



# Lesson 4: Internment Experiences

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

## Activity 1: Remembering Manzanar

How did the identities of Japanese Americans shape their internment experiences?

### Objective:

Students formulate a better understanding of Japanese American internment and reflect on what they learned .



Dusty street scene, Manzanar. Clem Albers, 1942

### Procedure:

- ✓ Hand out the *Remembering Manzanar* Discussion Questions worksheet (located in the Lesson 4 Activity 1 Resources section).
- ✓ Watch *Remembering Manzanar* DVD (22-minutes).
- ✓ Discuss questions as a class and/or break into groups for discussion, then report findings to the class.

### Assessment:

1. Involvement in class discussion.
2. Groups working collectively.
3. Evaluate quality of shared material during class discussions.

### Extension:

1. For more detailed lesson plans about Civil Rights, reference the *Densho* CD.
2. Read the book: **Remembering Manzanar** by Michael Cooper, **A Place Where Sunflowers Grow** by Ami Lee-Tai, **The Bracelet** by Yoshiko Uchida or **Dear Miss Breed** by Joanne Oppenheim. All of these titles and more are located in the bibliography.
3. Refer to education DVD, **MANZANAR: Desert Diamonds Behind Barbed Wire**, "Events and Experiences."
4. Alternative film suggestion: **Day of Independence**.

**Grade Level:** 10 & 11

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials:**

*Remembering Manzanar*  
DVD

*Remembering Manzanar*  
Discussion Questions  
worksheet

**Concepts Covered:**

**Compare & contrast**

information from primary sources.

**Relate** primary source material from a historical period to present day.

**CDE Standards:**

**10th Grade**  
**English/Language Arts**  
**Listening & Speaking**  
1.1  
**History/Social Science**  
10.8.6

**11th Grade**  
**English/Language Arts**  
**Listening & Speaking**  
1.3 2.2  
**History/Social Science**  
11.7.3 11.7.5



Activity 1: **Remembering Manzanar**

*Remembering Manzanar* Discussion Questions

After watching the film *Remembering Manzanar*, use what you have learned to answer the following questions.

1. What did you learn about the Japanese immigrant experience? How were people's identities affected by this experience? How does it compare with your family's experience?
2. How did the U. S. government's and media's use of propaganda fuel the growing fear and hysteria and affect Japanese Americans?
3. What does "shikata ga nai" mean? What does it mean to you?  
Is there a phrase or word in American culture that means the same thing?
4. What lessons can we learn from the U.S. government's internment of Japanese Americans and others?  
How are these lessons relevant today?



# Lesson 4: Internment Experiences

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

## Activity 2: Interned

How did the identities of Japanese Americans shape their internment experiences?

### Objective:

Students discover and relate to internee experiences.

### Procedure:

- ✓ Ask students to remember the essential items that they packed when they considered internment (Lesson 3 Activity 3).
- ✓ Discuss the size of a barracks using the barracks sheet (located in the Lesson 4 Activity 2 Resources section). Take your class to a large space such as your school parking lot or gymnasium. Divide the space into four 20' x 25' apartments using a tape measure, string and/or chalk. Have eight students stand in each 20' x 25' barracks apartment and ask them to imagine that space with 8 cots and a heating stove. Ask what is missing (kitchen, bathroom, furniture, etc.) Ask them what they could do to improve things. Ask students to share what they remember from the barracks images shown in the movie *Remembering Manzanar*. Discuss how their essential items would help them live in this situation/circumstance. How would they create privacy?
- ✓ Homework assignment: Have students journal their reflections to the following questions.

*What would this experience have done to shape your identity in America?*

*Should the internment of Japanese Americans be forgotten or remembered? Why?*

- ✓ Discuss reflections and answers during the next class.



People hauling possessions to their Manzanar barracks. Clem Albers, 1942

**Grade Level:** 10 & 11  
**Time:** 1 hour (class)  
 30 minutes (home)

**Materials:**  
 Student journals  
 Barracks picture  
 Tape measure

### Concepts Covered:

**Analyze** controversial historic events.

**Write** coherent essays.

### CDE Standards:

**10th Grade English/Language Arts Writing**

2.3

**History/Social Science**

10.8.6

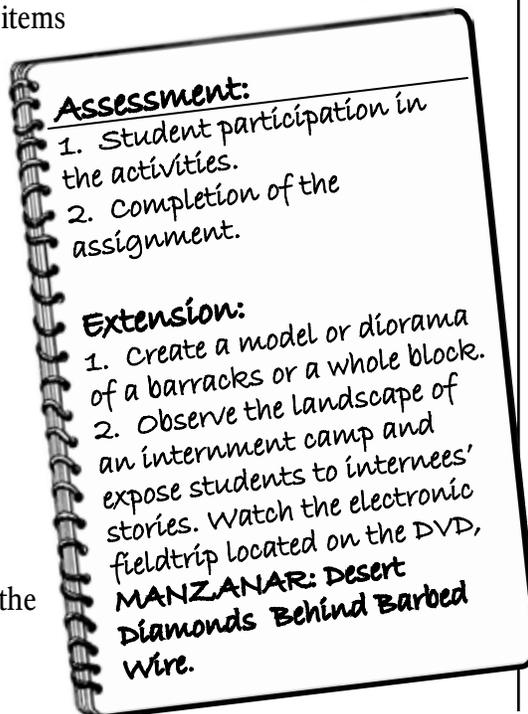
**11th Grade**

**English/Language Arts Writing**

2.4

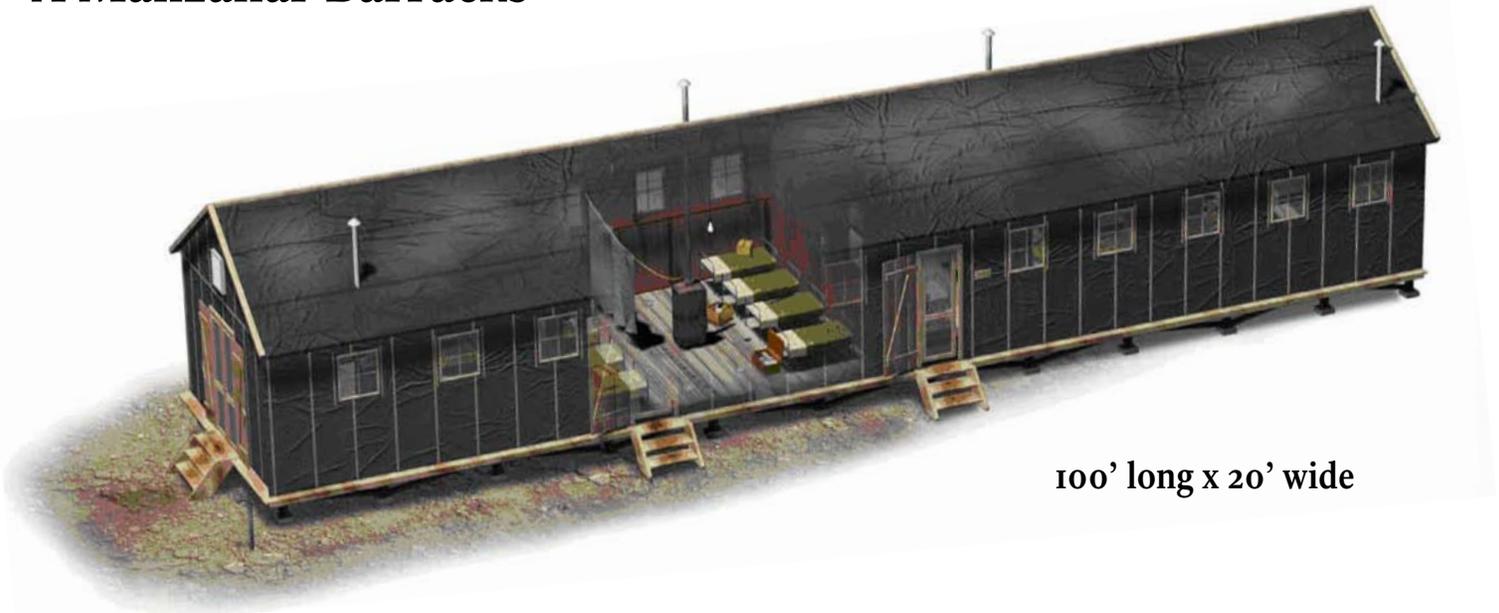
**History/Social Science**

11.7.3 11.7.5





# A Manzanar Barracks

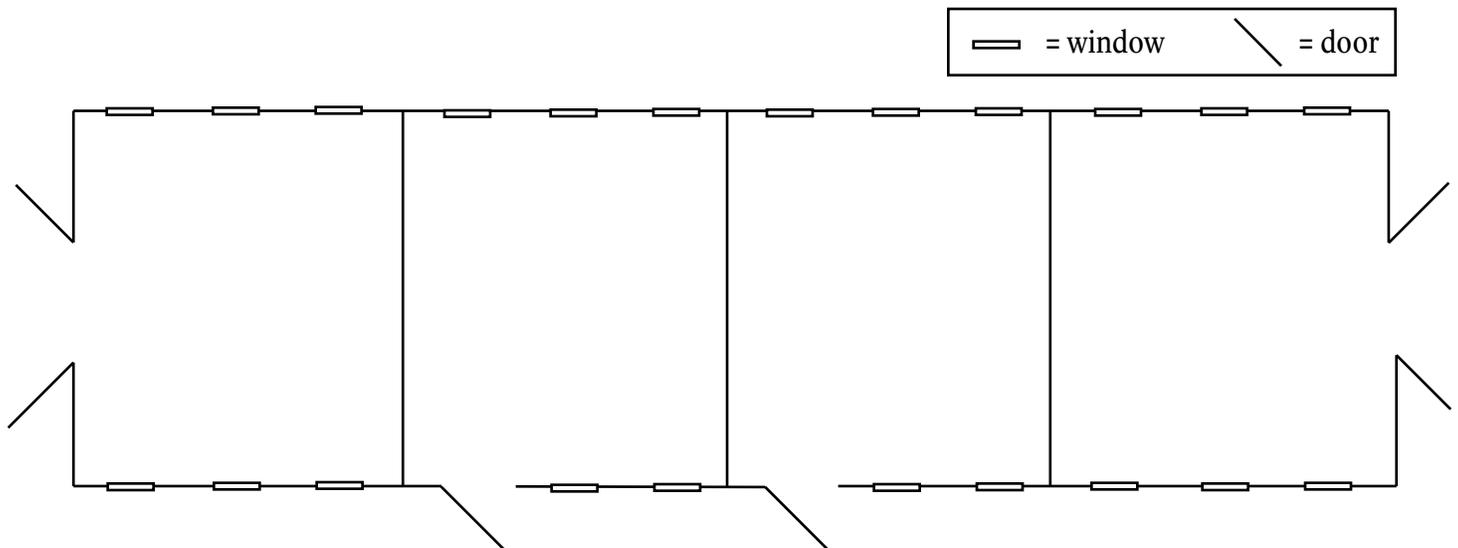


100' long x 20' wide

Each barracks was divided into four 20' x 25' rooms. Eight cots (7' long, 3' wide) were originally provided for each room. 32-36 people were assigned to each barracks (8-9 people per "apartment") in the early months of the camp.

The barracks were crowded until the "leave clearance program" was initiated in early 1943. This program allowed internees to leave Manzanar and relocate to the Midwest or East once they were accepted into jobs or universities, had secured a place to live and received a clear FBI background check. As internees moved out of camp, additional rooms became available, providing private quarters.

Use this barracks floor plan to sketch the eight cots in each of the four rooms. Design a different arrangement in each room. Options include: partitions, beds, luggage, homemade tables or chairs, etc.





# Lesson 4: Internment Experiences

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

## Activity 3: Identities

How did the identities of Japanese Americans shape their internment experiences?

### Objective:

Students learn about Japanese American internment by reading individual stories of people who were at Manzanar and other camps.

### Procedure:

- ✔ Distribute and assign different individual ID (identification) booklets which are available in .pdf format on the Educator Resources disc or visit [www.nps.gov/manz](http://www.nps.gov/manz). The stories of over sixty individuals are represented so that each student can explore a different experience.
- ✔ Students independently read the ID booklets in class to learn the unique story of an individual affected by internment.
- ✔ Divide students into groups of four to discuss their ID booklets and answer questions on the Discussion Groups worksheet (located in the Lesson 4 Activity 3 Resources section).
- ✔ Students share the conclusions from the group discussion with the entire class. Explore recurring themes in the ID booklets and class discussion.
- ✔ Students are given the Writing Assignment handout (located in the Lesson 4 Activity 3 Resources section). Have them choose one writing assignment from this handout. Depending on the ability of the class, students can be given one to two weeks to complete one of the writing assignments (possibly for homework). Provide the Letter Assignment handout (located in the Lesson 4 Activity 3 Resources section) to students who choose assignment 1.
- ✔ Ask students to journal a day in their lives. They should take their journal with them everywhere they go to log all their activities for one day. For instance, they should record what time they wake up, times for school classes, band or drama practice, chores, sports, etc.



**Grade Level:** 10 & 11

**Time:** 2 hours (class)  
1 week (home)

#### Materials:

- ID Booklets
- Discussion Groups Worksheet
- ID booklet writing assignment
- ID booklet scoring sheet
- Letter Assignment handout
- Student journals

#### Concepts Covered:

- Summarize** biographical information.
- Compare & contrast** information from primary sources.
- Relate** primary source material from a historical period to today's world.
- Understand** the elements that comprise characterization.
- Develop** interview techniques.
- Use** vivid diction and figurative language (metaphor, simile, symbolism, etc.) in original compositions.

#### CDE Standards:

##### 10th Grade

##### English/Language Arts

##### Reading

2.3    2.4    2.5

##### Writing

1.3    1.4    1.5    2.1

##### Written & Oral English Language Conventions

1.1    1.2    1.3

##### History/Social Science

10.8.6

##### 11th Grade

##### English/Language Arts

##### Reading

2.4    2.6

##### Writing

2.1    2.4

##### Listening & Speaking

2.2

##### History/Social Science

11.7.3    11.7.5



Activity 3: **Identities**

How did the identities of Japanese Americans shape their internment experiences?



Lining up for a meal at a Manzanar mess hall. Ansel Adams, 1942

**Procedure (continued):**

- ☑ Ask students to review their recorded day and discuss the following questions: *Do your recorded activities represent a typical day of your life? Do your activities represent your identity in America? If someone read your daily log would that person know that you live in America or could these same activities take place in another country?*
- ☑ Conduct a classroom discussion with the following questions:

  - Have you ever treated someone differently due to their identity?*
  - How can you ensure that we treat everyone fairly and respectfully?*
- ☑ Have students write final reflections in their journal.

**Assessment:**

1. Involvement in class discussions.
2. See that each group is working cooperatively and evaluate the quality of shared material during whole class discussion.
3. Individual grades based on writing assignments.

**Extension:**

1. Refer to education DVD, **MANZANAR: Desert Diamonds Behind Barbed Wire**, "Manzanar Scrapbook".
2. Have students compare their daily log with the day in the life of a Japanese American internee. They can do this by reviewing the War Relocation Center newspapers or by listening to oral history interviews. Both can be found on Densho's website [www.densho.org](http://www.densho.org). They may also read a memoir from a former internee or camp employee.



**ID Booklet Writing Assignment Scoring Sheet**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

	Possible Points	Points Earned
<i>Following Directions</i>		
1. Assignment turned in on time	5	_____
2. Follows directions for chosen assignment	5	_____
<i>Content</i>		
3. Uses information from ID booklet	10	_____
4. Shows insight into internment camp experience	10	_____
<i>Technique</i>		
5. Grammar, Spelling, and Syntax	10	_____
6. Presentation	10	_____
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<u>50</u>	_____

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

	Possible Points	Points Earned
<i>Following Directions</i>		
1. Assignment turned in on time	5	_____
2. Follows directions for chosen assignment	5	_____
<i>Content</i>		
3. Uses information from ID booklet	10	_____
4. Shows insight into internment camp experience	10	_____
<i>Technique</i>		
5. Grammar, Spelling, and Syntax	10	_____
6. Presentation	10	_____
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<u>50</u>	_____

Activity 3: **Identities****ID Booklets: Discussion Groups**

Directions: Read the ID booklet you received. Then in groups of four or five, answer the questions below:

1. Have each person in your group summarize the life story of the person in their ID booklet.
2. What similarities and differences did your group find in the experiences of each person?
3. Was there anything about a particular person's experience that your group found surprising or especially significant? Any unusual differences?
4. Did you connect emotionally to the person's story in your ID booklet? Why or why not?
5. What made the biggest impression on your group members?
6. If one of your booklets profiles a child of a WRA (War Relocation Authority) staff member, describe the differences between staff children and internee children.
7. How many different perspectives on the camp experience were reflected in your group's ID booklets? What were they?
8. How did the identities of the individuals affect their opportunities and/or lack thereof in America?
9. How are the stories in the ID booklets relevant to our lives today?
10. Describe any additional findings or thoughts that your group noted. Be prepared to report your findings to the class tomorrow.



## Writing Assignments

### Directions:

Read your ID booklet carefully. The booklets contain real stories from people who experienced Japanese American internment. Some of the people wrote their card themselves, other cards were written by their friends and families. After you have read your card, complete one of the following writing assignments.

Your assignment is due on \_\_\_\_\_.

### Assignment 1

*Imagine you are the person in the ID booklet. Write a letter describing internment. In paragraph one, explain the internment experience. In the next paragraph, write about the advice you think this person would want to share with students today. Refer to specific information in the ID booklet. Your letter should include all five parts of a friendly letter (heading, salutation, two to three body paragraphs, closing, and signature).*

### Assignment 2

*Imagine that you could interview the person in the ID booklet. Write a list of questions you would like to ask (you should have at least 5 questions). In a well-written paragraph, describe how you feel about the person in your ID booklet.*

### Assignment 3

*Imagine you are the person in the ID booklet. Try to express your feelings and experiences during the war. You may write a short story, a poem, a series of diary entries or a descriptive passage. Try to include some imagery (metaphor, simile, symbolism, allusion, etc.) and vivid vocabulary. Make your reader “see” and “feel” what you saw and felt during the war.*

### Assignment 4

*If you have a relative or friend who lived through internment or another experience that violated people’s civil or human rights (the Holocaust, the Armenian Holocaust, escape from Vietnam, or prisoner of war) create an ID booklet biography for him/her. You may want to conduct an interview to get more information. If you have a photograph, copy it and place it next to the biography.*



Activity 3: **Identities**

*Letter to You from a Fictitious Former Internee*

(Fill in the blanks with your own creative writing)

\_\_\_\_\_, California

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:  
(your name)

I'm glad to hear that you are studying about the Japanese American internment in your class this year. I hope that the booklets help you understand something about our experiences, during World War II. In the camp, I learned many things...

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Forty-three years after we left camp, the U.S. government apologized for putting us there. They realized you cannot take people away just because they look or act differently. After the terrible events of September 11, 2001, I hope that Arab and Muslim Americans or anybody else are not viewed as "the enemy" and subjected to racial profiling. It is important that after this tragedy, we learn from the mistakes of the past. We should...

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Thank you for your interest in my life, and I hope that you have learned how tragic prejudice and racism can be for all of us.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_



# Lesson 4: Internment Experiences

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

## Activity 4: Daily Motion

How did the identities of Japanese Americans shape their internment experiences?

### Objective:

Students utilize primary sources to understand what life was like at Manzanar and other internment camps.

### Procedure:

✓ Have students read the *Manzanar Free Press* newspapers and/or other camp newspapers. The Densho online archive contains 3,938 newspapers representing all 10 camps. Go to [www.densho.org](http://www.densho.org), click on Archive, log in, click on Camp Newspaper Collections (left side) and choose a newspaper.

✓ Divide the class into small groups. Refer students to their “daily log” (Lesson 4 Activity 3).

✓ Have students work in pairs on the following tasks and questions:  
*Compare the newspapers, ID booklets, the film **Remembering Manzanar** and find three similarities and three differences when you compare your daily log activities to internees’ lives in the war relocation centers.*

*How were the daily activities in war relocation centers*

*similar to how the rest of America was living?  
How were they different?*

*How do day-to-day activities in early 1942 differ from later dates of 1944-45?*

*If the people in the war relocation centers were conducting their lives as other Americans were, why were they interned?*

✓ Have each group share their answers with the entire class.

**Grade Level:** 10 & 11

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials:**

*Manzanar Free Press*

newspapers

Student journals

Internet access

Densho member login

**Concepts Covered:**

**Analyze** primary sources.

**Compare & contrast**

ideas and themes.

**Summarize** main points.

**CDE Standards:**

**10th Grade**

English/Language Arts

Reading

2.4 2.5

Listening & Speaking

2.1 2.5

History/Social Science

10.8.6

**11th Grade**

English/Language Arts

Reading

3.2

Listening & Speaking

1.4 2.2

History/Social Science

11.7.3 11.7.5

### Assessment:

1. Group Participation
2. Successful completion of comparison assignment.

### Extension:

1. Encourage students to read non-camp newspaper articles written between 1942 and 1945. Newspapers may include **San Francisco Chronicle, Los Angeles Times, Seattle Times, New York Times, etc.** **San Francisco Chronicle** examples can be found at [www.sfmuseum.org](http://www.sfmuseum.org), by searching by year, subject or through the index.



# Lesson 4: Remembering Manzanar

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

## Activity 5: KWL

How did the identities of Japanese Americans shape their internment experiences?

### Objective:

Students reflect on what they have 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 did you **know** about the Japanese American internment experience?

What did you **know** about the individual effects of internment?

What do you **want** to know more about in relation to the internment of Japanese Americans and others during World War II?

What else do you **want** to know about how internment shaped identities in America?

What did you **learn** about the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II?

What did you **learn** about the effects internment had on individuals?

- This information is shared with the entire class.

**Grade Level:** 10 & 11

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Materials:**

Student journals

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 Writing**

2.2

**History/Social Science 10.8.6**

**11th Grade English/Language Arts Writing**

1.1

**History/Social Science 11.7.5**

### Assessment:

- Class participation.
- Journal entries.

### Lesson 4: Wrap Up

- Discuss the following questions with your classroom.

Why were Japanese Americans sent to internment camps?

What was life like in the internment camps?

Did everyone have the same experience? Why or why not?

- Ask your students if they have any other questions.



Manzanar Memorial Day Service with Boy Scouts and the American Legion. Francis Stewart, 1942