Title of Lesson Plan: A Day of Remembrance through Photographs

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Grade Level: 9-12

Synopsis/Summary of Lesson:
Students learn the importance of the Japanese American incarceration through the study and analysis of photographs and the creation of an “I am” poem. Students begin by creating a KWL (What I Know, What I Would Like to Know, & What I Learned) chart in order to determine their prior knowledge of the topic. After watching the “Looking Like the Enemy” video, students use what they learned to complete the “L” in the KWL chart. Students then complete the photo analysis activity individually. They choose a photo from the Densho Encyclopedia website and evaluate it by answering the leading questions. As a group, the class discusses the meaning of the photographs and why they are significant to the story of incarceration.

Background Introduction:
In February 1942, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 in response to the bombing of Pearl Harbor and increased pressure from military and political advisors. Furthermore, these advisors felt the order would address the nation’s fears of further attack on the West Coast including naval ports, major agricultural regions, and commercial ships. Approximately 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent were forcibly removed from their homes as a “military necessity” and placed in concentration camps. These were located throughout the United States and finally closed by 1946. However, the impact of the incarceration would last for decades to come.

Possible Units to Use With: World War II, Civil Rights

Focus/Essential Question(s): How do images reinforce the importance of a historical event?

Objectives:
1. Understand why remembering the Japanese American incarceration is important to future generations.
2. Analyze primary sources in order to learn how the Japanese American incarceration affected those involved.

C3 Framework Standards:
D2.His.1.9-12. Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.
D2.Civ.13.9-12. Evaluate public policies in terms of intended and unintended outcomes, and related consequences.

**Required Materials and Preparation:**
- KWL Chart – Students can create this in their notebooks, with each column labeled *(What I Know, What I Would Like to Know, & What I Learned)*
- “Looking like the Enemy” video clip
- Photo Analysis instruction handout – One copy for each student, or this handout can be shared with them electronically
- Densho Digital Archives (Digital Repository: [http://ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-2/](http://ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-2/)). This lesson is linked to the Bain Collection, but others can be substituted

**Procedure:**
1. Students create a KWL three-column chart in their notebooks. They should complete the KW portion addressing what they know about the WWII Japanese American incarceration. (5 minutes)
2. Lead a class discussion about the conclusions students came to. (10 minutes)
3. Use the KWL chart as a springboard into showing the “Looking like the Enemy” video clip. (8 minutes)
4. After the clip, students should complete the “L” portion of their charts. If time allows, ask students to do a quick share with a partner. (5 minutes)
5. Introduce students to the photo analysis activity. The handout with instructions can be printed for each student or shared electronically. (5 minutes)
6. In this activity, students will be required to work individually as they research and study the Japanese American incarceration in order to demonstrate why this historical event is important for future generations to learn from. (25 minutes)
   - Students will choose one of the roles listed in the Photo Analysis handout and find a photograph using the Densho Digital Archives.
7. They should then complete the photo analysis questions in Activity #1 on the handout based on the photo they select.

**Differentiated Engagement Strategies for Accessibility of All Students:** (optional)
Supply *Executive Order 9066* for students to read and analyze for purpose and content. The document provides more historical context and can be read in small groups. It can be found at the Densho Encyclopedia website: [http://encyclopedia.densho.org/search/](http://encyclopedia.densho.org/search/). For students who may need more reading assistance, teachers can read the document as a group and have students mark the text for unfamiliar vocabulary and purpose.

**Extension Activity:**
Students may create an "I Am" poem from the information learned in class that can be shared with the whole group or in smaller factions of the class. An “I Am” poem is a poem about a person, a group of people, or even an inanimate object that uses the ideas of emotion and senses. This writing activity works best in a class when students are given a variety of points of view when studying a topic or event in history. They can write the poem from the perspective of people or objects featured in their photograph. The handout will provide students with a series of prompts to fill in from the point-of-view of their person or object. Finally, students can read their poems aloud; often, these poems can reveal contrasting or different perspectives.

Teachers may also choose to complete activity #2 on the Photo Analysis handout with students. In this activity, students create a story for their photos using the question prompts provided on the handout.
A Day of Remembrance Photo Analysis

Student Directions: Choose one of the roles below and find a photograph in the Densho Digital Archive to use for these two activities. (For this activity we will be using the photos from the Bain Collection.) Use your KWL chart and the video we viewed in class to help you choose a photo. Copy/paste your photo into a document, then print and attach it to your work.

- Families/children
- Domestic life
- Objects
- Incarceration camps

Activity #1: Photograph Study Guide
Students will research the lives and troubles faced by the subject in the photo and display their research through completion of the following questions:

1. What is happening in this picture?

2. What are the circumstances this photo represents?

3. How does this photograph reinforce the importance of this event for future generations?

If there are people in your photo: (skip 4 & 5 if you do not have any people)
4. How are these people dressed?

5. What can you infer from the expressions on their faces and their posture?

6. Describe the condition of any man-made objects in the photo.

7. What seems to have led to these circumstances?
8. Is there anything interesting or surprising about the situation represented here?

9. What problems or frustrations are suggested by this image?

10. What adaptations can you assume or infer people are making to these conditions?

11. What is unique about this image that the photographer wanted to capture?

**Activity #2: What’s My Story? An Exercise in Empathy**

Students will complete the image interpretation “What’s my Story” activity to display their understanding and ability to empathize with the people in the image.

**Directions:** During the Japanese American incarceration, Americans of Japanese descent faced incredible hardship. Your job is to tell their story. Use the image you chose and your knowledge of their experience in order to write a piece of historical fiction to answer the question, “What’s My Story?” Think about who is your person? Where is he/she located? What did he/she experience? How did he/she get to this point? Why is this important to remember?

Remember: **Empathy** is the ability to imagine yourself in someone else’s position and to intuit what that person is feeling. It is the ability to stand in others’ shoes, to see with their eyes, and to feel with their hearts. It is not sympathy—that is, feeling bad for someone else. It is feeling with someone else, sensing what it would be like to be that person. It is climbing into another’s mind to experience the world from that person’s perspective.
“I Am” Poem

Student Directions: Follow the template below by completing the sentences. Afterwards, you can read your poem aloud in order to share one point of view about the event.

I Am

I Wonder

I Hear

I See

I Am

I Pretend

I Feel

I Touch

I Worry

I Cry

I Am

I Understand

I Say

I Dream

I Try

I Hope

I Am