

Leaving Home

Time

2 class periods (30 minutes per period)

Overview

Lesson 3 covers Chapters 9 through 12 (25 pages) in *Weedflower*. Chapters 9 through 12 deal with Japanese Americans getting ready to move and then their placement in a temporary assembly center at the San Carlos Racetrack.

Objectives

- Students will understand that wartime distrust and uncertainty caused the Japanese Americans living along the West Coast to have to move from their homes.

Essential Question

- Why is it important to treat everybody—including those who may seem different from me—fairly?

Guiding Question(s)

- How did distrust and uncertainty affect Japanese Americans during World War II?

Colorado Model Content Standards (2008)

- History 3: Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.
- History 5.3: Students know how political power has been acquired, maintained, used, and/or lost throughout history.

Materials

- A copy of the young adult novel *Weedflower* by Cynthia Kadohata
- A copy of the map entitled “Japanese American Confinement Sites in the United States During World War II” found in the Appendix of this curriculum
- Photos and other primary source documents are especially helpful in this lesson. Many are available on

the Web; see the sites listed in the References section below. A few documents and photos are included as handouts for this lesson:

- *Handout 3-1: Civilian Exclusion Order No. 43*
- *Handout 3-2: Family Packing*
- *Handout 3-3: Family Waiting*
- *Handout 3-4: “I Am an American”*
- It is recommended that an additional primary source document be downloaded and printed:
 - President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Executive Order 9066 (transcript) can be downloaded from the Our Documents Web site at <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=74&page=transcript> (accessed August 4, 2009).

Background

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which gave the War Department the authority to designate certain areas as military areas from which certain people could be excluded. Prohibited areas included most of the West Coast and part of Arizona. All persons of Japanese ancestry—both U.S.-born citizens and the first-generation immigrants who were ineligible for citizenship at that time—who lived in states on or adjacent to the West Coast were to be moved inland to concentration camps. While the camps were being made ready, people were first sent to temporary assembly centers. People were permitted to take only what they could carry; many sold all of their property for mere cents on the dollar. In addition, they were forced to leave pets and other animals behind.

Activities

- There are no new vocabulary words in Lesson 3.
- Read aloud Chapters 9 through 12.
- Continue to chart and discuss the ways in which Sumiko’s life is similar to students’ lives as well as those things in her life that reflect her Japanese heritage.

- Focus on things that happen in Sumiko’s life that don’t usually happen to American citizens. Remind students that Sumiko is American, as are Bull, Ichiro, and Tak-Tak.
- Distribute copies of *Handouts 3-1 to 3-4* as well as the downloaded and printed transcript of Executive Order 9066; students can view these in groups or individually.
- Discuss the following:
 - What things did families need to take with them?
 - How much were they allowed to take?
 - In Chapter 10 Sumiko saw signs that read, “I Am an American.” What is the significance of those signs?
 - In what ways was life at the racetrack difficult?
 - Why do you think Japanese Americans went along with Executive Order 9066 with little resistance or protest?

Closing

- Have students write two paragraphs about this time period:
 - What caused distrust and uncertainty before and after the bombing of Pearl Harbor?
 - What could have been done to prevent this distrust and uncertainty?

Extensions

- Read aloud *The Bracelet* by Yoshiko Uchida. This picture book tells the story of a little girl whose family is moving to a concentration camp; the child’s best friend gives her a bracelet as a keepsake by which to remember her.
- Bring a suitcase to school along with sheets, blankets, and silverware. Demonstrate to students how much room is left in the suitcase after packing those items and discuss what things students would want to take with them. Remind students that people were limited to what they could carry. Ask: “Did Sumiko and Tak-Tak take any toys along?” Emphasize that they also had no idea where they were going or what the climate might be: some people were sent to Arizona where it

was hot, and some were sent to Wyoming where the winters are very cold.

References

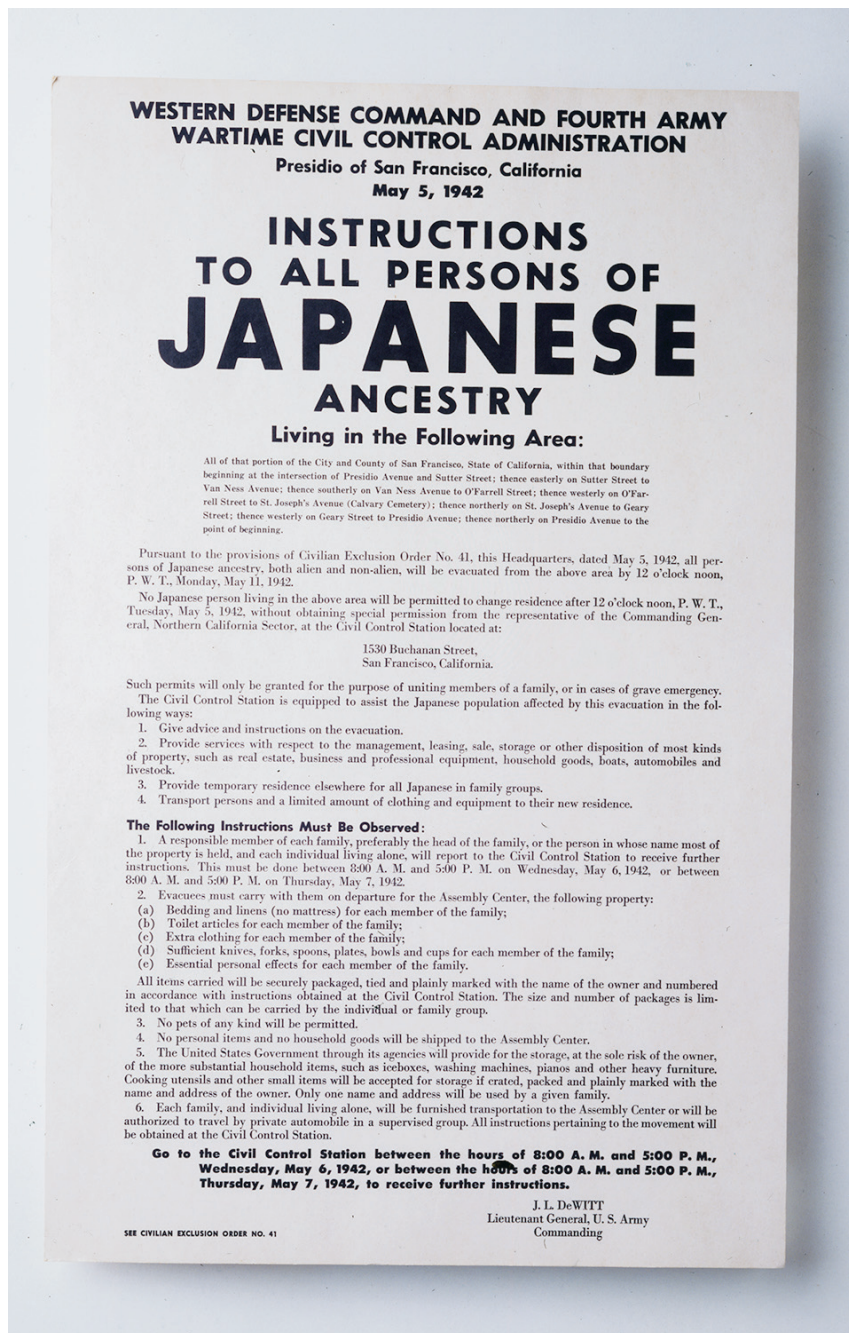
- Asian American Curriculum Project, Inc. “The Japanese American Journey: The Story of a People.” Appendix in *A Lesson in American History: The Japanese Experience*. N.p.: Japanese American Citizens League, 1996.
- Gordon, Linda, and Gary Y. Okihiro, eds. *Impounded: Dorothea Lange and the Censored Images of Japanese American Internment*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2006.
- Kadohata, Cynthia. *Weedflower*. New York: Atheneum Books, 2006.
- National Archives and Records Administration. <http://www.archives.gov/research/arc/> (accessed July 24, 2009).
- Uchida, Yoshiko. *The Bracelet*. New York: The Putnam and Grosset Group, 1996.
- University of California Calisphere (Japanese American Relocation Digital Archives [JARDA]). <http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/jarda/> (accessed July 24, 2009).

For further background, teachers may also wish to read Jonathan Sites, “Forward into the Past,” *Colorado Springs Independent*, November 1, 2001.

Civilian Exclusion Order No. 43

Handout 3-1

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All requests to publish or reproduce images in this collection must be submitted to the Hirasaki National Resource Center at the Japanese American National Museum. More information is available at <http://www.janm.org/nrc/>.
Gift of Kiyoshi Toi, Japanese American National Museum (92-94.1)

Family Packing

Handout 3-2

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San Francisco, California. Dave Tatsuno, president of the Japanese American Citizens League of San Francisco, and his family pack for evacuation. Tatsuno was born in this country and was graduated from the University of California in 1936. Evacuees of Japanese ancestry will be housed in War Relocation Authority centers for the duration.

Photographer: Dorothea Lange
Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration
ARC Identifier 536459 / Local Identifier 210-G-A569

Family Waiting

Handout 3-3

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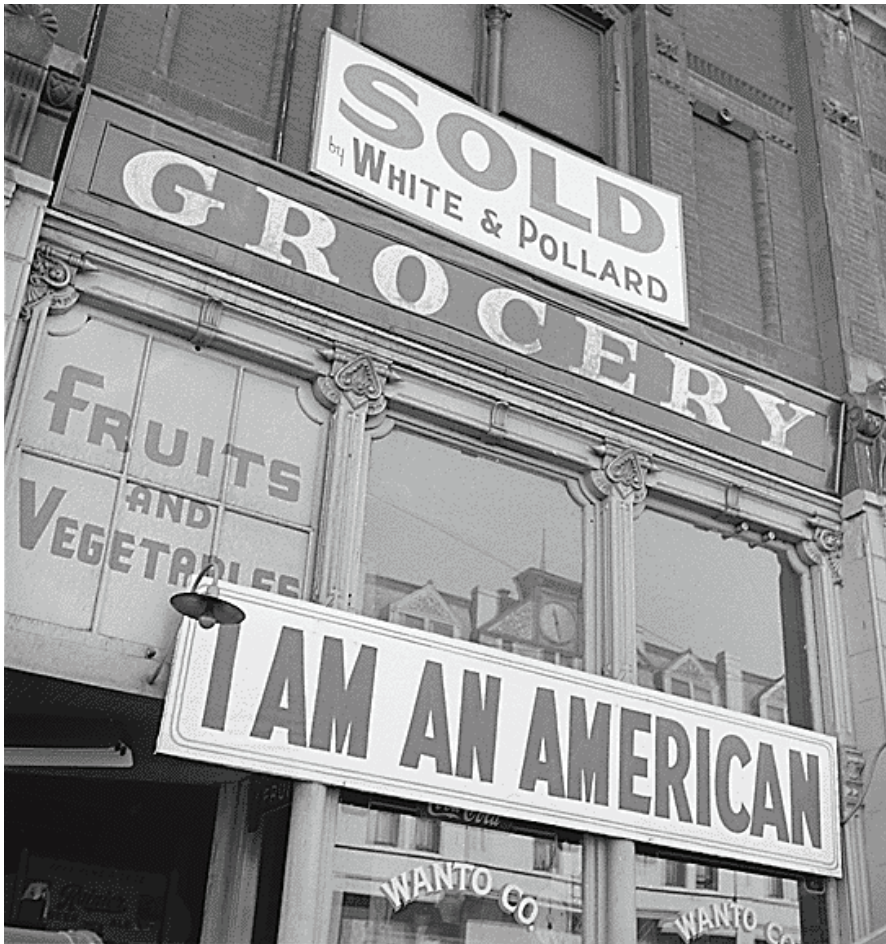
Hayward, California. A mother with her American-born-and-educated children awaiting evacuation bus. Evacuees of Japanese ancestry will be housed in War Relocation Authority centers for the duration.

Photographer: Dorothea Lange
Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration
ARC Identifier 537515 / Local Identifier 210-G-C165

I Am an American

Handout 3-4

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Oakland, California. Following evacuation orders, this store, at 13th and Franklin Streets, was closed. The owner, a University of California graduate of Japanese descent, placed the “I AM AN AMERICAN” sign on the store front on Dec. 8, the day after Pearl Harbor. Evacuees of Japanese ancestry will be housed in War Relocation Authority centers for the duration.

Photographer: Dorothea Lange
Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration
ARC Identifier 537833 / Local Identifier 210-G-C519