

Redress and Apology

Primary Resource Document- Lesson 4

Title: Making up for mistakes

Summary: This lesson describes the US governmental process of redress years later in reconsidering the incarceration of Japanese Americans and those of Japanese descent during WW2.

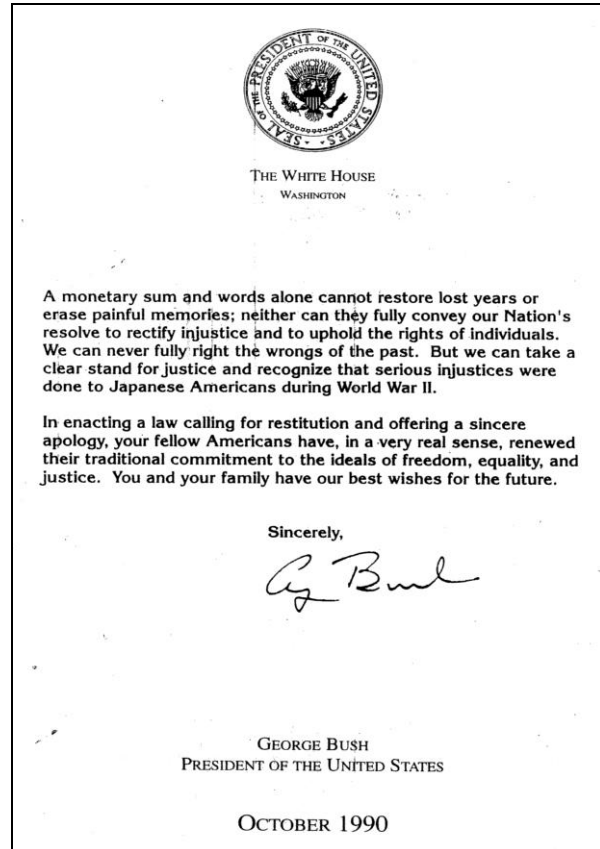
Age/grade level: 6th and up

Related EALR: Check the OSPI website for EALR and CBA's applicable to your grade level.

Suggested materials: Copies or enlargements of Presidential letters of Apology, copies of Omoide stories emphasizing return and later generations.

Time needed: One or two class sessions

Lesson Objective: Students will learn about redress as it pertains to internment victims and their families several years after the event.



Presenting the Lesson

Preparation:

This lesson will be more effective if done at the end of a unit on Japanese American history or after going through some events leading up to internment. You can use it in isolation as a social justice or government reparation lesson, however, some preview of the materials for your students would be helpful.

1. Make copies or prepare an overhead of the apology letters from the White House.
2. Familiarize yourself with the terms redress and reparation as necessary to explain to your students.
3. Post the set of guided questions for discussion. Add questions and topics that you feel your students will benefit from while discussing the topic.

Set/Introduction:

Ask students to think of:

- A time when they or someone they know were blamed for something they weren't guilty of doing.
- Punishments one can receive for committing a crime.

- What they might do if someone wrongly received a jail sentence
- Events in which they've had to apologize

Main activity:

Tell students that when someone is imprisoned they can never get the time back when they were in jail.

This is the scenario that happened during the WW2 internment of Japanese Americans and those of Japanese descent. It was recognized by the US Supreme court as illegal to imprison or remove people from their homes and put them in temporary facilities for no proven cause. This applies even in times of war hysteria. The people who were interned were never found guilty of the crimes they were accused of which was defined as being a danger to the United States due to their ethnic heritage.

Refer to the posted questions and begin an open discussion. You may wish to use a sharing device such as a speaking stick or small group sharing and reporting. If you use small groups, circulate among the groups and note comments. When students have had a chance to voice opinions, take a minute to summarize the activity.

Secondary activity:

Have students generate other ideas of ways that redress or reparation could be addressed. Have students generate a list of questions that they still may have concerning the internment process, redress, reparation or retribution.

Guided questions:

- What does it mean to be wrongly accused?
- How does it feel to be punished for something you didn't do?
- If you and your family were put in prison or jailed because of your ethnic background, what would you do?
- If you or your family mistakenly had someone removed from their homes, what would you do?
- What did the US government do for the Japanese American survivors of the WW2 internment process?
- In your opinion, was this fair or necessary?

Summary:

Review with students the chain of events that led up to the process of internment and eventually redress measures. (Refer to the Omoide curriculum timeline lesson, if necessary.) Tell them that part of the apology process included making sure not only that internees and their families were aware of the wrong doings, but that other future people knew that some attempts were done to correct mistakes the US government made. Share the letters from the White House.

Assessment options:

Have students respond in writing to any or all of the guided questions. You can use the [response rubric](#) or the [empathy rubric](#) found in the Omoide curriculum website to assess understanding.

Extensions/Follow up:

As individuals or in small groups encourage students to research on the internet for other US citizen groups that were wrongly accused and see if measures of apology and redress were also extended to them. Continue discussions as they report their findings.

Additional Bibliography:

Other resources can be found in the [reference/bibliography](#) located on the Omoide curriculum website.

Notes: