

Northwest History Consortium

Nisei: A Crisis of Identity

Alyssa Vis
10th – 12th Grade

National Standard

Era 8: The Great Depression and World War II (1929-1945) / Standard 3

Standard 3: The causes and course of World War II, the character of the war at home and abroad, and its reshaping of the U.S. role in world affairs

Standard 3A: The student understands the international background of World War II.

7-12: Analyze the reasons for American isolationist sentiment in the interwar period and its effects on international relations and diplomacy. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]

5-12: Evaluate American responses to German, Italian, and Japanese aggression in Europe, Africa, and Asia from 1935 to 1941. [Formulate a position or course of action on an issue]

7-12: Analyze the reasons for the growing tensions with Japan in East Asia culminating with the bombing of Pearl Harbor. [Marshal evidence of antecedent circumstances]

Standard 3C: The Student understands the effects of World War II at home

5-12: Evaluate the internment of Japanese Americans during the war and assess the implication for civil liberties. [Evaluate the implementation of a decision]

7-12: Evaluate how Americans viewed their achievements and global responsibilities at war's end. [Interrogate historical data]

7-12: Explore how the war fostered cultural exchange and interaction while promoting nationalism and American identity. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]

7-12: Evaluate how minorities organized to gain access to wartime jobs and how they confronted discrimination. [Formulate a position or course of action on an issue]

BACKGROUND

You could also begin this lesson by having the students listen to FDR's speech instead of having them read portions of it. This might be a good "hook" to get the students interested.

Other tangents that could be investigated are what sort of reparations—if any—should be given to those who were sent to the internment camps, and what should be done to the Germans and Italians who were also living in the United States; or, follow up with a discussion as to why the same intense attention wasn't paid to the Germans and Italians.

What made the Japanese so different?

Roosevelt, Franklin Delano. "Pearl Harbor Address to the Nation." 8 Dec. 1941. [American Rhetoric \(University of Texas at Tyler\)](http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrpearlharbor.htm). ©2001 – 2010. Tyler, TX. <<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrpearlharbor.htm>>.

This site provides the text and audio for this speech.

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PROBLEM

The goal of this PBL is to decide whether or not the treatment of the Japanese on the Pacific coast was fair, justified, and/or appropriate; or, was it just a reaction to the events that had just transpired. Why were only the people of Japanese descent on the west coast sent to the internment camps and not those who inhabited the Hawaiian Islands—the site of the attack?

SCENARIO

“Yesterday, December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan,” stated President Franklin Roosevelt who began his address to the United States the day after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Before the end of that week, the United States was at war with Japan, Germany, and Italy.

It did not take long for different information to be disseminated across the country. Whereas, the Munson report, November 1941, stated that “The consensus of opinion is that there will be no racial uprising of Japanese in Honolulu.” Governor Olson of California countered the Munson report’s assertion by saying that “. . . it is known that there are Japanese residents of California who have sought to aid the Japanese enemy. . . .” The military is now asking the Secretary of War to provide for the exclusion of “Any and all other persons who are suspected . . . to be actual or potential saboteurs . . . from military areas. . . .”

In order to protect the country from another attack and curb mass hysteria, a proposal has been made that all the people of enemy alien ancestry need to be moved away from the Pacific Coast and protected in new settlements in the interior of the country.

- Culbert Olson, Governor of California, February 1942
- Final Recommendation of the Commanding General, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, Submitted to Secretary of War, 1942

TASK

You are a member of one of President Roosevelt’s advisory panels dealing with enemy Japanese aliens and their children. You have been asked to assess the risk of and risk to this group of people and then present your findings, including a decision as to what (if anything) should be done with or to them. You are tasked with presenting your findings and recommendations in a presentation to President Roosevelt and his Cabinet. Additionally, you will need to submit a written report to President Roosevelt which outlines your findings and provides thorough justification for your recommendations.

President Roosevelt is very concerned with misinformation, so you will need to include a list of your resources in MLA format and cite specific examples and evidence in your written report.

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RESOURCES

Documents

Japanese-American Internment: Miscellaneous Documents

“As interview after interview piled up, those bringing in results began to call it the same old tune. . . . There is no Japanese ‘problem’ on the Coast. There will be no armed uprising of Japanese. There will undoubtedly be some sabotage financed by Japan and executed largely by imported agents.”

Munson Report (November 1941)

“The consensus of opinion is that there will be no racial uprising of the Japanese in Honolulu The first generation, as on the Coast, are ideologically and culturally closest to Japan . . . it is considered that the big bulk of them will be loyal The second generation is estimated as approximately ninety-eight percent loyal.”

Munson Report (November 1941)

“It is known that there are Japanese residents of California who have sought to aid the Japanese by way of communicating information, or have shown indications of preparation for fifth column activities.”

California Governor Culbert Olson (Speech, February 1942)

“There’s a tremendous volume of public opinion now developing against the Japanese of all classes, that is aliens and non-aliens, to get them off the land . . . they want and they are bringing pressure on the government to move all the Japanese out. As a matter of fact, it’s not being instigated or developed by people who are not thinking but by the best people of California . . . they fell that they are living in the midst of a lot of enemies. They don’t trust the Japanese. . . .”

Lt. General DeWitt to Major Karl Bendetsen (Telephone Transcript, January 29, 1942)

“ . . . Any estimate of the situation indicates that the following are possible and probable enemy activities:

- a. Naval attack on shipping in coastal waters;
- b. Naval attack on coastal cities and vital installations;
- c. Air raids on vital installations, particularly within two hundred miles of the coast;
- d. Sabotage of vital installations throughout the Western Defense Command. Hostile naval and air raids will be assisted by enemy agents signaling from the coastline . . . and by supplying and otherwise assisting enemy vessels by sabotage. . . .”

“I now recommend . . . that the Secretary of War provide for the exclusion from . . . military areas . . .

- a. Japanese aliens
- b. Japanese Americans citizens
- c. Alien enemies other than Japanese aliens
- d. Any and all other persons who are suspected . . . to be actual or potential saboteurs”

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“That the evacuation of classes (a), (b), and (c) from such military areas be initiated on a designated evacuation day and carried to completion as rapidly as practicable.”

Memorandum to Secretary Stimson from Lt. General DeWitt (February 13, 1942)

“Neither of the DiMaggio seniors is a citizen. They have reared nine children . . . eight of who were born in the United States. . . . Three of the boys are outstanding persons in the sports world. Joe who is with the Yanks . . . Dominic is with the Boston Red Sox . . . Vincent is with the Pittsburgh team. To evacuate (people like the DiMaggios) would . . . present . . . a serious situation. Many of the people affected by the existing order have boys and girls in the armed forces . . . it would be destructive and have a tendency to lower morale . . . if information should reach those in the armed forces that their relatives have been ordered to move out of this area because unfortunately they are not citizens.”

San Francisco Attorney Chauncey Tramutolo (Tolan Congressional Hearings, February-March 1942)

“Unfortunately (many) are of the opinion that because we have had no sabotage and no fifth column activities in this state . . . that means that none have been planned for us. But I take the view that this is the most ominous sign in our whole situation. It convinces me more than perhaps any other factor that the sabotage we are to get, the fifth column activities that we are to get, are timed just like Pearl Harbor was timed. . . .”

Earl Warren (Gubernatorial Candidate, 1942)

“The proposal of the War Department to organize a combat team consisting of legal American citizens of Japanese descent has my full approval. The new combat team will add to the nearly 5,000 loyal Americans of Japanese ancestry who are already serving in the armed forces for our country . . . No loyal citizens of the United States should be denied the democratic right to exercise the responsibilities of his citizenship, regardless of ancestry . . . A good American is one who is loyal to his country and to our creed of liberty and democracy.”

President Roosevelt to Secretary Stimson (Letter, February 1, 1943)

Books and Periodicals

Grunwald, Lisa, and Adler, Stephen J., editors. Letters of the Century: America 1900-1999. New York: The Dial Press, 1999.

Hakim, Joy. War, Peace, and All That Jazz from *A History of US*. Vol. 9. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Immell, Myra H, editor. World War II. San Diego, CA: Greenhaven Press, 2001.

Keese, Timothy and Sidwell, Mark. United States History for Christian School. 2nd ed. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1991.

Lindley, Ernest K. "Problems of the Japanese Migration." Newsweek 30 March 1942: 26.

Monk, Linda R, editor. Ordinary Americans: U.S. History Through the Eyes of Everyday People. 2nd ed. Alexandria, VA: Close Up Press, 2003.

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Sullivan, George. The Day Pearl Harbor was Bombed: A Photo History of World War II. New York, NY: Scholastic, 1991.

Uchida, Yoshiko. Desert Exile: The Uprooting of a Japanese American Family. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1982.

"When is a Jap?" Newsweek 24 May 1943: 33-34.

Your classroom textbook.

Internet

Powell, Kimberly. "World War II Internment Records: World War II Enemy Alien Control Program." About.Com: Genealogy (A New York Times Company). ©2010 About.Com. New York, NY. 3 August 2010 <http://genealogy.about.com/od/immigration/a/internment_2.htm>.

"The Nisei Go Back" from *Time*, 25 December 1944. Time.Com. ©2010 Time, Inc. Tampa, FL. 3 August 2010 <<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,791699,00.html>>.

Photos of Japanese war balloons. The National Archives and Records Administration. 2010. College Park, MD. 3 August 2010 <<http://www.archives.gov/research/arc/>>. Identifiers: 1801064, 1800692, 285260, 285259, 1801149, 285263, 285258, 285262, 285264, 1799582, 1801148, 285261, 1800932, and 285257

World War II websites at "PageKeeper: Bookmarking for Teachers and Students." Teaching Matters, Inc. ©2006. New York, NY. 30 July 2010 <<http://pagekeeper.teachingmatters.org/home>>. User: alyssavis

ASSESSMENT

Students will begin this PBL by completing a pre-Quick-Write. They will finish the PBL by completing a post Quick-Write. This will help the classroom teacher gauge individual learning on the subject matter.

Students will also be assessed using the following two rubrics – one for their oral report and one for their written report. They are also required to turn in a works cited page for all the sources that they used in their presentation.

Before they leave on Friday, each student will be asked to write down what percent of the work each group member completed (including themselves). These percentages will not be shown to the rest of the group, but this needs to have the individual's name on it. These percentages will be used to give each student an individual grade on the project as well.

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Oral Presentation Rubric

	2	4	6	8
Central Question or Problem	Identifies a relevant issue or sub-problem in the scenario	States a central question or problem in the scenario	States a clear and accurate central question or problem with reasons for its importance	Gives other possible questions or problems and tells why this is the central question or problem
Position or Decision	Focuses on the central issue in the scenario	Answers the question or addresses the problem	Explains why this decision is better than other possible choices	Describes the process of making the decision
Supporting Argument	Explains the decision with reasons	Provides two or more logical reasons	Provides two or more reasons that, taken together, logically lead to the position	Provides at least one counter-reason to the position
Evidence Sources	Gives sources to explain the decision	Gives two or more reliable (good) sources	Gives sources to support the main parts of the argument	Gives sources that do not support the decision and tells why they were not accepted
Argument	Uses vocabulary that can be understood by the audience	Gives the question, decision, argument and evidence with sources	Explains why the ideas should be important to this audience	Uses a story, or other "hook" to get the audience interested
Reflection	Gives timeline of problem solving activities	Describes problems or challenges the group had	Identifies important "ah-has" for the group and explains how they happened	Describes what could have been better and lessons learned
Speaking Skills	Inaudible or too loud; no eye contact; rate too slow/fast; speaker seemed uninterested and used monotone	Some mumbling; little eye contact; uneven rate; little or no expression	Clear articulation but not as polished	Poised, clear articulation; proper volume; steady rate; good posture and eye contact; enthusiasm; confidence
Audience Response	Incoherent; audience lost interest and could not determine the point of the presentation	Some related facts but went off topic and lost audience; mostly presented facts with little or no imagination	Presented facts with some interesting "twists"; held the audience's attention most of the time	Involved the audience in the presentation; points made in creative way; held audience's attention throughout
Length of Presentation	More than 4 minutes away from allotted time	Between 2-4 minutes of allotted time	Between 0-2 minutes from allotted time	Within allotted time

**Score is dependent upon meeting the requirements of the lower scores as well.

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Written Report Rubric

	2	4	6	8
Central Question or Problem	Identifies a relevant issue or sub-problem in the scenario	States a central question or problem in the scenario	States a clear and accurate central question or problem with reasons for its importance	Gives other possible questions or problems and tells why this is the central question or problem
Position or Decision	Focuses on the central issue in the scenario	Answers the question or addresses the problem	Explains why this decision is better than other possible choices	Describes the process of making the decision
Supporting Argument	Explains the decision with reasons	Provides two or more logical reasons	Provides two or more reasons that, taken together, logically lead to the position	Provides at least one counter-reason to the position
Evidence Sources	Gives sources to explain the decision	Gives two or more reliable (good) sources	Gives sources to support the main parts of the argument	Gives sources that do not support the decision and tells why they were not accepted
Argument	Uses vocabulary that can be understood by the audience	Gives the question, decision, argument and evidence with sources	Explains why the ideas should be important to this audience	Uses a story, or other "hook" to get the audience interested
Sentence Structure	Repetitious; fragments and run-ons are frequent	Variety is present; some errors are evident	Complete and correct	Complete; varied; interesting
Punctuation/ Spelling	Block meaning	Careless or distracting	Errors present but do not interfere with meaning	Error-free
Voice	Unclear	Mechanical, formulaic	Clear and authentic	Distinctive; appropriate to task and audience

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REFERENCES/CITATIONS

- DeWitt, Lt. General Wallace. "Telephone Transcript of Lt. General DeWitt to Major Karl Bendetsen." 29 January 1942. Digital History (University of Houston). ©2006 – 2010. Houston, TX. 3 August 2010 <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/learning_history/japanese_internment/witt_bendetsen_conversation.cfm>.
- DeWitt, Lt. General Wallace. "Final Recommendation of the Commanding General, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, Submitted to the Secretary of War." 13 February 1942. Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco. ©1995 – 2010. San Francisco, CA. 4 August 2010 <<http://www.sfmuseum.org/war/dewitt4.html>>.
- "History Standards for Grades 5-12 United States." UCLA National Center for History in the Schools. 2005. Los Angeles, CA. 21 May 2009 <<http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards/us-standards5>>.
- Munson, Curtis B. "The Munson Report." November 1941. Digital History (University of Houston). ©2006 – 2010. Houston, TX. 3 August 2010 <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/learning_history/japanese_internment/munson_report.cfm>.
- Olson, Governor Culbert. "Radio Speech." 3 February 1942. Berlet.Org (Ira Lee Berlet). 2010. Houston, TX. 4 August 2010 <http://www.berlet.org/apush/assignments/japanese_internment_dbq.pdf>.
- Roosevelt, President Franklin Delano. "Letter to Secretary Stimson Regarding the Origins of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team." 1 February 1943. The 442nd Regimental Combat Team Historical Society. 2010. [location unknown]. 4 August 2010 <<http://the442.org/activation.html>>.
- Tramutolo, Chauncey. "Tolan Congressional Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration." February/March 1942. Internet Archive. 2010. San Francisco, CA. 4 August 2010 <<http://www.archive.org/details/nationaldefensem29unit>>.
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- Warren, Earl. "The Earl Warren Project" from *Japanese-American Relocation Reviewed: Vol. II, The Internment* by Robert Cozzens, 1974. Online Archive of California. ©2009 – 2010. Oakland, CA. 4 August 2010 <http://content.cdlib.org/view?docId=ft1290031s&brand=oac&doc.view=entire_text>.