

Reading charts and maps - Camp locations

Support Lesson 2

Title: Where is “the middle of nowhere?”

Summary: This lesson identifies the location of assembly centers and internment camps on a US map, gives numbers for population at different timeframes, and defines each.

Age/grade level: 5th- 8th (also applicable as general interest for older age groups)

Related EALR: Check the Omoide website for Washington State 2008 EARLS and CBA’s applicable to your grade level emphasis on map and chart reading skills.

Suggested materials: Enlargement (overhead slide) of the Camps map and chart.

Time needed: One or two class sessions

Lesson Objective: Students will identify locations of the WWII assembly centers, internment camps and the restricted zone as they were assigned in the United States. They will read a chart describing the numbers of internees at the different areas at different time periods.



Presenting the Lesson

Preparation:

1. Decide how much basic map reading skill review and background information about WWII you will need to do before presenting this lesson.
2. Make copies or prepare an overhead of the provided [Assembly Centers and Camps map](#) and [chart](#).
3. Familiarize yourself with the restricted zone and the events associated with the zone during WWII.
4. If using, create questions that require specific map or chart reading answers applicable to your grade. For example, find the largest camp, which camp was farthest away, how many assembly centers were there?

Set/Introduction:

Ask students to describe what they think of when they talk about the word, “camp.”

Based on your placement of this lesson and the background of your class, review or introduce the events leading up to the incarceration of Japanese Americans and those of Japanese ancestry to the creation of camps.

Main activity:

Using the chart, go over the names of the internment camps and assembly centers.

1. Define the differences between internment camps and assembly centers.
2. List the different names for the camps. (internment, incarceration, evacuation, concentration, war relocation, and detention centers) *Note – Students may see any of these terms describing the areas of internment.)

3. Go over the columns indicating the number of people that were taken to the various points at different time periods.
4. Use the map to associate locations with the chart details.
5. As a large group (*or in pairs or alone) have students generate questions about the map and chart. * See *Assessment Opportunities* below.

Secondary activity:

Have students read through the Omoide stories of your choice. Encourage them to find the location of the camps that are mentioned in the stories.

Guided questions/Potential answers:

- ❑ Who ended up going to the camps? (*Primarily those of Japanese descent that lived in the restricted zone and influential others associated with the Japanese community*)
- ❑ How do you think the camp areas were selected? (*Answers will vary but may include: They were far away from the coast. The land was deemed not valuable. It was government owned.*)
- ❑ Why do you think there are so many different names for the camps? (*Answers will vary but may include: No one really knew what to call them. They didn't really know what would happen there. To make them sound less like prisons.*)
- ❑ Why do you think there were both assembly centers and camps? (*Answers will vary but may include: They needed a time and place to assigning people before sending them to camp.*)
- ❑ Why aren't there any camps besides the one in Arkansas that are farther East? (*With the exception of Arkansas, the primary purpose was to remove Japanese contacts from the coast.*)

Summary:

Have students review their early definitions of the word camp. Compare their definitions to what they know about internment camps. Have them speculate the connection, if any, between usages of the word. Remind students that internees did not know where the camps would be located when they were sent there or how long they would be there.

Assessment options:

Although not directly part of the main objective, you can devise a map test in which students identify the camp locations and specific areas of interest as they apply to the internment experience, such as the restricted zone or the geological details of the camps and assembly centers. In addition, you could do a similar chart reading test for number comparisons or graphing.

You may also choose to evaluate responses to the student generated questions. Refer to the response rubric in assessment section of this guide. Have students answer each others questions or find answers together. Note that some questions may not have correct answers.

Extensions/Follow up:

On a US map, ask students to locate the town they are living in. On the same map, locate the town(s) their parents and grandparents grew up in. Identify and define the restricted zone designated in WWII. Informally assess how many of their relatives would have had direct impact with the events that occurred during the war or if similar wartime events were to have happened while they were living there. Emphasize that entire communities were effected, not simply Japanese Americans and those of Japanese descent.

Additional Bibliography:

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

Notes: