Japanese Internment
Pearl Harbor’s Impact on the Japanese

- Anti-Japanese sentiments have existed in the United States for several decades prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor.
- On December 7, 1941, the United States naval base Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japan, resulting in the U.S. entry into WWII.
- During that time, more than 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry, two-thirds of them American citizens, were living in California, Washington, and Oregon.
Many Americans living on the West Coast turned their anger against the Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans.

Mobs attacked their businesses/homes, banks would not cash their checks, grocers refused to sell them food, and newspapers printed rumors of Japanese spies.
Many people were afraid that Japanese Americans that lived on the West Coast might be acting as spies helping Japan attack the U.S.

Many Japanese Americans were fishermen...What might this mean?
WE DON'T WANT ANY JAPS BACK HERE--EVER!
FDR signed **Executive Order No. 9066** in February of 1942.

- Declared the West Coast a military zone
- Ordered all people of Japanese ancestry to evacuated to 10 internment camps further inland.
Those of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast were to be relocated.

Internment - refers to the forced imprisonment and relocation of a group of people.
Fear of disloyalty on the part of those of Japanese ancestry was common among many Americans.

- **Nisei**: those born to Japanese parents, thus U.S. citizens.

1/3 of the population of Hawaii was comprised of Japanese descendents, thus many of them were not interned, however the islands were placed under martial law.

Japanese assets were frozen after the attack on Pearl Harbor, making it difficult for many Japanese Americans to move from the West Coast.
Internment

- **March 2, 1942**
  Gen. John L. DeWitt issues Public Proclamation No. 1 which creates Military Areas No. 1 and 2. Military Area No. 1 includes the western portion of California, Oregon and Washington, and part of Arizona. Military Area No. 2 includes the rest of these states. The proclamation also hints that people might be excluded from Military Area No. 1.
THE WRA RELOCATION CAMPS, 1942-1946
March 18, 1942
The president signs Executive Order 9102 establishing the War Relocation Authority (WRA) with Milton Eisenhower as director. It is allocated $5.5 million.

March 21, 1942
The first advance groups of Japanese American "volunteers" arrive at Manzanar, CA. The WRA would take over on June 1 and transform it into a "relocation center."
- **March 24, 1942**
The first Civilian Exclusion Order issued by the Army is issued for the Bainbridge Island area near Seattle. The forty-five families there are given one week to prepare.

- By the end of October, 108 exclusion orders would be issued, and all Japanese Americans in Military Area No. 1 and the California portion of No. 2 would be incarcerated.
## War Relocation Authority (WRA) Centers

Table 3.2. WRA Relocation Centers (Daniels 1993:131; Thomas 1952:88).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center</th>
<th>Date of first arrival</th>
<th>Peak population</th>
<th>Date of peak population</th>
<th>Date of last departure</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gila River</td>
<td>7-20-42</td>
<td>13,348</td>
<td>12-30-42</td>
<td>11-10-45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heart Mountain</td>
<td>8-12-42</td>
<td>10,767</td>
<td>1-1-43</td>
<td>11-10-45</td>
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<td>Jerome</td>
<td>10-6-42</td>
<td>8,497</td>
<td>2-11-43</td>
<td>6-30-44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manzanar</td>
<td>3-21-42</td>
<td>10,046</td>
<td>9-22-42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minidoka</td>
<td>8-10-42</td>
<td>9,397</td>
<td>3-1-43</td>
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<td>Poston</td>
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<td>17,814</td>
<td>9-2-42</td>
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<td>Rohwer</td>
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<td>8,130</td>
<td>3-17-43</td>
<td>10-31-45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tule Lake</td>
<td>5-27-42</td>
<td>18,789</td>
<td>12-25-44</td>
<td>3-20-46</td>
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</table>
“It was really cruel and harsh. To pack and evacuate in 48 hours seemed impossible. Seeing mothers completely bewildered with children crying from want and peddlers taking advantage and offering prices next to robbery made me feel like murdering those responsible without the slightest compassion in my heart.

– Joseph Yoshisuke
Life in Internment Camps

"In the detention centers, families lived in substandard housing, had inadequate nutrition and health care, and had their livelihoods destroyed: many continued to suffer psychologically long after their release"
- Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians
Life in Internment Camps

"In desert camps, the evacuees met severe extremes of temperature. In winter it reached 35 degrees below zero, and summer brought temperatures as high as 115 degrees. Rattlesnakes and desert wildlife added danger to discomfort."

Interns tried to make the best of it by living their lives with some degree of normalcy. Schools, libraries, sports teams, churches, and Americanization classes were created.
Life in Manzanar

Photos taken by Ansel Adams
Comparing the Japanese-American Internment camps vs. Nazi concentration camps...
Racism

“Germans, defend yourselves against the Jews propaganda, buy only at German shops!”
Barracks:

Germany

United States
The barracks were surrounded by barbed wire and overseen by high wooden watchtowers. Privacy was almost nonexistent.
“I remember the soldiers marching us to the barracks and I looked at their rifles and I was just terrified because I could see this long knife at the end ... I thought I was imagining it, it couldn’t have been a bayonets because we were just kids.”

– From “Children of the Camp”
In 1943 all interns over the age of 17 were given a loyalty test. They were asked the following 2 questions:

1. Are you willing to serve the armed forces of the United States on combat duty whatever ordered?

2. Will you swear allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all foreign or domestic forces, and foreswear any form allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government or organization?
Korematsu v U.S. ‘44:

- Fred Korematsu sued b/c it violated his constitutional rights.
- Took the argument to the Supreme Court.
- Supreme Court ruled that relocation was constitutional b/c it was based not on race but “military urgency.”
In 1988, Congress implemented the Civil Liberties Act, apologizing on behalf of the nation for the "grave injustice" done to persons of Japanese ancestry. Congress declared that the internments had been "motivated largely by racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership" and authorized $20,000 payments to Japanese Americans who had suffered injustices during World War II.
Attached v Detached Earlobes:

- Worksheet- Writing Prompts about the Japanese Internment Camps