



Lesson 1: Identity Awareness

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

Activity 1: Who Am I?

How do we start to understand different life experiences?

Objective:

Students examine what constitutes an identity.

Procedure:

- ✓ Have students create individual journals (distribute notebooks, journals or blank pages for students to assemble and staple together).
- ✓ Take digital images of each student to paste in his/her journal.
- ✓ As questions arise during this unit, ask students to write them at the bottom of a journal page.
- ✓ As a class, define the word culture. Write all possible answers on the board. The following example may serve as a starting point:

Culture can be defined through language, dance, food, customs and social norms.

- ✓ Have your class create one definition for culture and write it in their journals.
- ✓ Read the following questions to your students and have the students write responses in their journals:

Who are you? Is your identity made up of your eye color, your shoe size, your favorite video game or book? Is your identity defined by your family size, the music you listen to, the food you eat, your favorite hobby, who you associate with, or your dream profession? Do all of these concepts make up your identity? Use the definition of culture to help you define your identity.

Do you feel your friends or classmates would describe you differently than you describe yourself? If so, how?

How does your identity or experience affect your opportunities in life?

Do you feel your experience in America today is different than it would have been in the 1940s? If so, how?



Education Week at Manzanar, Ansel Adams 1943

Grade Level: 10 & 11

Time: 90 minutes

Materials:

- Student journals
- Internet access
- Densho member login
- Blank ID Tags

Concepts Covered:

Write for detail.

Understand elements of journal writing.

Support observations with specific detail.

Relate personal characteristics and modern points of view to the past.

CDE Standards:

10th Grade

English/Language Arts Writing

2.1

History-Social Science

10.8.6

11th Grade

English/Language Arts Writing

2.1 2.3

History-Social Science

11.7.5

Activity 1: **Who Am I?**

How do we start to understand different life experiences?

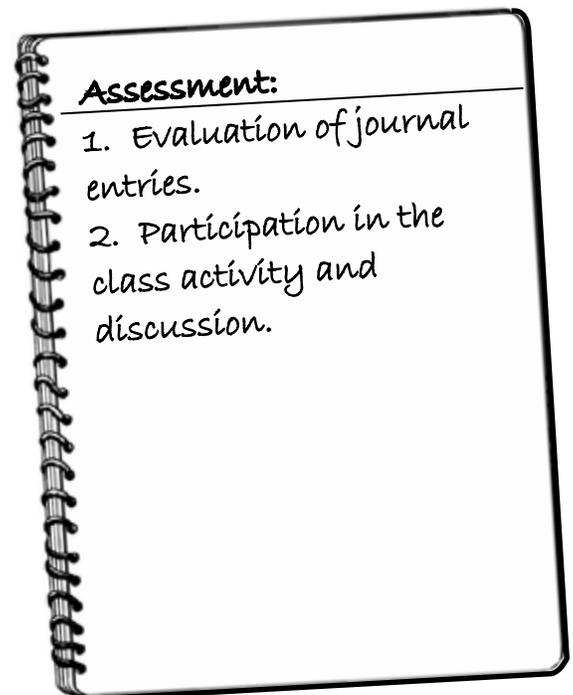
Procedure (continued):

- ✓ Share the following portrait of adolescent experiences in the 1940s. Visit Densho's online archive at www.densho.org (obtain a free login one week prior to the assignment). Click on the Archive section titled Visual History Collections, Manzanar Collection. Select Dennis Bambauer and listen to or read his oral history interview section *Memories of Being Taken from Orphanage to Manzanar as a Child* (1 minute and 42 seconds). In addition, click on Densho's Visual History Collection, select May K. Sasaki and listen to or read her oral history interview section *Feeling Ashamed of Being Japanese American: Changing Name from "Kimiko" to "May"* (2 minutes 51 seconds). Ask your students to revisit the previous list of questions and apply them to the lives of Dennis and May. Ask what they think shaped Dennis' and May's identities (Dennis is in the *Remembering Manzanar* film).

- ✓ Have each student ask two classmates to describe him/her and journal their depictions. Provide your students with the following questions to stimulate discussion:

How many siblings do you imagine he/she has?
What do you think his/her favorite type of music is?
What do you think is his/her favorite activity/hobby?
What do you think his/her future career will be?
How do cultural customs and/or traditions define him/her?

- ✓ Have the groups volunteer to share their answers with the class. Ask your students if they feel their classmates' responses are accurate. Do they feel these descriptions define their identity and culture?
- ✓ Discuss personal identities versus perceived identities.
- ✓ Have the class divide into small groups to answer the following question: How does your identity shape America's identity? Students share examples with the class.
- ✓ Ask students to create their own ID tags, using the format provided in the Lesson 1 Activity 1 Resources. On the back of their ID tags, have students write one thing about themselves that no one would know by looking at them. Conclude with a final discussion on the concepts of perception and reality in regards to identity.





Activity 1: **Who Am I?**

ID Tags

Cut and distribute one tag to each student. Have the students write a brief description of themselves on the back of their tags. *Option: Attach strings to the tags so students may tie the tags to their clothing.*

NAME _____

Family No.

YOU ARE INSTRUCTED TO REPORT
READY TO TRAVEL ON:

TO BE RETAINED BY PERSON
TO WHOM ISSUED

NAME _____

Family No.

YOU ARE INSTRUCTED TO REPORT
READY TO TRAVEL ON:

TO BE RETAINED BY PERSON
TO WHOM ISSUED

NAME _____

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Lesson 1: Identity Awareness

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

Activity 2: Friends

How do we start to understand different life experiences?

Objective:

Students utilize primary sources and work together in groups to create original plays.

Procedure:

Day 1:

- ✓ Journal: Students write for 10 minutes on the topic “Friends.” They can describe the importance of friends, describe a friend, detail an incident when a friend helped or disappointed them, etc. Ask for volunteers to share their journal entries.
- ✓ Read the children’s picture book *The Bracelet* to the class.
- ✓ Students read the poem “In Response to Executive Order 9066” by Dwight Okita (located in the Lesson 1 Activity 2 Resources).
- ✓ Students read excerpt from a Poston yearbook, *Into the Desert!* by Nancy Karakane (located in the Lesson 1 Activity 2 Resources).
- ✓ Fill in the Friends: Comparison & Contrast Chart for all three reading selections (located in the Lesson 1 Activity 2 Resources).

Day 2:

- ✓ Take 10 minutes to review responses to the chart.
- ✓ Discuss how friends, parents, siblings, neighbors, teachers, doctors, clergy, caretakers, grocers, coaches and others play a role in shaping individual identities and the community’s identity/culture.
- ✓ Share letters that Japanese American children wrote to Miss Breed, their San Diego librarian/friend, while they were interned. The letters can be found in the book *Dear Miss Breed* by Joanne Oppenheim or online at:

http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/japanese_internment/index.html

On the website, click on the magnifying glass icon labeled *Letter to Miss Breed: September 27, 1942*. Explore the role that this librarian played in many lives as a friend outside of camp.

Grade Level: 10 & 11
Time: 3 hours
 (4 class periods)
Materials: *The Bracelet* by Yoshiko Uchida, *In Response to Executive Order 9066* by Dwight Okita, *Into the Desert!* by Nancy Karakane, Comparison & Contrast Chart, Play writing assignment, Internet access or *Dear Miss Breed* by Joanne Oppenheim

Concepts Covered:

Work cooperatively in a group (dividing responsibilities, reaching a consensus).

Create an original play using the elements of fiction and **focus** on the universal theme of friendship.

Incorporate ideas from primary & secondary sources into a short play.

Use realistic dialogue and concrete details.

Rehearse & present a student-written play to an audience.

CDE Standards:

10th Grade English/Language Arts Listening & Speaking

1.10 1.11 2.1

History-Social Science

10.8.6

11th Grade

English/Language Arts Writing

2.3

History-Social Science

11.7.5

9-12th Grade

Visual Performing Arts

2.1 2.2



Activity 2: **Friends**

How do we start to understand different life experiences?



Momo Nagano (right) and her friends at Dorsey High, Los Angeles, 1940. Momo Nagano Collection, Manzanar NHS

Procedure (continued):

- ✓ Divide class into groups of four or five (depending on the size of the class). Have each group choose a chairperson.
- ✓ Distribute the play writing assignment (located in the Lesson 1 Activity 2 Resources) and allow the students to work together for the rest of the period.

Day 3:

- ✓ Students continue working on their plays. The objective is to finish their play by the end of the period.

Day 4:

- ✓ Groups rehearse their plays and present them to the class.

Assessment:

1. Teacher informally evaluates the process of each group.
2. Evaluation of final script.
3. Evaluation of play.

Extension:

1. Conduct an internet search for Ralph Lazo, a Los Angeles teenager of Irish and Mexican ancestry, who disagreed with internment and followed his friends to Manzanar. He lived in the camp for more than two years.
2. Analyze the language employed in Executive Order 9066 (brochure found in Educator Resources disc) and discuss the impacts of the authorization.



*In Response to
Executive Order 9066:*

All Americans of Japanese Descent
Must Report to Relocation Centers

Dear Sirs:
Of course I'll come. I've packed my galoshes
and three packets of tomato seeds. Denise calls them
love apples. My father says where we're going
they won't grow.

I am a fourteen-year-old girl with bad spelling
and a messy room. If it helps any, I will tell you
I have always felt funny using chopsticks
and my favorite food is hot dogs.
My best friend is a white girl named Denise—
we look at boys together. She sat in front of me
all through grade school because of our names:
O'Connor, Ozawa. I know the back of Denise's head very well.

I tell her she's going bald. She tells me I copy on tests.
We're best friends.

I saw Denise today in Geography class.
She was sitting on the other side of the room.
"You're trying to start a war," she said, "giving secrets
away to the Enemy. Why can't you keep your big
mouth shut?"

I didn't know what to say.
I gave her a packet of tomato seeds
and asked her to plant them for me, told her
when the first tomato ripened
she'd miss me.

Dwight Okita



INTO THE DESERT!
From, "Out of the Desert"
April 1, 1943
Poston, Arizona

The girl wore only a simple brown serge garment, that was girdled by a white cord, on which were the mystic knots of trinity. She had purchased this at the Mission of Capistrano, and it was one of her dearest possessions.

As the breeze blew into the room, fanning back her jet black hair, it revealed the features of an Oriental. The slanting eyes, high cheekbones, and sallow skin belonged to Masako, a typical Japanese girl, smartly dressed and with American ideas and ways.

Today, she was sitting in her favorite arm-chair, cuddled into a ball, listening to the radio. All of a sudden, she sat up straight! What was this she heard? Could it be possible? Then with a sudden inspiration, she lifted her face towards the heavens in pain, while her lips moved with a silent prayer. For what she heard was that which every Japanese was to hear every day, for weeks to come. It was the first announcement of the evacuation of the Japanese from the West Coast!

This announcement struck Masako with a strong sense of rebellion. It was hard to realize she would have to leave school and home. In a few days Nobu, Aiko and Chiyoko checked out of school and evacuated to Manzanar. Next, Chiyeko, Masao and Shigeo were leaving. All her dearest and closest friends were being divided and sent to different camps! Mortification overflowed her thoughts. She resented the actions of the government and could not understand why all the Japanese had to sell their homes, furniture and everything that was near and dear and go to a windy, dusty desert to stay perhaps for years.

Then the dreaded announcement came of the evacuation of Los Angeles. Masako wondered where her destination would be. The last place she expected to go to was Poston!!!

Finally, after weeks of selling, shopping and packing, the day of evacuation came. Masako went slowly and sadly around the neighborhood, head bowed, tears on the verge of falling, saying farewell to friends she had known since she was knee-high; friends with whom she had attended school; friends that were true! It was hard to believe that she had to leave them and never see them again. As Masako clasped hands with her best-friend, Irene, Irish by birth, the tears that were on the verge of falling, finally stole on their downward path. Masako handed the white cord, with the mystic knots of trinity, to Irene, for Irene had been so fond of it. Masako knew that her dearest treasure was worth giving to this dear friend.

On the morn of May 29, 1942, at the Santa Fe Station, Irene and Masako were again clasping hands only this time, Masako was hanging half-way out of the train window and Irene was standing on the platform. The train started to roll slowly, slowly, slowly, until it left only a tiny dot, the figure of Irene.

Since Masako had stayed up the previous night, without a wink of sleep, she was restless, and soon after her home and friends were left behind, she fell into a deep slumber.

When she awoke, she saw marvels of nature which seemed as though they could be created only by rubbing Aladdin's Magic Lamp or by a mystic wishing well. Miles and miles of vineyards and orchards showed their greenness in the sparkling sunlight. The valleys and the hillsides were profusely in flower, glistening in their great variety of smiling tints and shades. *(continued)*

Activity 2: **Friends***INTO THE DESERT! (continued)*

As the train drew near its destination, she felt a sudden wave of hot air, becoming stronger and stronger. Could the destination be a place of great heat? Finally after thirteen hours of boring traveling, she arrived at Poston!

The heat was terrific! Her first impression was severe, critical. The place was nothing but a 120 degree oven, swarming with dust, dirt, and insects of every type! So this was the kind of place to which the Japanese had disappeared! But after a few weeks, she changed her opinion of the place. She tried to like this new kind of life. Again she lifted her eyes, shining and alive, towards the heavens, while her lips moved with a silent prayer of thankfulness. Then on her face there came a serene smile of hope. Though the heavens towards which she gazed might become stormy, and lightning spears of hatred, fear and prejudice came hurling towards her, her expression of confidence would never change, for she would always remember, there is still hope.

*Nancy Karakane
Junior, Poston High School 1943*



Poston War Relocation Center, Arizona, 1943, artist unknown



FRIENDS: Comparison & Contrast Chart

Activity 2: **Friends**

Elements	<i>The Bracelet</i>	<i>Poem: In Response.....</i>	<i>Into the Desert</i>
Main Characters			
Setting			
Relationship between girls before the war			
Key words or dialogue which reveals how the girls feel about each other before and/or after the war			
Significance of parting gifts			
How did these experiences change or influence their lives?			
Conclusion			

**A Short Play Assignment****Directions:**

1. With your group members, brainstorm a situation involving friends who have to be separated for an unknown length of time. If you wish, your group may use the events of one of the pieces of literature we read about the internment (*The Bracelet, In Response to Executive Order 9066* or *Into the Desert*) as the basis for the play. The play may be about the internment, but it does not have to be. Using an outline, your brainstorming should include:

- The Theme of Friendship:** *Strive to make the theme of friendship recognizable, to engage the audience's attention immediately and to sustain it throughout the play. The theme of friendship should be revealed by the two main characters' actions and reactions to the impending and actual separation.*
- Characters:** *Create two main characters who are friends. You may have one or more minor characters. List each character's personality and behavioral traits. One of your characters may be a narrator or double as a narrator.*
- Setting:** *Where does your play occur? Develop a location, time period (past, present or future) and time of day or night for your play. Try to limit your play to one location.*
- Develop the Conflict:** *How does the separation motivate your characters?*
- Opposing Motivation:** *Explore the different ways your two main characters act and react toward the separation.*
- Confrontation:** *Describe a situation in which the characters meet/talk and confront each other about their opposing desires. Your confrontation scene may involve parting gifts.*
- Resolution:** *How do the two main characters resolve their conflicting desires? How does the play end?*

2. Based on your group's brainstorming outline, write a rough draft for your play. Develop your character(s) through the use of realistic dialogue. Your play may build suspense or use humor as it dramatizes the action. Use the following scripting structure for your play:

- Exposition:** *Create the setting and time period of your play through the dialogue and action of your characters. Have your characters reveal their relationship and "normal" lives through their interactions.*
- Conflict:** *Introduce the separation and focus how it produces changes in the lives and behaviors of the characters. The conflict should build to a climax in the action.*
- Resolution:** *How do the two main characters overcome the conflict created by the separation? How are they different or the same as they were before the separation? (continued)*



A Short Play Assignment (continued)

3. Make sure that you include stage directions in parentheses. **Remember:** When writing for the stage, all the action must be seen or heard. The dialogue is crucial to developing the characters and actions. The staging must be simple and not involve a lot of props.

Example:

Narrator: Two young girls wait at a train station.

Masako: (sadly) I wish I didn't have to leave.

Irene: I wish I knew how long you will be gone for.

Masako: I guess this is goodbye. (She turns her face away from her friend.)

4. Rehearse your completed play and be prepared to present it to the class on _____.



Manzanar, 1943
Katsumi Taniguchi Collection, Manzanar NHS





Lesson 1: Identity Awareness

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

Activity 3: Perceptions

How do we start to understand different life experiences?

Objective:

Students learn about the effects of racial hatred and stereotyping.

Procedure:

- ✓ Discuss in class Dwight Okita's poem "In Response to Executive Order 9066" (found in Lesson 1 Activity 2 Resources).
- ✓ In the poem, Miss Ozawa's friend Denise states "You're trying to start a war." Ask students if Denise's comment was based on: the color of Miss Ozawa's skin, Miss Ozawa's culture or Miss Ozawa's perceived identity. Was Denise's comment based on the color of her own skin, her own culture, her own identity or world events?
- ✓ Ask students how they treat people based on perceptions. Do they treat people differently based on accent, clothing, hair color, shoe size, physical disability, status, or the amount of money they have? What influences their perceptions of people (media, parents, friends, etc.)?
- ✓ Ask students if they feel they are treated differently because they are teenagers. Initiate a discussion with the following quote:

...sometimes you hear people say that teenagers are lazy, rude, selfish and materialistic. Teenagers today get compared to teenagers of the past who were described as patriotic and idealistic. Yet, in reality, among values teens say they rank highest are "being honest," "working hard," "being a good student" and "giving time to helping others."

[source: <http://www.connectforkids.org/node/202>]
- ✓ Initiate a discussion about how stereotypes can create problems for individuals and communities. Examples:

How can you encourage your culture, your community and the legal system to see you as an individual instead of grouping you with others your age?

How do perceptions shape individual experiences?

Grade Level: 10 & 11
Time: 60 minutes
Materials:
In Response to Executive Order 9066
 by Dwight Okita
 Student Journals
 Personal ID tags

Concepts Covered:
Understand other people's experiences and points of view.
Draw conclusions and **write** about new ideas.

CDE Standards:
10th Grade
English/Language Arts
 Reading
 3.2
History-Social Science
 10.8.6
11th Grade
English/Language Arts
 Reading
 3.2
History-Social Science
 11.7.5



Dorethea Lange, 1942



Clem Albers, 1942



Clem Albers, 1942



Activity 3: Perceptions

How do we start to understand different life experiences?



*"Americans All" booth at the Pan-Pacific Industrial Exposition, Los Angeles, 1945
Photo by Hikaru Iwasaki, courtesy of Bancroft Library/UC Berkeley*

Procedure (continued):

- ✓ Referring to the previous two questions, ask students to spend 10 minutes journaling their ideas for making positive changes in their community. Follow the journaling exercise with a class discussion on strategies for seeing others as individuals and being seen as an individual.
- ✓ Invite volunteers to reveal what they wrote on the back of their ID tags (see Lesson 1 Activity 1 Resource section).

Assessment:

1. Class participation
2. Journal entries

Extension:

1. Students create an action plan to implement their ideas for positive change.



Lesson 1: Identity Awareness

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

Activity 4: KWL

How do we start to understand different life experiences?

Objective:

Students reflect on what they learned.

Procedure:

- Have students answer the questions listed below. Use the KWL chart (located in the Additional Resources section) as an example or have your students create their own KWL charts in their journals.

What do you **know** about different cultures and ethnic groups in America?

What do you **know** about differing life experiences?

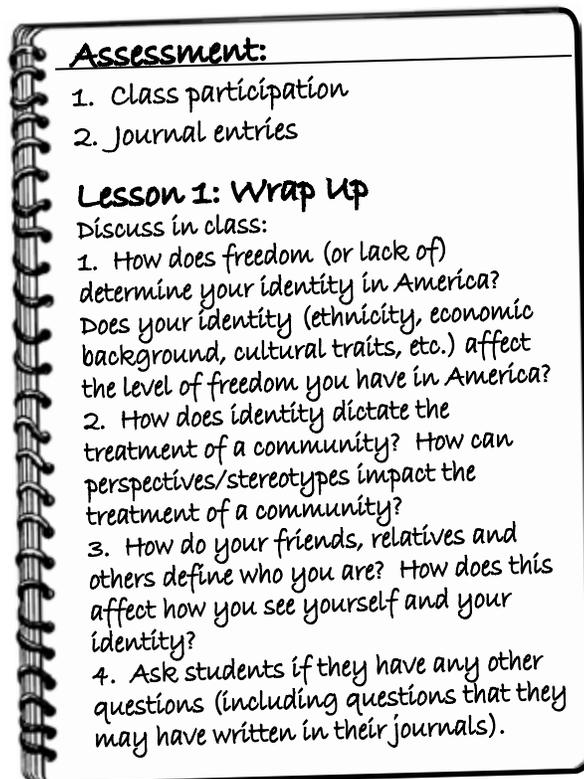
What do you **want** to know about your identity in your community?

What do you **want** to learn about the cultures and ethnic groups in America?

What did you **learn** about the identity of your family and community?

What did you **learn** about different life experiences?

- This information is shared with the entire class.



Grade Level: 10 & 11
Time: 20 minutes
Materials:
 Student journal
 KWL chart (optional)

Concepts Covered:
Assess students' background knowledge.
Anticipate what students expect to learn.
Evaluate what they have learned.
Fill out charts.

CDE Standards:
10th Grade
English/Language Arts
 Writing
 2.3
History-Social Science
 10.8.6
11th Grade
English/Language Arts
 Writing
 1.1
History-Social Science
 11.7.5