

Lesson Title: Who is James N. Yamazaki?

Grade Level: 10 – 11

Unit of Study: World War II - Post World War II

California Standards - History Social Science

Grade 10 World History - 10.8.6

Students analyze the causes and consequences of World War II.

Discuss the human costs of the war, with particular attention to the civilian and military losses in Russia, Germany, Britain, the United States, China, and Japan.

Grade 11 U.S. History 11.7.7 and 11.9.3

11.7.7 Students analyze America's participation in World War II.

Discuss the decision to drop atomic bombs and the consequences of the decision (Hiroshima and Nagasaki)

11.9.3 Students analyze U.S. foreign policy since World War II.

Trace the origins and geopolitical consequences (foreign and domestic) of the Cold War and containment policy, including the following: Atomic testing in the American West, the "mutual assured destruction" doctrine and disarmament policies.

California Standards - Language Arts

Grade 11 and 12 Units such as "Evaluating the experience of others-Biography, Perceiving Life's Problems: Short Stories, Search for Justice and Dignity,

Writing - Research and Technology

2.4 Write historical investigation reports:

- a. Use exposition, narration, description, argumentation, or some combination of rhetorical strategies to support the main proposition.
- b. Analyze several historical records of a single event, examining critical relationships between elements of the research topic.
- c. Explain the perceived reason or reasons for the similarities and differences in historical records with information derived from primary and secondary sources to support or enhance the presentation.
- d. Include information from all relevant perspectives and take into consideration the validity and reliability of sources.
- e. Include a formal bibliography.

2.0 Speaking Applications

2.2 Deliver oral reports on historical investigations.

2.4 Delivery multimedia presentations

Key Concepts: Racism discrimination violation of civil rights nuclear age

Setting the Context:

Dr. James N. Yamazaki is a remarkable man. Today he is in his 90s and through his life students can explore many of the critical events of the 20th century.

Early Life

Born in 1916, James Yamazaki is a Nisei (a second generation Japanese American), who lived through a turbulent era. He can personally speak about anti-Japanese discrimination and prejudice that was translated into state and federal laws. Examples include the California Alien Land Law and the 1924 National Origins Act (also called the Immigration Act of 1924). The state law prohibited the Issei, immigrant Japanese from owning land while the Act of 1924 barred all Japanese immigration to the U.S.

Despite this atmosphere of discrimination Yamazaki sought to better himself. He went to UCLA, then enrolled at Marquette University Medical School.

During the 1930s the relationship between the U.S. and Japan grew increasingly strained. The U.S. declaration of an oil embargo against Japan raised the level of tension. In the early summer of 1941 President Franklin Roosevelt declared an embargo on oil. The embargo would shut off the oil supply vital to Japan. Sensing that war was in the air, Yamazaki applied for the U.S. Army Reserve Corps. He received his appointment as a Second Lieutenant a week before the Pearl Harbor attack.,

Yamazaki personal experiences help to illustrate the unique wartime experiences of Americans of Japanese ancestry. In some ways his life mirrored that of most Japanese Americans during the war years, in other ways, his experience was uniquely different.

Life for all Japanese Americans changed after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. There were two large Japanese American communities, one in the Territory of Hawaii with a population of over 155,000 (Hawaii became a state in 1959). The other was located in the West Coast states (population of over 120,000). Capitalizing on existing anti-Asian sentiments, anti-Japanese groups on the West Coast decided to capitalize on the hysteria and suspicion caused by the Pearl Harbor attack. They pressed for the removal of all Japanese Americans living on the coast. Eventually ten War Relocation Authority sites were created, housing 120,000 Japanese Americans.

Fortunately for Yamazaki, he was going to school on the East Coast and did not personally experience removal and imprisonment—but his parents did. They were incarcerated in Jerome Arkansas, one of the ten War Relocation Authority camps. Japanese Americans on the East Coast and Hawaii for the most part did not lose their home or their freedom. They were not ordered into camps.

Japanese Americans and Military Service

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, other Nisei, young Japanese American men, wanted to join the Army.. They were eager to prove their loyalty. However, the government classified them as 4-C, enemy aliens and this barred them from service. There was however, over 1300 Nisei already in the Army in Hawaii. The Army initially did not know what to do with them. Eventually they became the first the all-Japanese American, 100th Battalion (Separate). The 100th was the first Japanese American unit to see battle. Shortly thereafter, the all-Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team was organized. It drew men from the camps and from Hawaii. The 100th/442nd fought with distinction in Italy and France.

Serving in the 106th Infantry Division

Unlike most Japanese Americans, Yamazaki was assigned to a non-segregated unit, the 106th Infantry Division, as a Combat Medic (Battalion Surgeon). While the 100th/442nd fought in the south, Dr. Yamazaki and the 106th Infantry Division were sent to Northern Europe and entered combat on December 10, 1944. Six days later the Germans began an offensive that we now call the Battle of the Bulge. Allied forces found themselves facing a quarter of a million German troops. The Allied front stretched from southern Belgium into Luxembourg, The German troops pushed some 50 miles into the Allied lines, creating a deadly "bulge".

Over 76,000 Americans were killed, wounded, or captured. Dr. Yamazaki was among those captured (Dec. 21, 1944). He and his comrades endured an eight hundred mile trek through Germany by foot and train boxcar. On the third day of capture, he survived a bombing raid in the marshalling yard of Hanover. In Nuremberg in April some of his fellow POWs were killed in a massive air raid as they were leaving the city. Dr. Yamazaki was a prisoner of war for over six months. While at **Mooseburg (prisoner of war camp)** he witnessed the escalating aerial war over Germany.

Other men of 106th Infantry Division were held as POWs in the city of Dresden, the capital of the German state of Saxony. They witnessed the bombing of Dresden that resulted in a firestorm that caused the death of over 20,000 civilians with estimates going as high as 40,000.

Yamazaki's personal experiences gave him a up-close and personal view of the horrors of war. Released from the POW camp he spent time in a rehabilitation center to regain his health.

A Doctor's Mission

Yamazaki's understanding of the human tragedy of war continued to grow after his discharged from the Army in 1946, He continued his medical training interning at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia and

Cincinnati for the next three years. In 1949, at the age of 33, he was designated the lead physician of the U.S. Atomic Bomb Medical Team assigned to Nagasaki to survey the effects of the bomb. He faced the challenge of overcoming the suspicions of the leaders and citizens of Nagasaki. **Yamazaki did so by reaching out to the people of Nagasaki. Though his Japanese was limited he connected with the citizens of Nagasaki with his sincerity. He gained their confidence**

For the next two years he worked with the parents and children of Nagasaki. Having seen the horrors of radiation first hand, Dr. Yamazaki has become a passionate spokesperson against the use of nuclear weapons. In 1995 *Children of the Atomic Bomb: An American Physician's Memoir of Nagasaki, Hiroshima, and the Marshall Islands* was written by Dr. Yamazaki and Louis B. Fleming. George L. Voelz, MD, Journal of the American Medical Association, one of the reviewers of the book wrote,

“Yamazaki’s story in a single lifetime portrays racial prejudice in the United States, war in Europe, and the human impact of the atomic bomb. He was not prepared for the Nagasaki and Hiroshima death tolls or for the many children who died and were disabled. . . . This fine book is his ‘way of remembering.’ . . . Read it so that you too may remember.”

Expected Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to:

1. Identify James Yamazaki and describe his early life.
2. Explain his connection to the people of Nagasaki
3. Explain why Dr. Yamazaki is such a passionate voice against nuclear weapons.
4. Provide arguments against the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

PROCEDURE

Show the photo of Dr. Yamazaki in his military uniform. Write his name on the Board, Dr. James Yamazaki Write the numbers 1916 and 2008. Explain that Dr. Yamazaki was born in 1916 and explain that as a person who is over 90 he has lived through a very turbulent period of history. Ask students to cite some of the events that have occurred since 1916.

If you have access to the inter-net in your classroom “Google” The Children of the Atomic Bomb – click on the listing with <http://www.aasc.ucla.edu/cab/index.html> address . Note the subtitle *A UCLA Physician's Eyewitness Report and Call to Save the World's Children* to explain the purpose of the web-site. Aside from his longevity, tell students that Dr. Yamazaki has a unique experience that has made him a passionate advocate against nuclear weapons. He was a doctor assigned as the lead physician of the U.S. Atomic Bomb Medical Team assigned to Nagasaki to survey the effects of the bomb.

Introduce Dr. Yamazaki by going to the right column of the home page under Online and click on [University of California's Secrecy about Atomic bomb's effects](#). Students will view a short portion of an interview with Dr. Yamazaki recalling his mission to Nagasaki. On June 8, 2008 Dr. Yamazaki was recognized by the Physicians for Social Responsibility with its Socially Responsible Medicine Award. A short video of Dr. Yamazaki (4.53 min.) is available by clicking on: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nneVFKxXlek&eurl=http://www.psrla.org/2008_gala.php

Assessment Based on students’ research on Dr. Yamazaki, have students write a response to the prompt:

- Dr. James Yamazaki is passionately opposed to nuclear weapons for the following reasons.
- What I learned most from this lesson was:

Then write a letter supporting the efforts of Dr. Yamazaki to end nuclear warfare

Enrichment:

Students may wish to conduct research on Japanese American history by checking out the following sites

Go For Broke National Education Center Japanese American World War II veterans established the Go For Broke National Education Center. Their website seeks to educate students and teachers of the history of Japanese American soldiers of WW II the Japanese American incarceration, and the civil liberties issues raised by these events.	http://www.goforbroke.org/
Japanese American Relocation Digital Archives (JARDA) JARDA contains thousands of Japanese American internment primary source materials including Personal diaries, letters, photographs, and drawings; US War Relocation Authority materials, including camp newsletters, final reports, photographs, and other documents relating to the day-to-day administration of the camps; Personal histories documenting the lives of the people who lived in the camps as well as the administrators who created and worked in the camps	http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/jarda/
JARDA The 442nd Regimental Combat Team Photos/drawings and lesson	http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/themed_collections/subtopic5f.html
Densho The Japanese American Legacy Project Testimonies of Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II	http://www.densho.org/densho.asp

Vocabulary Activities: Have students define the following:

Issei Nisei 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate) 442nd Regimental Combat Team 106th Infantry Division Battle of the Bulge Pediatrician

Focus Questions:

1. Who is James Yamazaki?
2. What forms of discrimination did Yamazaki experience as a Japanese Americans?
3. To what military unit was Yamazaki assigned during World War II? What was his job?
4. How was his wartime experience different from most Japanese Americans?
5. What happened to Yamazaki while he was in the Army?
6. In what area of medicine did Yamazaki specialize?
7. What was Yamazaki's mission in Nagasaki?
8. What were his major findings about the affects of radiation?

For students who have access to computers assign for **homework on the Children of the Atomic Bomb website**. Have students read *through Who and Why: Dr, James Yamazaki In his own words.* (Many of these sections are brief) *Divide the class into teams of 3 or 4 assign each 4 sections to read*

Group 1 Assignment Read * Who Is Dr. James Yamazaki * My Life in Medicine: Before, During, and After the Atomic Bomb *A One Hundred Year Perspective * From Japan to America: Medicine Was Always in My Family

Group 2 Assignment Read * A Minister's Son *Prelude to World War II * World War II, The European Theater
* Discrimination and the Winds of War

Group 3 Assignment Read * From Concentration Camps to the U.S. Army * Battle of the Bulge
* American Concentration Camps *Missing in Action

Group 4 Assignment Read * Eight Hundred Mile Trek * The Medical Investigation in the Bombing of Nagasaki
* American Medical Mission or Asian Guinea Pigs? * Nagasaki: Eyewitness to Death and Destruction

Group 5 Assignment Read Dr. Yamazaki's comments on *Battle of Monte Cassino * Dresden * The Holocaust

* Treblinka



DR. JAMES N. YAMAZAKI

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

The 106th Infantry Division

The Golden Lion Division