

Lesson 1: Freedom for Everyone?

OVERVIEW

This lesson introduces the topic of Japanese American incarceration during World War II and places it in the context of Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s administration and the bombing of Pearl Harbor. It also examines President Roosevelt’s “Four Freedoms” speech and how it applies to the experiences of Japanese Americans during WWII, as well as students’ lives today.

OBJECTIVES

Students will understand the content and context of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “Four Freedoms” speech.

Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of the word “freedom” in written and oral form.

GUIDING QUESTION

What happened to Japanese Americans during World War II?

ARKANSAS HISTORY FRAMEWORKS

TCC 1.2, 1.3

PPE 1.1

SSPS 1.1, 1.4

MATERIALS

Excerpts from Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “Four Freedoms” speech (reproduce on to overhead transparency or read aloud to the class)

Norman Rockwell’s Four Freedoms Paintings (reproduced following the lesson plan or in color on the CD-ROM)

Excerpts from the Diary of an Evacuee (1 copy per student, or reproduce on overhead transparency)

Student Activity Sheet, “Four Freedoms” (1 copy per student, or have students draw on blank paper)

BACKGROUND

On January 6, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s State of the Union Address to Congress set forth four freedoms that he thought should prevail everywhere in the world. These freedoms were freedom from fear, freedom from want, freedom of speech and freedom of worship. This address became known as the “Four Freedoms” speech. At the time of the speech, World War II was being fought in Europe and Asia but the United States was not yet militarily involved. However, on December 7, 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawai’i and the United States responded by entering the war. Panic and fear quickly spread in response to the Japanese attack and many confused Japanese Americans for the enemy. As a result, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 9066 on February 19,

1942 which authorized the Secretary of War to establish military zones to exclude persons of Japanese Americans from their homes on the West Coast of the United States. The United States government did not have a similar policy for imprisoning German Americans or Italian Americans.

In 1943, the year after Japanese Americans had been stripped of their civil rights, Norman Rockwell depicted the Four Freedoms of Roosevelt's speech in paintings published in *The Saturday Evening Post*. The original paintings toured the country in 1943 and their display raised \$132 million in war bonds sales. President Roosevelt later thanked Norman Rockwell for his work, saying that it contributed to a "freer, happier world."

OPENING

Have students respond to the following question, written on the board or overhead projector, in a well-organized paragraph:

"What does freedom mean to you?"

Ask several students to volunteer to read their responses. Then, discuss with the entire class ways of completing the following statement:

"In the United States, we should have the freedom of....."

ACTIVITIES

1. Read aloud the excerpt from President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" speech (reprinted following the lesson plan - you may reproduce this excerpt on an overhead transparency or write on the board). As you read, discuss difficult vocabulary terms (such as armaments) and have students paraphrase Roosevelt's words into their own words. Then, show the students the accompanying Norman Rockwell "Four Freedoms" paintings (on CD-ROM; use with computer and data projector, or copy onto overhead transparency). Have students write down the vocabulary term "Four Freedoms" and its definition.

Four Freedoms: Freedom of Speech and Expression, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want, Freedom from Fear – the freedoms that should prevail everywhere in the world, as stated in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's January 6, 1941 speech.

Discuss with the students the relationship between each freedom and its corresponding painting.

Ask students why President Roosevelt would have listed these freedoms as those which were most important. Are there other freedoms on the students' lists from the opening activity that they think are more important?

Briefly remind students of the Great Depression, the looming threat of World War II, and the problems facing the United States in 1941, such as whether or not to enter the war, rebuilding the economy, and segregation in the military, schools and public facilities.

2. Have students read the excerpt from the diary, then answer question 1.

Have students write down the vocabulary word concentration camp and its definition:
concentration camp: a prison camp in which political prisoners are confined.

Tell them that this diary excerpt was written in one of America's concentration camps in Arkansas where Japanese Americans were held during World War II. View the documentary video *Time of Fear* from the start of the film (set counter to 0:00) until 2:38. Explain that the class will be studying this forced relocation in more detail over the next two weeks.

Have the students answer questions 2, 3, and 4 individually, as a group, or as a class, as they re-examine President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" speech and the Norman Rockwell "Four Freedoms" paintings. Students may also complete this activity for homework.

CLOSING

Distribute the student activity sheet, "Four Freedoms," or have students fold a piece of blank paper into fourths, labeling each section with a different freedom. Have students think about how these four freedoms relate to their lives today in Arkansas. They should then write about how this freedom relates to their lives, or draw a picture symbolizing the freedom. These may be posted around the room.

At the end of this unit, students will complete a culminating project in which they will follow a Japanese American or Arkansan during World War II. The project assignment sheet and scoring rubric are found at the beginning of this unit. Teachers should decide when is the most appropriate time to introduce the project and hand out the project assignment sheet.

EXTENSIONS

Have students research Norman Rockwell and his art, particularly its connection to U.S. history.

Have students make lists of other times in U.S. or Arkansas history in which the four freedoms identified by President Roosevelt were denied to groups or individuals. They might choose one of these instances and do further research.

REFERENCES

The Norman Rockwell Museum at Stockbridge. <http://www.nrm.org>

The Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and Museum. <http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/od4freed.html>

Franklin D. Roosevelt Defines the “Four Freedoms”

“In the future days which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression — everywhere in the world. The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way — everywhere in the world. The third is freedom from want, which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants — everywhere in the world. The fourth is freedom from fear, which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor — anywhere in the world.”

– *Franklin D. Roosevelt*

State of the Union Speech

January 6, 1941

Norman Rockwell's "Four Freedoms" Paintings

[Note: This image was unavailable for inclusion in the on-line version of this curriculum.]

Freedom of Speech

[Note: This image was unavailable for inclusion in the on-line version of this curriculum.]

Freedom of Worship

[Note: This image was unavailable for inclusion in the on-line version of this curriculum.]

Freedom from Want

[Note: This image was unavailable for inclusion in the on-line version of this curriculum.]

Freedom from Fear

LESSON 1: FREEDOM FOR EVERYONE?
EXCERPTS FROM THE “DIARY OF AN EVACUEE”

October 31, 1942

Arrived at our destination – could see the points of the barbed wire fences with droplets of rain stuck no them. Camp looked like some regimented metropolis – orderly rows of lights, quite a sprawling village...

We were brought to a brightly lighted mess hall – ah, food, we thought – Nothin’ doin’. Registration and induction at 2:30 a.m. Went forward to desk as “head” of the family (of two). Received assignment to quarters...

Well, we were led into our quarters wading through mud. We initiated our new home by splattering mud all over it. We struggled with cots...[and] had to wait for blankets.

February 8, 1943

A call for *Nisei* [Japanese American citizens] volunteers into U.S. Army issued. A special combat unit is to be organized. Boy, how suddenly they put things like that before us. Propaganda will be to good purpose – isn’t that making us stomach all the sacrifices and no breaks? What of post war status? Where do Nisei soldiers “go home” – suppose enough don’t volunteer – they sure put us on the spot....Mrs. T. was already expressing anxiety for sons. Two are eligible.

March 16, 1943

Rain is nice – keeps the dust down. Victory gardens progressing, snakes are coming out of hibernation in woods. It’s a Rohwer custom to walk about with your nose to the ground – it may not improve your posture but you might find an agate, or some stone suitable for polishing. Other people with leisure time go cray-fishing with nets along the ditches....Mr. M. and Mr. Y. have made garden furniture of crooked limbs of trees.

April 9, 1943

W.O. visited from Wyoming camp – he is a volunteer and is now making a round of some of the camps. He’s an idealistic sort of lad, a church go-er, whose father has been able to provide him with all advantages of an “American” life.

April 19, 1943

Received Norman Rockwell’s series “4 Freedoms” reprint in mail today....Went to canteen 3 times for some cake – missed out – only a little came in.

April 20.

Appointment for work in Columbus [Ohio] came in today! Too elated to speak properly!

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Who do you think wrote this diary entry? Where was it written? To what kind of “camp” do you think the author was referring?
2. What were the Four Freedoms to which President Roosevelt referred? Why were these freedoms so important to the United States in the 1940s?
3. Do you think Japanese Americans were denied these freedoms during World War II? Why? Use evidence from the diary entry to support your answer.
4. Do you think all Americans today have all of the freedoms that Roosevelt guaranteed? Please give examples to support your answer.

LESSON 1: FREEDOM FOR EVERYONE?
STUDENT ACTIVITY SHEET – “FOUR FREEDOMS”

Directions: What do these four freedoms mean to you?
Draw a picture or write a sentence explaining your understanding of these freedoms as they relate to Arkansas today.

<p>“The first is freedom of speech and expression.”</p>	<p>“The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way.”</p>
<p>“The third is freedom from want.”</p>	<p>“The fourth is freedom from fear.”</p>