

**Lesson Developer:** Tom Lindskog, Willamette High School

**Subject Area:** Social Studies

**Grade Level:** High School

**Lesson Description:** Students will examine the decision to place all Japanese-Americans living on the West Coast into internment camps during WWII. This lesson is part of a mini-unit on Japanese Internment that will include readings in primary source documents and materials from History Alive that will provide most of the background knowledge necessary to evaluate the decision to intern Japanese-Americans during the war and the effects of internment on this group during the post-war period.

**Recommended Time:** 90 minutes

**National Standards:**

Technology:

- 1) Students use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity.
- 2) Students use technology tools to process data and report results.

Social Studies:

- 1) US History, Era 7, Standard 3: explain the character of the war (WWII) at home.
- 2) Civics, Standard V, B&C: understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

Geography:

- 1) Use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process and report information from a spatial perspective.
- 2) Evaluate the characteristics, distribution and migration of human populations on the Earth's surface.

## **Geospatial Concepts:**

1. Location: SWBAT explain where the populations of German, Italian and Japanese-Americans were located within the U.S.
2. Connection: SWBAT evaluate the placement of relocation centers and internment camps.
3. Pattern: SWBAT describe settlement patterns of the three groups.

## **Other Disciplines:**

History: Explaining the decision to intern Japanese Americans requires an understanding of the treatment of Japanese and other immigrant groups in America and immigration laws regarding Asians specifically.

Government: Students may use their understanding of the government's decision-making process in this case to evaluate past and current policies concerning civil and human rights.

**Career Connection**: I will introduce GIS careers with a video clip from YouTube. Historians, Geographers, Political Scientists and government policy-makers use GIS to evaluate demographic patterns, voting behavior, state laws and policies in the creation and assessment of current and future policy.

**Web-based GIS Tools**: Layers, legend, Zoom and Query

**Materials**: Students will need copies of the student handout, writing utensils and access to a computer with internet connection.

**Prerequisites**: What must students know before they begin this lesson? How does the lesson fit into the course?

## **Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to explain how the U.S. government responded to concerns about enemy collaborators and espionage during WWII.
2. Students will be able to evaluate the actions of the United States in the following areas: protecting the U.S. against enemy collaborators, internment of Japanese-Americans and the apology for and reparations made to Japanese-Americans 40 years later.

## Beginning the Lesson

### I. Intro.:

#### A. Notes:

1. One of the things a nation fears most in times of war is the possibility of the presence of an enemy within.
  - a. During WWII, many feared that some people in the U.S. might collaborate with our enemies, Germany, Italy and Japan.
  - b. Collaborators could destroy us from within, leaving us open to invasion by our enemies.
  - c. How would you deal with this threat? Is that fair?
2. Throughout our history, decision makers have had to struggle with this question. What actions are fair and just during times of war. Should this change during wartime and not others?
  - a. How and should our constitutional rights change during times of war?
  - b. To safeguard American security, can the government violate the rights of American citizens? Or can the constitution never be violated, even in wartime?
3. Several American presidents have faced this question.
  - a. Lincoln: Jailed thousands of men suspected of being southern sympathizers. Held them without a trial against the opinion of the Supreme court. Lincoln believed it was more important to preserve the Union than it was to protect the rights of some individuals.
  - b. Wilson: believed only a united country could win the war. Encouraged congress to pass acts like the Espionage and Sedition acts that called for the punishment and imprisonment of those who spoke out against the war. 1,100 Arizona copper miners arrested for holding up war production with a strike, Eugene Debs, a socialist, jailed 3 years for protesting the war.
4. Today, we face the same questions in our wars with Iraq and continue our “War on Terrorism” begun after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks.
  - a. During the first two years following, it was considered unpatriotic to criticize the actions of the government and especially the President
    - ❖ Saturday Night Live
    - ❖ Propaganda on the evening news
  - b. We jailed thousands of men of Middle Eastern descent, and held them without trial indefinitely, in violation of the Constitution. All of this in the name of national security. We believe that the needs of the whole outweigh the needs of the few.
5. Today we will look at how these questions and fears were dealt with during WWII.
  - a. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the government feared further attacks on U.S. soil.
  - b. These attacks would not be carried out through direct military action like an invasion, they would most likely take the form of acts of sabotage or terrorism by enemy collaborators.
  - c. Our suspicions immediately turned to those of German, Italian and Japanese descent.
  - d. Many of these people were not citizens, and the government had to determine whether their presence constituted a threat to national security.
    - ❖ This was primarily because U.S. immigration laws made that difficult or impossible for many, especially Asians.

- ❖ Many of these also lived in easily identifiable ethnic neighborhoods with in major cities. Why?

### Developing the Lesson

To begin, students will read about the issues considered in the early years of WWII regarding German, Italian and Japanese-Americans as potential national security threats. The class will then move to the computer lab to study the distribution of these three populations before narrowing their focus to Japanese-Americans living in the western coastal states as laid out in the student guide.

### Concluding the Lesson

After completing the GIS portion of the lesson, students will watch a short film about the experiences of Estelle Ishigo and her husband in the Hart Mountain internment camp, watch interviews with community members interned in the camps from <http://www.lesd.k12.or.us/tah/ejaam/> website and read excerpts from Farewell to Manzanar and Snow Falling on Cedars to understand the effects of internment on Japanese-Americans. Following this, students will write and illustrate a Haiku about internment from the perspective of one who lived through it.

**Assessment/Evaluation:** Students understanding of the decision to intern Japanese-Americans will be assessed through their Haiku and an essay on the issue of compensation and apology from the government in the 1980s.