

## **Racism, Relocation, and Redress: The Japanese-Canadian Experience**

### **Teacher Script**

**Show Slide 1** before beginning the reading to introduce the topic.

**Now show Slide 2** Japanese immigrants began arriving in Canada during the 1870s.

**Show Slides 3-4** The majority settled in British Columbia and southern Alberta and worked in the fishing, agriculture, lumber, and mining industries.

**Show Slides 5-6** Over time, through hard work, they were able to purchase their own fishing boats, farms, and businesses. The prosperity of Japanese-Canadians was resented by Canadians of European descent who viewed them as an economic threat. Consequently, laws were passed by the provincial and national governments which barred them from certain professions (civil service, teaching, lawyers, to name a few), denied them the right to vote, allowed them to be legally paid lower wages, and restricted immigration (quota system).

**Show Slide 7** To combat this discrimination, Japanese-Canadians clustered in their own neighborhoods and communities.

**Show Slides 8-9** Here they established their own businesses, schools, temples, churches, hospitals, social clubs, and Japanese language newspapers. This self-imposed isolation made Japanese-Canadians feel more secure, but only raised suspicion among other Canadians who questioned their loyalty. An uneasy truce existed until the outbreak of World War II.

**Show Slide 10** Early in 1941, British Columbian politicians passed a law requiring all Japanese-Canadians to register with their local Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Then came the attacks on Pearl Harbor and Hong Kong by the Japanese Imperial Forces. During the siege of Hong Kong, some Canadian prisoners of war and medical personnel were massacred. Public outcry over these attacks and pressure by politicians resulted in the national government in Ottawa taking action against Japanese-Canadians.

**Show Slide 11** Prime Minister Mackenzie King ordered all fishing boats owned by Japanese-Canadians to be confiscated and issued P.C. (Privy Council) Order 9760 which required all Japanese-Canadians to register as enemy aliens. Then, P.C. Order 365 was issued in January 1942. It created a “protected area” extending from the west coast of Canada to 100 miles inland. Thus was set in motion the relocation of Japanese-Canadians.

**Show Slide 12** On February 7, 1942, all Japanese-Canadian males ages 18-45 were ordered to leave the protected area by April 1.

**Show Slide 13** They were sent to road camps in the Rocky Mountains. Here they were put to work building the Trans-Canada Highway.

**Show Slide 14** In March 1942, the British Columbia Commission was established to “plan, supervise, and direct the expulsion” of all remaining Japanese-Canadians from the protected zone.

**Show Slide 15** These Japanese-Canadians were to report to holding stations with only what they could carry. The government, for safekeeping confiscated all other property including bank accounts. They were loaded onto special trains for transport to newly created or renovated ghost towns in the Rocky Mountains.

**Show Slides 16-19** There were 8 of these internment camps: Kaslo, New Denver, Tashme, Roseberry, Slocan City, Lemon Creek, Sandon, and Greenwood. Women, children, and the elderly populated them. By October 1942, some 22,000 Japanese-Canadians had been relocated and the protected zone was empty of all people of Japanese ancestry.

**Show Slide 20** As the war wore on, married men were given the option of moving to the camps where their families were located in exchange for agreeing to work on sugar beet farms. This was done due to labor shortages.

**Show Slide 21** Mail to and from the camps was censored. Young men volunteered to join the Canadian army to prove their loyalty but were denied. The British army, however, accepted them. In 1943, the government ordered the auction of all seized Japanese-Canadian property and possessions to help pay for the camps. Prime Minister King proposed in 1944 that Japanese-Canadians be “dispersed” across Canada at the end of the war. Under his plan, interned Japanese-Canadians could agree to move east of the Rocky Mountains or accept “repatriation” to Japan. Nearly 10,000 internees accepted the repatriation offer.

On September 2, 1945, Japan surrendered and the war was over. All internment camps except New Denver were closed and bulldozed. Most Japanese-Canadians moved to areas east of the Rocky Mountains, far from the west coast of Canada. In May of 1946, repatriation ships began to transport former internees to Japan. Nearly 4,000 left before the Supreme Court of Canada ruled repatriation illegal.

In 1949, the national government gave Japanese Canadians the right to vote and allowed them to return to the former protected area. The right to vote was a victory but returning to their former homes in British Columbia was unrealistic. They had lost everything and there was nothing to return to. The Japanese-Canadian community there had been eradicated.

**Show Slide 22** During the 1980's, a movement began among Japanese-Canadians to ask the government to redress the wrongs committed against them during World War II. Public support for this grew.

**Show Slide 23** On September 22, 1988, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and the Canadian Parliament acknowledged the wrongs that were committed, apologized for them, and authorized that each survivor receive \$21,000 in compensation. Japanese-Canadians were finally vindicated.

There were similarities and differences between the internments conducted in Canada and the United States. In both nations:

- A “protected area” was created along the West Coast from which all people of Japanese ancestry were forbidden to live.
- Internees were forced to liquidate all possessions and assets they couldn't carry prior to relocation.
- The camps were located in remote areas.
- Internees created institutions like schools, churches, and sports teams to give life in the camps a certain degree of normalcy.
- Because of labor shortages, internees were expected to work.
- Surviving internees in both the United States and Canada eventually received an apology and compensation from the government for what had been done to them.

Some differences were:

- The United States kept families together while Canada initially separated them. U.S. camps were surrounded by fences but Canadian ones were not.
- Canada refused to allow internees to serve in the military while the U.S. permitted it.
- And lastly, at the end of the war, the U.S. allowed internees to return to their homes while Canada encouraged them to settle in other areas of the nation.

There are other similarities and differences in how the United States and Canada handles this situation. Research the internment of people of Japanese ancestry during World War II to see if you can find more.

## **Racism, Relocation, and Redress: The Japanese-Canadian Experience Reading**

Japanese immigrants began arriving in Canada during the 1870's. The majority settled in British Columbia and southern Alberta and worked in the fishing, agriculture, lumber, and mining industries. Over time, through hard work, they were able to purchase their own fishing boats, farms, and businesses. The prosperity of Japanese-Canadians was resented by Canadians of European descent who viewed them as an economic threat. Consequently, laws were passed by the provincial and national governments which barred Japanese-Canadians from certain professions (civil service, teaching, lawyers, to name a few), denied them the right to vote, allowed them to be legally paid lower wages, and restricted immigration (a quota system). In view of this discrimination, Japanese-Canadians clustered in their own neighborhoods and communities. Here they established their own businesses, schools, temples, churches, hospitals, social clubs, and Japanese language newspapers. This self-imposed isolation made Japanese-Canadians feel more secure but only raised suspicion among "white" Canadians who questioned their loyalty. An uneasy truce existed until the outbreak of World War II.

Early in 1941, British Columbian politicians passed a law requiring all Japanese-Canadians to register with their local Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Then came the attacks on Pearl Harbor and Hong Kong by the Japanese Imperial Forces. During the siege of Hong Kong, some Canadian prisoners of war and medical personnel were massacred. Public outcry over these attacks and pressure by politicians resulted in the national government in Ottawa taking action against Japanese-Canadians. Prime Minister Mackenzie King ordered all fishing boats owned by Japanese-Canadians to be confiscated and issued P.C. (Privy Council) Order 9760 which required all Japanese-Canadians to register as enemy aliens. Then, P.C. Order 365 was issued in January 1942. It created a "protected area" extending from the west coast of Canada to 100 miles inland. Thus was set in motion the relocation of Japanese-Canadians.

On February 7, 1942, all Japanese-Canadian males ages 18-45 were ordered to leave the protected area by April 1. They are sent to road camps in the Rocky Mountains. Here they are put to work building the Trans-Canada Highway. In March 1942, the British Columbia Commission was established to “plan, supervise, and direct the expulsion” of all remaining Japanese-Canadians from the protected zone. They were to report to holding stations with only what they could carry. The government, for safekeeping, confiscated all other property including bank accounts. They were loading onto special trains for transport to newly created or renovated ghost towns in the Rocky Mountains. There were eight of these internment camps: Kaslo, New Denver, Tashme, Roseberry, Slocan City, Lemon Creek, Sandon, and Greenwood. Women, children, and the elderly populated them. By October 1942, some 22,000 Japanese-Canadians had been relocated and the protected zone was empty of all people of Japanese ancestry.

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Canadians the right to vote and said they could return to the former protected area. The right to vote was a victory, but returning to their former homes in British Columbia was unrealistic. They had lost everything and there was nothing to return to. The Japanese-Canadian community there had been eradicated.

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## Racism, Relocation, and Redress Writing Prompt

**Directions:** You are going to write an informative essay on the Japanese-Canadian experience before, during, and after World War II. You may use your Racism, Relocation, and Redress: The Japanese-Canadian Experience Reading and the Internet as sources of information on this topic. Be sure everything is in your own words. Use the checklist and scoring guide below to guide your writing.

### Checklist and Scoring Guide

I included in my essay:	Yes or No	Points Possible	Points Earned	Teacher Comments
2 reasons why people of Japanese ancestry were discriminated against by Canadians		10		
5 ways Japanese Canadians were discriminated against prior to World War II		25		
5 ways Japanese Canadians were discriminated against during World War II		25		
3 ways the wrongs against Japanese Canadians were redressed		15		
My own words		15		
Good spelling and grammar		10		
Total Points		100		