



# 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.