



Lesson 4: Remembering Manzanar

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

Activity 2: **Interned**

How did Japanese Americans' identities shape their internment experiences?

Objective:

Students identify with internees' experiences.

Procedure:

- ✓ Discuss your local environment such as your city, weather, people, native animals and other things that surround your community.
- ✓ Ask students to think of all the things they identify with in their surroundings (animals, buildings, athletic areas, water sources, vehicles, weather, etc.) and write their answers on the board.
- ✓ Ask students to imagine an environment that is the exact opposite. What would that be? Write answers on the board. Discuss how and if they could adjust to the opposite environment.
- ✓ Discuss the identity crisis that may take place when surroundings change. Talk about this change in relation to the internees: moving to unknown locations that were opposite from their local/home surroundings. Discuss positive aspects of a location change. Ask for volunteers to share personal stories of moving to a new location.
- ✓ Ask your students to imagine what it would be like to be forcibly "evacuated" from their home. Ask them to think about the items they packed in Lesson 3 Activity 3. Ask your students what they would miss the most about leaving their home.
- ✓ Discuss the size of a barracks, using the barracks sheet provided (located in Lesson 4 Activity 2 Resources). Take your class to a large space such as your school playground, parking lot or gymnasium. Mark out the space of a 20' x 100' barracks, using a tape measure, string and/or chalk. Divide the space into four equal sections, 20' x 25'. Have eight students stand in a 20' x 25' barracks "apartment" and ask them to imagine that space with 8 cots, and a stove to stay warm. Ask them what is missing (kitchen, bathroom, walls, additional furniture, etc.). Ask students what they could do to improve things.

Grade Level: 4th
Time: 60 minutes (class)
20 minutes (home)

Materials:
Student journals
Barracks picture with measurements
Tape Measure
Quote handout

Concepts Covered:

Compare & contrast environments.

Write reflective notes on quotes.

CDE Standards:

4th Grade English/Language Arts: Writing
2.1.a 2.1.d

History-Social Science
4.4.4 4.4.5

Activity 2: **Interned**

How did Japanese Americans' identities shape their internment experiences?

Procedure (continued):

- ✓ Hand out the following quotes to your students and ask volunteers to read each quote to the class. The quotes are from former Japanese American internees.

"We each crammed a duffel bag with necessities and because I loved to draw cars and hot-rods, I added my notebooks and pencils; a picture of our dog Spotty; a small tool box I received for Christmas."

"There was absolutely no privacy anywhere, and we were crammed into such small quarters!"

"Many families had to live in horse stables. A bare, single barrack room with cots would serve as our temporary 'home.' The food was terrible. Most of us got diarrhea."

"On May 10, 1942, my last day of freedom, I had to wear an I.D. tag on my shirt, marked with my family serial number, #22687. I could take only what I could carry, which included tin plate, cup, fork, spoon, clothes, bed sheets, etc."

"Surprisingly, we adjusted to the new lifestyle quickly. In order for the camp to sustain itself, people volunteered for various jobs such as in administration, health, food, school, etc."

- ✓ After reading the quotes and discussing a barracks "apartment," ask your students how the items in their suitcase would have helped them during the forced evacuation (Lesson 3 Activity 3). Ask students if they had wished that they had packed differently.

- ✓ Ask students to reflect on what each quote means to them. It may be easier for students to share their reflections with a friend or group before they write their comment/reflection on their handout or in their journal.

- ✓ Homework assignment: Ask your students to write their reflections and answer the following questions in their journals:

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

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

- ✓ The following day, discuss reflections and answers as a class.

Assessment:

1. Student participation during group activities.
2. Student written reflections in journal homework assignments.

Extension:

1. Homework Assignment: Have students log onto the Densho website and watch an oral history interview. Ask each student to write down the name and some interesting facts about the oral history to share with the class.
2. watch a short segment of the fieldtrip segment of the **MANZANAR: Desert Diamonds Behind Barbed Wire** DVD which shows former internees answering questions about life in Manzanar.



Quotes from former Japanese American Internees:

“We each crammed a duffel bag with necessities and because I loved to draw cars and hot-rods, I added my notebooks and pencils; a picture of our dog Spotty; a small tool box I received for Christmas.”

“There was absolutely no privacy anywhere, and we were crammed into such small quarters!”

“Many families had to live in horse stables. A bare, single barrack room with cots would serve as our temporary “home.” The food was terrible. Most of us got diarrhea.”

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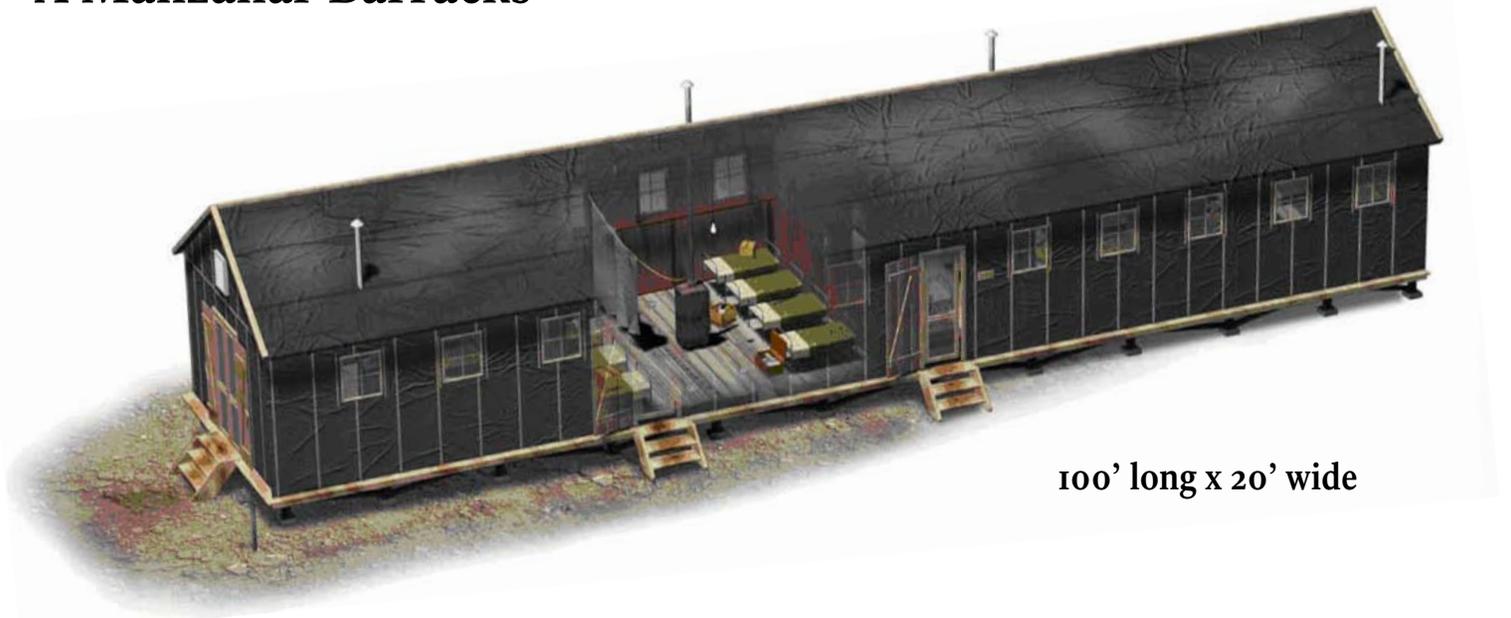
“Surprisingly, we adjusted to the new lifestyle quickly. In order for the camp to sustain itself, people volunteered for various jobs such as in administration, health, food, school, etc.”



New Arrivals at Manzanar, Clem Albers 1942.



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.

