; others refused to report for the draft, resulting in prison terms.
13. How did Ralph support Japanese Americans during and after World War II?	Ralph voluntarily joined his Japanese American friends at Manzanar. He defended their loyalty, sensed the injustice of what was happening, and felt he had to share their experiences. After the war, Lazo continued his support by speaking out for redress for former Japanese American inmates. He became a “ronin,” one of ten people who donated \$1,000 each to initiate a class action lawsuit by the National Council for Japanese American Redress.
14. What did the Munson report say about the loyalty of Japanese Americans during World War II?	The Munson report, undertaken at the request of the U.S. Department of State, along with FBI and naval intelligence, found Japanese Americans to be consistently loyal. Curtis Munson stated, “The story was all the same. There is no Japanese ‘problem’ on the Coast.”
15. After the war, what difficulties did the Japanese Americans face during resettlement?	The remaining inmates were given \$25 and a bus or train ticket home. Many had no homes to return to. Japanese Americans moved into temporary shelters, converted army barracks, rundown trailer parks, and hotels. Many encountered job discrimination, anti-Japanese feelings, and life-threatening situations. The camps destroyed Japanese American communities, and most were never rebuilt.
16. What did Japanese Americans do to “right the wrong”? How did the government respond?	By the 1980s, many people who recognized the serious injustices done to Japanese Americans pushed the federal government for redress and reparations. Japanese Americans organized the community through meetings, writing letters to Congress, and reaching out to other groups, gaining widespread support throughout the country, which culminated in the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which provided a presidential apology and \$20,000 in reparations to each surviving inmate.

## QUESTIONS B FROM ACTIVITY CARDS

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### For the Teacher

These questions are found at the bottom of each card (Question B.) Each student is to write an essay in response to the question(s) on the Activity Card he or she received.

1. How would you feel if this happened to you today?
2. Do you know of any groups of people who have been described negatively by media? Do you believe everything you read in the newspapers or hear on TV? How do you decide what is true or not?
3. Can you think of other euphemisms used today (or in the past)? What is the problem or danger with euphemisms?
4. What can we learn about how the government decided to remove Japanese Americans from the West Coast?
5. Make a list of the losses (for example, property, personal freedoms, friends, pets, etc.) you would suffer if you were to be sent to a concentration camp next week.
6. What do you think about Player 3's button, "I'm Chinese" (see front of card)? Would you have done the same thing? Why or why not?
7. What should be the rights of all people, immigrants (documented and undocumented), and citizens? Should the laws be different for some groups of people? Is it ever justified to violate the rights of a whole group of people in order to keep our country safe or for national security? Explain.
8. If your government forcibly removed you to a desolate place, what items would you choose if you could only take what you could carry? What would you have to leave behind?
9. What ethnic, racial, or religious groups are being discriminated against today? What are ways that one can help or support them?
10. Imagine that you have been forced to leave your home and live in one of these concentration camps based solely on your race. How would this affect the way you see yourself? What would be some of the lasting effects on you and your family?
11. In *Stand Up for Justice*, Art said, "If we don't prove we're loyal [by serving in the military], they'll think we're just like the enemy. We gotta show them we're American just like everyone else." Do you agree with Art? Does not serving in the military mean you are not loyal? Explain your answer.
12. What did Japanese Americans do to stand up for their rights? What kind of person is able to resist and stand up to the government? What would you do if you or your family were in a similar situation (curfews, evacuation, camps, draft, etc.) as the Japanese Americans during World War II?
13. What qualities about Ralph Lazo made him do what he did? Are these qualities important to you? Why or why not?
14. How do you think Japanese Americans felt when their loyalty was questioned?
15. What might be the feelings of those who were just released from camp? Would you have gone back to the West Coast? Where else could you have gone? Explain your answer.
16. Have you or a family member been faced with an injustice? If so, what did you (or they) do? What are some of the injustices that other ethnic communities are facing today?

## OPTIONAL MINI LESSONS

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These lessons can be done before the viewing of the film.

### Objectives

Students will be able to

1. have the opportunity to become familiar with information about the film;
2. be exposed to terms and vocabulary used in the film.

### Gallery Walk

Time: 10–15 minutes

1. Arrange the Activity Cards around the room so the students can view the photo side.
  2. Have the students look at all the photos and ask them to think about the following:
    - What do you notice about the people in the photos?
    - What's happening to them?
    - What do you think the film is about?
    - After looking at the photos choose a favorite one.
  3. Discuss responses as a class.
- 

### The Party

Time: 30 minutes

1. Select quotes from the Activity Cards or other sources. The direct quotes on the photo side of the card as well as quotes from the text side can be used. Dialogue from the film can also be used. Write quotes on individual 3-by-5-inch cards or strips of paper, one for each student.
2. Distribute one card to each student or have the students pull their own cards. Give them time to read and practice the quote “silently” to themselves. Answer any questions about the content or vocabulary.
3. Tell the students:
  - a. You are at a party. Circulate and “talk” to as many people as possible; however, the only thing you can say is the quote on your card.
  - b. Speak slowly, clearly and with emotion. Pay attention to question marks and exclamation marks. Try to make the quote come alive. Keep moving around the room until you have had a “conversation” with everyone.
4. Ask students what they think the film is about based on what they heard at “The Party.”

## OPTIONAL MINI LESSONS

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### Speed Dating

Time: 30–45 minutes

1. Pass out the 16 Activity Cards to the students. Students may have to pair up.
2. Have students read the text side of the card and ask them to select the three or more main ideas from the information. Give them enough time to fully read the text and select the ideas they want to share. Circulate to see if students understand the information and to answer any questions they may have.
3. Divide the students into two equal groups and have them stand in two parallel lines. Have students face each other. Each person should be facing someone with a different card.

Step 1: Each student will be given one minute to share the main ideas on the card with the student across from him/her.

Step 2: After one minute, the teacher will say “switch,” and the other student will have a minute to share his/her main points.

Step 3: After both have shared, the student at the head of line 1 will go to the back of the line so that students are now facing someone new.

Step 4: Have students repeat Steps 1, 2, and 3 until the first student is at the front of the line again.

- Since each line of students has eight cards, the students are able to hear the information on only eight of the cards.
- This is a take-off from “speed dating,” where people meet and talk to each other to find out if they might want to date each other at a later time. After talking to one person for a set number of minutes, they then rotate to the next person.

## STUDENT PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

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These are suggested activities to extend the study of America's concentration camps. They can be assigned as extra credit, end-of-course projects, or class assignments at the discretion of the instructor.

1. Learn more about Japanese American inmates' experiences during WWII by using online sites listed in the appendix. Select an oral or written history of an inmate to share with other students. Write a biography about that person. (Teachers may register their entire class on the Densho website; the process may take a few days. The Go for Broke website focuses on the Japanese American soldiers' experiences during the war. The JANM website features written interviews of prominent Japanese Americans as well as many other features.)
2. Invite a Japanese American former WWII inmate to speak with your class. Prepare appropriate questions before the presentation. Most of the inmates alive today were in their teens or younger during the war. Questions can include just facts (when, where, how) to questions about the emotional impact and losses suffered by the former inmate and his or her family.
3. Imagine yourself in a concentration camp. Write firsthand diary entries for the course of a couple of years, recording your initial experiences and feelings and how these changed over your time in camp.
4. Put together a visual presentation by using photos on the Internet (see p. 67 in the appendix) and caption or narrate the pictures. Use PowerPoint to create the presentation.
5. Research one of the following:
  - a. The 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team or the Military Intelligence Service (MIS), the battles they fought and the contributions they made.
  - b. Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee, whose members resisted the military draft while in camp and served time in prison.
  - c. The redress and reparations movement of Japanese Americans to obtain an apology from the government and monetary compensation of \$20,000. Investigate settlements to others who have had their rights violated by the U.S. government, the reparations Germany paid after World War II, and other attempts at reparations.
6. Compare what happened to Japanese Americans immediately after the bombing of Pearl Harbor with Arab Americans after the events of September 11, 2001. Investigate the government's reactions and the general public's reactions to each of these events.
7. Surf the Web making a list of sites and organizations that support the civil rights of Americans and sites and organizations that attempt to restrict one's freedoms because of race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.
8. Imagine being a journalist reporting on people's reaction and feelings in the event of a war with another country, a country from which many have emigrated who now reside in the United States (for example, Mexico, Korea, or Russia).
9. Examine the successful grassroots campaign by Japanese Americans to win redress to determine the role and importance of the grassroots in making changes in our society. Compare what people did in this campaign and in other grassroots efforts such as gaining the right to vote for women, ending apartheid in South Africa, stopping jail construction in East Los Angeles, and others. Are there issues or problems in your neighborhood, school, or city that could be corrected or resolved through a grassroots campaign?

## STAND UP FOR JUSTICE: WHO'S WHO

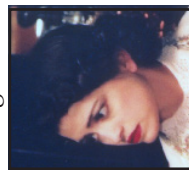
All characters in *Stand Up for Justice* are composite characters except for Ralph Lazo, whose portrayal is as true to life as we have come to know it. The family relationships are pictured

### Lazo Family



Mr. Lazo

Virginia — Ralph



Ralph's mother passed away when Ralph was young. His dad left the care of Ralph and the household to Ralph's sister, Virginia.



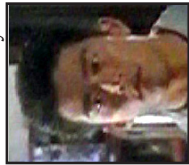
Older Ralph

### Matsuoka Family



Mr. and Mrs. Matsuoka

Harry — Jimmy



The Matsuokas' two sons, Harry and Jimmy, followed different paths. Harry served in the U.S. Army and was killed in action in Italy, while Jimmy (Ralph's good friend) refused to be drafted out of the concentration camps and served time in prison for his decision.

### Manaka Family



Mr. and Mrs. Manaka

Ruby



The Manakas' only daughter, Ruby, was a schoolmate of Ralph, Jimmy, and Art. Like many real-life friends of Ralph, she remained close friends with him until his death in 1992.



Older Ruby

Art



Art left Manzanar to serve in the 442nd Central Postal Directory in Europe which, along with the 100th Central Postal Directory, became the most decorated unit in U.S. history. Art, like Harry, was killed in Europe fighting the Nazis.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

### Historical Overview

In 1942 the lives of all Americans of Japanese ancestry were thrown into turmoil by an executive order issued by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Over 110,000 Japanese Americans were imprisoned by the United States government in detention centers, internment camps, temporary assembly centers and concentration camps. Thousands lost their jobs and homes. Students had to leave school and colleges. The mass incarceration and the deprivation of the civil and constitutional rights of innocent men, women, and children by their own government were unprecedented in modern American history.

### The Immediate Aftermath of December 7, 1941

The arrest of persons of Japanese ancestry began shortly after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Within days of the bombing, over 2,000 Japanese, mostly Japanese immigrants with permanent residency status, were arrested and detained by the FBI. Community and business leaders, Japanese-language school teachers, newspaper editors, and Buddhist priests were among those arrested. The families of the detained often did not know where their loved ones had been taken, and for some, it was years before they were reunited.

### Executive Order 9066

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. This order said that the secretary of war and military commanders could remove “any and all persons” from certain parts of the West Coast. The order states that the action was necessary as “protection against espionage and against sabotage to national-defense material...” There is no direct mention of Japanese Americans in the order. However, the order was the outcome of discussions by President Roosevelt and his advisors about how to deal with Japanese Americans after the start of the war. The order was clearly directed at Japanese Americans. The area extending approximately 100 miles inland from the coast of Washington, Oregon, and California and the southern half of Arizona was designated “Military Area No. 1.” The other portions of these states were designated “Military Area No. 2.” At first Japanese Americans were ordered to leave only Military Area No. 1, but later they were also forcibly removed from the entire state

of California. The United States government transported Japanese Americans by bus, train, and truck to local temporary (“assembly”) centers and then, a few months later, to concentration camps (“relocation centers”). The inmates were surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by military police.

### About Japanese Americans

The times of Ralph Lazo and his Japanese American friends during World War II were a world apart from your experiences today. Many students today may have experienced racial or other discrimination. But in order to fully appreciate the power of Ralph Lazo’s actions toward his friends and their undying love and gratitude toward him, you must understand how isolated and fearful Japanese Americans were during World War II.

Japanese Americans then, like today, were only a very small segment of the total population in California and the rest of the United States. Even so, many white community leaders resented Japanese Americans and created an unwarranted fear that Japanese Americans would take away jobs from whites. Discrimination was so strong against them that Japanese immigrants were not allowed to become naturalized citizens or to own land. They were called Issei (first generation) and, despite being treated so badly in the United States, were determined to build their families and future here.

Two-thirds of Japanese Americans had been born and raised in the United States. These children of immigrants were called Nisei (second generation). The Nisei had little to no interaction with Japan. They had no sense of loyalty or connection to the Japanese government or the Japanese emperor. Instead, they wanted desperately to be accepted as Americans. English was their main or only language. In school, they proudly recited the Pledge of Allegiance every day and learned about the greatness of the U.S. Constitution and its ideals to protect the rights of all Americans.

Japanese Americans were forced to live in segregated communities, and choices for work were extremely limited. Japanese Americans had learned to depend only on each other, and so they were overwhelmed when Ralph Lazo, a Mexican American, joined them in Manzanar and continued a lifelong commitment to his Japanese American friends and their pursuit of justice.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FILM

### 1. Why did Ralph's dad let him go to camp?

In the film, Ralph's older sister, Virginia, asks their father, "Have you seen Ralph, Dad?" The father replies, "I thought he said he was going to the Boy Scout camp or something." Ralph did not ask for his father's permission to go with his friends to Manzanar. He made the decision to support his friends. Ralph's mother died when Ralph was young, so his father put a lot of responsibility on Virginia to care for him. Perhaps that contributed to making Ralph so independent.

### 2. Why was Ralph allowed to stay in camp? He wasn't Japanese American.

Each of the hastily constructed camps housed about 10,000 people. Faced with the huge task of getting it ready and assigning quarters, as well as feeding and clothing all the inmates, the camp administration may not have had time to worry about Ralph. When Ralph first boarded the train, no one stopped him. In camp, he was so well liked by the Japanese Americans that he quickly became a member of the community.

### 3. During the basketball scene, Ralph's friends use the terms *Pinoy* and *Tojo*, and one basketball player wears a badge that says, "I am Chinese." What do they mean?

*Pinoy* refers to a male of Filipino extraction. The term is now widely used to describe all Filipinos. *Tojo* refers to Hideki Tojo, the minister of war and prime minister of Japan from 1941 to 1944.

The "I am Chinese" badge was created because only Americans of Japanese ancestry were targeted for eviction by the government. Some Chinese Americans wore them so they would not be mistaken for Japanese.

### 4. At the Manzanar concentration camp, what was written on the cemetery monument?

The translation of *I-rei-toh* (e-rey-toe) from the Japanese language is "consoled spirits monument." The monument was dedicated on August 14, 1943.

### 5. Are the characters in the film based on real-life individuals?

Yes. In addition to Ralph Laso, whose character is based on an actual historical person, all the Japanese Americans in the film represent composite characters based on the experiences of people during the World War II era.

### 6. What happened to Jimmy after camp?

At the end of the film the character Jimmy writes to Ralph: "I know you and Art are pretty determined to serve. For me, it's not so simple. This country has not

kept its promises, and I'm just not big enough to forgive that. So, even if they draft me, I don't know if I can go along with it."

Jimmy is angry about the way he, his family, and all other Japanese Americans have been mistreated by the U.S. government and is unwilling to serve in the military under these conditions. He plans to resist the draft. (Resisters, see p. 57 of the appendix.)

### 7. Did Ruby and Ralph get married? They were together in the last part of the movie.

No. Ruby is a fictionalized character that represents the close relationship Ralph had with his Japanese American friends. Ralph stayed friends with many Japanese Americans all through his life, and he attended many pilgrimages to Manzanar. In the last scene he is shown with Ruby and two of his students. He was a teacher and counselor in Los Angeles before he passed away in 1992. Read more about Ralph on pp. 59–65 in the appendix.

### 8. Did the photographer in the movie think Ralph was a gardener?

The photographer isn't sure if Ralph is Japanese or not. That's why he questions Jimmy and then remarks that (if Ralph is indeed Japanese) he must be a gardener, because gardeners are out in the sun a lot and get sun-tanned. Many adult inmates had jobs at the camps as plumbers, drivers, cooks, gardeners, etc.

#### Director John Esaki's comments:

The photographer's questions thematically follow up Ralph's earlier answer to Ruby on the train as to "how on earth did they let you on?" Ralph's answer, "I guess there's some advantage to being brown," was intended to imply that the guards (and the American populace in general) have difficulty really determining the ethnicity of nonwhites. This confusion is also expressed in the photographer's puzzlement.

To add to the confusion, Ralph speaks Japanese to the photographer. Does the photographer ever know for sure that Ralph isn't Japanese? This factor contributes to the plausibility that Ralph was able to live in a Japanese American concentration camp without fellow inmates—or camp authorities—raising too much concern. All of which makes for a great discussion about ethnic stereotypes and the absurdity of judging people by ethnicity / skin color.

This thematic thread culminates in Ralph's statement to the reporter: "Who can say that I don't have Japanese blood in my veins?" Ralph recognizes a common humanity that transcends race and ethnicity.







# ACTIVITY CARDS



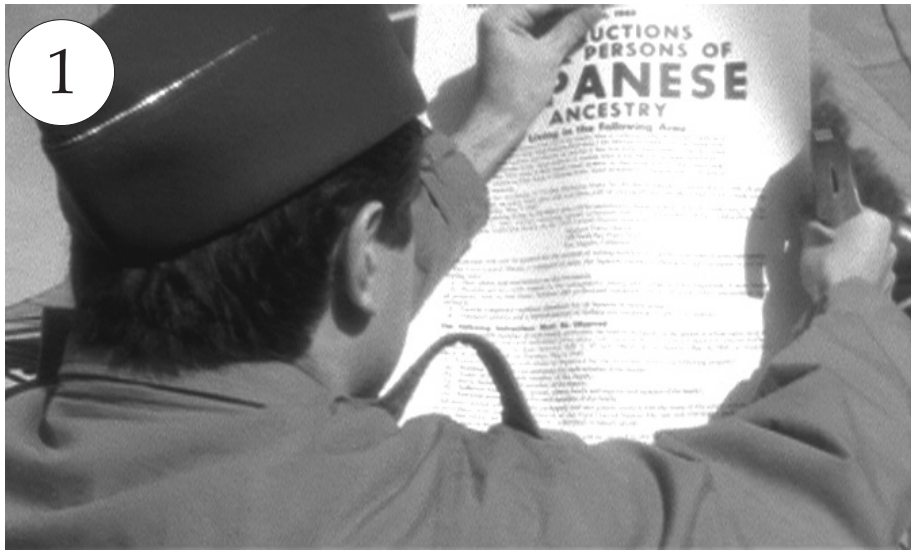
# ACTIVITY CARDS FOR THE TEACHER

Each Activity Card has the following scenes from the film on the front side and the text on the back side.

Activity Cards

For the Teacher

## EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066 AND POSTING OF REMOVAL NOTICES



Los Angeles, 1942: A soldier posts a notice that gives instructions for the removal of all Japanese Americans.

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. This order said that the secretary of war and military commanders could remove “any or all persons” from certain parts of the West Coast. The order states that the action was necessary as “protection against espionage and against sabotage to national-defense materials.”

There is no direct mention of Japanese Americans in the order. However, the order was the outcome of discussions by President Roosevelt and his advisors about how to deal with Japanese Americans after the start of the war.

Vocal politicians and anti-Japanese groups pushed for the removal of Japanese Americans from the West Coast. Many newspapers and political leaders said that Japanese Americans could not be trusted. They claimed some would commit espionage or sabotage against the government. Political and military leaders said that Japanese Americans were a threat to national security or safety and might help Japan’s war effort. These leaders said it was too difficult to determine who was “loyal” and who was “disloyal” among Japanese Americans.

However, studies by the Department of State, the Navy, and the FBI concluded that Japanese Americans were consistently loyal to the United States. But President Roosevelt and his advisors disregarded these studies, and the president decided to sign the order. The order was clearly directed at Japanese Americans.

After March 1942, notices (like the one in the film) were posted in Japanese American communities. They ordered Japanese Americans to figure out what to do with their property and businesses in a very short time. Japanese Americans did not know where they would be taken. The notice included the following language:

*The size and number of packages is limited to that which can be carried by the individual or family group.... No pets of any kind will be permitted.*

Can you imagine trying to make arrangements for all your belongings (even your beloved pets) within a matter of days? Imagine that all your friends and your whole community were being removed and taken away. You could take with you only what you could carry. It was a time of great fear for everyone in the Japanese American community.

## THE POWER OF THE MEDIA – NEWSPAPERS AND RADIO



The Lazo home: Ralph reads about the removal of Japanese Americans.

Newspapers play an important role in our society. We depend on them for well-researched and truthful information. Throughout history, however, many newspapers have presented false information—even from political leaders and journalists. In the early 1900s, some newspapers and film companies owned by people like William Randolph Hearst spread the term *yellow peril* to falsely claim that the immigration of Japanese and Chinese was like an invasion. They described the yellow peril as hordes of little yellow Asian men who would abduct white women and claim California for their own. These newspapers contributed greatly to the **dehumanizing** of Asian immigrants and the public’s negative attitude.

During World War II, many in the media did not question the government’s actions or the false information against Japanese Americans. Instead, newspaper articles described Japanese as sneaky and dangerous people; political cartoons showed them as animal-like and threatening. John B. Hughes of the Mutual Broadcast Company began a monthlong series from Los Angeles that spread rumors of spying by Japanese Americans.

By the end of January 1942, most newspapers had called for the removal of Japanese Americans. Hearst columnist McLemore wrote:

*I am for the immediate removal of every Japanese on the West Coast to a point deep in the interior. I don't mean a nice part of the interior either. Herd 'em up, pack 'em off and give 'em the inside room in the badlands. Let 'em be pinched, hurt, hungry, and dead up against it.*

General John DeWitt, the military commander of the entire Pacific Coast area, made it clear to a congressional committee that Japanese Americans could not be trusted and must be incarcerated:

*A Jap is a Jap ... There is no way to determine their loyalty ... It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen; theoretically he is still a Japanese and you can't change him.*

However, by April 1943, public opinion began to change, especially on the East Coast. A *Washington Post* editorial responded to General DeWitt’s proclamation that “a Jap is a Jap”:

*The general should be told that American democracy and the Constitution of the United States are too vital to be ignored and flouted by any military zealot. The panic of Pearl Harbor is now past. There has been ample time for the investigation of these people and the determination of their loyalty to this country on an individual basis. Whatever excuse there once was for evacuation and holding them indiscriminately no longer exists.*

## MANIPULATING LANGUAGE: EUPHEMISMS



The Matsuo home: Mr. and Mrs. Matsuo ask Jimmy and Ralph to explain what the notice for removal means.

**Euphemism** (yoo' fe miz em) *n.* the use of a word or phrase that is less expressive or direct but considered less distasteful, less offensive than another (Example: "remains" for "corpse") [*Webster's New World College Dictionary*, fourth edition].

Language, one's choice of words, has a powerful influence on how people understand an event. During World War II the U.S. government effectively used euphemisms to soften the impact of the forced removal and imprisonment of more than 110,000 Japanese Americans based only on their racial ancestry. Over two-thirds of the prisoners were U.S. citizens by birth; the others were their immigrant parents who were denied citizenship.

Two of the most common euphemisms that are still misused today are *evacuation* and *internment camp* (or *relocation center*). More accurate words are *forced removal* and *concentration camp*. The government's terms give the impression that its actions were gentle and harmless. It did not want the public to know that its own citizens were imprisoned.

For example, an exclusion poster of the Western Defense Command read:

*All Japanese persons, both alien and non-alien will be evacuated from the above-designated area by 12:00 o'clock noon, Thursday, April 7, 1942. ... Each family and individual living alone will be furnished transportation to the Reception Center.*

Even today, the government has used euphemisms such as *casualties* to refer to those killed or wounded in war. Other countries have used *ethnic cleansing* to refer to genocide, the murder of an entire ethnic and/or religious group.

## MILITARY NECESSITY



The Lazo home: Ralph, his father, and sister Virginia discuss the forced removal of Japanese Americans.

The U.S. government called the bombing of Pearl Harbor a sneak attack by Japan. Then the government and many newspapers portrayed Japanese people as sneaky and not to be trusted. Japanese Americans had no connection at all to the bombing of Pearl Harbor. But many political leaders and newspapers began to say Japanese Americans were likely to be loyal to Japan rather than to the United States. They claimed some would commit **espionage** or **sabotage** against the government.

Vocal politicians, newspapers, and anti-Japanese groups on the West Coast used prejudices from the past to create hatred and fear toward Japanese Americans. These anti-Japanese voices became stronger and stronger and called for the removal of all Japanese Americans from the West Coast. Henry Stimson, the secretary of war, and military officials listened to these anti-Japanese voices as they prepared recommendations for President Roosevelt. In his recommendations, Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt said that "along the Pacific Coast over 112,000 potential enemies, of Japanese extraction, are at large today." Dewitt said that Japanese Americans born in the United States were likely to be as disloyal to the U.S. government as their immigrant parents might be. He later said, "A Jap's a Jap. There is no way to determine their loyalty." DeWitt said that there were signs that Japanese Americans would commit sabotage and Japanese Americans were a danger to U.S. military efforts. This idea of danger became known as the "military necessity" to remove Japanese Americans from military areas on the West Coast.

However, the Department of State, the Navy, and the FBI had studied Japanese Americans and concluded that they were consistently loyal to the United States. But these studies were disregarded by the president and his advisors. Later historians found that DeWitt had lied about sabotage by Japanese Americans to make his argument stronger to persuade Stimson and President Roosevelt to follow his recommendations.

Stimson followed DeWitt's recommendations and advised President Roosevelt to begin the process of giving the military the power to remove Japanese Americans from military areas. Roosevelt decided to go along with Stimson's recommendations and signed Executive Order 9066 (EO 9066). Although the order did not directly mention Japanese Americans, it was clearly intended for them.

In 1980, the federal government formed the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) to study the causes of the removal and incarceration. This group listened to former Japanese American inmates, former government officials, and historians who testified about the incarceration experience. The commission concluded that the removal and incarceration were *not* because of military necessity. Instead, it concluded that the reasons for the removal and incarceration were "race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership."

## LOSSES DUE TO FORCED REMOVAL



The Matsuoka home: Before the forced removal, the Matsuoka family has to quickly sell their belongings to neighbors and profiteers.

After learning that the U.S. military was going to take them from their homes and communities, Japanese Americans hurriedly sold their belongings, in most cases for next to nothing. A 37-room hotel sold for \$300. Greedy farmers rushed to buy as cheaply as they could productive farmlands long cultivated by Japanese Americans. Whatever couldn't be sold or carried to camp was abandoned. Books, photos, and Japanese antiques were burned. About 3,500 Japanese American students were expelled from colleges and universities on the West Coast. Thousands of high school students did not graduate. The loss of earnings, property, education, and self-respect were blows from which many Japanese Americans never fully recovered (see *The Journey; Personal Justice Denied*).

In 1942, the Federal Reserve Bank estimated that the total Japanese American property loss was about \$400 million (this would amount to billions of dollars today). In 1948, through the Evacuation Claims Act, the government gave some of the former inmates **compensation** of less than ten cents per dollar for property they had given up (for example, for a car valued at \$500, the claimant would receive less than \$50). Japanese American claimants also had to turn in receipts for items lost. Very few were compensated, and no one was paid for losses due to death, physical or mental hardship, or suffering (see *America's Concentration Camps*).

In 1988, Congress passed and President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act, which gave each former inmate (who was still alive) **reparations** of \$20,000 and an apology for the violation of constitutional rights. This compensation was a very small amount for such a huge injustice, not to mention that the reparations and apology came more than 40 years after the camps closed. It had taken that long for the Japanese American community to rebuild its spirit and strength for a **redress** campaign.

The Civil Liberties Act helped to redress some of the wrongs committed against Japanese Americans. However, many of the former inmates had already passed away and never received redress. As a result of the redress campaign, state and local governments also tried to correct their earlier wrongdoings against Japanese Americans. More recently, hundreds of former inmates (who are now in their 70s and 80s) were given high school diplomas from their original high schools.

## RACE PREJUDICE



Los Angeles basketball court: Ralph and Jimmy's Chinese American friend wears a badge so that others won't think that he's Japanese American.

During the late 1880s and early 1900s, many Japanese immigrants came to the United States. They worked on farms, on railroads, and in businesses. Laws kept them from becoming citizens or owning land. Like other immigrants, they faced discrimination and race prejudice. Some store owners posted signs stating, "No Japs Allowed!"

On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked the United States by bombing Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i. Over 2,400 American soldiers were killed and 21 military ships were destroyed. The fear of, and anger against, Japan were directed toward Japanese American by newspapers and government officials.

President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942. This order allowed the military to remove all Japanese Americans from their homes on the West Coast. They were imprisoned in America's concentration camps. The country's leaders said that the forced removal was based on "**military necessity**." However, groups such as the Asiatic Exclusion League and the Native Sons of the Golden West pushed for the forced removal for their own gain. The league's members feared that Asian immigrants were taking jobs from them. They resented the Japanese American farmers' ability to turn undesirable land into productive farms.

Fearing the growing racism, some Asian Americans wore buttons stating, "I am Chinese." They did not want to be mistaken for Japanese. Leaders continued to make prejudicial statements about Japanese Americans that led to **stereotyping** and negative feelings. They called Japanese Americans "Japs," a **derogatory**, hurtful word.

General John L. DeWitt: *A Jap's a Jap.*

Secretary of War Henry Stimson: *Their racial characteristics are such that we cannot understand or trust even the citizen Japanese.*

U.S. Representative John Rankin: *I'm for catching every Japanese in America, Alaska, and Hawaii now and putting them in concentration camps.... Damn them! Let's get rid of them now!*

The United States was also at war with Germany and Italy. During 1942, about 150 U.S. merchant ships positioned off the Gulf of Mexico and the East Coast were attacked and sunk by German vessels. There was, however, no call for the mass imprisonment of German or Italian Americans.

In 1983, a government commission concluded that the wartime removal and imprisonment of Japanese Americans were due to "race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership." This report provided the basis for a presidential apology and reparations to over 82,000 surviving former inmates.

## ANTI-ALIEN LEGISLATION



The Matsuoka home: Ralph thinks about the Matsuoka family, which was sent to Manzanar concentration camp by the U.S. government.

Long before World War II, Asians in California were treated badly. When the first Chinese came to work in the gold mines in 1848, they were often victims of violent crimes, such as **arson** and murder. Laws prevented Chinese immigrants from becoming citizens or voting. Further, California's **anti-miscegenation** law of 1880 prohibited the marriage of a "**negro, mulatto or Mongolian**" to a white person. The California Constitution even let cities expel all of their Chinese residents. Finally, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 stopped the flow of Chinese laborers to the United States and was expanded six years later to include all Chinese.

But growers needed cheap labor for the sugar cane fields of Hawai'i and farms in California. The farming industry turned to Japan for workers, who began to come in the 1890s. The Japanese soon faced the same discriminatory laws as the Chinese before them. Groups like the Asiatic Exclusion League, the Japanese Exclusion League of California, and organized labor pushed for laws to restrict immigration and land ownership by Japanese.

The Gentlemen's Agreement with Japan ended the immigration of Japanese workers but allowed those who were already in the United States to travel to Japan and to bring immediate family members, including prospective brides, to the United States. The California alien land laws of 1913 and 1920 prevented "aliens" (in reality, Asians) from owning land, purchasing land in the name of their citizen children, or from even leasing land for more than three years. Families were forced to move every few years in order to find new land to lease.

Other states, such as Arizona, Texas, Oregon, and Washington, followed with their own alien land laws. Anti-Asian groups were able to pressure the U.S. government to end all immigration from Japan with the Immigration Act of 1924. (An earlier immigration act created an Asiatic Barred Zone that excluded immigrants from India, Burma, Siam, Afghanistan, Arabia, the Malay Islands, and Polynesia.)

Unlike the Chinese, Japanese men were able to bring their wives to the United States. Until 1920, they could also marry "**picture brides**" and start families. Japanese immigrant parents believed that their U.S.-born children would have better lives than they had. Unfortunately, the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II destroyed this hope. The constitutional rights of Japanese Americans were violated when the government put them into concentration camps.

## FORCED REMOVAL



Los Angeles train station, 1942: Ralph's friend Art boards the train to Manzanar with other Japanese Americans.

Over 110,000 Japanese Americans were removed from Arizona, Washington, Oregon, and California and placed in concentration camps in desolate parts of the United States. Persons with as little as one-sixteenth Japanese ancestry were incarcerated. They were ordered to leave their homes, farms, schools, and businesses within days of receiving notice from the government. Many of the community leaders had already been arrested just hours after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. While concentration camps ringed by barbed wire were being built far inland, Japanese Americans were housed in 16 temporary detention centers. Some of these "assembly centers" were former racetracks, such as the Santa Anita racetrack. The horse stalls, many of which were still coated with manure, became the Japanese Americans' new living quarters.

Mary Kurihara (from *Repairing America*):

*I remember thinking, Am I a human being? Why are we being treated like this? Santa Anita [race-track] stunk like hell.*

Grace Nakamura (*Personal Justice Denied*):

*On May 16, 1942 at 9:30 a.m., we departed . . . for an unknown destination. To this day, I can remember vividly the plight of the elderly, some on stretchers, orphans herded onto the train by the caretakers, and especially a young couple with four pre-school children. The mother had two frightened toddlers hanging on to her coat. In her arms, she carried two crying babies. The father had diapers and other baby paraphernalia strapped to his back. In his hands he struggled with duffle bag and suitcase. The shades were drawn on the train for our entire trip. Military police patrolled the aisles.*

William Kochiyama recalled his entry to Tanforan Assembly Center (a racetrack):

*At the entrance ... stood two lines of troops with rifles and fixed bayonets pointed at the evacuees as they walked between the soldiers to the prison compound. Overwhelmed with bitterness and blind with rage, I screamed every obscenity I knew at the armed guards, daring them to shoot me.*

The U.S. government also forcibly removed 2,264 Japanese from Latin America and incarcerated them at Crystal City, Texas. Hundreds of Japanese Americans and Japanese Latin Americans were used in the U.S. government's hostage-exchange program with Japan. Two sailings of the Swedish ship *Gripsholm* transported hundreds of them to Asia. They were exchanged for white Americans who were held captive in Asia after the outbreak of war. Many Japanese Latin Americans were not allowed to return to their homeland after the war.

## THOSE WHO STOOD UP FOR JAPANESE AMERICANS



Los Angeles train station, 1942: Friends come to say goodbye to their Japanese American neighbors.

While most Americans turned their backs on Japanese Americans, there were some shining examples of kindness and courage.

Clara Breed was a librarian in San Diego during the war and knew many of the Japanese American children who were incarcerated. Miss Breed, as she was known to the children, gave each student a supply of stamped postcards so they could keep in touch while in camp. She mailed books, candy, and clothes to the children. All during their long imprisonment, Miss Breed corresponded with the students. She gave them support and advice. Through her, the student inmates stayed connected with the outside world.

The Society of Friends, or **Quakers**, spoke out against the camps and criticized the living conditions, but to no avail. They helped over 4,000 **Nisei** leave the camps early to finish their college education in the Midwest and on the East Coast and helped Japanese Americans find jobs and housing. The Quakers drove long distances to the camps, bringing them gifts and basic necessities. To the imprisoned Japanese Americans, their actions showed that there were white Americans who cared.

Individuals such as Fred Okrand and Ernest Besig of the **American Civil Liberties Union** helped some Japanese Americans challenge the constitutionality of the camps in the courts. Because of this, they were attacked as “anti-American” and “unpatriotic.” Okrand called the incarceration “an atrocity ... the greatest single violation of civil rights in our history.” Wayne M. Collins was a heroic supporter of the Japanese Americans. He fought to regain citizenship for Japanese Americans who had gone to Japan during the war. They were used as part of the U.S. government’s hostage-exchange program. He also helped 365 Japanese Latin Americans obtain permanent residency (green card) status in the United States. For more than 20 years, Collins worked on court cases that resulted in the return of U.S. citizenship for 4,978 **Nisei** who had given up their citizenship for various reasons, including disgust at how they were being treated by the U.S. government.

## A CONCENTRATION CAMP



Manzanar concentration camp: An inmate looks at the barbed wire and guard tower surrounding the camp.

Although the War Relocation Authority (WRA) called them “relocation centers,” they were America’s concentration camps, “hastily constructed facilities for housing Japanese Americans forcibly removed from their homes and businesses on the West Coast during World War II” (from *Japanese American History*). Surrounded by barbed wire and watchtowers with armed soldiers, each of the ten concentration camps imprisoned from 8,000 to 20,000 inmates. The camps were often located in swampland or deserts.

Each had a similar layout—rows of barracks, large plain buildings about 20 feet wide and 120 feet long. Each barrack was divided into six rooms. There were 12 to 14 of these barracks in a block. For each block there was a **mess hall**, **communal** showers, toilets without partitions, a laundry, and a recreational hall. When Japanese Americans first walked into their rooms, they saw a potbellied stove, two Army cots with blankets, and little else. During the first night in camp some families talked about being so cold that they huddled together like dogs to keep warm.

One and sometimes two families shared a 20’x16’ room. The walls were so thin that conversations could be overheard, leaving very little privacy. The inmates tried to improve their surroundings by making their own furniture, planting gardens, and putting up partitions. It was difficult to keep the family together as a unit because the young people tended to eat separately with their friends in the mess hall. There was a shortage of medical care and basic necessities. Growing children did not have enough milk, meat or eggs. The endless lines, dust storms, extreme heat and bitter cold—at times 35 degrees below zero—caused terrible hardship and suffering for the Japanese Americans.

Although the inmates organized schools, churches, clubs, and sports to make life seem more normal, the lack of freedom and the poor conditions led to discontent. Riots occurred and some inmates were even shot at if they wandered too close to the barbed wire fence.

*I cannot help but think of the old men standing with plates in their hands. Residents in America for forty or fifty years, they pursued gigantic dreams and crossed an expansive ocean to America to live... They were people who had worked with all they had until on their forehead wave-like furrows were harrowed. Every time I see these oldsters with resigned, peaceful expressions meekly eating what is offered them, I feel my eyes become warm. (from Years of Infamy)*

## JAPANESE AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN WORLD WAR II



11  
Manzanar concentration camp: A military messenger informs the Matsuokas that their son Harry has been killed while serving in the U.S. military.

In 1942, **Nisei** men from Hawai'i volunteered for the U.S. Army's 100th Battalion. The majority of Japanese Americans in Hawai'i were not incarcerated in concentration camps. The 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT) was also made up of Japanese Americans. Unlike the Nisei in the 100th, many of these men had volunteered or were drafted from the concentration camps. The 100th Battalion had already fought many battles in North Africa and in the Battle of Cassino in Italy by the time the 442nd RCT arrived in March 1944. The 100th Battalion became the first battalion of the 442nd and together they helped free towns in France from the Nazis. They saved the Texas "Lost Battalion" of 211 men trapped in eastern France. In the process, 184 Japanese American soldiers lost their lives. These Texans still honor them today as "honorary Texans." The lesser known 522 Field Artillery Battalion of the 442nd RCT helped to free the Jewish prisoners at the Dachau concentration camp in Germany.

Over 33,000 Nisei served in the U.S. military during and immediately after World War II, and many died for their country at places like Anzio and Cassino in Italy while their families were behind barbed wire in concentration camps in America. The men of the 442nd RCT were given over 18,000 medals for bravery. The 442nd RCT was the most highly decorated military unit for its size and length of service in U.S. military history. Yet only one soldier, Sadao Munemori, received the Medal of Honor at that time. It wasn't until 2000 that 20 Japanese Americans who fought in World War II finally received this highest military honor by President Bill Clinton, although 13 of the 20 had already died. After the war, President Harry Truman told the Nisei soldiers,

*You fought not only the enemy, but you fought prejudice and you won.*  
(from *Japanese American History*)

Nisei soldiers served in the Pacific as part of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). They could speak both English and Japanese and translated maps and messages sent by Japan. The Nisei questioned Japanese prisoners of war, and they even talked enemy soldiers into giving up. Talking about the MIS, General Douglas MacArthur stated,

*Never in military history did an army know so much about the enemy prior to actual engagement.* (from *Due Process*)

General Willoughby, an Army intelligence chief, said.

*The Nisei saved countless Allied lives and shortened the war by two years.* (from *Due Process*)

## RIGHTS, CHOICES AND RESISTANCE



12  
Mess hall at Manzanar concentration camp: Jimmy tells Art why he is so angry about being in camp.

The Constitution and Bill of Rights guarantee many rights to citizens of the United States. One of the most important rights is the right to due process. This means that a person has the right to know the charges against him or her and has the right to a speedy and public trial. The U.S. government violated these rights when it removed Japanese Americans from the West Coast. In addition, the FBI entered their homes without search warrants and took away their property. The government put them into concentration camps without charges or trials. On top of this injustice, the government then wanted Japanese Americans to volunteer for military service while imprisoned in the camps.

Some Japanese Americans believed that it was important to volunteer and to show loyalty to the United States. Many joined the **442nd Regimental Combat Team** and the **100th Battalion**. The 442nd lost 700 men and the 100th suffered 900 casualties, including injuries and deaths. Together they earned more than 18,000 medals for bravery (see card 11). Japanese American soldiers also served in the Pacific as part of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). Able to speak both English and Japanese, these soldiers translated maps and messages sent by Japan and questioned Japanese prisoners of war.

Others believed that it was wrong for the government to draft them while they were incarcerated in the camps. Many refused to report for duty. At the Heart Mountain concentration camp, 63 members of the **Fair Play Committee** were tried and sentenced to prison for resisting the draft. The seven leaders faced prison terms of three years. Some were put into solitary confinement.

Overall, 315 inmates from the ten camps resisted the draft.

Japanese Americans protested in many other ways. They went on strike at the Santa Anita Assembly Center and at Heart Mountain over working conditions and wages. They protested the way prisoners were treated in the Tule Lake stockade. Two Japanese Americans, Gordon Hirabayashi and Minoru Yasui, disobeyed the curfew laws which restricted Japanese Americans to their homes after 8 PM. Fred Korematsu and Hirabayashi refused the order to leave the West Coast. All three spent time in jail for their decisions and filed lawsuits against the government. It was not until 1983–1988 that their convictions were vacated.



**RALPH'S CHOICE**

**LOYALTY**



13

Outside the mess hall at Manzanar concentration camp: Ruby comforts Ralph just after Jimmy lashes out at him.

Ralph identified himself as a Mexican American although he was of Mexican and Irish ancestry. Ralph lived in downtown Los Angeles with his father and older sister in a multicultural neighborhood of Japanese, Jews, Basques, Filipinos and African Americans. When his Japanese American friends were sent to the Manzanar concentration camp during World War II, he decided to go with them. He spent two and a half years at Manzanar. After graduation from Manzanar High School in 1944, he was drafted into the Army. Ralph served in the South Pacific, where he participated in the campaign to liberate the Philippines and earned a Bronze Star for heroism in combat.

After the war he graduated from UCLA, earned a master's degree from California State University at Northridge, and taught in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Ralph eventually became a counselor at Los Angeles Valley College. During the redress movement of the 1980s, Lazo spoke out for redress for the former Japanese American inmates.

When asked why he decided to join his friends at Manzanar and live behind barbed wire in a concentration camp, Ralph said that he sensed the injustice of what was happening to his friends. He also felt that he had to share their experiences. Ralph explained:

*I knew their loyalty; they hadn't done anything I hadn't done, and time has proven this. It was wrong. I come from a long line of humanitarians; the most important thing for us is a human being, a human life, a human dignity. (from Rafu Shimpo, reprinted pp. 63-64 in the appendix)*

Ralph won undying love and gratitude from the Japanese American community for his actions. Sue Kunitomi Embrey, former chairperson of the Manzanar Committee, which organizes an annual pilgrimage to the Manzanar camp, remembers Ralph:

*On one thing he was consistent and strong—the evacuation and internment were utterly unjustified, and he would never keep quiet about how he felt. Few of his friends knew he had been threatened on more than one occasion. He may have been scared, but he wasn't going to be bullied. At the same time, he was kind and considerate of his friends, a loyal comrade whose friends loved him in return. With this strong commitment, Ralph went one step further. He became a "ronin"—one of ten gallant people to put up \$1,000 (each) to initiate a class-action suit for the National Council for Japanese American Redress. (from "50th Anniversary Day of Remembrance" booklet)*



14

The Lazo home: Mr. Lazo and daughter Virginia find out that Ralph is in the Manzanar concentration camp.

After Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor, the U.S. government said that Japanese Americans could not be trusted to be loyal to the United States. The government said that Japanese Americans might be spies or might commit sabotage against our government.

But Japanese Americans were as loyal as any other group of Americans. Two-thirds of them were born and raised in the United States and had no sense of loyalty at all to Japan. Their immigrant parents were treated badly in the United States. However, their lives in Japan had been very difficult. Therefore they decided to stay here to build their families and future in the United States.

So, when World War II started, there was no evidence from the past to show that Japanese Americans would be disloyal to our government. In fact, the FBI and naval intelligence had investigated the loyalty of Japanese Americans for over ten years before World War II. Their studies found Japanese Americans to be consistently loyal. In addition, two months before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt ordered a special investigation into the loyalty of Japanese Americans. Curtis Munson, the investigator, reported:

*For the most part the local Japanese are loyal to the United States ... We do not believe that they would be at the least any more disloyal than any other racial group in the United States with whom we went to war. ... The story was all the same. There is no Japanese 'problem' on the Coast.*

However, despite the Munson report, there were military and government leaders who still pushed the idea that Japanese Americans could not be trusted. Earl Warren, who was the attorney general of California and preparing to run for governor, was among the loudest and most influential voices calling for the removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans. He claimed that there was no way of separating the loyal from the disloyal among Japanese Americans. Warren called for speedy removal of Japanese Americans.

Many West Coast newspapers and anti-Japanese groups joined Warren. They blamed Japanese Americans for the bombing of Pearl Harbor and demanded their removal from the West Coast. Their views were echoed by Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, who was the military commander in charge of West Coast security. He was a key person to make recommendations to President Roosevelt's advisors on what to do with Japanese Americans. DeWitt claimed that all Japanese Americans might be disloyal to the U.S. government. He later said, "A Jap's a Jap.... There is no way to determine their loyalty.... It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen; theoretically he is still a Japanese and you can't change him."

## RESETTLEMENT/RETURNING HOME



The Matsuoka home, 1945: The Matsuokas return home at the end of the war.

The War Relocation Authority (WRA) director, Dillon Myer, encouraged Japanese Americans who could pass security clearances to leave the camps to move east or north, away from military zones. **Resettlement**—leaving camp and starting their lives over—was very difficult for most Japanese Americans. By the end of 1943, only 17,000 people had left camp to resettle. By 1945 inmates were allowed to return to the West Coast. The **Issei** had had everything taken away three years earlier and were now in their 60s—too old to start over. Bad as the camps were, many felt resettlement was even more upsetting.

The last 44,000 inmates from the 10 major camps—many elderly or poor—were forced to leave the camps. However, with shattered lives and little hope for the future, they did not want to leave the security of the camps. For many Japanese Americans there were no homes or work to return to. They were given \$25 and a bus or train ticket to a destination of their choice. Many moved to Chicago, Denver, Seabrook Farms (New Jersey), and other places where they could find work.

The camps destroyed Japanese American communities, and it would be many years before some were rebuilt. Many were never rebuilt. Housing was a big problem during resettlement. Many people would not rent to Japanese Americans, so finding decent places was a big problem. Many people moved into temporary shelters, converted army barracks, rundown trailer parks, and hotels.

Many camp survivors got tuberculosis. Some suffered nervous breakdowns and others died from heart conditions. Former Japanese American inmates tried to forget the past out of shame and grief. Many became silent about their experiences.

Racism against Japanese Americans was strong, especially on the West Coast. **Nisei** men had difficulty finding jobs. Many went into gardening and janitorial work; women took housework or civil service jobs. Kiku Hori Funabiki said:

*Returns faced life-threatening situations. A friend informed me that on one occasion, with her family, [she] had to dodge bullets from a drive-by shooting. Then she shared a story of a neighbor who had his house torched. We had no protection from these incidents. (from *Our Side of the Fence*)*

## STANDING UP FOR JUSTICE



Manzanar Pilgrimage, 1988: Still friends, Ralph and Ruby visit Manzanar concentration camp with two of Ralph's students.

In the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, many Americans were seeking to end racial segregation and promote equal rights for all Americans. There were Japanese Americans who were involved in this civil rights movement and who were inspired to create their own movement. By the early 1980s, many people recognized the serious injustices done to Japanese Americans during World War II and were ready to push the government to make amends with Japanese Americans.

The Japanese American community was determined to seek redress from the U.S. government. For many years, it held meetings, wrote letters to Congress, and made hundreds of presentations to churches, schools, and community groups. This grassroots campaign gained widespread support throughout the country. Latinos, African Americans, religious groups, and many others gave their support. Together, all of these groups helped Japanese Americans win redress.

The redress campaign resulted in Congress passing the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. This act gave a presidential apology and \$20,000 in reparations to each surviving inmate and Japanese Americans who lost liberty or property as a result of EO 9066. An education fund was also provided to support projects that would teach the American public about the forced removal and imprisonment of Japanese Americans.

By 1998, over 82,000 Japanese Americans had received the president's apology and the compensation. The U.S. government admitted it had wronged Japanese Americans—this partially restored some of the dignity and pride that were taken away during the war. However, the compensation was a small amount compared to the injustice and losses that Japanese Americans had suffered.

Ralph Lazo did not have to go to a concentration camp. He volunteered to be there to stand by his Japanese American friends. Later in life he continued to support them in their efforts to win redress. Ralph, in this way, stood up for justice. In 1980, during a conflict with Iran, some in our government suggested that Iranian Americans be incarcerated. At that time, when Ralph Lazo was asked whether he would go again to camp, he replied:

*That's an ideal question to ask if you can. No one should've gone to the camps. I had to go because my friends shouldn't have had to go. So sure, yes, I would. (from *Rafu Shimpo*, reprinted pp. 63-64 in the appendix)*