

# ***Geography and the Japanese American Experience in WWII Arkansas***

## **Teacher Overview**

This unit, *Geography and the Japanese American Experience in WWII Arkansas*, was written for middle school geography teachers. Teaching the unit in its entirety would require 10 classes, or 5 class periods on the block schedule, although lessons or activities could be used separately as well. The unit is based around an essential question, which students should be able to answer by the end of the lessons. This type of curriculum writing, advocated by educators such as Heidi Hayes Jacobs and Grant Wiggins, encourages students to think critically and ties units together so that all activities are linked to a common goal. The culminating project for this unit is a research and reflection project in which students assume the identity of a Japanese American student during WWII and answer the unit's guiding questions in the form of a diary or scrapbook. Teachers may wish to use the unit at the end of the year to review the five themes of geography and tie them to an important event in U.S. and Arkansas history. Teachers may wish to draw additional information and/or activities from the middle school Arkansas history unit, the Rights and Responsibilities unit for U.S. history and civics, or the elementary Journey Home curriculum.

Materials provided for use with this unit include the following:

- Unit plan for two weeks with reproducible student activity sheets
- CD-ROM with primary source documents related to the Japanese American experience during WWII
- 56-minute documentary *Time of Fear* about the Japanese American experience in WWII Arkansas

The CD-ROM included with this curriculum book contains primary source documents, including photographs, maps, oral histories, art, and other documents. Much of the material is not necessary to complete the lesson plans; however, students may use it for research projects and teachers may use it to create and supplement lessons. A complete list of documents is listed on the spreadsheet entitled "Document References, Credits and Descriptions" on the CD-ROM. Adobe Acrobat Reader is required to read the most of the documents. This software can be downloaded free of charge from [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)

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## **Unit Map**

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How did the geography of the Arkansas Delta shape the Japanese American experience in World War II?

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What were the experiences of Japanese Americans during World War II?  
(Lessons 1,2,3)
2. How did the geography of the Arkansas Delta differ from that of the West Coast?
  - a. Location/ Region (Lesson 4)
  - b. Place (Lesson 5)
3. How did Japanese Americans impact the landscape at Rohwer and Jerome?  
(Lessons 6, 7)

Lesson 1: Freedom for Everyone

Lesson 2: Forced Migration to Arkansas (Movement)

Lesson 3: “A Long and Weary 3-Day Train Ride” (Movement)

Lesson 4: Where in the World are Rohwer and Jerome (Location & Region)

Lesson 5: What Did We See When We Got There? (Place)

Lesson 6: Human-Environment Interaction

Lesson 7: Gardens

Lesson 8: Where To?

Lesson 9: Research/ project workday in class

Lesson 10: Student project gallery tour, Conclusion

## GEOGRAPHY AND THE JAPANESE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN WWII ARKANSAS CULMINATING PROJECT ASSIGNMENT

Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### ASSIGNMENT

You are to assume the identity of a Japanese American in 1940. You will trace your journey beginning at a time prior to the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor and continuing throughout the duration of your incarceration in an Arkansas camp, either Rohwer or Jerome. You should include information that demonstrates knowledge of each of the guiding questions from this unit.

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How did the geography of the Arkansas Delta shape the Japanese American Experience in World War II?

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What were the experiences of Japanese Americans during World War II?
2. How did the geography of the Arkansas Delta differ from that of the West Coast?
3. How did Japanese Americans impact the landscape at Rohwer and Jerome?

### FORMAT

You may choose one of the following formats in which to organize your project:

- PowerPoint Presentation
- Scrapbook/Memory Book
- Journal/Diary
- Museum Display
- Letters
- Newspaper or Magazine Articles
- Any other creative format that may be designed by you with the teacher's approval

### PRESENTATION

Please be prepared to display and present your project to the class.

### SCORING

Your project will be graded based upon the understanding of the content and guiding questions discussed in this unit. You must also show understanding and use of primary sources. Your project must follow chronological order and be neat and well organized. A scoring rubric is provided to help you complete the project.

# GEOGRAPHY AND THE JAPANESE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN WWII ARKANSAS PROJECT SCORING RUBRIC

| Score  | Description   |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>4</b><br/><b>(A)</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student's project demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the relevant content and/or procedures.</li> <li>• The student completes all components of the project accurately.</li> <li>• The student offers numerous interpretations of primary sources.</li> <li>• The student's project provides an accurate chronological scheme.</li> <li>• The student's project is well organized and neat.</li> <li>• The student's project demonstrates excellence in understanding the essential and guiding questions.</li> </ul> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>3</b><br/><b>(B)</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student's project demonstrates an understanding of relevant content and/or procedures.</li> <li>• The student completes most aspects of the project accurately.</li> <li>• The student offers some interpretations of primary sources.</li> <li>• The student's project may contain minor flaws.</li> <li>• The student's project is neat and organized.</li> <li>• The student's project demonstrates mastery in understanding the essential and guiding questions.</li> </ul>  |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>2</b><br/><b>(C)</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student's project demonstrates some understanding of relevant content and/or procedures.</li> <li>• The student completes some aspects of the project.</li> <li>• The student offers very few interpretations of primary sources.</li> <li>• The student's project has very little organization and neatness.</li> <li>• The student's project demonstrates some understanding of the essential and guiding questions.</li> </ul>  |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>1</b><br/><b>(D)</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student completes only a small portion of the project and/or shows minimal understanding of relevant content and/or procedures.</li> <li>• The student's project demonstrates limited understanding of the essential and guiding questions.</li> </ul>   |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>0</b><br/><b>(F)</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student's project is incorrect, irrelevant, or incomplete.</li> </ul>  |