

Military Service and Draft Resistance

Learning objectives: In this module, students will discuss the World War II draft and how it affected Japanese Americans. They will analyze the implications of civic duty of Japanese Americans who were being falsely imprisoned at relocation camps. A special emphasis will be placed on the 442nd Battalion and the draft resisters. Students learn of the impact of organizations such as the Fair Play Committee and the Japanese American Citizens League (SS5.4.4, SS8.4.4, SS12.4.4). Students will explore the topic by utilizing relevant primary sources (SS4.4.5, SS8.4.5, SS12.4.5). They will also complete activities that will encourage students to convey messages through writing (CCW9-12.3) and art (FPA4.1.A.1, FPA4.1.A.2, FPA8.1.A.1, FPA8.1.A.2, FPA11.1.A.1, FPA11.1.A.2)

Introduction: Before the induction of the draft, Japanese Americans were turned away from volunteering in the armed services and completely barred from joining the Navy. Once the federal government instituted the draft, Japanese Americans questioned how their status of citizenship aligned with the practice. Were they still considered citizens if they were eligible for the draft? Would they be put on the frontlines to protect white soldiers from being harmed? These were important questions that were never answered by the U.S. federal government. Instead, loyalty questionnaires were issued and draft resisters were charged with crimes.

Activity

- How do you serve your country?
 - Have students list different ways they can serve their nations. Whether through conventional terms of service or not. Encourage them to think beyond typical military service. Have students consult outside resources. What types of service organizations utilize the federal oath of service besides the armed forces? Is protesting and organizing voter registration a way to serve your country? Afterward, have students write 1-2 paragraphs explaining the different ways someone can serve their country.

Suggested Readings

- Letters from the 442nd
- Stanley Hayami Nisei Son
- Wyoming Samurai
- Free to Die for Their Country
 - [Excerpt from Chapter 1](#)
- Articles for student use
 - [Densho- Draft Resistance](#)
 - [The Suyama Project](#)
- Podcasts <https://beta.prx.org/stories/1411>

Video suggestion

- From Barbed Wire to Battlefield Part 1 and 2
- The Resistance Fighting the Draft at Heart Mountain

- Dusted Off: Military Intelligence Service (Heart Mountain YouTube channel)
- An American Hero: The Ted Fujioka Story

Film Suggestions

- A Flicker in Eternity (This can be found in our Classroom Resources)
- Going for Broke