

Lesson Plans and Resources for *Journey to Topaz* Table of Contents

1. Overview and Essential Questions
2. In-Class Introduction + Supplements
3. Reader Response Questions + Vocabulary
4. Literary Log Prompts + Worksheets
 - *What Yuki Noticed*
 - *Adults and Opinions*
5. Analytical Assessments
6. Creative Assessments
7. Online Resources
8. Print Resources
9. Library Supporters

These resources are all available, both separately and together, at www.freelibrary.org/onebook

Please send any comments or feedback about these resources to Larissa.Pahomov@gmail.com.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

The materials in this unit plan are meant to be flexible and easy to adapt to your own classroom. Each chapter has discussion questions provided in a later section. However, for students reading the entire book, there are several themes that connect the stories. Students should be introduced to one or more the following key questions as they begin reading, and keep them in mind as they work through the book:

How do people get through hard times?

What makes a person grow up?

Are the characters in the book American? What makes a person American?

Many of the reader response questions and suggested projects relate to these essential questions. Students are encouraged to ask these questions not only of the characters of the book, but of themselves.

ADDITIONAL LESSON PLANS

A Literature-Based Approach

This curriculum includes four distinct parts. The introductory activities presented in this packet are adapted from this collection: <http://bss.sfsu.edu/internment/njahs1.html>

"Journey Home" Curriculum

The Journey Home curriculum includes detailed day-by-day activities, including a daily journal prompt, word skills, a social studies connection, and a visual art connection. The discussion questions presented in this packet are adapted from this collection: http://www.ualr.edu/lifeinterrupted/curriculum/journey_home_curriculum.asp

A Virtual Museum

This online project features nine "halls" of work arranged by a 5th grade class. A great place for students to explore, or inspiration for their own project: http://home.jps.net/~gailhd/Journey_to_Topaz_-_A_Virtual_Museum.html

"Journey Through Topaz"

A six-page site which is a great introduction to the events leading up to and during Japanese Internment. http://www.uen.org/utahlink/tours/tourFames.cgi?tour_id=14717

"Time of Remembrance" Lessons + Video

A great four-week lesson plan with video clips of a woman who lived through internment, sharing her experiences in an interview. Clips can be mixed and matched: http://www.egusd.net/tor/lessons/a_patton/lesson.html#

IN-CLASS INTRODUCTION

This lesson is designed to provide students with a one-class introduction to the book. The lesson can be used to start off a class reading of the text, or to encourage them to read it independently.

As a recipient of One Book resources, the Free Library requires that you devote one class period to introducing *Journey to Topaz* to students, either using this lesson or your own plan.

First Day options:

PHOTO ACTIVITY:

Without any instructions, show students the photograph of the next page. Ask them:

- What do you notice?
- Where are we?
- When was the photo taken?
- Who are the people?
- What are they doing?
- What about the expressions on their faces?
- What conclusions do you draw?

The photograph was taken at Tanofran internment camp – one of the places the Sakane family is sent to in the book.

Leave the photo in front of students as you read them the first chapter of the book. Can they imagine this family as the one in the book, or one of their neighbors?

For more historical information, show students this visual slideshow about Japanese internment (includes short videos embedded in the slides):

http://www.densho.org/learning/civilliberties/slideshow_html/slide04v.htm

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SIMULATION ACTIVITY:

1. Students are given the following homework assignment. "Your family is being evacuated from your home. Pack in a backpack two sets of clothing, favorite toy, book, game, and whatever you can carry. Include your treasured collections and hobbies. Be careful not to lose them . Be ready to share items from your backpack in groups of four.
2. Next day. Backpacks are piled in the center of the room. Each student picks up another student's backpack. Assignment: Look at contents in backpack and make some statements about the person whose treasures you are looking at. 1. What kind of person - girl?, -boy? interests, hobbies? 2. In Reading Log write your conclusions.
3. Return backpack to each student. Students are then divided into groups of four representing a Japanese American family. Head of household is pinned with a card having family name on it and other family members have only the same identification number pinned on them. Instructor does not reveal where they are going to what they will do when they get there.
4. In family groups, students walk around the school yard twice, carrying their backpacks.
 - A. Review the Sakane family's evacuation to enhance realistic role playing.
 - B. In family groups, student writes down the contents of the backpack, places it into two categories.
 1. electrical 2. non-electrical. Of the non-electrical, any books with pictures are listed.
5. When family groups return to class, instructor writes down on blackboard, the category of items. Then proceeds to cross off items that may be considered "contraband" such as radios, Walkmans, diaries, language books, books with maps, plastic or toy weapons. Stress that children were not allowed to see most of their class friends or bring their pets to camp.
6. Write in reading log the evacuation experience. How would you feel, what would you do, who would you miss?

READER RESPONSE QUESTIONS + VOCABULARY

Chapters 1-2

murky (1), contemplate (2), sanctuary (3), frantically (9)

charred (11), haughty (13), clamoring (18)

1. What happened to father? Why?
2. Why does mother offer the police tea and cake?

Chapters 3-4

ominously (19), Nisei (20), stunned (23), sabotage (25)

rucksack (34), smuggle (36), evacuation (36), vulture (39)

1. What happens to Yuki's father?
2. How does Mother prepare for the evacuation?

Chapters 5-6

conscientious (41), suitable (42), deprived (43), encircled (46)

contraband (49), cluster (50), barrack (51), savoring (56)

1. Why do you think Yuki, "felt numb and strange, as though she were inside someone else's body?"
2. Give details that describe their new apartment.

Chapters 7-8

partition (59), bean curd (62), grandstand (64)

tinted (69), anxious (71), Issei (71)

1. What do you know about Yuki's new friend?
2. What do you think Ken should do? Why?

Chapters 9-10

recruited (76), reluctant (76), affidavits (77), thrusting (82)

scrunched (83), harsh (86), bulging (87), murmur (88)

1. What is Ken's decision? What is his reason?
2. What do you think is bothering Ken? Ken?

Chapters 11-12

engulf (96), sprawling (96), dazzling (100)

bewildered (104), forlorn (104), barren (104), nourishing (109)

1. What happened to Emi?
2. Select three phrases that you think best describe the dust storm.

Chapters 13-14

sullen (114), giddy (115)

harsh (117), distraught (119)

1. What happened to Mr. Kurihara? Why?
2. How did Ken help Mrs. Kurihara?

Chapters 15-16

rumpled (123), sheepishly (126), sliver (127), tinge (129)

bewildered (133), turbulent (134), dignity (136)

1. What stories did Father tell about Montana?
2. Do you think that Ken made a wise decision? Why or why not?

Chapter 17

ragged (139), weary (140), blacklist (145), dismantle (146)

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1. Name some of the reasons why people were leaving the camp.
2. How does the story end? Did you like the ending?

What Yuki noticed

Name: _____

In this literary log, it is your job to record anytime Yuki makes an observation that also makes her feel a particular way – it could be a good or bad feeling.

What did Yuki **notice**?

How did she **feel** about this? Why?

What did Yuki **notice**?

How did she **feel** about this? Why?

Adult Opinions in “Journey to Topaz”

Name: _____

Yuki has many adults in her life, who all have different opinions about the evacuation and camps the Japanese have to live in. What do they say about the events in the camps, and what does that show about them? What are their attitudes and beliefs?

Who was speaking, and what did they say? What does this show about them?

Who was speaking, and what did they say? What does this show about them?

ANALYTICAL ASSESSMENTS

1. Write a review of “Journey to Topaz.” Don’t give away the whole story, but DO describe some of the big lessons and themes you got from the book.
2. Create a visual timeline of the book – collect 2-3 events per chapter, and then string them together at the end. (This could be a class-wide project, with each student or group producing a couple of items for the timeline.)
3. Write an essay about a hardship you have gone through. Maybe you have never been forced to move somewhere – but when have you felt like Yuki? And why did it get better?

CREATIVE ASSESSMENTS

1. Throughout the book, Yuki is writing letters to her friend Mimi and Mrs. Jamieson. Find the sentences that are included in Journey to Topaz, and turn them into complete letters. What else did Yuki say to her friends outside the camp? What kind of news and messages did Mimi and Mrs. Jamieson have to share in return?
2. What happens after the book ends? Write the next chapter of “Journey to Topaz.” What happens with the Sakane family arrives in Salt Lake City? Make sure you mention each member of the family.
3. In the online slideshow “The Art of Gaman,” there are many works of art that were made by those who were in the camps. View the slideshow and find inspiration for your own work of art. What feelings about life in the camps can you express through your art?
<http://americanart.si.edu/exhibitions/online/gaman/index.cfm>

ONLINE RESOURCES

HISTORY

Japanese Picture Brides in Central Valley

An 8-minute video featuring photos from the era, translated interviews with actual picture brides, and a brief historical overview of their lives, social structures, and the situation for their children.

<http://video.answers.com/japanese-picture-bride-phenomena-in-central-valley-300995146>

Japanese Picture Brides: Building a Family Through Photographs

A thoughtful article discussing the traditions, hopes, and pitfalls around Japanese marriages arranged through photographs. Includes several photos of bachelors, newlyweds, newly-arrived picture brides, and families.

<http://www.kcet.org/socal/departures/little-tokyo/japanese-picture-brides-building-a-family-through-photographs.html>

Voices of Japanese-American Internees

A 3-part lesson plan produced by the Anti-Defamation league. Includes a link to the short film "We Are Americans."

http://www.adl.org/education/curriculum_connections/summer_2008/default.asp

Densho – The Japanese American Legacy Project

A comprehensive independent archive, including extensive video interviews, downloadable curriculum, and other documents.

<http://www.densho.org/densho.asp>

JARDA – Japanese American Relocation Digital Archives

A comprehensive archive from the University of California, with primary resources and a variety of lesson plans.

Photos, audio recordings, timelines, and more. <http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/jarda/>

JARDA – Links and resources

The University of California's own collection of resource links.

<http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/jarda/related-resources.html#curricula>

Japanese Picture Marriage and the Image of Immigrant Women in Early Twentieth-Century California

A scholarly article with a thorough discussion of the topic in the title. Could be used for advanced historical research, or excerpted.

<http://www.soc.nii.ac.jp/jaas/periodicals/JJAS/PDF/2004/No.15-115.pdf>

PRIMARY RESOURCES

Japanese American Internment: The Library at Vanderbilt University

A small collection of pamphlets and art from the era, including paintings and drawings of internment camps.

<http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/speccol/exhibits/WW2/internment.shtml>

The Art Of Gaman: Arts and Crafts from the Japanese Internment Camps

A slideshow of works that were displayed by the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

<http://americanart.si.edu/exhibitions/online/gaman/index.cfm>

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