

### Summary Description

This is the seventh in a series of 12 lessons that introduces the student to Asian American history.

### Learning Objectives

To learn a few facts about Japanese American history and culture.

### Approximate Time for Lesson

60 minutes

### Suggested Maturity Level for Instruction

Student should be able to read simple words and perform simple addition and subtraction. Also, student should be able to sit still and engage in one-on-one conversation.

### References:

"Japanese History", Historymania -

[http://www.historymania.com/american\\_history/Meiji\\_Restoration](http://www.historymania.com/american_history/Meiji_Restoration)

"Japanese Immigration", AsianAmericans.com -

<http://www.asianamericans.com/JapaneseImmigration.htm>

"Biography of Daniel K. Inouye" - <http://inouye.senate.gov/>

### Materials Needed

1. Internet Access - Pull up the following:
  - a. World Map (go to <http://maps.google.com/maps>)
2. Coloring worksheet of City of Tokio.
3. Crayons

### Preparation

Make sure you have materials open, printed and/or available prior to beginning the lesson.

### Script

#### Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Teacher: Last lesson we learned about Asian Americans called the Korean Americans. Do you remember where the Korean Americans went from their country in Korea? [Engage the Student in discussion but make the point that Korean Americans went to Hawaii to work in the sugar cane fields].
2. Teacher: That's right. Today, we're going to learn about another Asian American people, called the Japanese Americans.
3. Teacher: [Pointing to Japan in the World Map - use the zoom out function by clicking on the minus sign. Then, click anywhere in the map and drag to the right until the island

[nation of Japan appears](#)] This is where the Japanese Americans came from, a country called "Japan".

4. Teacher: Would you like to know where they first landed in North America? I'll give you a hint - they arrived in the same place as the Korean Americans, but just much earlier than them. [\[Obtain positive response from Student and begin lesson\]](#).

Lesson (50 minutes)

1. Teacher: The first Japanese Americans came to an island that was part of the United States, called Hawaii, and remember what kind of food is grown in Hawaii? [\[Engage the Student in discussion but ultimately make the point that Hawaii was one of the best places in North American \(specifically in the United States\) to create sugar\]](#).
2. Teacher: That's right, now even though the Korean Americans and Japanese Americans both went to Hawaii, some of the reasons for the Japanese Americans moving to Hawaii were the same as the Korean Americans, but some were different.
3. Teacher: One of the most important same reasons was that the Japanese wanted to look for a better opportunity for their families.
4. Teacher: And now, let me tell you about some reasons why Japanese Americans went to Hawaii that are different from the reasons of the Korean Americans. Imagine that you live in Japan even before your grandfather was born. There are no cars, no phones. You're not rich, just a normal farmer that makes enough money to feed your family. But you live in very dangerous times. *(Note to Teacher: this script describes the era of the Meiji Restoration 1866-1869)* You see, there is a war going on across your whole country and it's been going on for years now!
5. Teacher: As a farmer, you are not allowed to own land and all the owners of the land, called Samurai (this is one kind of people that live in your country, just like you are a farmer, but they own the land that you work on everyday), are fighting a war against the armies of the Emperor of Japan! Oh and one other thing, as a farmer you are not allowed to carry and weapons (it's against the law)...so basically you are in the middle of a war with no weapon...how would that make you feel? [\[Engage the Student in discussion but make that point that someone in this situation would feel nervous about her future since she would not know who will win and what will happen to her after the war\]](#).
6. Teacher: I agree I would feel really nervous about this whole thing. What would happen if the samurai lost? Would the emperor then order that you, as a farmer, could not work on the land since you do not own it? Or if the samurai won, would they make you pay more money to them than ever since they themselves spent so much of their own money fighting this war? And this is exactly how the farmers and the other people who were not samurai felt about this war.

7. Teacher: Then, there were the Americans. They arrived in Japan after this war and while the entire country was changing - they offered something safer for the Japanese. They basically told the Japanese, "hey, come work for us in the sugar cane fields...the fields are on a tropical island called Hawaii. You will get money for your work and a free place to sleep. Stay for a couple of years, then after all this change in your country is over, you can always come back...what do you say?" Would you accept that kind of offer? [Engage the student in discussion but ultimately make the point that some of the Japanese thought this was a safer future for them and since they could come back to Japan later, some of the Japanese left for Hawaii].
8. Teacher: And that's why the Japanese Americans went to Hawaii, for a safer opportunity for them and their family.
9. Teacher: So, why do you think the Americans offered the Japanese that nice offer? Why would you want to have some people who don't even speak your language come to your country and work for money? [Engage the Student in discussion].
10. Teacher: Those are some good reasons. You may not remember this, but remember the Chinese Americans I told you about a while back (*note to Teacher: this is referring to the lesson on Chinese American History*)? I said that the Chinese went to California and more and more were coming to look for gold. Well, the Americans didn't like the fact that someone who didn't look like they did were coming to their land and taking their gold and money. So, the Americans made a new law that didn't allow anymore Chinese to come to America. What do you think about this? [Engage the Student in discussion].
11. Teacher: Well, whether it was for good or bad reasons, the law was the law. And so no more Chinese came to America. But America still needed people to work jobs that other Americans didn't want to do, like work in the sugar cane fields (it's really tough work). Since Americans couldn't get Chinese to come to America because of this law, the Americans went to Japan instead and got the Japanese to come over to work on the sugar fields.
12. Teacher: There were already some Chinese that were working in the sugar cane fields in Hawaii and now Japanese people were working there. And soon, the Koreans would come over to work. The Americans actually liked that there were so many people working on the sugar cane fields, but who could not talk with each other since all three groups spoke different languages. Why do you think the Americans liked this? [Engage the Student in discussion].
13. Teacher: Those are some good reasons. But let me try to explain in a fun way why the Americans wanted people from different countries to work in the sugar cane fields. Do you know how to play tag? [Get positive response from Student. If the Student does not know how to play, then explain the rules (the person who is "it" tries to touch anyone playing the game. If the person who is "it" touches someone playing the game, then that person is now "it" and must try to tag another person)].

14. Teacher: Well, let's change the rules a bit on this game. Instead of only one person being "it", now there are 3 people that are "it"...and they're out to tag you.
15. Teacher: It's like 3 against 1...do you think it will be easy for them to tag you? Why? [Engage the Student in discussion but ultimately make the point that the Student will probably get caught because the 3 will communicate and cooperate to try to tag the Student].
16. Teacher: Now, imagine that the 3 people who are "it", can't talk to each other...do you think it'll be harder for them now to tag you? [Engage the Student in discussion but make the point that it'll be harder for the 3 to tag the Student since they can't talk to each other].
17. Teacher: And that's exactly why the Americans wanted people from different countries to work on their sugar cane fields - because the Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans couldn't talk to each other, it made it harder for them to form one group and ask the Americans for better things like more money or more comfortable places to sleep.
18. Teacher: OK - let's do an activity. [Show the City of Tokio Coloring Worksheet] The ship in this worksheet is called "The City of Tokio"; it's the ship that the first Japanese Americans sailed to Hawaii in. Go ahead and color the ship traveling to Hawaii. [Have the Student color the worksheet].
19. Teacher: Wow - you did great coloring the ship!
20. Teacher: Now, do you want to know what happened to the Japanese Americans in Hawaii? [Get the positive response from the Student].
21. Teacher: They rose from sugar cane workers to the highest levels among the Hawaiian people. In fact, when Hawaii officially became a state, the congressman to represent Hawaii was a Japanese American named Daniel Inouye. A "congressman" is someone who make new laws and speaks for the people of a state - in this case, Hawaii. Daniel Inouye actually fought for America in a war and lost his right arm during the war. Because of his bravery in the war, he won the highest medal of them all, the Medal of Honor! Daniel is now one of the most important congressmen in the nation.
22. Teacher: OK - now, stand up and stand up in front of me and let's do our review. [Have the Student stand in front of you and ask the following:
  - a. Why did the Japanese come to America? Like the Koreans, for a better opportunity. But also unique to the Japanese, there was a lot of uncertainty about what changes would result due to war (i.e., the Meiji Restoration, the war between the army of the emperor and the samurai).
  - b. Why did the Americans want people from different countries working in their sugar cane fields? Because they couldn't talk to each other and therefore, that made it harder for the Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans to organize a combined effort to demand better wages, living conditions, rest breaks, etc.

- c. What was the name of the steamship that took that first Japanese to Hawaii? The City of Tokio.
- d. Can you tell me about one famous Japanese American who was the first to represent Hawaii when Hawaii became a state? Daniel Inouye

Help the Student review the materials and correct any errors with the Student].

Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Teacher: [Clapping] You did GREAT! Wonderful job! Are there any questions that you have about the Japanese Americans? [Engage in conversation with the Student, research questions on the Internet, and close the lesson].