

## 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](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?