

I am describing a two day lesson that is part of my lesson on World War II which I am calling "The Good War?" (with a nod to Studs Terkel).

This two day lesson focuses on the internment of Japanese -Americans in the 1940's.

1) The lesson will begin with the class looking at pictures of Issei (first generation Japanese immigrants to the United States) taken from Lauren Kessler's book, "Stubborn Twig. They will use a variation of an analysis sheet used by Patricia Erickson and XXXX XXX at their workshop Malaga Island-Fragmented Lives at the November 9th Maine Council for the Social Studies conference in Augusta. This analysis sheet asks the students to first list the people in the photograph, than the objects or artifacts in the photo, third the things in the natural environment and finally the actions occurring in the photo. This is the front side of the worksheet. It concentrates on the objective, factual elements of the photo. Once students complete this half of the worksheet, they will then flip to the back side of the worksheet, where they will deal with more reflective questions such as "Can we tell if individuals are related to one another" and "Are there any clues about when or where this photo was taken".

A) Student reaction was quite what I expected. Students saw mostly the faces in the pictures and the faces they saw were Asian (most of them correctly identified them as being of Japanese heritage, though a few went with Chinese). Because they saw Asian faces they wrongly deduced that the people of Asian ancestry were in Asia. This backed up my assumption that a) race or facial color is one of the first things that students look at when identifying people, but also showed me that their understanding of fashion and technology in a world before their time is limited; i.e. they assume that people the world over dressed in western styles and drove western vehicles no matter the time period. Now all that said, I can understand some of their confusion, because while the men were dressed in western styles, the women were dressed in what would seem to the uninitiated as traditional Asian garb.

2) Shortly after this students will be asked to take a look at a list of internees at a Japanese-American internment camp. Students will not be told what this list represents, but instead will be asked to determine what the list represents based mostly on the context that we are studying America's role in World War II.

A) Unfortunately, I was not able to come up with said list. I have a hard time believing that such a list does not exist and I plan to do my best to procure such a list this semester when I will be teaching the same course with a different crew.

*The main idea of this opening exercise was to test student awareness of the presence of Americans of Japanese descent in American history. My guess is that most students will not recognize the people in the pictures or on the list as Americans.*

*Once I have determined student understanding of Japanese-American demographics in early to mid twentieth century America , the next step will be to introduce Executive Order # 9066.*

3) I will begin this segment of the lesson by asking student's what an "Executive Order" is. Chances are that student's will not be familiar with this. I will have them search Article 2 of the Constitution for the EO, but not let them search too long because it is not there. I will then explain to them what an EO is and give them the example of President Obama's Executive Order that prevented the deportations of thousands of illegal aliens.

A) I was not able to get to this part of my lesson plan. I hope to be able to get to this in second semester.

4) Then students will read Executive Order # 9066. We will discuss the fairness of the order. We will discuss why it made sense at the time, but how it was ultimately unfair.

A) We got to this point, but instead of having student's read this, I read it to them. There was not much time for discussion, but many students were shocked that the U.S government would do this to American citizens. I felt that this backed up my understanding of the young people of today; when they make decisions based on visuals their reaction is often visceral, but when they realize that the "foreigners" they saw in the pictures were American citizens, they were outraged that they were treated as being different.

5) Then we will discuss how the fairness of acts and laws are determined in the U.S. By hook or by crook we will come to the answer; The Supreme Court. I will have them read the dissenting opinion of Justice Murphy in the case of *Korematsu vs. United States* (1944) (found on pgs 184-186 of volume II of *Voices of the American People*). I will disguise the fact that Murphy's opinion is the dissenting one and ask them what they think of this opinion. I will then reveal to them that the Murphy opinion is the dissenting one and will reveal the majority opinion. They will read the majority opinion and we will discuss how they could have made a decision that in retrospect seems so wrong today.

A) I was not able to get to this part of my lesson plan. I hope to be able to get to this in second semester.

The last part of the lesson was to look at what the camps were really like.

6) I started out by having them watch a propaganda video created by the federal government that was about 9 and a half minutes long. Besides watching the video they were also required to take notes on what the video told them happened in the camps.

- A) Reaction of students was priceless. Many of them were quick to catch onto the hypocrisy of the government video.
- 7) The second part of the assignment was to listen and watch interviews with two survivors of the camps. What made these interviews a little more interesting than the average interviews was that both were with celebrities that students might have been able to identify with. The first was a seven minute interview with actor, George Takei who is most well remembered for his role as Sulu in the Star Trek television series and movies. Some kids would remember him for these roles, but most would not. Still, they might know him for his recent celebrity as a gay-rights activist and for his commentary on Facebook. The other shorter interview was with Pat Morita, who I remember as Arnold in the 70's sitcom Happy Days, but students more likely know as Mr. Miyagi in the inspirational 80's movie Karate Kid. Both interviews were available on YouTube.

A) Students watched the interview with Takei with little discussion and did not get a chance to view the Morita interview.

- 8) The last part of this assignment was to explore the PBS website Children of the Camps, which looked at the lives of six children who experienced the camps.