

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Part 3: "Allegiance"

Document-Based Activity

MISSION US: "Prisoner in My Homeland"

Allegiance | "Loyalty Questionnaire"

Instructions

A NOTE TO THE EDUCATOR: This activity is best used after students have played Part 3 of the game.

The U.S. War Department and the War Relocation Authority (WRA) created a process to determine which Japanese Americans were more likely to be loyal to the U.S. This included a set of questions that informally came to be known as the "Loyalty Questionnaire." Questions 27 and 28 were especially controversial and caused disagreements and resentment within families and among fellow Japanese American incarcerated. Those who answered "No-No" were considered disloyal and segregated to the Tule Lake Segregation Center, while those who answered "Yes-Yes" were not. Many also responded "No-Yes" and "Yes-No," while others refused to answer these questions. Because these questions caused a great deal of confusion, Japanese Americans interpreted them in many ways and responded in a variety of different reasons depending on the individuals and their families.

Students will investigate questions 27 and 28 of the "Loyalty Questionnaire" and oral history transcripts that show examples of why Japanese Americans answered 'yes' or 'no' to these questions. Make sure to explain to students that there are a variety of ways that Japanese American individuals and families interpreted and responded to these questions. The documents listed here are two examples.

Students should also be aware that although oral history documents offer valuable insights into personal experiences, thinking, and emotions, they may also contain statements and impressions that are not entirely factual due to the subjective nature of these types of documents. In Document 2 - "A Nisei Who Said No," the Community Analyst recorded the conversation between the Hearing Board Member and the Nisei based on what was heard by hand, not through a tape or video recording. In Documents 3 - 8, since interviewee are spontaneously recalling information that occurred many years after, it may not be exactly as it occurred.

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Steps to Complete

The following procedure is recommended for this activity and can be adapted based on your curricular goals and timing constraints:

1. Distribute primary source document(s) to students.
2. Have students work independently or in small groups to investigate the document(s) with the goal of learning why the "Loyalty Questionnaire" was controversial and what are some of the reasons behind why Japanese Americans answered the questions the way they did.
3. Tell students or student groups to answer the guided questions for Document 1: Loyalty Questionnaire.
4. Review the answers to the guided questions through a class discussion.
5. Instruct students or student groups to answer the Documents 2 - 8 Guided Questions for each document.
6. Instruct students to use their analysis from the documents to complete the first three sections of each chart on the handout, "Loyalty Questionnaire: How Some Japanese Americans Responded" This may be done either individually or within small groups of students.
7. Review student responses on the handout through a class discussion.
8. Have each individual student complete the "My Response" section for each chart on the handout.
9. Three Corners Activity
 - a. Class Preparation ahead of time:

Label three corners of the classroom with a small sign in the following way: One corner is "YES;" Another corner is "NO;" The third corner is "REFUSE TO ANSWER"
 - b. Instruct students that after the teacher reads the question (chart on handout) of the "Loyalty Questionnaire," they will move to the corner that matches their response for that question and be prepared to explain their responses out loud to the class.
 - c. Conduct the Three Corners Activity for Question 27 and 28 as described in 9b.

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Document 1 - Loyalty Questionnaire

Incarcerated individuals received different questionnaires depending on their gender and citizen status. Nisei men who were old enough to be drafted into the army received Army Questionnaire Questions 27 and 28. Nisei women who were old enough to serve in the Army Nurse Corps received the WRA Questionnaire Questions 27 and 28.

Army Questionnaire Question 27: Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?

OR

WRA Questionnaire Question 27: If the opportunity presents itself and you are found qualified, would you be willing to volunteer for the Army Nurse Corps or the WAAC?

Army Questionnaire Question 28: Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power, or organization?

OR

WRA Questionnaire Question 28: Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power or organization?

Guided Questions

1. According to these questions, what are the ways to show one's loyalty to the U.S.?
2. Review the vocabulary word, "unqualified allegiance" in the Vocabulary Activity. What do you think is meant by "unqualified allegiance" and why would this type of allegiance be particularly important to the U.S.?
3. Why do you think Americans of Japanese descent were specifically asked to give up any loyalty or obedience to the Japanese emperor or any other foreign power?

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Documents 2 - 8 Guided Questions: Accounts of Japanese American prisoners at Incarceration Camps

1. What feelings and other general reactions did this person or people he/she knew have to the "Loyalty Questionnaire?"
2. Why did people think that the government didn't have the right to ask them to complete the "Loyalty Questionnaire?"
3. How did people feel about Japan and being asked about Japan?
4. How did this person or people he/she knew answer Question 27 and/or Question 28 on the "Loyalty Questionnaire?" How did this person or people he/she knew respond to the topics within these questions? Why?

Document 2 - ["A Nisei Who Said No"](#)

This is an excerpt of the reasoning behind why a Nisei answered "no" to Question 28, as recorded by the Community Analyst of Manzanar. The first section is part of an exchange between the Hearing Board to determine who would be segregated and the Nisei who responded to "no." The second section is the fuller statement that the Community Analyst later collected from the Nisei independently.

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
Community Analysis Section
January 15, 1944
Community Analysis Notes No.1

FROM A NISEI WHO SAID "NO".

Section 1:

Hearing Board Member: Don't you want to tell us? Perhaps there is something that we can do. If you say "No" you are giving away your citizenship. Is that what you want to do? Feel free to talk. We're not here to argue with you but we want to help you.

Nisei: What I was thinking. I thought that since there is a war on between Japan and America, since the people of this country have to be geared up to fight against Japan, they are taught to

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hate us. So they don't accept us. First I wanted to help this country, but they evacuated us instead of giving us a chance. Then I wanted to be neutral, but now that you force a decision, I have to say this. We have a Japanese face. Even if I try to be American I won't be entirely accepted...

Nisei: If I would say "Yes", I'd be expected to say that I'd given up my life for this country. I don't think I could say that because this country has not treated me as a citizen. I could go three-quarters of the way but not all the way after what has happened.

HBM: Would you be willing to be drafted?

Nisei: No I wouldn't do that.

Later I contacted this young man and asked him for a fuller statement of his views. The following is what he told me:

Section 2:

...I don't know Japan. I'm not interested in Japan. That's another thing that worries me. I don't know what will become of me and people like me if we have to go to Japan...[My father] doesn't tell me what to do but I know what he wants me to do about this answer. I can sense it from the way he talks.

In order to go out prepared and willing to die, expecting to die, you have to believe in what you are fighting for. If I am going to end the family line, if my father is going to lose his only son, it should be for some cause we respect. I believe in democracy as I was taught it in school. I would have been willing to go out forever before evacuation. It's [not] that I'm a coward or afraid to die. My father would have been willing to see me go out at one time. But my father can't feel the same after this evacuation and I can't either.

...I'm sick right now. Right now while I've been talking to you I've had a cramp in the pit of my stomach.

I appreciate this talk with you. But my mind is made up. I know my father is planning to return to Japan. I know he expects me to say "No" so there will be no possibility that the family will be separated. There isn't much I can do for my father [anymore]; I can't work for him the way I used to. But I can at least quiet his mind on this.

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Document 3 - Transcript of Interview with Paul Nagano by Densho on May 25, 1999

<https://ddr.densho.org/interviews/ddr-densho-1000-65-8/>

<https://ddr.densho.org/media/ddr-densho-1000/ddr-densho-1000-65-8-transcript-7142576b37.htm>

Background:

Paul Nagano was incarcerated with his family in Poston, Arizona, where he served as the one of the first English-speaking Japanese American pastors in any of the prison camps. He responded 'yes-yes' to Questions 27 and 28 of the "Loyalty Questionnaire" and partly attributes his Christian faith and prayers to how he came to this decision. He states: "It was a grave and traumatic decision as I felt I must prove my loyalty to the United States,"²¹

[Summary resourced from: https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Paul%20M.%20Nagano/#cite_note-ftnt_ref2-2]

Note: "442" within the transcript refers to the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, a U.S. Army unit during WWII that consisted of Japanese American enlisted men.

...Christian fellows, particularly at the beginning, they were volunteering for the special regimental team, 442. And we had to think that thing through, because here they're incarcerated in camp because they're Japanese Americans, and then to volunteer for the U.S. Army. Parents are still in there, and then to go overseas to fight the battles. It was a hard decision...And I could say the Christian fellows were more readily responding to that, saying, "Yes, I'll volunteer."

...Here we are in these camps -- American citizens -- concentration camps, really. And they want us to volunteer and serve the United States Army. It was sort of a paradoxical experience.

BF: *Do you recall some of the things that you said?*

PN: *Well, it's very difficult to answer those questions. But I wrestled with it myself, and so I volunteered. But I volunteered as a chaplain. My friends were going and I was at that age, still able to volunteer. And I volunteered as a chaplain. And a couple of weeks later they called me in from the other camp saying, "You cannot serve as a chaplain because you don't have your seminary training." And so I was rejected. But in, in thinking about this, we felt that, well we could get mad and say, "Here, we are in camp, and we're considered prisoners. And we should -- why should we go out and fight for the United States?" But*

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we didn't know where our future was to be or where do we belong? And we realized we're -- actually, our future will be here in America. We are American citizens, this is our proper responsibility. And we thought about the future. So that was the counseling that I gave out. I tried to be an example, myself, by volunteering.

Document 4 - Transcript of Interview with Frank Emi by Densho on March 20, 1994

Background: Frank Emi was one of the leaders of a resistance movement that questioned the legal rights of forcing Japanese American men to be drafted into the U.S. Army during World War II, since they were imprisoned by the government without constitutional rights.

Frank Emi: ...And when 27 asked about, "Will you go into combat duty wherever ordered?" I thought it was very stupid, and a very... arrogant question to ask of us, after we were thrown out of our homes and put into these concentration camps, without even a word about our citizenship rights or civil rights, or constitutional rights being restored. And then question 28 was very, another very ambiguous and a very senseless question, because it said, "Will you" -- one of the phrases was, "Will you forswear allegiance to the Emperor of Japan?" And something that we had never sworn allegiance to the Emperor of Japan, and how can we forswear something we had never sworn to before? So that didn't make sense. And then for the, our parents to forswear allegiance to Japan, that would have left them without a country, they'd have become stateless persons. So it really made me very angry just reading that thing, and that's when I got sort of involved into it.

That night, after studying it carefully, I formed my answers to both questions. I put down, "Under the present conditions and circumstances, I am unable to answer these questions." And I put that on both 27 and 28. And then I had thought that maybe many of the camp people might have a hard time answering these questions, so I got my younger brother and we put out, wrote out our answers, "Suggested answers to questions 27 and 28," and we made a bunch of copies and pasted up in the different mess hall doors and latrine doors, wherever people gathered.

Emiko Omori: What was the suggested answers? What were they?

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FE: Questions 27 and 28, put both: "Under the present conditions and circumstances, I cannot answer these questions." Because you are there under duress, without due process, and how can you answer questions like that under those conditions? It just got to a point where the government was compounding one injustice onto another one.

EO: So what happened?

FE: ...I don't remember for sure whether it was the Christian pastor there, or the associate editor of the *Heart Mountain Sentinel*, the camp newspaper, who was Nobu Kawai, who was the past president of the Pasadena chapter of JACL before the war. He was, it was either one of those two, gave a talk on why we should register and not cause any problems, you know. It was our duty to register, and not only that, but the WRA had, I think, said that penalties would be assessed or something if we didn't register. Which was a lie, because we found out later -- this was after the war -- that you didn't have to answer these, you didn't have to sign 'em. Anyway, at that meeting, after this fellow gave that talk on why we should cooperate, another older fellow -- found out later his name was Kiyoshi Okamoto -- got up and said that, "You know, the government evacuated us, put us in these concentration camps without any due process of law," and he says, "They trampled on all your constitutional rights." And this was the first time we -- at least I -- heard about due process or constitutional law or anything like that. But he gave some very good reasons for people to think about this registration before they signed it, you know

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Document 5 - Transcript of Interview with Amy Uno Ishii by Betty E. Mitson and Kristin Mitchell on July 9 and July 20, 1973 for the California State University, Fullerton Oral History Program Japanese American Project

http://content.cdlib.org/view?docId=ft18700334&brand=calisphere&doc.view=entire_text

Yes, it was a loyalty questionnaire. Everyone called it "question 27 and 28." It was worded something to the effect, "Will you be willing to bear arms for this country, or will you not fight on behalf of Japan?" And, "Would you be loyal to this country?" Of course, what is the justification of the government bringing questionnaires such as that into these barbed wire encampments where we were being "protected," when we didn't ask to be protected, when we didn't feel we needed to be protected. (laughter) They looked upon us as enemies of this country, and yet they dared to bring in this type of questionnaire asking us all to sign those questions saying, "Will you be faithful and loyal to this country?" How could we be anything but? They had us where they wanted us, behind barbed wire, guard towers, searchlights, and armed guards. So this was really a ridiculous thing. It was really an insult to the integrity of the American people, to put forth these types of questions to the Japanese internees, and we *were* considered internees. And yet, the boys still were forced to sign these questionnaires. Many, many Japanese people said, "Don't sign it. By golly, they've got us here. If they want us to be loyal Americans, turn us loose, put us back where we were, send us home, and then draft our boys into the service. Then our boys would be justified to go and fight for this country and prove their loyalty to this country." So there were a lot of hard feelings.

...My mother, who had done nothing against the country except raise ten children, was behind barbed wire. In spite of all that, my mother felt, "If you boys go and serve this country and prove your loyalty, maybe they will turn Daddy loose, and at least give a chance for Dad to join Mother and the children and bring back the family unit." So with this in mind, my brothers said, "Yes, there's a good chance that they might allow Dad to be either completely released or at least released where he can come and join Mother and the children." So the boys decided that they would go.

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Document 6 - Interview with George Fujii by Ronald C. Larson on August 31, 1976 for the California State University, Fullerton Oral History Program Japanese American Project

http://texts.cdlib.org/view?docId=ft1f59n61r&doc.view=entire_text

... we were asked [on a questionnaire to determine loyalty for military service and resettlement out of camp] questions 27 and 28, whether we would defend the United States.⁽²⁾ I told the truth and answered yes, yes. I signed the whole thing away. In the first place, anything the government asked me to do, I did it. In the second place, in order for me to protest the government, or demand a right to the government, I would have to be a citizen. If you declare yourself a non-citizen, then you have no right to protest. That was my interpretation of the whole matter. So, I kept my position as a citizen intact so that I could protest to the government.

...There were those [interned Japanese Americans] who said, "If they're going to treat us like Japanese, then the hell with serving in the U.S. Army." I told them to take it easy; I calmed them down.

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Document 7 - Interview with James M. Omura by Arthur A. Hansen on August 22-25, 1984 for the California State University, Fullerton Oral History Program Japanese American Project

http://texts.cdlib.org/view?docId=ft1f59n61r&doc.view=entire_text

I objected to the phraseology, and I wrote them a long letter and sent it back, and told them I had thrown the forms out. They sent me a letter and told me that they appreciated my stand, but by law I was required to fill it out, and if I don't fill it out, they were going to put me in jail. So I said, "I don't want to violate any law, and if you will send me the questionnaire again, I'll fill it out." They sent it to me, so I filled it out, except I refused to answer that question. I left it blank. Then I sent it in. That was the end of that. But then, since I actually had kept the other copy, I copied it. I have the copy of my answer. (laughter)

Document 8 - Interview with Chizuko Iyama by Densho on December 11, 1983

...And it created a lot of problems in camp. I was working with social services at that time and so I sat in on a lot of the family discussions that people were having. It was very difficult. Because mixed into was a lot of the bitterness that people felt about what had happened to them in evacuation, the uncertainty of what was going to happen to them in the future, the feeling that we should not sign any declaration that says that we are willing to forswear allegiance to Japan because there were some people for whom it would mean that they would have no land if anything should happen to, you know, in the future in the war. And so there were a lot of mixed feelings at that time and I could see a lot of tragedies that were developing. There were instances, for example, of people who had children in Japan and therefore wanted to check to make sure that their children were okay, but at the same time, they wanted to stay in the United States. And I know of one family where, you know, the families just separated along those lines. People who were gonna stay and people who had to go back to Japan, not because they were disloyal, but because they had family that they had to check on. We had instances where the parents were very discouraged about what had happened to them and therefore did not want their children to volunteer for the army. At the same time, we had people who were very strong about demonstrating loyalty and therefore joining the army. And so the whole camp was put

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into a terrible situation because people could not under the circumstances make what they think is a wise and reasoned decision. That was very difficult, and I saw families split as a result of it. And I've talked to some people who've told me that even today, they just don't talk about that period because it was so painful to them.

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Loyalty Questionnaire: How Some Japanese Americans Responded

Directions: Use responses to the Guided Questions of all documents to help you complete the following charts.

Army Questionnaire Question 27: Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?	
OR	
WRA Questionnaire Question 27: If the opportunity presents itself and you are found qualified, would you be willing to volunteer for the Army Nurse Corps or the WAAC?	
1. Some Japanese Americans responded "YES" because...	From all the documents within this activity, who responded in this way?
2. Some Japanese Americans responded "NO" because...	From all the documents within this activity, who responded in this way?
3. Some Japanese Americans refused to answer because...	From all the documents within this activity, who responded in this way?

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MY RESPONSE

If I were forced to answer this question as a Japanese American incarcerated I would respond _____ because...

Army Questionnaire Question 28: Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power, or organization?

OR

WRA Questionnaire Question 28: Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power or organization?

Some Japanese Americans responded "YES" because...

From all the documents within this activity, who responded in this way?

Some Japanese Americans responded "NO" because...

From all the documents within this activity, who responded in this way?

Some Japanese Americans refused to answer because...

From all the documents within this activity, who responded in this way?

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MY RESPONSE	
<i>If I were forced to answer this question as a Japanese American incarcerated I would respond _____ because...</i>	