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## ABSTRACT

This study guide was created to accompany the special exhibit "Strength and Diversity: Japanese American Women, 1885 to 1990" at The Oakland (California) Museum, February 17-May 13, 1990. The guide provides a supplement for studying the history of Japanese American women, their immigration, and acculturation. The guide touches upon important historical and sociological aspects of becoming an American, such as immigration, acculturation, discrimination, ethnic identity/pride, and cultural diversity. The guide is divided into four parts, including: (1) "Overview and Brief History"; (2) "Concepts and Biographies"; (3) "Activities"; and (4) "Bibliography." First-person accounts are included for the immigrant experience (Issei), the acculturation of the second generation U.S. born women (Nisei), and the cultural integration of the third and fourth generations (Sansei and Yonsei). (EH)

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# STRENGTH AND DIVERSITY:

## JAPANESE AMERICAN WOMEN, 1885 TO 1990



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**STRENGTH AND DIVERSITY: JAPANESE AMERICAN WOMEN, 1885 TO 1990**  
**CLASSROOM STUDY GUIDE**

**PURPOSE**

This Classroom Study Guide is provided as an essential educational supplement for studying the history of Japanese American women, their immigration and acculturation. We have attempted to address issues relating to the growing diversity of school age children, many from immigrant households. In fact, this guide presents a truly American story touching upon important historical and sociological aspects of becoming an American such as immigration, acculturation, discrimination, ethnic identity/pride, and cultural diversity. We hope this guide helps teachers, librarians, students, and family and community members address issues relevant to their lives. In addition, we hope it stimulates discussion as we learn about and share in each other's experience of growing up in America.

We caution you to be sensitive to students who, due to recent immigration traumas, may exhibit a reluctance to participate fully in discussions or activities.

**PREFACE/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This guide was commissioned and published by the National Japanese American Historical Society (NJAHS). We would like to thank and acknowledge the following individuals who have worked collectively to produce it: Florence M. Hongo, President of the Japanese American Curriculum Project, Inc. (JACP); Chris Hiroshima, Program Consultant, Department of Integration, San Francisco Unified School District, member S.F. Nikkei in Education; Kathy Reyes, educator, board member JACP, NJAHS; Cheryl Tanaka, desktop publisher, member JACP; Rosalyn Tonal, Project Director, *Strength and Diversity: Japanese American Women, 1885 to 1990*, Administrative Director, NJAHS. We also would like to thank the many individuals and organizations that have supplied us with information and photographs for this guide.

**THIS GUIDE IS ORGANIZED INTO FOUR PARTS:**

**1. OVERVIEW AND BRIEF HISTORY**

This section briefly describes the history of Japanese immigration to the U.S., the World War II forced evacuation and internment experience and the coming of age of recent generations. It tells of the struggles and challenges of the first immigrant Japanese women (Issei), the acculturation of the second generation (Nisei), American born women, adapting to two worlds, and the cultural integration of the third and fourth generation (Sansei and Yonsei) women into the American mainstream. A chronology of events affecting Japanese Americans and women in America has been included.

**2. CONCEPTS AND BIOGRAPHIES**

Major concepts are introduced in this section and include issues related to immigration, acculturation, discrimination, ethnic identity and cultural diversity. Twelve biographies present the concepts in a more personalized way.

**3. ACTIVITIES**

A series of classroom activities, and homework assignments has been provided for immediate use. Some classroom-ready pages have been made for easy reproduction. A glossary of special terms has been included.

**4. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

A selected and annotated bibliography is provided listing books for reading, reference and activities, current films and videos available, and resource organizations.

**STRENGTH AND DIVERSITY:  
JAPANESE AMERICAN WOMEN, 1885 TO 1990  
CLASSROOM STUDY GUIDE**

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## JAPANESE AMERICAN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

by Florence M. Hongo

The earliest documentation of a Japanese woman coming to the United States is the poignant story of seventeen year old Okei Ito, a child care person. In May 1869, she accompanied the John Henry Schnell family as part of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony.<sup>1</sup> This colony of Japanese exiles under Lord Matsudaira settled in Gold Hill (Coloma) in El Dorado County near Sacramento to escape the fall of the Tokugawa government and the return of Imperial rule to Japan. Okei tragically died two years after arriving in California, and a grave in Coloma marks her place in Japanese American history.

Japanese did not begin to come to the United States in any significant numbers until after 1885, following a signed agreement between Japan and the United States which guaranteed the civil rights of those Japanese who chose to emigrate. During those early years very few women emigrated. Most who came were young, adventurous single men whose goal was to return to Japan once they had found their fortune. Those few families who emigrated during those early years were faced with numerous problems.

In May 5, 1891, Mrs. Ekiu Nishimura, a 25 year old married woman arrived in San Francisco to join her husband. Her husband was not able to meet her when she arrived. The Commissioner of Immigration refused to allow her to land, ruling her "a person likely to become a public charge." Her case attracted the attention of sympathetic lawyers and, in January, 1892, went all the way to the Supreme Court. Although she lost her case, it helped Japan secure better treatment for Japanese citizens who emigrated to the United States, and was the first case by a Japanese to reach the U.S. Supreme Court.<sup>2</sup>

The United States had already established a pattern of anti-Asian racism with their attitudes towards the Chinese, who came to America thirty-seven years before the Japanese. During that period, politicians and labor unions, who saw the Chinese as an economic threat, had quickly succeeded in closing the door to them with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Consequently the Western states employers found themselves at a loss for a readily available supply of cheap hard working labor and turned to Japan for a new supply.

Since Japanese women arrived in the U.S. in fewer numbers than men in the first phase of immigration, there were only 1,000 females (not all adults) out of a total of 27,440 Issei counted in the 1900 census.<sup>3</sup>

Japan as a nation had already become a successful military power. U.S. Presidents wanted good relations for trade purposes; therefore the anti-Japanese feeling on the West Coast was a continuing source of embarrassment to Washington.

In 1907 Japan had successfully defeated Russia in a war over territories North of Japan. To maintain a good relationship with Japan, President Theodore Roosevelt interceded, at the request of Japanese parents, in the San Francisco School Board's decision to segregate Japanese students along with Chinese and Korean students. The 93 Japanese American students, in San Francisco at the time, were not segregated. In return, Japan agreed to stop anymore laborers from immigrating. This was called the Gentlemen's Agreement.

This was the environment Issei women encountered when they came to an America that had been painted as a land of opportunity where riches could be made in a short time, and one could enjoy undreamed of freedom.

The majority of Issei women came to the United States between the years of 1910 to 1920 when the "picture bride" system became a popular way for single men to marry. Sincere relatives or marriage brokers encouraged women to emigrate and marry. Their courtship was accomplished through the exchange of photos and letters, creating the phrase "picture bride". By 1919, there was much feeling against the picture bride system and the Japanese government ceased issuing passports to them.

It took a special kind of woman to venture to strange lands to marry an unknown man and take up housekeeping in a foreign environment. It was not a future for the faint of heart. Issei women were born and raised in a male dominated society which only saw a woman's worth as a dedicated appendage of men, bearer of children (hopefully sons), and laborers in the fields and shops their men owned. When they worked outside their farms and businesses, they worked as domestics to bring additional monies to the family. <sup>4</sup> These women worked hard, showing a will to sacrifice themselves for the sake of husband and children. They were pioneers whose vision was toward the future and the time when hardships and other barriers would be overcome.

Issei women played an important role in the development of communities. They took leadership roles in the churches leading missionary efforts, teaching religion to the young, and organizing women's service groups. These women's groups became an important place to exchange ideas, and solve the problems of raising children in a strange and generally hostile society. Churches offered services, like English lessons, which aided their acculturation. Religious organizations both Buddhist and Protestant offered a cultural home for these early Japanese immigrant women.

The politicians in the West were relentless in their efforts to restrict the economic growth of the Japanese. In 1913 California passed the first of a series of laws aimed at the Japanese. The Alien Land Law prohibited "aliens ineligible for citizenship" from owning land. The Japanese and other Asians had been declared "ineligible for citizenship" by an interpretation of the 1790 law which declared that "any alien of the white or black race" was eligible for citizenship. On November 13, 1922, in the U. S. Supreme Court case, *Ozawa vs. U.S.*, it was interpreted to mean that since Japanese were neither white nor black, they were ineligible for citizenship. <sup>5</sup>

The Nisei were citizens by virtue of birth. But the hostile majority never did distinguish between the alien and American-born Japanese. During the early 1930's these Japanese Americans, determined to be recognized as U.S. citizens, organized to fight for their civil rights. This organization eventually became known as the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL).

In 1931 the JACL sent their first representative to Washington, D.C. She was Ms. Suma Sugi, and she lobbied for the repeal of the Cable Act. The 1922 Cable Act had declared that any female American marrying an alien ineligible for citizenship would thereby lose her U.S. citizenship. The JACL was assisted by the League of Women Voters, which considered the bill discriminatory against women in general. It was overturned in 1936. <sup>6</sup>

The Quota Immigration Law of 1924 completely stopped immigration by Japanese. Now since Japanese immigration had stopped, the Japanese community formed distinctive generational lines which exist today. Issei, Nisei, and Sansei all have distinct age ranges and therefore fairly similar cultural traits.

The Nisei, for the most part, came from a fairly stable community. By this time families had become established in businesses, farms and homes. Nisei women were expected to be much like their Issei mothers. They were secondary to the males in the family. The men had first priority. When food was scarce the men always got the extra food, when money for education was scarce the males were sent to college. Nisei women provided labor for the family farms and businesses. They worked right along side their brothers and then went home to cook, clean and launder. When they worked outside their homes, they were often forced to work as domestics as their mothers did, because of discrimination in the workplace.

Japanese mothers were torn between raising well-mannered Japanese daughters and yielding to the influences of assimilation. In addition to going to public school, most Nisei children also were expected to attend Japanese school to learn Japanese language and culture. So the Nisei became truly bi-cultural people, yielding when necessary to parental pressure, and yet knowledgeably functioning in the American society. Their social lives were strictly regulated and confined mostly to contacts with other Japanese Americans.

The Japanese family recognized the importance of education, so many Nisei women were allowed to seek a college education. But anti-Japanese racism made it hard for them to become professionals in the days before World War II.

When Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, over 2,000 men, heads of families were suddenly whisked away to jails sometimes in secret places where no one could contact them. Then on February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 which set in motion the mass removal and detention of Japanese, U.S. citizens or not, from the West Coast.

Suddenly many Issei women became the heads of their households. In agony they prepared their families for removal to concentration camps far from their homes.

Now Nisei women were asked to take on leadership roles as English speaking and American educated workers. They helped in the process of evacuation as clerks, nurses, doctors, and in the camps as educators, cooks, and leaders of children's and youth groups. Along with Nisei men, Nisei women enlisted in the military, both determined to prove their loyalty.

On December 18, 1944, the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case, (*Ex parte Endo*) which finally released the Japanese Americans and aliens, from concentration camps, was decided. Mitsuye Endo had contended that she was a loyal and law-abiding citizen of the United States, and that without any charges made against her, she was being unlawfully detained, and confined in a relocation center under armed guard and against her will.<sup>7</sup>

The lives of Nisei women were heavily marred by the camp experience and the struggle to reestablish a normal life after the war.

As the intensity of anti-Japanese racism subsided, Nisei women began to enter jobs, in government, medicine and education, for which they had been trained.

The traumatic experiences of the war led Nisei women to avoid teaching their children about the horrors of the camp experience and to raise 150% American children. This only led to more problems because racism still existed and their children were ignorant about these important elements of their background. But no one wanted to talk about what had happened.

On December 24, 1952, with the strong backing of Japanese Americans, the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Naturalization Act went into effect. This law finally allowed Japanese aliens to become naturalized citizens. Thousands of elderly Japanese flocked to get their citizenship.

When the Civil Rights movement exploded upon the American scene, Japanese Americans looked upon their own past with a different eye. Forced by the Sansei to analyze their past, and with their support and help, the Nisei began a redress movement in 1976. They wanted redress from the U.S. Government for their wrongful internment during World War II. They succeeded in 1988 when Congress passed legislation to offer apologies and compensation to the remaining survivors of the internment.

Sansei woman have sought and attained a kind of freedom hardly hoped for by Nisei woman. Financed by parents and burning with the determination to excell, they have become involved in a wide variety of professions, and even the arts, defining their image from a freer perspective. Now able to identify as Japanese and American, they bring culture to their children with a feeling of pride.

This short summary hardly begins to describe the strength and diversity in Japanese American women's experience from the first Issei to venture to our shores to third and fourth generation women. The pages which follow in this Classroom Study Guide encourage you to explore that diversity.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. "Mayflower of the Pacific," *The Pacific Citizen*, December, 1966, Section 3-b.
2. Frank Chuman, *Bamboo People: The Law and Japanese Americans*, pp.12-14.
3. Bill Hosokawa, *Nisei, The Quiet Americans*, p.119.
4. Glenn, Evelyn Nakano, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride: Three Generations of Japanese American Women in Domestic Service*.
5. Chuman, op. cit., pp. 65-71.
6. Bill Hosokawa, *JACL In Quest of Justice: The History of the Japanese American Citizens League*, pp.48-51.
7. Chuman, op cit., pp. 195, 229, 235, 250, 269.



## MAJOR EVENTS IN THE LIVES OF:

### JAPANESE IN AMERICA

### WOMEN IN AMERICA

1868	June 19	Women are among the first group of 148 Japanese contract laborers to arrive in Hawaii.	
1869	May 27	Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony immigrants from Japan arrive in San Francisco. Colony is established at Gold Hill (Coloma), California. Okei Ito's grave is at the colony site.	
1882	May 6	Chinese Exclusion Act passes Congress.	
1885	Feb. 2	859 men, women and children from Japan arrive in Honolulu. Emigration became legal in Japan in 1884.	
1892	January	Mrs. Ekiu Nishimura vs. U.S. challenged the right to enter the U.S. Mrs. Nishimura's case was the first by a Japanese to reach the U.S. Supreme Court.	
1894		Nishimura vs. U.S. precipitates Japan and the U.S. entering into an agreement to ensure the civil liberties of Japanese immigrants.	
1900		Census data reveals only 1,000 females out of a total of 27,440 Issei.	1900 Dec. 22 Carrie Nation, temperance activist, marches on Carey Hotel in Wichita, Kansas.
	April 30	Organic Act establishes territorial government in Hawaii and declares contract laborers illegal.	1902 First international organization for woman suffrage founded in Washington, DC.
1906	Oct. 11	San Francisco School Board orders segregation of 93 Japanese school children.	1903 Helen Keller, blind and deaf since infancy, publishes her autobiography, <u>The Story of My Life</u> .
1907	March 13	San Francisco School Board rescinds its order of October, 1906. Japanese students desegregated.	1906 April 18 San Francisco Earthquake
1910		Arrival of first picture brides.	1908 May 13 U.S. Navy establishes a Nurse Corps.

1920 March 1 Under pressure from U.S. Japan stops issuing passports to picture brides.

1922 Sept. 22 Cable Act passes Congress. Americans of Asian ancestry marrying foreign citizens denied right to regain American citizenship when marriage terminated by divorce or death.

Nov. 13 U.S. Supreme Court declares Asian immigrants ineligible for naturalization (*Ozawa vs. U.S.*)

1924 July 1 Quota Immigration Law or Asian Exclusion Act goes into effect. Issei designates the day as National Humiliation Day.

1933 Cable Act of 1922 is amended to permit Asian American women to regain American citizenship after terminating their marriages to foreign citizens.

1936 June 25 Cable Act of 1922 repealed with the help of Ms. Suma Sugl, JACL's representative in Washington, D.C. and the League of Women Voters.

1941 Dec. 7 Japan bombs Pearl Harbor, which brings U.S. into war with Japan.

1942 Feb. 19 President Roosevelt signs Executive Order #9066, setting in motion the mass removal and detention of Japanese Americans. On the same day in 1976, this order was rescinded by President Gerald Ford.

1943 Feb. 2 So-called "loyalty" questionnaire forced on camp detainees, all men and women 17 years old and above.

1944 Dec. 18 U.S. Supreme Court rules that removal and detention orders are constitutional in the Korematsu case. In *Ex parte Endo* case it rules that government cannot hold loyal citizens of U.S. in detention against their will.

1914 May 7 President Wilson decrees the second Sunday in May to be a national holiday known as Mother's Day.

1919 June 4 Congress proposes the 19th Amendment to the Constitution which would give women the right to vote.

1920 Aug. 26 Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is ratified, providing for Women's Suffrage nationwide.

1922 Feb. 27 U.S. Supreme Court makes a unanimous ruling in favor of the 19th Amendment (Women's Suffrage).

1932 June 12 First woman elected to U.S. Senate, Hattie Wyatt Caraway (D-Arkansas).

1933 March 4 First woman cabinet member in U.S. history is sworn in. Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor.

1939 April 9 Contralto Marian Anderson sings at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) prevented her singing at Constitution Hall because she is black. Eleanor Roosevelt resigns from the DAR in protest.

1945		310 Nisei women served the military in World War II as WACs, over 200 in the U.S. Cadet Nursing Corps.		
1945	August 6 August 9	U.S. drops A-bomb on Hiroshima. U.S. drops A-bomb on Nagasaki.	1945	August Japan surrenders. WWII ends.
	Dec. 28	President Truman signs War Brides Act, allowing Chinese and Japanese brides of American GIs to come to U.S.		
1946	Feb. 23	432 persons of Japanese ancestry repatriated and expatriated to Japan.		
1948	Oct. 6	U.S. Supreme Court declares the California ban on interracial marriage unconstitutional.	1948	April 6 Babe Didrikson Zaharias is barred from the National Open Golf Tournament when the U.S. Golf Association states that the contest is limited to men.
1949	Oct. 7	Iva d'Aquino Toguri "Tokyo Rose" sentenced to prison and fined. She is later pardoned by Pres. Gerald Ford and her citizenship restored in Jan. 1977.		
1952	Dec. 24	McCarran-Walter Immigration and Naturalization Act go into effect. Japanese immigrants finally become eligible for naturalization.	1963	Equal Pay Act is passed effective June 1964.
1964	Nov. 3	Patsy Takemoto Mink of Hawaii (D) is first Nisei woman elected to U.S. House of Representatives.		
1975	July	Ann Kiyomura (USA) and Kazuko Sawamatsu (JPN) win Wimbledon women's doubles title.	1973	June 22 U.S. Supreme Court (Roe v. Wade) rules that a woman may choose to terminate her pregnancy.
1980	July 31	Commission of Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) is created by President Jimmy Carter. It recommends a formal apology, monetary redress to former internees and an educational fund.	1975	July 28 Congress passes a bill that will allow women admitted to U.S. military academies.
1986	Nov. 4	Patricia Saiki of Hawaii (R) is the 2nd Nisei congresswoman elected.	1979	June 9 U.S. Supreme Court rules that a law excusing women from jury duty on the basis of sex is unconstitutional.
1988	August 10	President Reagan signs Redress bill for Japanese Americans.		Sept. 25 Sandra Day O'Connor becomes the first woman member of the U.S. Supreme Court.
1989	March	Kristi Yamaguchi, becomes the first American woman in 36 years to advance to the World Championships in singles and pairs figure skating.	1982	June 16 Astronaut Sally K. Ride is the first American woman in space.
1990	October	First scheduled redress payments to be issued to former internees through entitlement bill (signed into law by Pres. George Bush 11/15/89).		

## **Issei: First Generation Women**

Issei women were born in the late 1800's and early 1900's and grew up in a Japan that had reopened its doors to the West. They lived in a Japan that had been ruled by warrior lords of the Tokugawa family for two hundred years. Emperor Meiji, although he welcomed Western culture and thought, was still considered to be god-like. Buddhism and Shintoism were the two major religions. Christianity and Catholicism were new religions to the Japanese.

Although Western ideas, clothing and science were of great interest, Japan was still steeped in its centuries old culture and traditions.

Why would a Japanese woman, often as young as fifteen years of age, leave the home she knew to come to live in a country so different from her own, and to live among strangers with a husband she might only know through a picture?

She might have felt that America would give her the opportunity for a new beginning, adventure and freedom from the strict rules of Japanese culture. Maybe America would be paradise.

Many Issei women came to the U.S. as "picture brides," who knew their husbands-to-be only through letters and a picture. That seemed strange to Americans, but was not so unusual to Japanese who trusted their families to arrange their marriages.

When an Issei woman arrived in America, things were not always as she had been told. Most Issei men had come to the U.S. as laborers. They had dreamt of striking it rich and then returning to Japan. Although some men made money, others were not as fortunate. Life did not always work out as expected. Often these men exaggerated their jobs, wealth and living conditions so that they would appear successful and so Issei women would consent to the marriage. Some men had not written the letters to their brides in Japan, because they did not have much education. Sometimes they did not look as handsome or young as the picture they had sent.

And what could Issei women do? Some yearned for the chance to live in America and stayed. Others, afraid of bringing shame to the family, felt obligated to stay. A few returned home to Japan. Most Issei women made the best of what life brought them. They worked hard beside their husbands and raised children to whom they taught Japanese values. They made sacrifices so that their children, born and educated in America, would have a better life and fulfill their dreams of success and acceptance.



## **Issei Women's Biographies**

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### **Yano Toyoda Uyeno Murakami:**

She Kept Her Love for Dance and Music Through Hard Times

pages 9-10

### **Naka Noguchi:**

From the Capitol of Japan to the Cities of America

pages 11-12

### **Michi Moriya Tani Sugawara:**

Urban Issei Woman

pages 13-14

### **Masuyo Hirata Wada:**

An Independent Spirit

pages 15-16

## Yano Toyoda Uyeno Murakami: She Kept Her Love for Dance and Music Through Hard Times

---

Yano Toyoda Uyeno Murakami was born on a farm in Kumamoto Prefecture, Izumi Village, Nagamizo, Japan. She was the second oldest of five children.

She studied *odori*, Japanese dance, and played the *shamisen*, a Japanese instrument shaped like a banjo. Her love for dance and music would bring joy to her throughout her life.

Yano was approached by Mr. Sonoda, acting as *baishakunin*, (a marriage go-between) to be a picture bride for his nephew Mr. Mohachi Uyeno. At first, she declined because America was so far away, and she had only known her marriage prospect through a photo. Later, Yano changed her mind and in 1918 traveled to Seattle, Washington to marry Mohachi.

From Seattle, they went to Pocatello, Idaho, where Mohachi was a potato farmer. Yano arrived at dinner time to find a table full of strange looking long haired, bearded men. Yano was afraid of them until she spoke with them and found out they were Japanese. They were just so busy during harvest time that they did not take the time to shave.

Yano encountered many differences between Japan and America. For example, in Japan, farm houses were close together and were set apart from the fields. American farm houses were surrounded by fields and situated on large pieces of land. Neighbors were further away, making visits less convenient.

Cooking was also different. Instead of cooking in a firepit as she did in Japan, Yano had to feed pieces of wood into a stove until the fire was red hot. She then cooked on the stovetop. In the beginning, Yano's rice was like mush on the bottom, half-cooked in the middle and raw on the top. She was embarrassed to serve it to her husband and the farm hands. They assured her that her rice cooking would get better.

In the first year of their marriage the couple prospered. Potatoes were selling at the high price of five dollars per sack. The next year, however, potato prices fell to



photo courtesy Nancy Mochida



only twenty-five cents. The drop in the price of potatoes, along with the difficulties of sharecropping, giving half of the profits to the landowner, resulted in poverty for them.

Still, life went on and Yano and Mohachi had their first daughter Michiko in 1919 and their second daughter Toyome in 1921. Then, her husband fell ill with the flu which worsened to pneumonia. Before he died, he begged Yano to marry his cousin Mr. Toraki "Tom" Murakami.

Yano's father felt she should return to Japan and remarry. Yet, Yano felt that if she had to remarry, she would rather stay in America and marry Mr. Murakami as her husband had wished.

Mr. Murakami was a section foreman in the main office of the superintendent of the Union Pacific Railroad. He was the first Issei to have such a high position. When he was young he had learned English and was able to speak, read and write quite well.

Yano married Mr. Murakami and moved several times so that their children could attend good schools. Like many Issei parents, they wanted their Nisei children to learn English in public schools and Japanese in private language schools. Yano's love for music and dance continued as she taught her older daughters and some students odori. By this time Yano and Mr. Murakami had children of their own too, three boys, Kiyoshi, Yoshito and Shozo, and a girl, Yaeko.

Mr. Murakami had only two more years to go before he could retire from the railroad with a pension, when World War II broke out. Japan was at war with the U.S., and people viewed any persons of Japanese descent, even children who were U.S. citizens, as "enemy aliens." In spite of his long service with the railroad company, Mr. Murakami was wrongfully dismissed from his job and his family forced out of the foreman's quarters simply because they were Japanese.

Although they were not interned in concentration camps like many persons of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast, they still faced hardship. Landlords would not rent to them because they were Japanese. Eventually, they rented a house from an Italian gentleman. By that time, Mr. Murakami was too old to work so Yano and her daughters sought work as farm laborers.

The oldest son, Kiyoshi, volunteered for the U.S. Army joining the all-Nisei 442nd Regimental Combat Team that fought many battles in Italy and France. Her daughter Toyome had also volunteered and had served in the Women's Army Corps (WACs). Tragically, Kiyoshi was killed in action just before the war ended. Yano was devastated. She felt Kiyoshi had willingly given his life for America.

In the years that followed, Yano once again took up teaching and performing Japanese dance and music. Now in her nineties, she prides herself in her children who are happy, healthy and have fine families.

## **Naka Noguchi: From the Capitol of Japan to the Cities of America**

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Naka Noguchi was born in Tokyo, Japan on September 24, 1894. For generations the men in her family had been scribes (government advisors) to the Tokugawa government that gave military rule to Japan from 1615 to 1868. Her great-grandmother was a personal maid to Lady Tsubone Tokugawa.

Naka lived with her great-grandmother from the time she was nine until she was eleven. During that time she heard many wonderful stories about Japanese history. Naka felt that her great-grandmother was a "living encyclopedia." She gave Naka a love for history and travel.

In November, 1916, when Naka was twenty-two, she came to the United States with her aunt. Her aunt was going to join her husband who operated a restaurant in Fresno, California. She needed Naka to help her care for her three young children on the sixteen-day boat trip from Japan to Seattle, Washington.

Two days before they were to reach Seattle, a German World War I submarine followed their ship. The ship had to travel without lights and everyone on board had to prepare for the worst. They gathered money and important papers, and put on life jackets. Everyone was worried that they might be attacked. When they saw the lights of Vancouver the next morning, they rejoiced because they were close to land and they were safe.

When Naka and her relatives landed in Seattle, she was struck by the sights. The streets were wide, and magnificent automobiles were parked along the curb. They had dinner at the home of her aunt's friends and Naka marveled at how spectacular and convenient their home was. But then Naka thought, "Of course, this is America!"

From Seattle, Naka and her relatives journeyed to her uncle's home in Fresno. From Fresno, they traveled to San Francisco where they stayed for a year. Even though it was ten years after the 1906 earthquake, Naka could still see some of the damage it had done to San Francisco.





A year later Naka received a marriage proposal from her aunt's nephew. Naka was married in April of 1918. Her husband managed an orchard.

Naka lived the life of a country wife helping her husband with the orchard and raising their three sons and daughter. At first the work was hard for Naka, because she had been raised in the city and didn't know about farm work. By watching others, she soon caught on.

Her family managed to struggle through the 1930's Depression when no one knew what price their annual crop would bring. Then the U.S. entered World War II on December 7, 1941. In January, 1942, Naka's oldest son was drafted into the army and sent to bootcamp in Arkansas. In May, the rest of the family was sent to an "assembly center" in Turlock, California. In August, they were sent to a detention camp in Gila, Arizona.

The people in camp were angry, because their children were U.S. citizens and their sons were drafted to fight for their country, yet they were interned and called "enemy aliens." But no one could change things, so everyone, rich or poor, young or old, lived in crowded barracks, eating the same food and finding jobs to do.

Naka worked in the mess hall. That was where she received the news on November 10, 1943, that her oldest son had been injured, losing the use of his arms and legs. She received a letter her son had dictated a month later saying that although he could not use his arms and legs, he still had his "senses and faculties." The doctor had said it was a miracle he had survived.

After the war ended in August, 1945, Naka and her husband moved to Chicago, Illinois, to find work to help support their oldest son. Both of them worked tirelessly and selflessly to help him until he was able to be on his own.

Now Naka's children are grown with jobs and families of their own. They phone and visit her often. They tell her, "From now on relax and do what you like." They want her to enjoy her life now that her hard times are over.

## **Michi Moriya Tani Sugawara: Urban Issei Woman**

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When Michi Moriya arrived at Angel Island in 1911, she surprised the customs and immigration officials by speaking formal Canadian English.

Betrothed to her mother's cousin, Thomas Tsuneo Tani, Michi had been sent to a Canadian Methodist Mission school in Tokyo. She was to prepare for a life in America as the wife of a Christian. Her education enabled her to read, write and speak English rather well.



photo courtesy Lily Abiko

After she married Thomas, Michi lived most of her life in San Francisco. There, she and her husband were active in the Japanese First Reformed Church. She taught the kindergarten Sunday school class for twenty years. In the beginning, Michi would walk up Post and Sutter Streets on Sunday mornings gathering children for Sunday school while teachers from the Buddhist Church did the same across the street.

As a young wife, she worked for a family, and learned about the American kitchen and home. Later she did embroidery and bead work to supplement the family's income. Her husband became an insurance broker and had an office downtown. In addition, he and Michi took over the Toyo Hotel on Post Street. Many young newly arrived Japanese men went there to stay, spending their first years adjusting to life in America.

Michi and Thomas had a son and twin daughters. One of the twins died at the age of four after a long illness. They mourned her death for a long time. That summer was spent in Modesto for Michi's health.

Upon returning to San Francisco, Michi and Thomas bought a small house in the outer Mission District, feeling the weather was better there than in Japan-town. The family lived there for twelve years. Nine years after the birth of her twins, Michi had another son.

They continued to be actively involved in their church and often drove the long distance in their Ford, or took the streetcar. With Michi's husband's health failing, the family moved back to Post Street to be closer to his insurance office.

Her oldest son, Henry was in his third year at Stanford University when his father had a massive stroke and died suddenly. At only twenty-one, Henry felt he had to support the family, so he quit school to take over his father's insurance business. After a year, Michi insisted that he go back to finish college sensing his education was very important for his future.

Then she received a marriage proposal from Mr. Akimi Sugawara. Michi worried about the impact her remarrying would have on her family in San Francisco and Japan. She decided that they wait to marry until her oldest son had graduated from Stanford.

When World War II broke out, Michi and second husband Akimi were forced to evacuate from their homes. They had many fine possessions like a brand new stove and piano. Yet, everything was sold for a mere \$300.00. Michi and Akimi went first to Tanforan Assembly Center and then to the Topaz, Utah concentration camp. Michi maintained correspondence with her children and step-children who were in the U.S. Army or in other camps during the war.

After the war, Michi and Akimi returned to San Francisco. She became active in her church again hosting many friends who returned home from the concentration camps. A proud moment for Michi was on December 9, 1953, when she became an American citizen.

She suffered a paralyzing stroke in 1966. At the time of her death in 1969 at age seventy-nine, she was a grandmother of twelve grandchildren and eight step-grandchildren.

## Masuyo Hirata Wada: An Independent Spirit

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Masuyo Hirata Wada came to America in 1906 when she was nineteen years old. Her boat could not dock, because San Francisco harbor was still burning in the aftermath of the earthquake.

photo courtesy Hatsumi Wada Ishii



Masuyo came from a farming family in Fukuoka, Japan. She was the second of four daughters. Her father did not want Masuyo to go to America, but she was independent and wanted to see what it was like, so she went anyway.

She met her husband, Raisuke Wada who had come from a family of Shinto priests. He had come to America for new opportunities. It was the tradition in those days for families to arrange marriages for their children. Masuyo's family wanted to know everything about Raisuke before they would permit them to marry.

Masuyo and Raisuke were married and opened a candy store in the Japanese section of downtown Hanford, California. Her husband also did janitorial work and window displays to earn more money. They had six children, and four of the surviving ones were Shizuka, Yoritada, Hatsumi and Yorinobu.

Her mother missed her and wrote that since Masuyo could not come for a visit, they should send Shizuka to Japan to raise her. Shizuka went to Japan when she was nine and has lived there most of her life.

Masuyo's husband became very ill and died when their youngest son was only six months old. Masuyo was in her late thirties. From that time on, she ran the candy store and raised her children.

As a businesswoman, Masuyo handled matters with a number of Caucasian salesmen, police and Hanford officials, which at the time was quite unusual for a Japanese woman. Although there were many single Japanese men around, she chose not to remarry, feeling that a new husband would not understand her children.



Despite her decision, she continued to believe that “a father scolds and a mother consoles,” and it was hard for her to have to do both. As her children grew and were able to help out at the store, Masuyo harvested strawberries and grapes to earn money for tuition, so that they could go to Japanese language school in addition to public school.

Masuyo worked hard to be self-sufficient so that her children could hold up their heads without a feeling of *haji*, shame. She did not want them to feel obligated to anyone. She made sure she did her part for the community too. When teams came from out of town to play inter-mural sports, she was one of the persons in town who prepared the *furo*, Japanese-style bath for the team members so that they could bathe and relax after the game.

Masuyo looked forward to the day when her oldest son Yoritada (Yori) would be able to help her out, but he had always wanted to go to college and Masuyo would not stand in his way. She asked that he wait two years after he graduated from high school. So he worked for those two years helping his mother. When the time came, Masuyo kept her promise and he left for the University of California at Berkeley. In the 1970's Yori would become a University of California Regent.

When he graduated from U.C. Berkeley, Masuyo was anticipating his return; however, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. Shortly thereafter, Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and the U.S. entered World War II.

Like almost all Japanese American residents on the West Coast, the Wadas were forced to sell all their belongings and move out of their home under Executive Order 9066. Masuyo, her younger daughter Hatsumi and son Yorinobu were sent to Fresno Assembly Center. They were later relocated to the Jerome, Arkansas, and Granada (Amache), Colorado, concentration camps.

After the war, Masuyo and Hatsumi moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where her son, Yorinobu, had been working at the University of Michigan. Mother and daughter went to live with an Ann Arbor attorney Mr. Ryan and his wife. The Ryans thought highly of Masuyo and were struck by her honesty and concern for them.

Yori, the oldest son, and his family moved to San Francisco, so Masuyo and the rest of her family moved back too. Masuyo was only in her sixties but her children felt it was their turn to care for her.

Masuyo lived the remainder of her ninety-three years with Hatsumi and her family. Having lived so many years, she felt she was a burden and would apologize saying, “I don't know why I'm living so long.” Yet her long life was a testament to her independent and indomitable spirit.

## Nisei: Second Generation Women

Born in the U.S., Nisei women were American citizens. Yet they grew up during a time of continued anti-Asian feeling, and legislation like the Cable Act, the Asian Exclusion Act and Executive Order 9066. So they did not automatically gain the acceptance their parents had hoped for.

Movies and newspapers showed Japanese in a negative way as cartoon characters, evil villains, inscrutable or exotic.

Nisei women were raised on many traditional Japanese ideas of behavior, rules and values. They often started school without speaking any English. Sometimes their teacher or another English-speaking adult helped, or they learned English from older brothers and sisters.

To fit in they acted as "American" as possible; they spoke English, "permed" their hair, wore makeup, participated in sports, drove cars and had more freedom than their mothers. They often wished their parents were more "American," and were sometimes ashamed of them.

The parents of the Nisei had high hopes for their children. They thought that their children's citizenship and a good education would make the Nisei successful. As much as possible, they tried to send their children to college.

Public fear and suspicion toward Japanese Americans grew as Japan's military aggression mounted. Yet, for many Japanese immigrants and particularly the Nisei who were U.S. citizens by birth, Japan's militarism was far removed from their daily lives in America.

When Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, the hysteria over the act led the government to remove the Japanese Americans from military zones of the West Coast and to place them in concentration camps in the interior of the U. S.

A few Nisei protested and some cases went to court, but there were no legislator to represent them. Many felt the way to prove their loyalty was to quietly obey the governmental orders. Japanese Americans went to the camps and others volunteered for military service. Some Nisei women served in the Women's Army Corps (WACs). Finally in 1944, in the case of Nisei Mitsuye Endo (*Ex parte Endo*), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that loyal American citizens could not be detained against their will. Nisei now had legal justification to return home.

Nisei women, who had tried so hard to be American before the war, now doubled their efforts. They became model American citizens. Because they had been accused of disloyalty, no matter how unjustly, a shadow of guilt hung over them. They wanted to blend in, so that they would never be singled out again.



## **Nisei Women's Biographies**

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## Ruth Asawa: Artist and Educator

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Born in Norwalk California, Ruth grew up in a farming community where her father had worked since 1902.

She was 16 when she got word that Japan had bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. It was then that the family suddenly realized that life was going to change drastically for them. Returning to school the next day, Ruth felt the entire student body was watching her and her Nisei classmates. Friends avoided her.



photo © Shirley Nakao

Soon after, a curfew was enforced which prohibited Japanese Americans from going out after 8 o'clock at night and from traveling certain distances. As soon as war was declared on Japan, her father began gathering up anything Japanese. All of their *kendo* [fencing] gear and Japanese books on flower arranging, theatre, antiques were put on a pile and burned.

Then on a Sunday morning in February of 1942, two FBI men came to their house to pick up and take Ruth's father away. There were no charges, no evidence of any wrongdoing. The family would not see him for four years. They had no idea where he was being held for over a year.

In April 1942, the Asawa family, like other Japanese Americans on the West coast, were removed from their home by the military. They had to dispose of their property. Although they had a modest farm, they lost everything. They were forced to sell their tractors, trucks, their horses, and all the farm equipment. Each of them could take only a suitcase.

From May until September they lived at the Santa Anita racetrack, a temporary "assembly center" surrounded by barbed wire and watchtowers. They crowded into horse stalls and had mattresses of straw. It had only been a week since the horses had been removed and the smell of the stalls was overwhelming.

The college students got together and organized classes for the younger kids. A Disney studio artist, Tom Okamoto, was among the evacuees and was Ruth's art teacher.





At the end of summer, Ruth, her family, and other Japanese Americans went to a concentration camp in Rohwer, Arkansas. The tar-papered barracks had barely been finished. There were 42 blocks of 12 barracks with six to eight units in each barrack. The center included a mess hall, the bathrooms, and the laundry room. The toilets had no doors and there were group showers.

Ruth's English teacher told her that this terrible experience should not discourage her from going on with her life. Upon graduation she was told she could get a special "leave clearance" to go to college in the Midwest, but not on either coast. Ruth chose Milwaukee State Teachers College because tuition was affordable and she could work as a schoolgirl for a family while attending classes. In 1945, she was ready to practice-teach but the department head said, "Ruth, I don't think we can find you a job because we don't want to risk your life in a small town. There's a lot of prejudice [against Japanese] out there."

It was then that Ruth decided to go to Black Mountain, an experimental arts college in North Carolina. It was there among the rich learning atmosphere of working artists that she began her lifelong commitment to art.

Ruth's artwork has been seen in private and public exhibitions in many American cities. In the Bay Area, there is her tied-wire sculpture on the facade of The Oakland Museum, the origami-based steel sculpture in the Buchanan Mall in Japantown in San Francisco, the bronze mermaid in Ghirardelli Square, and the caricature of San Francisco people and landmarks from baker's dough creations, on the steps of the Hyatt Hotel on Union Square.

In 1968, Ruth and other Noe Valley artist-mothers founded the Alvarado Arts Workshop at Alvarado School. For the past nine years she has worked on establishing the arts program at the School of the Arts in San Francisco. In San Jose California, she will design a memorial in honor of Japanese Americans during World War II.

Ruth Asawa has provided much inspiration to public education in her effort to make art an important part of learning and to give children practical hands-on experience.

With six children and eight grandchildren and architect husband Albert Lanier, Ruth embodies her Japanese American spirit instilled in her from her parents. "We've been poor all our lives, but we live in a nice house because we built everything...It all looks nice but in order to have it we've had to do it ourselves. I think that's the legacy we would like to pass on to our children and to our students...the ability to adjust, to adapt, to make something out of nothing."

## Yasuko Ishida Ito: A Community Activist for Education

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Twelve year old Yasuko ran across the school yard to get help for her young sister who was hurt. A teacher, not knowing how bad the injury really was, said, "You can walk, there's nothing wrong with your legs," and forced her sister to move by spanking her from behind even though she was in great pain. Later a doctor confirmed that her leg was broken.

The next morning an angry and determined Yasuko marched into the teachers' room (where students were forbidden to enter) to confront the teacher. "You are a liar," she said, "My sister's leg **is** broken."

This was the first time Yasuko fought for the underdog. Throughout her life she has continued to be a leader for those who have "no voice."

Yasuko Ann Ishida was born in the small farming community of Irvington, California, south of Oakland. She began school as a non-English speaking student. She credits her success to a kind woman who tutored her in English.

As the oldest child Yasuko took on heavy tasks to help her family. While in third grade she wrote letters to the Commission Merchants for her father asking for loans during desperate farming years. She felt that they always got the loans because the Commission Merchants found letters from a third grader hard to refuse.

During the World War II internment of Japanese Americans, Yasuko became a second grade teacher in the Topaz, Utah, concentration camp. Later she taught pre-schoolers at New York City's Mayor's Committee Nursery School in Brooklyn, New York.

In 1947 she came to San Mateo to continue teaching. In 1949 Yasuko married Hiroshi Ito. Since then she and her family have lived in the North Central area of San Mateo where she has fought to maintain a safe neighborhood with good schools.



photo courtesy Yssuko Ito



In 1966 as director of the San Mateo Head Start program, Yasuko gave parents a chance to learn about education as a way out of poverty. With her encouragement many parents went on to finish high school and enroll in job training programs.

There have been three major events in Yasuko's life as an activist. The first was in 1962 when the San Mateo City Elementary School Board passed a policy to pay for the busing of students to a distant school instead of allowing them to walk to a school which was closer, and had mostly minority students.

As a member of the local PTA executive board, Yasuko went before the board and the local parents to convince them all to oppose the school bond issue, because of its discriminatory nature. The parents opposed the issue, surprising the district and forcing them to rescind the policy.

In 1965, buoyed by their earlier success, minority parents in the North Central area were ready to fight for a better education for their children. With Yasuko as their leader and spokesperson, they went to see the superintendent of schools. After hearing their frustrations, he decided to work with the parents to develop an integration program. It became not only the first successful voluntary desegregation program, but also became a model for the State of California.

The third major event happened in 1985. Because Yasuko was a respected leader in education, the frustrated teachers of the San Mateo City Elementary School District and leaders of the community asked her to run for the Elementary School Board. Although she was a first-time and minority candidate, Yasuko received the most votes, and has now served on the Board for four years.

Her record of dynamic leadership has brought her countless honors and awards. Among them are the PTA Honorary Life Membership Award; a Woman of the Year Award from the City of San Mateo; and the Reverend M. Coleman Award for community service.

Yasuko is proudest of the JAACL Community History Project, which developed a book and slide program in 1981, telling about the history and contributions of Japanese Americans in San Mateo County. Through her leadership, these materials have been placed in every school in the county.

Yasuko also tutors non-English speaking students, is a loving family member, a strong mediator, a dedicated community volunteer, tireless campaigner for sympathetic local candidates, and devoted friend for all underprivileged people.

When Yasuko Ann Ito sees an injustice, she finds a way to right it.



## **Dr. Yoshiye Togasaki: A Lifetime Dedicated to Public Health**

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It was natural for Yoshiye Togasaki and her sisters Mitsue, Chiye, Teru and Yaye to go into medicine, because their family helped provide health care to the community. During the San Francisco flu epidemic of 1917-1918, Yoshiye's parents set up a "temporary hospital" where medical students cared for those who were ill.

In addition, her mother often acted as midwife for other Issei women. After school Yoshiye and her sisters translated for

Japanese women who had doctors' appointments or had just had surgery at Children's Hospital, which had been established as a place for women to do their internships and residencies.

Yoshiye entered the University of California at Berkeley as a pre-med student. She later switched and earned a Bachelor of Public Health degree. But she still wanted to go to medical school. She applied to the medical schools of Johns Hopkins, U.C. Berkeley, Michigan State, Women's Medical and the University of Pennsylvania.

She needed a letter of recommendation to apply to Johns Hopkins. The chairman of the Public Health department at U.C. Berkeley refused to give her a letter, feeling it would do her no good. Two of his female associates wrote her letters and she was accepted into Johns Hopkins Medical School in Baltimore, Maryland.

When she graduated, she asked the dean of the school of medicine to recommend her for an internship. He told her that she was a woman and Japanese, and there was no hospital for her to go. So Yoshiye applied on her own to Children's Hospital in San Francisco and to Los Angeles General Hospital. She did her internship and residency in Los Angeles.

Now ready to work, she faced more obstacles. Wanting to go into Public Health she was often told that staff members and the community would not accept her. She was told that if she were trained there was no guarantee of employment.

Determined to practice, Yoshiye worked part-time for the Los Angeles county as a Consultant and Medical Officer for Communicable Disease. She also opened her



own office and had a private practice.

After Pearl Harbor when people of Japanese ancestry were told to evacuate from the West Coast, Yoshiye's personal feeling was that this was "absolutely outrageous, uncalled for and completely opposite to what I expected."

Professionally she knew that a large group of people living together in close quarters would need a lot of medical care, so she volunteered to go to Manzanar, a concentration camp in the California desert. She made sure that mess hall conditions were sanitary, that the water supply was chlorinated, that infants had formula fortified with iron and vitamins, and that everyone was immunized against diseases like small pox, diphtheria, typhoid and whooping cough.

After several years in camp, Yoshiye was able to leave and volunteered for the United Nations Rehabilitation and Relief Association (UNRRA). She felt she had more experience in public health and in camp situations than a person fresh from college. The UNRRA was providing health services for refugees from Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland, Austria, Germany and the Nazi death camps. Since Europe was a war zone, Yoshiye had to be commissioned as a Captain in the U.S. Army before she could be sent over.

Upon returning to the U.S. in 1945, Yoshiye became the California State Department of Public Health's medical officer in charge of the Northern California coast and valley. Later she earned a masters degree in Public Health from Harvard University. In 1951 she continued her work with the Contra Costa County Department of Public Health.

Dr. Yoshiye Togasaki has lived a life of community service and one which proves "...it is important to follow your aspirations and not allow people to discourage you in the meantime."

## **Yoshiko Uchida: First Japanese American Writer for Young People**

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Yoshiko Uchida was ten when she wrote her first stories in small booklets she made from brown wrapping paper, and she has been writing ever since.



photo © Deborah Storms

Today she is the first full-time professional Nisei writer for young people with twenty-six books and many articles and stories to her credit. She has a large following of readers and has won over twenty awards and honors for excellence in writing.

Yoshiko was born in Alameda, California and grew up in Berkeley during the Depression of the 1930's when being Japanese American wasn't easy.

"I always felt that I was different and not quite as good as white Americans," she says. "When I went to a beauty parlor for my first professional haircut, I called first to ask, 'Do you cut Japanese hair?'"

If she felt rejected by society, she and her older sister were surrounded by love and warmth at home. Yoshiko grew up in a home full of books. The written word was important to her mother and father. Her parents instilled the richness of Japanese culture, values, traditions and beliefs in Yoshiko and her sister.

Although there were no books about Japanese Americans for Yoshiko to read as she was growing up, her mother was a role model for her. Her mother wrote poetry and read many Japanese stories and books to Yoshiko and her sister.

After high school Yoshiko attended the University of California at Berkeley. There she earned a BA degree with honors in English, History and Philosophy.

Before she could receive her diploma, Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, and the U.S. entered World War II. Along with 110,000 people of Japanese ancestry, most of them U.S. citizens like herself, Yoshiko was sent to a concentration camp. Her family was interned at a camp in Topaz, Utah, one of ten concentration camps in the U.S.

After a year at Topaz, Yoshiko received a full graduate fellowship to attend Smith College in Massachusetts. She earned a Masters in Education at Smith,



then taught in Philadelphia and eventually moved to New York. There Yoshiko started her writing career by publishing *The Dancing Kettle*, a collection of the folktales she had loved as a child.

From 1952-1954 Yoshiko lived in Japan on a Ford Foundation Fellowship. While there she collected more folk tales. "Most important, however," she says of her stay in Japan, "I became aware of a new dimension to myself as a Japanese American and deepened my respect for the culture that made my parents what they were."

"Our life experiences are always with us," says Yoshiko. She often draws from memories of her past in her writing. Bits and pieces of her child-self are in *A Jar of Dreams*, *The Best Bad Thing* and *The Happiest Ending*. The diary Yoshiko kept in camp later helped her write *Desert Exile: The Uprooting of a Japanese American Family* for adults, and *Journey to Topaz* and *Journey Home* written for young people, so they "understand that freedom is our most precious possession."

Yoshiko began by writing folktales hoping to help children understand each other better by "sharing stories and ideas." She also wrote about Japanese children so that people would see not stereotypes, but human beings.

Later Yoshiko wrote about the Japanese experience in America, and about the strength and courage of the Issei, so that Sansei would feel pride in their heritage, and all young people could "have a sense of continuity and a feeling of kinship with the past."

Although all of her books have been about people of Japanese ancestry, Yoshiko writes about situations common to all people and feels we must "celebrate our common humanity."

Through her writing Yoshiko Uchida has shared her family's love for the printed word and for all kinds of people.

## **Sansei: Third Generation Women (and Beyond)**

Sansei women are a product of a generation that has seen social upheaval and change, and then a return to conservatism in the "yuppie" era.

They started out in middle class households made especially American by their Nisei parents. In some cases, their Issei grandparents had a hand in raising them. But usually Sansei did not speak Japanese, so they were not able to communicate well with their grandparents.

Their parents expected them to do well in school and to go to college. Often the Sansei saw themselves as no different from their white classmates. Their parents had worked hard to be accepted.

The 1960's were a time of social change. For most of the country's history, rich white men had held the economic and political power. Now in the 1960's, the Civil Rights Movement began. African Americans demanded equal rights and opportunities. Soon Black Power and Pride would encourage other minority groups to assert their ethnic identities and demand their rights. Some young people became part of the "hippie" generation. They had so much they decided to give it all away and try other ways of living. The young also wanted a say in what was going on in the country. Students demonstrated for civil rights, and to end the war in Viet Nam on college campuses throughout the country. Women demanded equal rights, and the Women's Movement took hold.

The climate of the 60' and 70's allowed Sansei women to be conscious of themselves as Japanese American, and as women. Sometimes they rebelled against the choices their parents had made. They had the opportunity to explore different careers and lifestyles, even dating and marrying outside the Japanese American community. Some became involved in the student movements on college campuses. Others regained a sense of pride in their Japanese American heritage and created community programs and social services for the elderly and children.

They asked their parents, who had been incarcerated during World War II, why they had not protested. Their questioning began the process of healing for their parents, who had hoped to hide and forget that part of their history. Eventually, with Nisei and Sansei working together, Executive Order 9066 was rescinded and legislation, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, was passed to give redress and reparation to those unfairly interned during World War II.

Today, it may appear as if Sansei women have it made. Many are in professions not only in finance, the sciences, health care and education, but also in communications, and the arts. Many have highly visible positions and act as positive role models for the Yonsei and Gosei (Fourth and Fifth Generations). Yet like all women of the 80's they face the pressures of so many choices, so many possibilities and the desire to be successful and true to themselves.



## **Sansei Women's Biographies**

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**Velina Hasu Houston:**

Truly Japanese and American  
pages 29-30

**Irene Takahashi:**

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**Wendy Tokuda:**

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pages 35-36

## **Velina Hasu Houston: Truly Japanese and American**

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The story of Amerasian playwright Velina Hasu Houston begins with the love story of her mother Setsuko Okazaki Takechi, Japanese, and her father Lemo Houston, an American of Native American and African American heritage.

Her parents met while her father was a serviceman with the U.S. Occupation Forces in Japan after World War II. Their courtship lasted nine years during which time her father returned to the U.S. and then volunteered for active duty during the Korean conflict in order to be near her mother.

It is also a tragedy, because her mother's father had committed suicide. The land he had owned was divided up and most of it given away by the U.S. Occupation Government. Her mother's mother died soon after. Her father's family did not approve of the marriage.

Velina was born in Tokyo, Japan, but arrived in America as an infant and as an American citizen, because of her father's nationality. Velina, her mother, father, older sister and older adopted brother went to live in Ft. Riley, Kansas. The U.S. Army had decided that international brides (war brides) from Asia should live there.

When Velina was young she asked her father why he was "chocolate" and her mother "vanilla." Her father wanted her to be proud of being mixed, of being "something new" and unique. He bought some neopolitan ice cream. He pointed out the vanilla that was her mother, the chocolate and strawberry that was him. Then he put a scoop of each into a bowl and mixed them together. The colors melted into a soft brown. He asked Velina if she could separate the colors again. Velina knew they could not be separated. Her father wanted her to live her life that way, by not trying to separate the colors or letting anyone else do that either. He wanted her to accept herself for who she was.

Velina has done just that, using her unique experiences to show people her thoughts about life through her poems, stories and especially plays.



photo ©Velina Hasu Houston

When she was eleven her father died. She and her mother learned about American funeral arrangements together. They had always been close, but now Velina was her "mother's shadow." She wanted to be like her mother and do the things her mother did.

Her mother had raised Velina and her sister the only way she knew how, as Japanese daughters. Japanese culture had always been a strong influence in her home. When pressures from the outside world became too great, Velina knew she could find peace at home where "I could escape into my room and then into my head where my stories began to take shape."

Velina wrote poetry from age six and wrote her first play at thirteen. She was a Girl Scout, studied ballet and piano and calligraphy and brush painting. In high school Velina was editor of the yearbook, an editor on the school newspaper, a cheerleader, and still earned the straight A's to be a member of the National Honor Society. She also made time to play volleyball, basketball and participate in gymnastics. She was even a disc jockey for a local radio station. Velina's goal "was to do everything 500 percent."

After high school she attended Kansas State University so that she could stay close to her mother. Velina earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism and Mass Communications with minors in philosophy and theater, and graduated Phi Beta Kappa, with the highest honors.

She intended to go to law school to please her mother, but was encouraged by a theater professional to continue her studies in theater. So she went to UCLA where she earned a Master of Fine Arts in Theater Arts/Playwriting.

Since then Velina has worked as a journalist and in the film industry while continuing to write poems, stories and plays. She is also a lecturer, has received numerous awards and fellowships, and is a member of artistic, academic and cultural organizations. She is also active in organizing support groups for Amerasians like herself. Her stories and poems are published nationally, and her plays are produced by major theaters. They are often the first plays about the Japanese American experience to be staged there.

One of the joys of Velina's life was having her mother see her play, *Tea*, and then understood why Velina must write instead of practice law. *Tea* is scheduled to be filmed for television.

Velina has been pleased that on recent visits to Japan, her family there has welcomed her with warmth and acceptance.

Velina is raising her toddler son, Kiyoshi Sean Shannen by herself and wants him to know the Japanese culture her mother taught her. And as her father would have wanted, she is raising him to be proud to be "multi-racial Japanese."

photo courtesy Irene Takahashi



## **Irene Takahashi: Dispensing Justice to All People**

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On May 6, 1988, California Governor George Deukmejian appointed Irene Takahashi to be a judge for the Municipal Court of the Bay Judicial District in Contra Costa County. One day she could be a judge on the California Supreme Court.

Born in San Francisco and raised in El Cerrito, Irene was the first of three children born to her father, a doctor and her mother, a homemaker.

Elementary school was like play, so it was fun for Irene. In junior high school, she went to class with many of the children of the University of California, Berkeley, professors. Some of her textbooks were college level books. Irene studied very hard to earn the A's her father knew she could earn.

As a senior in high school, she was nervous about going to college. Her parents wanted her to go to U.C. Berkeley or Stanford, as her father had. Instead she went to San Francisco State University. After one semester, she transferred to the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland. She had taken a few art classes in high school and wanted to see if she had enough talent to make a career out of art. She decided she did not, but had satisfied her curiosity.

When she transferred to U.C. Berkeley, her parents were happy. She graduated with very good grades and a degree in Psychology. She decided to go to law school at the University of California at Davis.

At Davis, she was with the academic "cream of the crop." Although she studied harder than she ever had, it was frustrating for Irene not to earn A's. She persevered and earned her Doctor of Jurisprudence degree in 1976.

After law school, Irene was as a Deputy District Attorney by the Alameda County District Attorney's Office. She felt she had to make a good impression, because she was "a woman, a minority and young."

Irene has always found a career as a trial attorney to be fulfilling. She feels it helped her "improve her communication skills and develop as a person." As a

former prosecutor, she was able to help other people by looking out for the general public and the victims of crime.

She has also had the opportunity to try different things. In 1978, she went to San Diego to be a Federal prosecutor as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of California.

Then she had a private practice doing civil law and criminal defense work. She often represented juveniles who had been charged with a crime. In learning about their backgrounds, she saw that their parents failed to teach them about the rules of society. Irene felt fortunate that her parents had brought her up with strict rules, strong moral values and provided her with positive role models. She was also very thankful that her family did not have to worry about food, clothing and shelter.

In August of 1982, Irene returned to courtroom trial work as a Deputy District Attorney in Contra Costa County. After six years there, several judges in the Superior Court encouraged her to apply to the Governor's office to be a judge.

Now, as a Municipal Court Judge, it is especially important to Irene that the people who come before her have a fair trial and legal representation. This is because her parents and people of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast, were interned during World War II without any evidence or trial. As a child, Irene had asked her parents why they had not protested. Her mother answered, "In those days, we had no political representation. The only way to prove our loyalty [innocence] was to do what the government told us to do."

According to Judge Irene Takahashi, "My parents' war time experiences have affected me—especially now as a judge...I'm determined that no matter who comes before me, whatever the race, whatever the sex, it doesn't matter—that person will get a fair trial...".

## Wendy Tokuda: A Highly Visible Role Model

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Wendy Tokuda, KPIX Channel 5 Eyewitness News television anchor, is a role model for young women seeking careers in news broadcasting and reporting.

But the road to news anchoring was neither smooth nor easy. There were very few role models when she first started out. She had to "pay her dues." After receiving her college degree in Political Science, she worked in the public affairs department of KING-TV in Seattle as a secretary.

She wanted a chance to do news reporting and asked for that chance. News directors turned her down repeatedly. Her persistence paid off and she was finally given the opportunity. She became a news reporter. After a year and a half, she became weekend anchor.

In 1978, Wendy came to KPIX Channel 5 Eyewitness News in San Francisco. She began as a general assignment reporter, then specialized later in science and medical reports. By July 1978, she was anchoring the weekend news. In 1980, she started anchoring the *Eyewitness News at Noon* and then began co-anchoring the 6 o'clock and 11 o'clock news with Dave McElhatton.

In 1987 she stopped anchoring the 11 o'clock news to produce *Tokuda Reports*, an award-winning series of in-depth reports. She and the producer have won numerous Emmy and broadcasting awards. In recent years, Wendy received first place awards for her reporting on the *Japanese American exhibit* at the Smithsonian Institution from United Press International. Her special on Japan, *Land of the Rising Yen* won an award for best investigative reporting from the World Affairs Council.

On day of the Bay Area earthquake, October 17, 1989, Wendy, as part of the Eyewitness News team, brought continuous emergency news coverage to millions of Northern California viewers. Throughout the evening and on the days that followed, she informed the public of late-breaking developments on the destruction of the 7.1 quake and the rescue efforts that took place.



photo courtesy KPIX TV-Channel 5

Her family's commitment to community service has inspired her to give back to the community. On many occasions, Wendy has been supportive and active in the local Asian community. She has served as the Northern California President of the Asian American Journalist Association (AAJA) which seeks to increase minority representation in all forms of journalism by providing scholarships, student sponsorship, lectures, workshops and conferences. She now serves on the honorary Board of Directors.

Wendy and her husband, producer Richard Hall, also wrote two children's books. *Humphrey the Lost Whale* and more recently, *Shiro in Love*. The proceeds of the books' sales go to a family service agency in San Francisco and a youth agency in East Oakland.

In a public service announcement broadcast, *Take The Time For Kids' Sake*, Wendy spoke with pride about her brother, who is developmentally disabled, and about his participation in the Special Olympics.

Wendy finds her work demanding, challenging and rewarding. Like many working women today, she balances career with family. She feels her work gives her a "sense of self-respect" and credits her husband, and their two daughters with giving her life "warmth, happiness and meaning."

## **Kristi Yamaguchi: A Young Woman with Championship Qualities**

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How could Kristi Yamaguchi's high school graduation in June of 1989 compare to winning the gold medal at the Olympic Festival? Yet, like any other seventeen year old, it was an important part of her year as were finals and her senior prom. Then it was off to Toronto for more training in the life of a world-class figure skater.

That quest for "gold" began when Kristi started group ice skating lessons at age six. Private lessons followed at age eight. After her parents took her to see the National Championships in San Diego when she was nine, she began to train in earnest.

That training has lead her to "wow" audiences such as the crowd at the U.S. Championships, in February, 1989, where she executed seven triple jumps. Those jumps won her second place in senior women's singles, and she and her partner Rudy Galindo placed first in senior pairs.

In Paris in March, 1989, Kristi became the first American woman in thirty-six years to advance to the World Championships in both singles and pairs. There she placed sixth in women's singles and fifth in pairs.

Although she has a solid competition record as a single skater and as a member of a pair, Kristi does not boast about it. Off the ice she is as unassuming as she is dynamic on the ice.

Despite her modesty, the Japanese American community feels she is special. She is the first Japanese American woman to become a world-class figure skater. In October, 1989 she received a Special Recognition Award at Kimochi, Inc.'s annual fundraiser, *Sansei Live!*, honoring that accomplishment. Her appearance at that community function was only one of many appearances at similar events for the community.

Kristi loves competing and does not mind her hectic schedule. In fact, she enjoys traveling and meeting new people.



photo courtesy Kristi Yamaguchi



She thinks that her ability to focus her attention and set goals has brought her this far. She feels these are qualities her parents fostered in her. Since those qualities seem to be in her brother, who was captain of his freshman basketball team, and in her sister who, was head song-girl and a member of a national champion baton-twirling team, it does seem to run in the family.

She admits that the pressure sometimes bothers her, but she tries not to think about it too much and tries to have fun.

Kristi sees a few more years of amateur skating ahead including the 1992 Winter Olympics. Then she might turn professional for a year or two, but does not think she will make skating her career. She is interested in child psychology and hopes to pursue her education.

Whatever career she chooses, Kristi will use her championship qualities to make it a successful one.

## INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVITIES

The following classroom activities have been compiled to accompany the *Strength and Diversity: Japanese American Women, 1885 to 1990* exhibit at The Oakland Museum. Although these activities correspond to the particular themes of this exhibit, they also pertain to the experiences of many students today as there is continuing influx of immigrants to our public school systems. Activities are presented for students to relate their lives and the lives of those around them to historical events and situations that confront diverse immigrant populations.

In order to facilitate classroom application, these activities are worded for the students. Several classroom-ready worksheets are included at your convenience. (Please refer to the Bibliography for additional activities/resources.) A variety of instructional strategies and techniques have been incorporated into the activities to integrate History/Social Science with other content areas and to address different learning styles in order to ensure success for all students.

We caution teachers to be sensitive to students who, due to recent immigration traumas, may exhibit a reluctance to fully participate in these activities. It is when we learn the lessons of history and apply them to our present circumstances that we truly understand the concepts of immigration, discrimination and acculturation.

- Acculturation, page 38
- Discrimination, pages 39-41
- Immigration, pages 42-45
- Picture Brides, page 46
- Glossary, page 47-48

Many of the Issei women came to the U.S. as picture brides. They arrived in a new country with customs strange to them. Their husbands, on the other hand, were becoming “westernized” and expected their wives to adopt the manners and customs of their new home.

### **ACCULTURATION**

Many of us who have just arrived from other countries, or who still maintain customs of our cultural heritage, see differences between the way we do things at home and the way we do things outside of our homes. Can you think of some differences?

- Interview a classmate on how s/he celebrates the winter holidays. Where did these customs come from? How is this different from how you celebrate? Compare and contrast your celebrations.
- Sometimes, in order not to be different from our friends, we say or do things that aren't really **us**. Write about a time that you changed the way you did something in order to fit in with the rest of your classmates. Tell about your feelings before, during and after the incident.
- The way we do things, the foods we eat, the way we behave are all a part of who we are. Often people who come from very different backgrounds share some of the same characteristics. Interview two classmates and see what you and your families do alike and how you are different. Can you explain? Is there anything your family does that you think other people wouldn't understand?
- Who is an American? Make a collage of who an American is: what kinds of foods s/he eats, where s/he lives, his/her interests and hobbies. Compare your collage with those of your classmates. Discuss similarities and differences. Did the discussion change your attitudes about who an American is? Write a new definition of who an American is. Make a class collage or quilt representing your new definition of an American.
- Read the biographies of the Issei and do more research on the immigration of Japanese. List the kinds of changes in values, attitudes, customs and lifestyles that were made by the Japanese immigrants. Interview someone who has come to the U.S. recently to find out if similar changes need to be made today. How do they compare to yours?

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, discrimination against people of Japanese ancestry escalated. On the West Coast during World War II, citizens and non-citizens were placed in concentration camps.

### **DISCRIMINATION**

Prior to being sent to the concentration camps, some families were torn apart. Many community leaders were taken from their homes with little or no warning. Families sometimes had but a few days to sell all of their belongings and pack only the bare necessities to take with them.

- Work with three or four classmates. Imagine you are a family and you have been ordered to leave your home in 15 minutes. Come to consensus with your “family” and decide on the ten things you will take with you. Remember, you must be able to carry what you take. What will you do with the rest of your belongings? (See Evacuation Worksheet)
- How do you think you would feel if you were forced to leave your home, pets and friends to go live in a strange place just because you or your ancestors came from a certain country? Write a journal telling your feelings and experiences.
- Read *Journey to Topaz* by Yoshiko Uchida or one of the other selections found in the Bibliography that deals with the relocation experience. Write a book report and include a discussion of feelings described in the book. Have you ever had those feelings? Tell about them. (See Book Review Form)
- Look up previous anti-Japanese legislation that had been enacted before the relocation. Make a timeline of these events.
- Write a script of a Japanese American opposing the relocation and President Roosevelt explaining why this action is necessary.
- Review newspapers, magazines and other media for trends in how different ethnic groups are portrayed. Write your own newspaper article on your findings.
- Do research on the legal case of *Nishimura vs. U.S.* in *Bamboo People: The Law and Japanese Americans* by Frank Chuman. Prepare a defense argument for Mrs. Nishimura defending her right to enter the U.S. and join her husband.
- Imagine that you are a woman in 1922. Using a tape recorder, dictate a letter to your Senator arguing against the Cable Act. Remember that this is the year you were given the right to vote!

## EVACUATION WORKSHEET

Work with three or four classmates. Imagine you are a family and have been ordered to leave your home in 15 minutes. Come to consensus with your “family” and decide on the ten things you will take with you. **Remember, you must be able to carry what you take with you.**

ITEM	RATIONALE
	45

## BOOK REVIEW

by

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date

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You are a book reviewer for The City Newspaper. Write a review of your book. Remember that after you give a brief summary of the book, you must let your readers know why they may want to read it. How does it relate to their everyday lives? Are there lessons to be learned? What kinds of feelings and emotions confront the reader while reading this book? Would you recommend this book to others? Why or why not?

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

AUTHOR: \_\_\_\_\_

PUBLISHING COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_

YEAR OF PUBLICATION: \_\_\_\_\_



The Issei women immigrated from Japan. Some of them came because America provided hope for a better future, some came to escape the constraints of their home culture, some came for adventure and freedom.

## **IMMIGRATION**

Try to find out why your family or the family of a friend came to the U.S. Trace their route to the U.S. and to your city. How did you/they come to live here?

- Trace a family's progress from your ancestors' home country to here. Include why they left. Did they have to? Were they escaping from something? What hopes did they have for their lives in America? What kinds of things were they looking for?
- Write a journal as one of your family members as s/he emigrated from his/her country of origin. What kinds of things were happening in the world at that time? What kinds of transportation were used? What did it feel like to leave the safety and security of their home to travel to a new land? Why did s/he come to America? What did s/he expect in their new home? What was hardest to leave behind?
- Make a family tree. See how many generations you can go back. You will probably have to interview one or more family members to get all of this information. (See Interview Form and Questions)
- Find a person who has recently arrived in the U.S. Interview him/her to learn what it feels like to come to a new country. What are the similarities, differences and/or difficulties at home and at school? How does it feel to be so far away from other members of his/her family? How does s/he learn how to behave in the U.S.?
- Write a poem about what America can offer you for the future. You may want to include freedoms you may not have in other countries.
- What common differences would most immigrants share when they arrived in the U.S.? Form cooperative groups to research and identify characteristics of immigrant groups that might cause difficulties in adjusting to a foreign country. These characteristics may include: diet, clothing, language, housing, physical appearance, customs, family life, religious beliefs, socio-economic status, education and celebrations.

- Who do we consider to be Americans and why? Write a paragraph telling why you are or should be an American. Compare your writing with your classmates. Discuss the similarities and differences.
- Work in cooperative groups and look up definitions of "American". Do you agree or disagree? Create your group's definition of an American and share your results with the rest of the class.
- Work with three classmates and make a mural of a family's immigration to America. Include their home country and follow their route to this city. Include their means of transportation and significant events in their journey to America. Narrate their story on a tape.





## INTERVIEW FORM

When interviewing someone, be a good listener. Let the person continue speaking, even if s/he gets off the track. On the following pages use this form for summarizing your answers. The interview questions may help you focus on getting basic information, but feel free to ask your own questions for specific information you may be looking for. Don't forget, BE PATIENT!

PERSON INTERVIEWED \_\_\_\_\_

NAME AT BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

PLACE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

MAJOR MOVES (INCLUDE REASONS) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAMES, DATES, PLACES OF BIRTH OF BROTHERS AND/OR SISTERS

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION OF CHILDHOOD HOME (Urban, rural. If a city, what kind of dwelling, neighborhood, etc. If a farm, what kinds of crops, animals, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

IMPORTANT FAMILY EVENTS, HAPPY AND SAD (Fought in war, received an honor, a death, met or became a famous person, went to a special school, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Here are some suggestions of questions that may help you focus on different kinds of information you are trying to get from an interview. Change them to fit your style, language and comfort level. They may not all be appropriate for your interview, so decide what you will ask before you begin.

### **CHILDHOOD AND HOME LIFE**

- When and where were you born?
- Were there any unusual circumstances connected with your birth?
- Do you have any special memories of family members?
- How many times did you move and where did you live?
- Who were your neighbors?
- What responsibilities did you have in the house?
- What jobs did you have when you were growing up?
- Have you ever experienced a natural disaster like a flood, fire, earthquake or tornado?

### **EDUCATION**

- What schools did you attend?
- What were your favorite subjects?
- Who were you favorite teachers? Why?
- Do you remember any stories about your schooling?

### **IMMIGRATION**

- When did you come to the U.S.?
- Why did you leave your home country?
- Did America meet your expectations?
- What things were you disappointed in?
- How were things better or worse in your home country?

### **MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE**

- Where and how did you meet your spouse?
- When and where were you married?
- Where was your first home?
- Where have you lived since then?
- How many children do you have? What are their names and ages?

### **BUSINESS AND SOCIAL LIFE**

- What special talents or hobbies do you have?
- What is your occupation?
- What person, more than any other, has influenced your life?
- What do you think is the most important achievement or incident in your life?

In Japan, as well as in many European countries, it was customary for families to arrange marriages for their children. Young men and women were matched according to criteria determined by their families. Immigrant men, unable to take the time from their low-paying jobs to make the long voyage home to find suitable wives, relied on their families to find mates for them.

### PICTURE BRIDES

Picture Brides came to this country all alone. They arrived to marry men they had only known through letters and pictures.

- Imagine you are a Picture Bride and write a letter home to your family about what it is like to be a woman in a strange country. How is your life different from your new husband's? What kinds of things do you do to remind you of home? How do you know how to behave in a new country?
- Imagine you are an immigrant laborer. Write a letter home to your family asking them to find you a suitable wife. What could you offer a prospective bride? How will you provide for your wife and future family? What kinds of things can she look forward to in America?
- **Think:** Why do you think men had to "send away" for brides? Do you think it was possible for them to intermarry with the white women? Why do you think the Japanese men came over to the U.S.?  
**Pair:** Find a partner and discuss your ideas.  
**Share:** Share your thoughts with your partner and have him/her share his/her ideas with you. Then share your ideas with the rest of the class.
- The teacher will supply you with a picture of a stranger. List characteristics, values and traits of this person by simply viewing this picture. How would it feel to be married to this person? What kinds of feelings do you have? Write a letter to this person about those feelings. Read the biographies of the Issei. Did you share any of the same feelings they may have gone through?

## GLOSSARY

**The special terms in this glossary have been defined to fit the context of this study guide.**

<b>Alien</b>	a person who is not a U.S. citizen.
<b>Amerasian</b>	a child of American and Asian parentage. The term came into common use after the Viet Nam War to describe the offspring of a U.S. serviceman and an Asian woman. Currently the term is being broadened by the Amerasian League, co-founded by Velina Hasu Houston, to politically describe "anyone who is of multi-racial and/or multi-cultural Asian descent."
<b>Asian American</b>	an Asian person who lives in America.
<b>Assembly Center</b>	a place where West Coast Japanese were temporarily kept before they were sent to detention camps during World War II. Racetracks and fairgrounds became assembly centers.
<b>Bai-sha-ku-nin</b>	[bai-sha-ku-nēn] family marriage go-between or matchmaker.
<b>Concentration Camp or Detention Camp</b>	a camp of tar-papered barracks surrounded by barbed wire built by the U.S. Government to place and hold persons of Japanese ancestry, both citizens and non-citizens, during World War II.
<b>Enemy Alien</b>	a person who is a citizen of an enemy country.
<b>Evacuation</b>	the forced removal of persons of Japanese ancestry, both citizens and non-citizens, from the west coast during World War II by the U.S. government.
<b>Executive Order #9066</b>	the presidential order setting into motion the mass removal and detention of Japanese Americans.
<b>Expatriate</b>	to leave one's native land permanently.
<b>Furo or ofuro</b>	[fū-rō/o-fū-rō] Japanese-style bath.
<b>Haji</b>	[ha-jē] shame.

<b>Immigrant</b>	a person from another country who comes to the U.S. to live.
<b>International Bride</b>	Another term for War Bride. see War Bride.
<b>Issei</b>	[E-say] "First generation Japanese" in America. Native Japanese who immigrated to the U.S.
<b>Kendo</b>	[ken-dō] Japanese fencing art using swords of bamboo
<b>Japanese</b>	Ethnic identification or persons from Japan.
<b>Japanese Americans</b>	Americans of Japanese ancestry, and may include Japanese persons who are permanent residents of U.S.
<b>Naturalized</b>	to become a U.S. citizen after passing a citizenship test.
<b>Nisei</b>	[Nē-say] "second generation Japanese" in America. U.S. born offspring of Issei.
<b>Odori</b>	[ō-dō-ri] Japanese dance.
<b>Picture Bride</b>	a woman who becomes a bride through the exchange of photographs.
<b>Relocation Center</b>	term for detention camp used by the U.S. Government.
<b>Relocation Center/ Detention Camp</b>	a camp built by the U.S. government to place and hold persons of Japanese ancestry, both citizens and non-citizens.
<b>Repatriate</b>	to return to one's native land.
<b>Sansei</b>	[Sawn-say] "third generation Japanese" in America. U.S. born offspring of Nisei.
<b>Shamisen</b>	[Sha-mē-sen] Japanese 3-string instrument.
<b>Tokugawa</b>	[Tō-ku-ga-wa] name of the military family which ruled in Japan between 1600 - 1867.
<b>War Bride</b>	foreign born bride of a U.S. serviceman.
<b>Yonsei</b>	[Yōn-say] "fourth generation Japanese" in America. U.S. born offspring of Sansei.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF JAPANESE AMERICAN/ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S RESOURCES

COMPILED BY JACP, INC. AND NAATA

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Uchida, Yoshiko. **A JAR OF DREAMS**. New York, Atheneum, 1982. Awarded the California Commonwealth Club Medal, this novel has been hailed by ACE INTERNATIONAL, THE HORN BOOK, KIRKUS REVIEW, and BOOKLIST. This is a strong Depression Era story of eleven year old Rinko, who learns that she is a special and worthy person. 131 pp.

Uchida, Yoshiko. **JOURNEY HOME**. New York, Atheneum, 1978. In this poignant sequel to *JOURNEY TO TOPAZ*, Yuki and her family face the hostility and hardship awaiting them upon their return to California from Topaz concentration camp. It is a warm, dignified, optimistic, poignant and candid story. 131 pp.

Uchida, Yoshiko. **JOURNEY TO TOPAZ**. New York, Scribners, 1971. The moving World War II story of eleven year old Yuki Sakane and her family, as they are uprooted from their California home and sent to the desert concentration camp, Topaz. ALA BOOKLIST hails it as a "sensitive and thought-provoking story." 149 pp.

#### JAPANESE FOLK TALES

Horio, Seishi. **MONKEY AND THE CRAB, Kani, Saru**. Union City, CA, Heian International, 1985. A traditional folk tale retold; illustrated in color by Tsutomu Murakami. 30 pp.

- Nakano, Mei. **RIKO RABBIT**. Sebastopol, CA., Mina Press, 1982. An ancient Japanese folk tale retold. 66 pp.
- Okawa, Essei. **ADVENTURES OF THE ONE INCH BOY**. Union City, CA, Heian International, 1986. A Japanese "Tom Thumb." Full color illustrations. 32 pp.
- Okawa, Essei. **FISHERMAN AND THE GRATEFUL TURTLE**. Union City, CA, Heian International, 1986. Story of a fisherman seeking eternal life. Illustrated in full color. 32 pp.
- Sakade, Florence, Editor. **JAPANESE CHILDREN'S FAVORITE STORIES**. Rutland, VT., Charles E. Tuttle, 1953. Twenty popular Japanese folk tales. Illustrated by Yoshishuke Kurosaki. 120 pp.
- Shibano, Tamizo. **OLD MAN WHO MADE THE TREES BLOOM, HANASAKIA JIJI**. Union City, CA, Heian International, 1985. Retelling of a Japanese folk tale. Full color illustrations by Bunshu Iguchi. 30 pp.
- Uchida, Yoshiko. **THE DANCING KETTLE AND OTHER JAPANESE FOLK TALES**. Berkeley, CA, reprinted by Creative Arts Book Co., 1986. Reprint of a popular collection of Japanese folk tales. Illustrated by Richard C. Jones. 180 pp.
- Uchida, Yoshiko. **THE FOOLISH CATS**. New York, Atheneum, 1987. A Margaret McElberry Book with full color illustrations by Margot Zemach.
- Uchida, Yoshiko. **MAGIC LISTENING CAP, MORE FOLK TALES FROM JAPAN**. Berkeley, CA, Reprinted by Creative Arts Book Co., 1986. Fourteen Japanese folk tales to enjoy. Illustrated by Yoshiko Uchida. 144 pp. new edition.
- Uchida, Yoshiko. **SEA OF GOLD AND OTHER TALES FROM JAPAN**. Berkeley, CA, Reprinted by Creative Arts Book Co., 1987. Twelve tales from Japan. Illustrated by Marianne Yamaguchi. Story source and glossary and pronunciation key included.

## ACTIVITIES

- Araki, Nancy K. and Jane Hori. **MATSURI FESTIVAL!: JAPANESE AMERICAN CELEBRATIONS AND ACTIVITIES**. Union City, CA, Heian International, 1984. A guide to Japanese American celebrations, activities, and traditions. Well illustrated. 150 pp.
- Nihonmachi Little Friends. **JAPANESE CHILDREN'S SONGS - BOOK AND CASSETTE**. San Francisco, Nihonmachi Little Friends, 1983. 30 commonly sung Japanese folk songs in Romanized Japanese and English. Songs in English and Japanese.

## ACTIVITY BOOKS

- Tatsuno, Melanie and Muneko Hata. **OH! MATSURI!, A BILINGUAL COLORING BOOK OF JAPANESE AMERICAN FESTIVALS**. San Jose, Concept Pacific, 1983. Japanese American holidays depicted by Japanese American children. 11 pp.
- Visual Communications. **EAST/WEST ACTIVITY KIT**. Los Angeles, Visual Communications. Four large consumable sheets with twelve different activities including games, poetry, and language. Teacher's guide included. Grades 4-6.

HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE LEVEL

Houston, Jeanne Wakatsuki and James. **FAREWELL TO MANZANAR**. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1973. A personal story. 145 pp.

Houston, Jeanne Wakatsuki. **BEYOND MANZANAR: VIEWS OF ASIAN AMERICAN WOMANHOOD/ONE CAN THINK ABOUT LIFE AFTER THE FISH IS IN THE (???)**. Capra Press, 1985. Two stories included, 130 pp.

Houston, Velina Hasu. **TEA**, Plays in Progress. New York, Theatre Communications, 1985. Japanese international brides mourn the death of their friend and look at their lives.

Kadohata, Cynthia. **THE FLOATING WORLD**. New York, Viking Press, 1989. Masterful first novel about a Japanese American woman's adolescence in the 1950's and 60's.

Kikumura, Akemi. **THROUGH HARSH WINTERS. THE LIFE OF A JAPANESE IMMIGRANT WOMAN**. Novato, CA, Chandler and Sharp, 1981. A fascinating and moving study of one woman's will to triumph over countless barriers of family, community, and country. 157 pp.

Kudaka, Geraldine. **NUMEROUS AVALANCHES AT THE POINT OF INTERSECTION**. Greenfield Center, NY, Greenfield Review Press, 1979. Poetry, 83 pp.

Mirikitani, Janice. **AWAKE IN THE RIVER**. Isthmus Press, 1978. Poems and stories, illustrated, 115 pp.

Mirikitani, Janice. **SHEDDING SILENCE**. Berkeley, Celestial Arts, 1987. A second volume of poetry from the most popular Japanese American poet.

Saiki, Patsy Kisaku. **GANBARE! AN EXAMPLE OF JAPANESE SPIRIT**. 1982. This is the story of the Japanese American experience in Hawaii during World War II. 230 pp.

Sone, Monica. **NISEI DAUGHTER**. Seattle, University of Washington Press (reprint), 1953. The story of a Japanese American girl in the Pacific Northwest. 238 pp.

Sugimoto, Etsu Inagaki. **A DAUGHTER OF THE SAMURAI**. Rutland, VT, Charles Tuttle, 1966. The adventures of a Japanese woman's life in Japan and America.

Uchida, Yoshiko. **DESERT EXILE; THE UPROOTING OF A JAPANESE AMERICAN FAMILY**. Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1982. This is a personal account of a Berkeley family facing the tragic World War II uprooting and internment. U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye felt it to be a moving account of a not so noble period in American history. 154 pp.

Uchida, Yoshiko. **PICTURE BRIDE**. Flagstaff, AZ, Northland Publishers, 1987. An anxiously awaited second novel by Yoshiko Uchida, author of the much acclaimed **DESERT EXILE**. This novel traces the life of Hana Omiya, a picture bride from Japan, exploring her life and the lives of those around her. Includes wartime experience.

Uchida, Yoshiko. **SAMURAI OF GOLD HILL**. New York, Scribners, 1972. The vivid story of young Koichi and the Wakamatsu Colony who came from Japan to start an ill-fated tea and silk colony in post-gold rush California. BOOKLIST thought it to be a "moving narrative of courage and patience in the face of adversity." 119 pp.

Yamada, Mitsuye. **CAMP NOTES AND OTHER POEMS**. San Lorenzo, CA, Shameless Hussy Press, 1976. Ranges from Issei experience to the present. 25 pp.



Yamada, Mitsuye. **DESERT RUN**. Latham, NY, Kitchen Table, Women of Color Press, 1988. Poems and stories. 97 pp.

Yamamoto, Hisaye. **SEVENTEEN SYLLABLES And Other Stories**. Latham, NY, Kitchen Table, Women of Color Press, 1988. 143 pp.

#### WOMEN'S ANTHOLOGIES

Asian Women United of California. **MAKING WAVES, An Anthology of Writings by and about Asian American Women**.

Kim, Elaine, and Janice Otani. **WITH SILK WINGS: Asian American Women at Work**. San Francisco, Asian Women United, 1983. Asian American women in different careers.

Lim, Shirley Geok-lin, Mayumi Tsutakawa and Margarita Donnelly, editors. **FORBIDDEN STITCH, An Asian American Anthology**. Corvallis, OR, Calyx Books, 1989. Collection of literature by Asian American women. 290 pp.

#### REFERENCE

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Daniels, Roger, Sandra Taylor, and Harry Kitano, ed. **JAPANESE AMERICANS: FROM RELOCATION TO REDRESS**. Salt Lake City, University of Utah Press, 1986. 216 pp.

Duus, Masayo. **TOKYO ROSE, ORPHAN OF THE PACIFIC**. Tokyo, Kodansha International, 1979. 248 pp.

Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. **ISSEI, NISEI, WAR BRIDE; THREE GENERATIONS OF JAPANESE AMERICAN WOMEN IN DOMESTIC SERVICE**. Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1986. 312 pp.

Ichihashi, Yamato. **JAPANESE IN THE UNITED STATES**. New York, Arno Press, 1932. The first history of the Japanese Americans written in English. 426 pp.

Masumoto, David Mas. **COUNTRY VOICES, THE ORAL HISTORY OF A JAPANESE AMERICAN FARM COMMUNITY**. Del Rey, CA, Inaka Countryside Publications, 1987. Through interviews, essays, and stories, Masumoto describes the historical development of a rural community and explores the cultural and spiritual growth of all its people. 256 pp.

Nakano, Mei. **JAPANESE AMERICAN WOMEN, Three Generations**. Sebastopol, CA, Mina Press, 1990. A historical survey of Japanese American women. Accompanies the ***Strength and Diversity : Japanese American Women, 1885 to 1990*** exhibit.

Nakano, Mei, ed. **JAPANESE AMERICAN WOMEN'S RESOURCE DIRECTORY: Northern California 1987-88**. San Francisco, Women's Concerns Committee, Northern California Western Nevada Pacific District Council of the Japanese American Citizens League, 1987. Lists agencies or organizations whose activities affect women; entrepreneurs, artists, professional, volunteers, and other prominent Japanese American women. 128 pp.

National Japanese American Historical Society. **AMERICANS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY AND THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION**. San Francisco, NJAHS, 1987. A historical chronology. 91 pp.

National Japanese American Historical Society. **STRENGTH AND DIVERSITY: Japanese American Women, 1885-1990**. San Francisco, NJAHS, 1990. Classroom study guide which accompanies the Strength and Diversity Japanese American women's exhibit.

Nisei Christian Oral History Project, **NISEI CHRISTIAN JOURNEY, Its Promise and Fulfillment**. NCOHP, 1988. 152 pp.

Office of Historic Preservation, **FIVE VIEWS, An Ethnic Sites Survey for California**. Sacramento, State of California- The Resources Agency, Department of Parks & Recreation, 1988. A survey of California's ethnic history and and historic sites. 265pp.

Sarasohn, Sunada. **ISSEI - PORTRAIT OF A PIONEER**. Pacific Books, 1983. An anthology of Issei oral history. 296 pp.

Weglyn, Michi Nishiura. **YEARS OF INFAMY, THE UNTOLD STORY OF AMERICA'S CONCENTRATION CAMPS**. New York, William Morrow, 1976. 351 pp.

Wilson, Robert A. and Bill Hosokawa. **EAST TO AMERICA, A History of the Japanese in the United States**. New York, William Morrow, 1980.

#### FILM/VIDEO

Anderson, Cris, and John deGraaf, producers. **VISIBLE TARGET**. Video Production, Minneapolis. A view of the evacuation of Japanese Americans from Bainbridge Island, near Seattle, during World War II.  
*Distributor:* KCTS Seattle, and Bainbridge Island Community, Inc.

Asian Women United, Executive Producer. **WITH SILK WINGS: Asian Women at Work**, each of four parts 30 min., color video. **FOUR WOMEN**, produced and directed by Loni Ding. The stories of four contemporary Asian American women who touch the lives of Asians and non-Asians alike. **ON NEW GROUND**, produced and directed by Loni Ding. Shows ten Asian American women who have broken barriers and entered traditional male jobs. **FRANKLY SPEAKING**, produced and directed by Loni Ding. High school students, teachers, employers, and counselors discuss the challenges facing young Asian American women. **TALKING HISTORY**, produced and directed by Spencer Nakasako. Tells the history of immigration through the stories of five immigrant Asian women and their journey to America.  
*Distributor:* NAATA, CrossCurrent Media, 346 Ninth Street, Second Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103, (415) 552-9550.

Gee, Deborah. **SLAYING THE DRAGON**, produced by Asian Women United, 60 min., color video, documentary. From the "Dragon Lady" to "St. Elsewhere," SLAYING THE DRAGON analyzes the roles and images given to Asian women by the Hollywood film industry and network television over the past 50 years.  
*Distributor:* NAATA, CrossCurrent Media, 346 Ninth Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103, (415) 552-9550

Hatta, Kayo. **OTEMBA**. 16 min., 16 mm color, narrative. OTEMBA, meaning "tomboy" in Japanese, is about an eight year old Japanese American girl's struggle to find her identity in the face of traditional Japanese cultural values as expressed in her father's obsessive desire for a son.  
*Distributor:* Thousand Cranes Filmworks, 125 1/2 S. Carondelet, Los Angeles, CA 90057.



Light, Allie, and Irving Saraf. **MITSUYE AND NELLIE**. 58 min., 16 mm, color, documentary. This film creates a double portrait of two women whose poetry expresses, with dramatic clarity, the immigrant experience of Asian American women into a society contemptuous and suspicious of "orientals," generational conflicts between mothers and daughters, and the breaking of stereotypes of Asian American women.

*Distributor:* Light-Saraf Films, 131 Concord Street, San Francisco, CA 94112, (415) 469-0139.

Miyamoto, Bob. **GAMAN...TO ENDURE**. 6 min., 16 mm color, animation. This illustrated portrayal of camp life reveals the spirit of survival of Japanese American internees, as seen by a young girl. GAMAN combines the drawings of Betty Chen with the music of Nobuko Miyamoto to tell this haunting tale.

*Distributor:* Third World Newsreel, 335 W. 38th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10018, (212) 947-9277.

Nakamura, Robert. **WATARIDORI: BIRDS OF PASSAGE**, produced by Visual Communications. 37 min., 16 mm color, documentary. Four Issei describe a collective history through their personal memories. In a moving scene, several Issei talk about the World War II evacuation; in another, three generations pay tribute to lives spent at the Manzanar concentration camp.

*Distributor:* Third World Newsreel, 335 W. 38th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10018, (212) 947-9277.

Omori, Emiko. **THE DEPARTURE**. 13 min., 16 mm color, narrative. Haru shares a childhood memory, untouched for forty years, with her daughter. She tells the story of her family's Japanese dolls, heirlooms passed on to her by her mother, that are suddenly sold by her father, causing her tremendous grief. Sharing this memory allows Haru to understand more clearly her childhood years and being an immigrant's daughter.

*Video distributor:* NAATA, CrossCurrent Media, 346 Ninth Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103, (415) 552-9550

Ono, Michael, director, and Philip Kan Gotanda, writer. **THE WASH**. 90 min., 35 mm color, narrative. A tender story about a Nisei woman who in her sixties finds the courage to leave her stubborn, unaffectionate husband to find love again. Starring veteran actors Mako, Nobu McCarthy and Sab Shimono.

*Distributor:* Skouras Pictures, (213) 467-3000.

Onodera, Midi. **THE DISPLACED VIEW**. 52 min., 16 mm color, documentary. Through an examination of the emotional and cultural links between the women of one family, the unique and suppressed history of Japanese in Canada is revealed.

*Distributor:* M. Onodero Productions, 126 Brunswick Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5S 2M2, (416) 925-1065.

Tsuno, Keiko. **INVISIBLE CITIZENS**. 58 min., color video. Six Japanese Americans representing three generations share the pain and the sense of injustice over their internment during World War II. Those of the younger generation seek ways to recover what was lost.

*Distributor:* Downtown Community Television, 87 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10013, (212) 966-4510.

Uno, Michael Toshiyuki. **EMI**. 28 min., 16 mm color, documentary. Emiko Tonooka, a Nisei from Philadelphia, makes a pilgrimage back to the World War II relocation camp near Seattle where she spent her teenage years. She comes to grips with her past and conflicts over her identity.

*Distributor:* GPN, Box 80669, Lincoln, NE 68501, (800) 228-4630.

Visual Communications. **CRUISIN' J-TOWN**. 30 min., 16 mm color, documentary. A spirited profile of the popular jazz fusion band Hiroshima in its early days and its emergence out of the political movements of the 1960's.

*Distributor:* Third World Newsreel, 335 W. 38th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10018, (212) 947-9277.

FILM / VIDEO (continued)

Yamazaki, Hiroko. **JUXTA**. 29 min., 16 mm narrative. An emotional journey into the many faces of racism in the U.S. told through the memories of two racially mixed grown-up children of Japanese war brides and U.S. servicemen.

*Distributor:* Women Make Movies, 225 Lafayette Street, Suite 211, New York, NY 10012, (212) 925-0606, Contact: Patty White.

Yasui, Lise. **FAMILY GATHERING**, produced by Ann Tegnell. 30 min., 16 mm documentary. A personal voyage by Sansei filmmaker Lise Yasui as she searches to uncover the hidden story of her family's painful experience during World War II when Japanese living in America were declared "enemy aliens."

*Distributor:* New Day Films, 853 Broadway, Suite 1210, New York, NY 10003, (212) 477-4604.

RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS

**Japanese American Curriculum Project, Inc. (JACP)**, 414 East Third Avenue, San Mateo, CA 94401, (415) 343-9408. *Print Material.*

**National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA)**, 346 9th Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103, (415) 863-0814. *Audio Visual Resources.*





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