

# TEACHER'S GUIDE

## ***America's Concentration Camps: Remembering the Japanese American Experience***

MARCH 21 – JUNE 18, 2000



**“This travesty of justice could easily happen to any other group... Educating people about the incarceration of one group will help prevent its happening to other minorities in our American democracy.”**

*--Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians*

Photo credit: Gift of Grace and George Izumi,  
Japanese American National Museum (94.182.3)

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Japanese Community Youth Council

Jewish Museum San Francisco

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...for sharing his passion for education, and evaluating this Teacher's Guide.

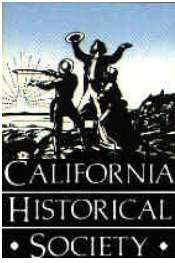
The Japanese American Citizens League National Education Committee

...for allowing us to excerpt information from their excellent curriculum and resource guide, *A Lesson in American History: The Japanese American Experience*.

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# ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



*The mission of the California Historical Society is to ensure that the history of California and the West is kept alive and made accessible for present and future generations.*

The California Historical Society (CHS), designated by the state legislature as the official historical society of California, is an independent, non-profit educational institution committed to serving the public at large. To fulfill our mission, the Society collects, preserves, interprets, publishes and exhibits materials about California thus providing an invaluable record of the various histories of the people of this state.

The Society seeks to enable visitors to experience history as lively, vital and relevant to everyday life, to use history as a means to explore their own identity and the identities of the various communities of which they are a part, and to understand history as a resource for making informed decisions about the future.

The CHS Fine Arts collections contain nearly 5,000 works reflecting the history of California from pre-Gold Rush days to early twentieth century. Over 450 oil paintings by such artists as Albert Bierstadt, Samuel Marsden Brookes, William Hahn, Thomas Hill, William Keith and Virgil Williams comprise the core of the collections, complemented by over 800 watercolors and drawings, 750 lithographs, etchings and engravings, and a small selection of sculpture. A highlight of the Fine Arts holdings is a group of over 250 letter sheets. Published in the two decades following 1849, these pictorial images recorded topical events, as well as views of cities and mining camps, printed on sheets of white writing paper. The Fine Arts collections are rounded out by a broad representation of decorative arts including silver and china, artifacts and costumes.

The California Historical Society's North Baker Library contains historical texts, manuscripts, maps and several special collections found nowhere else in the country. In addition to housing the most complete history of printing and lithography in the western United States, the North Baker Library houses ephemera files on California, San Francisco, businesses and theatre and thousands of corporate records. These materials are divided into three main collections: Reference and Research, Manuscript, and the Kemble Collections.

Included in the Reference and Research category are 35,000 published books and pamphlets, hundreds of thousands of pieces of ephemera, 3,700 maps, posters and broadsides, and 2,500 periodicals, newspapers and microfilm.

**Books:** Titles relating to the history of California from 1535 to the present day. Emphasizing local history, early exploration and growth of the state's 58 counties, and twentieth century materials focusing on the history of the States, women, ethnic groups, transportation, business and labor history.

**Ephemera:** General, biographical, business and theatrical materials such as advertisements, business cards, notices, billheads, etc. from the State and the Bay Area.

**Maps, Posters & Broadsides:** Approximately 3,000 maps and 700 posters and broadsides including original maps of the Fremont expedition, early boundary, city and county maps and Gold Rush material.

**Pamphlets:** Documents, reports and shorter works such as governmental publications, local histories, brochures and individual and corporate publications.

**Periodicals:** 2,500 periodicals including rare Gold Rush era newspapers, microfilm editions of the *Alta California* and the *San Francisco Call* through the early twentieth century.

In the Manuscripts category, 3,500 unique items including diaries and letters of Gold Rush miners, early settlers and ranchers as well as material from 19th-century businesses, political organizations and historical figures such as Adolph Sutro, Faxon Dean Atherton, James Rolph, Claus Spreckles and Ella Sterling Mighels.

The Kemble Collections on Western Printing & Publishing, named for California printer and publisher Edward Cleveland Kemble, consists of more than 4,000 books, extensive pamphlet and ephemeral materials, photographs from the archive of the Western Printer and Lithographer, archives of the Taylor & Taylor Printing Company files and more than 300 periodicals and significant manuscripts, all pertaining to the history of printing and publishing, especially in California and the West.

The Photographic Collection contains over half a million images documenting the history of California in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The core of the collection consists of 450,000 prints, 4,000 oversize prints and 43,000 film and glass plate negatives, providing an extraordinary breadth and depth of visual information. Special components of the collection include works by photographers such as Carleton E. Watkins, Eadweard Muybridge, Ansel Adams, Arnold Genthe, John A. Todd and G. R. Fardon. Other highlights include daguerreotypes and other cased images, photograph albums, mammoth plate prints, glass stereo views and photographic rare books. While the majority of the Society's holdings are located at the San Francisco headquarters, certain special collections relating to the Los Angeles area are housed at the Regional History Center, Department of Special Collections, at the University of Southern California, Doheny Library.

The California Historical Society has a Website that we are continually updating and expanding. Highlights include the complete index to our quarterly, *California History*, the shelf list to our photographic collections, and a list of our holdings of city directories throughout the state.

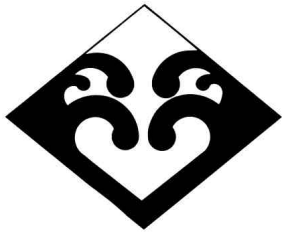
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## ABOUT THE JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM



*The mission of the Japanese American National Museum is to make known the Japanese American experience as an integral part of our nation's heritage in order to improve understanding and appreciation for America's ethnic and cultural diversity.*

The Japanese American National Museum (National Museum) is the first museum in the United States dedicated to sharing the experience of Americans of Japanese ancestry. Through its comprehensive collection of Japanese American objects, images and documents, as well as a multi-faceted program of exhibitions, educational programs, films and publications, the Museum shares the Japanese American story with a national and international audience.

The Museum was established in Los Angeles to preserve the rich heritage and cultural identity of Japanese Americans. In 1982, businessmen in LA's Little Tokyo began exploring the concept, as did a separate group of highly decorated World War II veterans. A representative from the financial group proposed incorporating a museum into a planned Little Tokyo residential complex, while veterans of the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team sponsored a "Japanese American Soldier" exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History.

The two groups soon joined forces, and in 1985 the Japanese American National Museum was incorporated as a private, nonprofit institution. Over the next several years, volunteers sought backing from community groups. In 1985, state Senator Art Torres introduced a funding bill that acknowledged the major contributions Japanese Americans have made to the social, cultural and economic spheres of California, and the state legislature soon appropriated \$750,000 toward the Museum on the condition that the City provide matching funds. At the urging of the volunteer corps, the City of Los Angeles granted a \$1 million match the following year.

Seeking to safeguard the rich oral histories of first generation immigrants, or Issei, and the artifacts, photographs, written records and other materials documenting the lives of Japanese Americans before, during, and after the World War II mass incarceration, Museum founders enlisted the support of the Japanese American community. In 1992, the Japanese American National Museum opened its doors to shed light on the Japanese American experience – a process of immigration and re-settlement common to so many Americans.

Built by Japanese immigrants in 1925, the original Museum building is the first Buddhist temple constructed in Los Angeles. The ornate structure incorporates elements of a temple in Kyoto, combining Japanese and Middle Eastern influences in its striking facade. The temple originally served as a house of worship, social hall and rental office space. A central gathering place in thriving Little Tokyo, the structure was later used to store the belongings of Japanese Americans sent to incarceration camps during World War II. The Temple eventually fell into disrepair and was sold to the City of Los Angeles in 1969. Declared a landmark by the City, it became the long-awaited space for the Japanese American National Museum.

In the mid-1990s, the Museum renewed its commitment to its mission. A groundbreaking ceremony to renovate the former temple marked a significant transition; after seven years, the Museum had a permanent home for its burgeoning collections, programming and traveling exhibitions. Internationally recognized as the premier institution dedicated to sharing the Japanese American experience, the Museum is now supported by more than 44,000 members and contributors, and hundreds of active volunteers from all fifty

states and 16 countries. The richness of its programs, exhibitions and collections has been recognized by its community, which extends from its historic neighborhood to across the globe.

The Museum opened its new 85,000 square-foot Pavilion to the public in January 1999. The City of Los Angeles has contributed a one-acre site for the Pavilion at \$1 per year on a 55-yr lease. The contemporary stone, steel and glass Pavilion bridges East-West aesthetic traditions by adjoining with the Museum's original building. Together they will provide more than 100,000 square feet of space, positioning the Museum as a world-class institution and an anchor to the cultural renaissance currently underway in downtown Los Angeles.

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**JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM**  
**369 East First Street, Los Angeles, California 90012**  
**Tel: 213/625-0414 or 1-800-461-5266; Fax: 213/625-1770;**  
**Website: [www.lausd.k12.ca.us/janm/main.htm](http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/janm/main.htm)**

## HOW TO USE THIS TEACHER'S GUIDE

This Teacher's Guide was designed to support the exhibition *America's Concentration Camps: Remembering the Japanese American Experience*. When used in conjunction with the exhibit, this guide can provide a meaningful experience for students studying the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. This guide does not, however, provide a comprehensive historical and cultural overview. It is designed as a supplementary tool to enhance your visit to the California Historical Society and your classroom teaching.

In addition to providing historical information, this guide provides materials and ideas for classroom activities. We strongly encourage your class to actively think about both the exhibit and the Japanese American experience. And while this exhibition is a story of a specific community, it is a part of our state's history, everyone's history.



Francis Stewart, Children at the Manzanar nursery school, 2/10/43. Section C WRA no. A-918.

## SCHOOL & YOUTH GROUP GUIDELINES

In order to insure that all visitors have a pleasant experience in the galleries and to protect the safety of our objects, the following rules have been established for school and youth groups. We want you to enjoy your visit to the California Historical Society, so please carefully review these guidelines with your students and chaperones before your scheduled visit.

Our galleries are open for tours by reservation Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:00am-3:00pm; Thursdays 9:00am-6:00pm; Saturday and Sunday, 11:00am-3:00pm.

Students should be accompanied by the recommended number of chaperones:

Grades K-5, 1 chaperone per 5 students

Grades 6-12, 1 chaperone per 10 students

If possible, please have your students wear nametags.

Students must be accompanied by a chaperone at all times.

The preferred maximum number of students and chaperones per tour is 35.

No gum, food, or drinks are allowed in the galleries.

No photography is allowed in the galleries.

Backpacks, large handbags, and bags from the Bookstore must be checked in at the front reception area.

Due to its size, only 5 students are allowed into the Bookstore at a time.

Pencils are the only writing instruments allowed in the galleries.

Please do not touch works of art.

Many of the objects in our galleries are one-of-a-kind. We ask you not to touch them because they are fragile and may be damaged easily.

There is no running allowed in the galleries.

**Thank you in advance for your cooperation!**

# PREPARING FOR YOUR TOUR

*To prepare your class for their visit to the California Historical Society, it will be helpful to introduce them to the following material.*

## **What is CHS?**

The California Historical Society (CHS), the State's official historical society, is a non-profit educational institution committed to serving the public at large. Knowledge of the past enables people to understand the present and to make informed decisions that will affect the future. The mission of the Society is to ensure that the history of California and the West is kept alive and made accessible for the enlightenment of everyone. To fulfill this mission, the organization is a resource for people who seek to know about California's past: the Society preserves, collects, interprets, publishes and, exhibits materials about the history of California and the West.

## **What will you do there?**

At the museum your class will take part in a one-hour docent-led tour of the exhibition. During this tour your Docent, or guide, will show you art works, objects, and artifacts and teach you all about them and the role they played in California's history. It is okay to ask questions, in fact we encourage it! The best part about history is that we are all a part of it. We encourage your group to share their stories as well. After the tour your class will participate in a hands-on activity or a creative writing project that is related to the exhibition.

## **What is a museum?**

A museum is a place where objects, artifacts, and art works are stored, collected, and cared for. It is also a place where you can go to learn about history, cultures, art, science, and the world.

## **Why do we ask that you do not touch?**

Because we are trying to preserve our objects for future generations, we ask that you don't touch them. Although we all wish we could appreciate the objects through the experience of touch, there are many reasons why it is important that we do not.

- Many of the objects in our collections are one-of-a-kind and cannot be replaced. If something happened, we could lose an important part of history.
- Everyone – students, teachers, and museum employees alike – has oils and acids on their skin that can damage works of art. Think about the fingerprints you leave behind when you touch a window. Imagine what hundreds of years of fingerprints could do to a piece of art or an object.

## **What is an historian?**

Webster's Dictionary defines the word historian as: 1. A writer of history; a chronicler; an annalist. 2. a writer or compiler of a chronicle. An historian, however, can be described in even more ways:

- A reader
- A recorder
- A writer
- A psychologist
- A detective
- A mind reader
- A fortune teller
- An economist
- A scientist
- An environmentalist
- A propagandist
- An archeologist
- A geologist

## **What does an historian need to do the job?**