



Japanese Internment Camps in British Columbia 1949 - Activity

Incorporating sources from UBC Library's Open Collections into your classroom can help students build their historical thinking through analyzing, contextualizing, and inferring using historical texts.

This activity will involve four photographs taken of Japanese Canadians during WWII internment in British Columbia. The purpose of this activity is for your students to develop their own historical questions from primary sources, using outside sources for contextual information, and formulating answers to their questions based on the information available.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Computers to access Open Collections Digital Primary Sources

Flipchart paper and markers

The Canadian Encyclopedia - Japanese Internment Banished and Beyond Tears (<https://tinyurl.com/labjzqt>)

OPEN COLLECTIONS DIGITAL PRIMARY SOURCES

Japanese Canadians being processed in Slocan (<https://dx.doi.org/10.14288/1.0049072>)

Japanese Canadians arriving at or departing from Slocan City A (<https://dx.doi.org/10.14288/1.0049249>)

Japanese Canadians arriving at or departing from Slocan City B (<https://dx.doi.org/10.14288/1.0049261>)

ACTIVITY

1. In small groups have your students analyze the photographs and brainstorm some questions they have about the photograph collection. Have the students record on flipchart paper their questions. Some examples of questions could be:
 - Who is taking the photographs?
 - What is happening in the photographs? What do the people in the photograph look like? Who might they be? What are they doing? Where are they? Is the photo posed or candid?
 - Who do you think took the picture? Why did the photographer take the photo? What message is the photographer trying to get across with the photos?
 - Do the pictures give you a different perspective or feeling? What perspective or feeling do you get from the different pictures?
2. Have students share their questions about the photographs with the class.
3. Reading the introduction from The Canadian Encyclopedia entry *Japanese Internment Banished and Beyond Tears* (<https://tinyurl.com/labjzqt>) have students discuss possible answers to the questions they created.

EXTEND THE ACTIVITY

Have students watch the short video *Japanese Canadian Internment | Narrated by David Suzuki* (<https://youtu.be/C8TQTuMqM9g>).

Using what they have learned from the video, have students write a reflection from the point of view of a Japanese Canadian, a letter to a family member, or a newspaper article describing what they were enduring during this time.

For additional resources, including how to search Open Collections for primary sources, visit:
<http://guides.library.ubc.ca/PrimarySourcesEducators>

Bring British Columbia history to life in the classroom with UBC's Open Collections