Japanese Internment

A two week lesson plan for middle school social studies

By Eva Waddell & Leslie Heffernan
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Overview/Goals
The movement of Japanese people to internment camps played a significant role in American’s attitudes towards people of Japanese descent in the US. Students will examine primary and secondary sources including song, photographs, letters, reports, interviews and other sources to explore the forced relocation of Japanese people after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941. They will also search for their own primary sources. Through these sources they will apply the information to:

- Graphic organizers
- Note taking
- Source analysis
- Using the steps of the writing process to produce their final product.

Essential Question: Why and how did the US government succeed in moving coastal people of Japanese ancestry to internment camps during World War II? Students will carefully examine letters, photographs, essays, journals, song and other print resources. Through careful examination of these primary and secondary sources, students will develop a historical question about the Japanese American’s treatment during this time.

In a multiple paragraph essay, students will construct an interpretation of the United State’s incarceration of Japanese people in the US after Pearl Harbor was bombed, as well as the effects of the incarceration, using historical materials.

Objectives
1. Students will use a variety of sources, including primary and secondary historical documents and photographs and will be able to evaluate their value.
2. Students will read a variety of primary and secondary sources and will use specific reading strategies and skills to gain a deeper understanding of history.
3. Students will examine different perspectives regarding relocation of Japanese.
4. Students will develop a historical question and state their position on the question.
5. Using the steps of the writing process, students will write an essay summarizing their learning and addressing the essential question.

Special Note: Most lessons are linked to other text and worksheets. These can be accessed by moving the cursor over the underlined text and clicking the mouse while holding down the control key.
Lesson 1 (two hours): Primary sources (sound recording, photographic and print)

**Objective:** Students will listen to a sound recording, look at photographs, and read print material and complete a corresponding graphic organizer to evaluate their content.

**Information/Materials:** Teacher will provide photographic, written and sound sources and allow students to analyze the primary sources. A great resource is *Japanese-American Internment: The Bill of Rights in Crisis* primary resource set, which contains several reproductions of primary sources.

**Activity:** Teacher will define what a primary source is and is not and will describe what *bias* means. Students will be given the following pieces of paper for this lesson: *What are Primary Sources?*, copies of the lyrics to the song, Executive Order 9066, and three copies of the *Primary Source Analysis Tool* from the Library of Congress. Students will also need access to books or online sources containing photographs of Japanese Americans (resources are outlined below for this).

- Review the information defined below (“What are Primary Sources?”) and define exactly what primary and secondary sources are. Have students generate several examples of each type.

### What are primary sources?

Historians use both primary and secondary sources to learn more about the past. A primary source is an original document, image, artifact or writing that is recorded at the time of an event. Secondary sources are created by someone who was not present when the event took place or someone who was removed by time from the event.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Examples of primary sources</th>
<th>Examples of secondary sources</th>
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<td>Newspapers</td>
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Note: Model each of these worksheets for students.

- **Step One:** SONG: Pass out *Primary Source Analysis Tool*. Then, play the song, "Kenji" by Fort Minor. Allow students to listen once through. Before the second listen, review and distribute the *Sound Recording Analysis Worksheet*. Pass out the lyrics. On the second listen, allow students to annotate their own thinking and questions. Next, model organizing their thinking onto the worksheet. Allow students to have several minutes to complete any questions they'd like.

- **Step Two:** PHOTOGRAPHS: Pass out another *Photo Analysis Worksheet*. This time, students will look at a photograph of their choice and analyze it using the graphic organizer. Follow the same process used above for the Kenji song.

- **Step Three:** Print Material: Pass out copies of Executive Order 9066. This time, students will look at the executive order and complete another analysis for this document. Students will use the *Written Document Analysis Worksheet*.

**Evaluation:** Completion of:
Primary Source Analysis: Song, Text and Photographs

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**Lesson 2 (one to two hours): DVD documentary and discussion: After Silence: Civil Rights and the Japanese American Internment during WWII**

**Objective:** Students will view a documentary and have a discussion based on guided questions.

**Information/Materials:** Teacher will provide students with discussion questions before viewing, each written on a large piece of butcher paper. This is a 20 minute film.

**Activity:**
Preview vocabulary words with their definitions with students before viewing:

- Issei
- Nisei
- Gaman
- Nikkei
- Kibei
- Minidoka
- Manzanar
- Internment
- Relocation
- Concentration Camp
As students are watching the film, encourage them to write down their thoughts, ideas and questions. When the film has ended, ask students to write these down on the pieces of butcher paper. These will become an “anchor” for student thinking as the unit plan continues.

Work Assignments (Adapted from Breaking Away From the Textbook on page 173):
Students can choose one of the following assignments to complete for this lesson:

1. Pretend you are a Japanese American. You have just been informed that you are being sent to an internment camp. Write a diary entry describing your feelings.
2. You are a Japanese-American boy. Write a letter to President Roosevelt telling him why you want to be allowed to fight in the armed forces.
3. If you had to get rid of all the things you couldn’t carry with you to an internment camp, which things would be most painful for you to part with? Why? Write a diary entry explaining.
4. Write a diary entry about being a Japanese-American living in a camp in 1942. What hurts the most about being relocated? Is there a positive side to life in the camps?
5. Write a newspaper editorial explaining why your paper feels that the imprisonment of Japanese-Americans is just or unjust.
6. Make a list of the rights you believe were violated when Japanese-Americans were imprisoned.

Evaluation: Completion of homework activity. Share and discuss in small groups by either grouping students who chose the same assignment together or in heterogeneous groups. A great debrief idea is to have students write a “Now I’m Thinking…” sticky note and add it to the anchor chart.

Lesson 3: (two hours): Jigsaw

Objective: Students will read at least five pieces of text the teacher will make available. Students will read for information to gain perspective about the relocation of Japanese people during WWII. They will complete a graphic organizer based on the reading of at least two readings.

Information/Materials/Activity: The teacher will need to model with at least one text. As you read the text, selectively underline or highlight words, phrases and sentences that tell:

1. The author’s point of view
2. What was their role in the Japanese internment experience
3. Powerful words or phrases

Students should write these three things on a separate piece of paper for each letter read:

| Point of View: | Five key ideas I read: | Conclusions/Questions: |
When students are done, they can even find other students who read the same letter and compare their findings.

**Evaluation:** Three texts read and point of view, key ideas, and conclusions are noted for each source showing comprehension.

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**Lesson 4 (one to two hours): Finding Primary Sources**

**Objective:** Many CBA’s hand-select the sources students are to use when researching a specific topic. We’d like to add a lesson that requires students to find at least two different primary sources. After the previous lessons and research conducted in this lesson, students will formulate a historical question about Japanese internment and state why this historical question helps us to understand current issues and events.  

**Materials:** Computer access; list of web sites for finding sources; copies of analysis worksheets  

**Activity:** Show students the materials and web sites. Allow student time to browse collections. Students must find two primary resources and use the primary resource analysis worksheets used in lesson one for each. Each analysis worksheet can be found at this web address: [http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/).

**Evaluation:** Each student must have found two primary resources and completed two analysis worksheets.

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**Lesson 5 (two hours): Perspectives Discussion**

**Objective:** The class will explore this topic from as many different points of view as possible as a way for each person to inform their own position. The class will read this anchor text as a group. Each participant will represent their assigned position and initially give that position its just representation. The group’s role is to keep the conversation going, while being respectful of the multiple perspectives offered.

**Information/Materials:** Executive Order 9066 and various other texts surrounding this issue. *Japanese American Internment Camps* edited by William Dudley has numerous texts with opposing viewpoints surrounding this topic.
**Activity:** Engage students in reading of the text by either practicing a comprehension strategy or giving a purpose for reading/text code. Gather texts/sources that represent multiple perspectives on the controversy. Try to represent a range of opinions or viewpoints. Students each receive a “perspective text” that they will represent in the discussion. Like a debater, their job is to explain and defend that position as best they can. To do so, they may need to set aside their own personal opinions or bias. Allow time for students to prepare their understanding of the perspective.

Discussion: The group’s role is to keep the conversation going while being respectful of the multiple perspectives offered. Students may want to try discussion language such as:

- I see your point, but…
- Another way to think about that is…
- Although I can understand that point of view, I also think…

The teacher’s role in the discussion is to offer up a provocative question, central to the issue that will allow multiple perspectives to be discussed. The group’s responsibility is to talk to each other and not just the teacher. Once every perspective has been offered, the group can begin to share and explore their own developing opinions. To demonstrate thinking that has synthesized the perspectives, a participant might say:

- I used to think…but now I’m thinking…
- Although I understand why some people would think …I really think…
- It makes sense to me that….However, I wonder if…

**Evaluation:** Discussion participation. Following the discussion, debrief. What was it like to represent a point of view that may or may not have been your own? What influence did hearing multiple perspectives have on your own understanding? How did the group do at demonstrating respect for multiple perspectives on an issue?
Lesson 6 (two hours): Spokane’s Japanese Experience

Objective: Students will gain an understanding of the location of the camps, which people were included in the executive order and gain insight as to why the people of Spokane were not included in the evacuation.

Information/Materials: A copy of Executive Order 9066, map of Restricted Zones 1942 from the Spokane Daily Chronicle, Deborah Ann Gallacci Wilbert thesis (page 103, 105 and 107) and (page 104, 106 and 108) and poster materials

Activity:
Entry task: What did Executive Order 9066 authorize? Students will answer the question. Then the teacher will lead a discussion guiding students to the realization that 9066 did not specifically call for Japanese American internment but rather allowed military commanders to establish zones of protection and military areas that any person could be excluded from. However, the president knew that the purpose of the Executive Order 9066 was to relocate Japanese Americans.

Introduction to concept activity:
Students will be given a copy of a map of restricted zones. Students need to identify cities and/or areas that they are surprised are not included in the “Restricted Zones.” Why was Spokane excluded? Students will make their best guess as to why Spokane wasn’t included in the restricted zones. The teacher will explain that this is the concept which is further explored in the lesson. Begin the concept poster activity.

Concept poster and writing activity
Students will be broken into seven to eight groups (depending on class size). Each group is provided with markers, colored pencils, poster paper, and a paragraph or portion of a paragraph from Wilbert, Deborah Ann Gallacci thesis. The resource starts at the second paragraph of page 103 and goes through the last full paragraph on page 107. The teacher will break down this section of the thesis into manageable reading sections for each group. Students will read their assigned section. They will work to interpret and summarize the meaning and main points into one sentence. This sentence will be written on the bottom of the poster paper. The group will then work to create an accompanying picture that also represents the main idea of the paragraph. Groups will be called upon randomly to display their posters at the front of the room. Students will read their sentence and show their picture. The teacher will explain that the next challenge will be to combine all of these sentences into a one paragraph summary working together as a class. The teacher will guide the discussion and continued readings of the sentences and help students decide which order the sentences should be put in. During the discussion, the teacher may need to add connecting thoughts and/or sentences between student written sentences and may
need to slightly adjust the wording of the sentences so the final finished product will be a cohesive one paragraph summary of a portion of this thesis.

**Evaluation:**
Completion of the entry task question. Did students attempt to answer the question? Each group created a poster that demonstrates an understanding of the concepts from their reading and completed an accurate one sentence summary of their assigned section.

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**Lesson 7 (one hour): Apology**

This lesson is adapted from a lesson presented in *Breaking Away from the Textbook*.

**Information/Materials:** Students will read the apology letter from President George Bush: *(http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/learning_history/japanese_internment/internment_menu.cfm)* and a copy of the letter from President Bill Clinton, written in 1993. *(http://www.pbs.org/childofcamp/history/clinton.html)*

**Activity:** Students will write a short response letter to either president stating their reaction to these letters. Students should express their feelings, doubts and/or questions about these letters that came so long after World War II had ended.

**Evaluation:** Completion of letter.

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**Culminating paper addressing essential question**

**Introduction:**
The federal government moved people of Japanese ancestry into internment camps after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. In a cohesive paper, students will explain why and how the US governments succeed in moving coastal people of Japanese ancestry to internment camps during World War II.

**Body Paragraphs (at least two):**
In each body paragraph, provide evidence for your position using one of the following social science perspectives:
geographic
cultural
political
economic
sociological
psychological.

You must use at least two primary sources you found on your own. The rest may come from the lessons in the unit. A total of four primary sources must be cited within your paper.

**Conclusion:**
Summarize your conclusions with your thesis in this paragraph.

**Bibliography:** Students must cite primary sources as they are used in the paper as well as in a works cited list using Citation Maker (http://www.oslis.org/resources/cm/mlacitationss)

**Evaluation:** Central Valley School District’s rubric on multiple paragraph essays will be used to assess the essay.

Use the Writing Tool Outline on the next couple of pages to help students write their essays.

**Writing Tool Outline**

**Ready to start your introduction?**

In this paragraph you are going to tell us your opinion. In other words, you are going to state your thesis. By now you must have some idea why and how the US government succeed in moving coastal people of Japanese ancestry to internment camps during World War II. Remember, you need a good “hook” to get your reader interested.

Write your hook and thesis below in black ink:

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
Ready to get started proving your thesis? Gather all your work (primary sources, etc.) together so you have your quotes ready to place in your paper.

**Body Paragraphs (two or three body paragraphs are required):**

Body paragraphs: I know this looks confusing but it's really not. Think of it this way. You have three really good facts to back up your thesis about why the US Government moved Japanese-Americans to internment camps. You are going to put your best fact in this paragraph's topic sentence. You are going to find two supporting details from all our lessons to back up your best facts and place them in this paper. Then, you will add your own comments about why you think the details back up your best fact. Simple, right?

*Topic Sentence (written in blue):* States the subject that will be discussed in the paragraph. A more detailed, narrower statement like the thesis.

*Concrete Detail 1 (RED PEN):* Fact quoted or paraphrased from the piece on which you are writing. Cite the source if directly quoted.

*Commentary 1 (GREEN PEN):* Comments on the importance of the concrete detail.

*Commentary 2 (GREEN PEN):* Comments on the statement in commentary 1.

*Concrete Detail 2 (RED PEN):* Fact quoted or paraphrased from the piece on which you are writing. Cite the source if directly quoted.

*Commentary 1 (GREEN PEN):* Comments on the importance of the concrete detail.

*Commentary 2 (GREEN PEN):* Comments on the statement in commentary 1.

*Concluding Sentence (BLUE PEN):* Wraps up the thoughts of this paragraph. Directly relates to the "Topic Sentence". Do not use any new facts in this sentence.

2nd and 3rd body paragraphs: Basically you are going to do the same thing you just did but with your second and third best facts. Repeat the steps for body paragraph 1 and you are almost done!

The Conclusion………DO NOT end your paper with “In conclusion”

**The Final Paragraph (two or three sentences, written in black):** Your conclusion wraps up the topic of the paper. It should directly relate to the thesis statement but does not repeat it. DO NOT introduce any new facts in this paragraph. This paragraph is solely used to end your paper with thoughtful ideas or conclusions about your topic.
# Rubric

**Middle School – Dig Deep-Analyzing Sources CBA Rubric (Recommended for 7th Grade)**

## Passing

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<th>3 – Proficient</th>
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<td>4.3.1 Analyzes and interprets historical materials from a variety of perspectives in Washington state and world history.</td>
<td>• Develops a historical question.</td>
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<td>5.2.1. Creates and uses research questions to guide inquiry on social studies issues and historical events.</td>
<td>Provides one or more reasons for the position supported by evidence.</td>
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<td>• An explanation of how three or more primary sources supports the reason(s).</td>
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<td>5.4.1 Analyzes multiple factors, makes generalizations, and interprets primary sources to formulate a thesis in a paper or presentation.</td>
<td>Provides evidence for the position using two or more of the following social science perspectives:</td>
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<td>5.4.2 Creates a product.</td>
<td>• Makes explicit references within the paper or presentation to four or more credible sources that provide relevant information.</td>
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<td>• Makes explicit references within the paper to one credible source that provides relevant information.</td>
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**Not Passing**

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Bibliography

Davis explores the forced internment of Japanese Americans in camps throughout WWII. He discusses their way of life there and their eventual assimilation into society following the war.

Digital History. “*Exploring Japanese-American Internment.*”
http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/learning_history/japanese_internment/internment_menu.cfm (8 October 2010)
This site holds numerous digital copies of primary resources as well as activities for students and others to learn more about this topic.

This book is a collection of primary and secondary source articles that focus on Japanese American internment.

Fremon describes the detention and imprisonment of Japanese American citizens during World War II in the United States. Using the personal experiences of the internees, as well as several primary documents, Fremon provides an overview of the events of 1941 to 1946 and of the legal battles that ensued.

This book is a collection of essays, speeches, and firsthand accounts of Japanese American internment camps during World War II. The collection explores some of the arguments for relocation, what life was like in the camps, and what it was like after leaving them.

This portfolio is a collection of reproduces primary documents consisting of letters, official government documents, newspapers, essays and writings, and maps. It provides great historical context of the experiences of those interned as well as varied viewpoints of the events that led to the internment of Japanese Americans.

This book discusses the impact of World War II on life in the United States, including preparations for the war, civil defense, the changing work force, family life, and life at the end, and after the war.

This book is guides teachers towards various activities and lessons that are not traditional for a wide array of historical eras.

Kitamoto, Dr. Frank. After Silence: Civil Rights and the Japanese American Internment During World War II. DVD. Directed by Lois Shelton. Foxglove Films. This documentary is presented by the Bainbridge Island Historical Society and the Washington Civil Liberties Public Education Program. It provides first-hand details and memories from Dr. Frank Kitamoto’s experiences.


Library of Congress. “Teacher Guide Primary Resource Set: Japanese American Internment During World War II.” http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/internment/pdf/overview.pdf (23 July 2010). This is a primary resource guide for teachers that provides cause and effect relationships of this event in American history. It describes relevant background information and has a bank of resource web sites that hold numerous documents and photographs useful for learning and teaching this topic.

The National Archives Document Analysis Worksheets. http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/ (10 August 2010). This site from the National Archives holds worksheets for student analysis of a variety of primary resources.

Kallen, Stuart. WWII: The War at Home. San Diego: Lucent Books, 2000. This book discusses the impact of World War II on life in the United States, including preparations for the war, civil defense, the changing work force, family life, and life at the end, and after the war.


Kitamoto, Dr. Frank. After Silence: Civil Rights and the Japanese American Internment During World War II. DVD. Directed by Lois Shelton. Foxglove Films. This documentary is presented by the Bainbridge Island Historical Society and the Washington Civil Liberties Public Education Program. It provides first-hand details and memories from Dr. Frank Kitamoto’s experiences.

This memoir of Annelex Layson’s experiences in a prison camp for civilians in areas occupied by the Japanese during WWII provides a stark and harrowing contrast to life in the internment camps for Japanese Americans in the United States.

This site offers ideas to teach with documents. Specifically, it holds several documents and photographs relating to Japanese internment.

This site has information related to the Manzanar relocation center for potential visitors. It also has primary resources related to this topic for teachers and students.

This describes and provides support material for the documentary, “Children of the Camps.”

This is the document authorizing the military commanders of the United States to designate certain parts of the United States as military areas in which non-alien could be relocated. It is the document that legally authorized the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII.

This song tells the story of Shinoda’s family as they were interned during WWII. His father, a child, and his grandmother and grandfather were interned. Eventually Shinoda’s grandfather would fight for the U.S. in WWII as a part of the famous 442nd Combat Regiment.

This thesis provides first-hand accounts through interviews and articles of the experiences of Japanese Americans before, during, and after WWII.

In this book Jerry Stanley explores the experience of those Japanese Americans during WWII. He primarily does this by recounting the experiences of Shi Nomura, who was sent to Manzanar in the deserts of eastern California when he was a high school senior.
Staley also provides deeper insight into the events surrounding the internment of Japanese Americans by providing a detailed history of Japanese immigration to the United States and anti-Japanese sentiments present before the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Takashima, Shizuye. *A Child in Prison Camp*. Plattsburg, N.Y.: Tundra Books, 1971. This is the first hand account of Shizuye Takashima. She was an eleven year old Japanese-Canadian interned in the Canadian Rockies in 1941. Takashima recounts the challenges of the camps, her own anger and sadness, as well as the small joys found during her time in the camp.

Tunnell, Michael. *The Children of Topaz: the story of a Japanese-American internment camp: based on a classroom diary*. New York: Holiday House, 1996. This book is based completely around an actual 3rd grade classroom in one of the internment camps in 1943. The brief diary entries are then significantly expanded upon by the author using historical research providing a depth of detail and a broader historical perspective for the entries made by the students.


Wilberg, Deborah Ann Gallacci. “A History of the Formation of the Japanese American Community in Spokane, Washington, 1890-1941.” Master’s thesis, Washington State University, 1982. This thesis describes the experience of various Japanese Americans in the Spokane area and a portion of it is dedicated to their experiences during WWII. In particular it provides insight into why this group of Japanese Americans was not interned during the war.
economic activity so completely, Seattle's Japanese had strong Hotel and Restaurant Keepers Associations that protected their members' interests and those of the Japanese community at large. Economic solidarity among Japanese in Seattle was also reflected in that city's Japanese Chamber of Commerce. In Spokane, Japanese businessmen had looser, less powerful economic associations because they were more integrated into the white economy. As seen in Chapter II, a Japanese Restaurant Keepers Association existed for a time and attempted to control prices, but by and large the Japanese business operators in Spokane reached their decisions on an informal basis.

In a similar manner, the social institutions of Spokane's Japanese community tended to be looser and less formally organized. Since the Japanese were few in number and experienced little overt hostility, they had less need for a highly visible, fully-functioning Japanese Association such as those which existed in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle. Moderately-sized Japanese communities like that in Sacramento also had formal Japanese Associations which collected dues from members and provided legal assistance and protection for Japantown. A few prominent Issei cut off from supporters by the time of World War II. It was easy for majority to view them as alien, and no common economic interests prevented their harrassment and incarceration, as it did in Hawaii. See also, Edna Bonacich and John Modell, The Economic Basis of Ethnic Solidarity: Small Business in the Japanese American Community (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).


suffer, however. Their worst experiences occurred immediately after Pearl Harbor was attacked. Banks froze Japanese accounts for a week, the city imposed curfews on them, and Chinese wore badges so they would not be mistaken for Japanese. Even though they escaped internment, the war was emotionally hard on them chiefly because their loyalty and honesty were questioned merely because of race. It was especially hard on Nisei, who became acutely aware that their American citizenship did not protect them. There were also economic hardships when white customers avoided Japanese-run businesses. For instance, Heijiro Warashina, a dentist, and Leo Yonago, a tailor, lost most of their clientele during the war years. As a consequence their families suffered hardships during that time.

City-imposed curfews on Japanese hurt organizations such as the Spokane Vegetable Growers' Association, which normally shipped its produce at night. Locals demanded that Japanese not hold government jobs and as a result Japanese railroad workers were laid off for a short time. Japanese were no longer granted hotel and restaurant licenses, though most carried on business anyway. In describing those years, Spokane Issei Tadaichi


Interview with Aiko Warashina, Spokane, Washington, 2 May 1981; Spokesman-Review, 8 December 1941, p. 3; 9 December 1941, pp. 6, 11. Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau issued an order for all U.S. banks to halt all transactions with Japanese aliens on December 7. Local bankers estimated that $50,000 in Japanese funds were frozen in Spokane.
usually no evidence of their disloyalty. On February 19, 1942 President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which allowed for the evacuation of persons from designated military zones in western Washington, western Oregon, California, and southern Arizona. On March 2, General DeWitt of the Western Defense Command issued an order to evacuate all persons of Japanese ancestry from these areas. Though Spokane Japanese were not included in this order, they believed that they too might be evacuated to concentration camps.

Fortunately, the Japanese of Spokane had influential white friends in the city to help alleviate their frustration and uncertainty. Their long history of interaction with the white community and their small numbers in the city enabled them to escape violence similar to that experienced by the Japanese in southern California, for instance. Their Methodist Church affiliation helped ease the passage through the difficult war years. Mrs. Alfred D. Butler, a member of the Central Methodist Church and the Reverend John B. Cobb, Pastor of the Japanese Methodist Church during the war, were the most important allies the Japanese Spokaneites had at that time. Issei and Nisei remember them fondly.

Mrs. Butler, a minister's daughter, was elected chairman of the

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18 Spokesman-Review, 10 December 1941, p. 3, reported that the FBI had arrested 150 "enemy aliens" (122 Japanese, 27 Germans, and 3 Italians) in Washington state.


took care of these functions informally for Spokane's extremely small Japanese population. Other social organizations such as kenjinkai and Buddhist churches were either non-existent or loosely organized and short-lived in Spokane before World War II. In contrast, Japanese communities in other small cities had strong kenjinkai and Buddhist Church organizations from the early 1900s. Sacramento's Issei established a Buddhist Church in 1899 and by 1911 there were seven times as many Japanese attending the Buddhist services than the several other Christian missions combined.\(^{11}\)

Spokane Issei were just as concerned with keeping in touch with their heritage as those elsewhere, but because of their small numbers, they accomplished this informally through the family or through their major social institution, the Japanese Methodist Church. That they used the church, a basically American institution, for this end indicates the more integrated nature of Spokane's Japanese community. Japanese residents absorbed Spokane's conservative, less-than-cosmopolitan outlook very rapidly because they interacted with the broader community in both economic and social spheres from the very beginning, further strengthening their commitment to the city and hastening Spokane's acceptance of them. The Nisei were truly Spokanites by birth and point of view and sometimes felt their lack of sophistication in comparison to Seattle's Nisei.\(^{12}\)

It was their differences from other Japanese American communities that enabled Spokane's Japanese to avoid the extremely harsh treatment that other areas experienced during World War II.\(^{13}\) The community did

\(^{11}\) Ibid., p. 25.

\(^{12}\) Interview with Michiho Hirata Sakai, Spokane, Washington, 9 May 1981.

\(^{13}\) The story of Japanese American evacuation and internment during World War II has been well documented. See especially, Michi Weglyn,
and Kikue Hayashi said that "we were not especially badly treated, but we felt uneasy as if we were always being watched."  

Spokane Japanese endured suspicion and harassment from police and neighbors, as did Japanese elsewhere. One day after Pearl Harbor the Spokesman-Review reported that "the city's Japanese population of 250 was carefully checked by Police Chief Ira A. Martin and his men." Police rudely searched the home of Heijiro Warashina, the dentist, and ransacked his Japanese possessions. Some Japanese destroyed family heirlooms and treasured possessions in order to avoid suspicion. Japanese drivers were routinely stopped and questioned. The most disturbing incident following the outbreak of the war occurred on December 7 immediately after the news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Unaware of the attack, most of the city's Japanese were at a wedding reception for Sumiko Yoshida and Joe Okamoto at the Japanese Methodist Church. Police broke up the gathering and arrested two community leaders, Frank Hirata and Hugh Kasai. Similar incidents were repeated all over the West Coast on that day. FBI sources had been keeping track of Issei leaders in the preceding months when war with Japan seemed imminent. On December 7 they were arrested and moved to military camps, even though there was


16 Spokesman-Review, 8 December 1941, p. 6.

17 Warashina interview; Katahira interview; Yoshida interview; interview with Masuo Akiyama, Spokane, Washington, 29 March 1981; Sakai interview.
Japanese Mission Board in Spokane in 1930. By the time the war broke out
she had taught kindergarten and Sunday School to most of the Nisei and
had acquired a close attachment to members of the community. She con-
tinued her work during the war years, even though some local residents
referred to her as a "white Jap." Her kindergarten offered an essential
childcare service for the many Issei couples forced to work long hours
out of economic necessity. Mrs. Butler, a respectable middle-class
woman and the wife of a city engineer, provided much needed emotional
support to the local Japanese by her refusal to let wartime hysteria in-
timidate her. One Issei woman recalled that "whenever running into any
of us on the street, she spoke warmly to us." That such behavior was
considered so remarkable attests to the stigma and isolation the Japanese
labored under during those years. 21

The Reverend John B. Cobb was another influential white friend of
the local Japanese during the war. He had been a missionary in Japan in
the 1930s and was assigned to the Spokane Japanese Methodist Church in
1941 and continued there until 1945. He was the church's only white
minister, appointed because of the hostile war climate. The Reverend Cobb
had great sympathy for the Japanese. He was familiar with their culture
and fluent in their language and helped them in any way he could. For
example, along with Mrs. Butler he used his influence to persuade city
officials to be lenient on Japanese businessmen and women. 22

Cobb served as a liaison between the Japanese and the authorities

21 Ito, Issei, pp. 682-83.

22 Ibid. Cobb and Mrs. Butler arranged for a city official to assist
Jun Hirata after her husband was arrested and she was left to run a 130-
room hotel by herself.