

# Nikkei Suitcase Lesson Plan - Legalities of the Incarceration by Heather Treanor

Fall '13 Social Studies Methods Class

~ School of Education, University of Portland

Instructor - Peter Pappas

<http://edmethods.com/2013/11/25/nikkei-suitcase-lesson-plan-legalities-of-the-incarceration/>

## 1. Identifying Information

Teacher:	Location:
Class/Topic: Social Studies/Japanese-American Incarceration Legal Study	Time: 50 minutes
Grade Level: Middle School	Date:

## 2. Overview:

This lesson is meant to be used as an overview of the legal aspects of the Japanese-American internment in concentration camps during World War II. The lesson can be used to introduce the history of the Japanese-American internment, or as a lesson meant to challenge students to think critically about the legal aspects of the internment. In this lesson, the students will be asked to think about the various legalities of interning people based on race and ethnicity, particularly how it relates to the internment of Japanese-Americans. This lesson is meant to complement a unit on either the Constitution/Bill Rights or World War II.

*Note: Teachers, please use your discretion on what material you wish to cover. If your classroom is studying World War II, please feel free to just cover the vocabulary from WWII - make the lesson fit your needs!*

### 3a. Goal:

#### Unit Goals:

TSW: develop an understanding of the Japanese-American internment.

TSW: be familiar with various legal terms (internment, detain, lawsuit, civil rights, etc).

TSW: be familiar with the social, legal, and ethical arguments surrounding the Japanese-American internment.

#### Lesson Goals:

TSW: be familiar with the causes and effects of the Japanese internment.

TSW: be able to give definitions for the legal terms used in this unit.

TSW: describe the importance of the Japanese-American internment in its historical context.

TSW: describe the similarities and differences of the Japanese-American concentration camps to the concentration camps used by Nazi Germany.

### 3b. Rationale:

This lesson forces the students to think critically about the internment of Japanese-Americans in the United States during World War II. By having the students compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the Japanese-American concentration camps and the Nazi Germany concentration camps, the students will gain an understanding of the ethical and social aspects of this action. Further, the lesson teaches the students how to use various legal terms -as they relate to the internment of Japanese-Americans - correctly.

### 3c. Standard:

6-8.RH.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

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- 6-8.RH.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- 6-8.RH.3 Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/ social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).
- 6-8.RH.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- 6-8.RH.5 Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- 6-8.RH.6 Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).
- 6-8.RH.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

## 4. Objective:

SWBAT: describe the importance of the internment of the Japanese-Americans during WWII.

SWBAT: describe the importance of the case *Korematsu v. United States*.

SWBAT: describe the cause and effect relationships of Pearl Harbor, racism towards Japanese-Americans, and the internment of Japanese-Americans.

## 5. Resources:

Nikei Center suitcase, notebooks/paper/etc. for students to take notes, pens/pencils

## 6. Modifications/Accommodations:

*Specific to the teacher/classroom; teachers, please use your best judgment on how to modify the lessons to accommodate your students.*

## 7. Procedure:

1. Hook (5 minutes)
  - a. Ask students to work in small groups to come with as many words/phrases as they can that relate to the Japanese-American internment in the United States during WWII.
  - b. Have students share their top two words with the class.
2. Vocabulary words/phrases (10 minutes) - **Primary Sources used: picture of Bill of Rights, pictures of concentration camps, pictures of Pearl Harbor, picture of a court room, picture of Executive Order 9066.**
  - a. Internment - **primary source: concentration camp picture, Executive Order 9066 picture**
    - i. The imprisonment or confinement of people, commonly in large groups, without a trial.
  - b. Concentration Camps - **primary source: concentration camp pictures from both the United States and Germany**
    - i. a place where large numbers of people, especially political prisoners or members of persecuted minorities, are deliberately imprisoned in a relatively small area with inadequate facilities, sometimes to provide forced labor or to await mass execution.

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- ii. The term is most strongly associated with Nazi Germany.
      - c. Pearl Harbor - **primary source: picture of Pearl Harbor before/after attack**
        - i. Attacked by Japanese on 7 December 1941
        - ii. Hawaii naval base
      - d. Lawsuit
        - i. A claim or dispute brought to a court of law for adjudication
      - e. Bill of Rights - **picture of Bill of Rights, Constitution**
        - i. A statement of rights of a class of people
        - ii. The first ten amendments to the Constitution of the United States
      - f. Executive Order 9066 - **picture of Executive Order 9066**
        - i. Governmental order that mandated all Japanese-Americans to be sent to a concentration camp.
3. *Korematsu v. United States* (10 minutes) - **Primary source used: picture of Korematsu/Supreme Court**
  - a. Overview of suit
    - i. 1944 Supreme Court case
    - ii. Upheld Executive Order 9066
  - b. Has never explicitly been overturned by the Supreme Court
4. Hands-on Activities:
  - a. Student Debate (20 minutes): *This activity could be used if the students already had background information on either the internment or Constitution/Bill of Rights.*
    - i. Separate students in groups of six, three students on each “side” - one side for “pro-internment” and one side “anti-internment”
    - ii. Have students debate the following:
      1. Legality of the internment
        - a. Bill of Rights
        - b. Constitution
      2. Common questions:
        - a. Did the Japanese need to be separated from other people for the Japanese-Americans’ own protection?
        - b. Should the United States have paid more than \$20,000 to each living member of the original detainees?
        - c. Should the Japanese-Americans be forced to register for the draft, seeing as they were forcibly interned?
  - b. Letter to the Editor: *This activity is useful for students if this is mostly new information; can be taken home to finish as homework as well.*
    - i. Explain letter
      1. Students will be writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper, as if they were either Japanese-Americans or “regular” American citizens
        - a. Japanese-Americans
          - i. Should be against the internment
        - b. “Regular” American citizens
          - i. Should be for the internment
      2. Students should use content vocabulary and emotional words to describe their positions.
      3. *Homework idea:* Have students do both letters (this encourages students to be critical thinkers, and understand how each position was reached.
5. Conclusion (5)
  - a. Assign homework
    - i. Extra Letter to the Editor
    - ii. Reflection on how the debate went