

Honor and Sacrifice: The Roy Matsumoto Story



History & Social Studies
Nisei in the WWII Pacific

Teacher's Guide
to
Classroom-Based
Assessment
Activities

Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community
Written by: Karen Matsumoto
Revised June 2018

Funded by
WA State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
Kip Tokuda Memorial Civil Liberties Public Education Program Grant

Nisei in the WWII Pacific

This curriculum unit, *Nisei in the WWII Pacific*, is made possible by a grant from the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Kip Tokuda Memorial Civil Liberties Public Education Program. This unit was designed by Karen Matsumoto, Project Manager of the *Honor and Sacrifice: The Roy Matsumoto Story* documentary film project.

This unit supports the California State History & Social Science framework, the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements in Social Studies, and the Classroom Based Assessment, *Dig Deep*. This unit is based on:

Category: History
Level: High School
Topic: Analyze Artifacts and Sources



BIJAC Overview

The Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community (BIJAC) honors the heritage of the Issei (first-generation Japanese) who came to the United States, and particularly those who came to Bainbridge Island, to make a new life for themselves and their children. We hope to promote a better understanding of the diversity of our nation by sharing their history, customs, and values. BIJAC is dedicated to preserving and sharing an accurate historical record through oral histories and an outreach educational program.

BIJAC's principal focus is the Nidoto Nai Yoni ("Let It Not Happen Again") Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial to honor those forced to leave their homes during World War II. Joining BIJAC in this project are local, county, state, and federal governments, as well as many, many individuals who have donated their time, money, and energy toward its completion. The Memorial is now a National Park Service satellite unit of the Minidoka National Historic Site.

For more information on BIJAC or feedback on the unit, please contact us at:

Email: info@bijac.org

Mail: BIJAC, P.O. Box 10449, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Website: www.bijac.org

DIG DEEP:

Honor and Sacrifice: The Roy Matsumoto Story

Overarching Focus Question:

What were the some of the individual roles and sacrifices of Japanese American soldiers during World War II?

View the film, *Honor and Sacrifice: The Roy Matsumoto Story*. Present students with the reflection questions before watching the film, and use them as a catalyst for discussion.

Reflection Questions for the film:

- Why were Japanese Americans on the west coast of the United States put in concentration camps?
- Why did so many Japanese American men volunteer to serve in the U.S. military?
- Why did the U.S. Army have all-Japanese American units?
- Why were most of the Japanese American soldiers sent to fight in Europe rather than in the Pacific?
- What was the main mission of Merrill's Marauders in Burma? How were the Japanese American soldiers critical to the Marauders' mission?
- What might have motivated the Nisei Marauders to take on dangerous missions?

- What could have happened if the Marauders had not had the help of the Nisei linguists?
- Why were Nisei soldiers especially vulnerable if captured by enemy Japanese soldiers?
- Why were *Kibei*s especially suited for military intelligence work in the Pacific War?
- Why was a working familiarity and understanding of different Japanese language dialects an important factor in translating into English?
- The story of the Nisei linguists of Merrill's Marauders illustrates the importance of knowing a second language. How is this applicable today? What are some of the languages students should be learning?

CLASSROOM-BASED ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1

Dig Deep: The China Burma India Theater

Read the following article from the *CBI Roundup*, a newsletter (artifact) from 1944. Identify central issues, and formulate and answer appropriate questions regarding the article.

Nisei was written by S/Sgt. Edgar Laytha and is from the September 14, 1944, *CBI Roundup*, the newsletter of the CBI, written from Delhi, India. This article can be found on the Internet at:

<http://www.cbi-theater.com/roundup/roundup091444.html>

Introduction:

China Burma India Theater (CBI) was the name used by the United States Army for its forces operating in conjunction with Allied air and land forces in China, Burma, and India during World War II. Well-known military units in this theater included the Flying Tigers, transport and bomber units flying the Hump, the 1st Air Commando Group, the engineers who built the Ledo Road, and the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), otherwise known as Merrill's Marauders.

Focus Questions:

1. Do you see evidence of racial stereotypes, racial slurs, or prejudice by the author of the article?
2. What positive encounters or stories did the author relate about his experience with the Nisei Marauders?
3. What do you think were the genuine feelings of the author toward the Nisei Marauders? Do racial or ethnic stereotypes affect the author's feelings?
4. There were many acts of heroism by the Nisei Marauders. What is a common thread of their experiences?
5. What could account for the perspective of the author?



Brig. Gen. Frank Merrill, former leader of the fabulous Marauders, chats with two Nisei, T/Sgts. Herbert Miyazaki, left, and Akiji Yoshimura.

Nisei

By S/Sgt. EDGAR LAYTHA

Excerpted from an article in the *CBI Roundup* dated September 14, 1944

CBI now has its own Sergeant York. He is S/Sgt. Kenny Yasui. Kenny is about five feet two and weighs scarcely more than 120 pounds. And this Baby York of CBI is a Nisei.

Nisei means second generation. It is a Japanese word, but Nisei are Americans. Ten thousand of these American-born children of Japanese immigrants fight now in the United States Army and some in this Theater. Their presence in CBI was for a long time a military secret. For their own protection, they were not publicized. Some still have relatives in Japan who had to be considered, and then there always was and still always will be the possibility of capture by the enemy, which for a Nisei would mean no picnic.

Under the veil of protective secrecy, however, the stubborn, sturdy fighting Nisei grew to the stature of heroes. They became exceedingly popular, earned the admiration and personal friendship of every private and general with whom they came in contact. The secrecy was officially lifted a few days ago. Now we can tell their story.

The case of Sergeant Yasui, who captured 16 Japanese at the Irrawaddy River, is only one of the many bright spots the Nisei are writing into modern American military history. They fight for Uncle Sam in the Aleutians, in Italy, all over the Southwest Pacific, and all over the CBI.

The most publicized Nisei soldiers are the men of the terrific 100th Infantry battalion in Italy. One thousand of the 1,300 men of the battalion have been wounded in combat and wear the Purple Heart. The unit earned 44 Silver Stars, 33 Bronze Stars, three Legion of Merit medals, and many battlefield promotions. Since the birth of the battalion, there has not been a single case of desertion, not even a slight AWOL. The men of the 100th fought in Sicily. Near Cassino, they spearheaded the crossing of the Rapido River; at

Belvidere, they outflanked the toughest German position and flabbergasted the Nazis they captured. In Rome, they went sightseeing, but soon after helped the Engineers to rebuild the port of Leghorn.

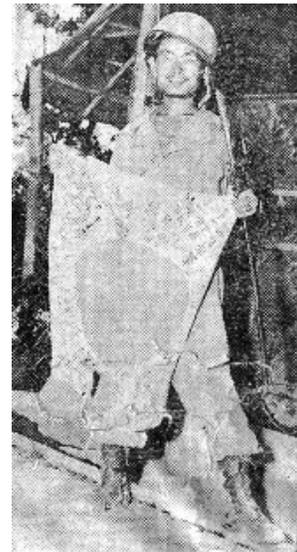
To this Theater, they came more recently. Our Sergeant Yasui, who crossed the Pacific some six months ago, was preceded by a tough and audacious bunch of his fellow Nisei who joined Merrill's Marauders. I met the Nisei Marauders just a few days ago when they were mounting a truck for a rest camp.

Some were distinctly tall; all were well built. All looked gay, worryless, self sure, happy-go-lucky. Very American. This, of course, is no accident. Nisei grow about two inches taller and are far better built than their relatives in Japan. This is a scientifically-proven fact. The Jap is the son of an undernourished nation and looks it. The uncanny discipline and self-negation to which he is subjected from the cradle to the grave makes him tight, crampy; more a human automaton than a human being. But all this vanishes under the American sun. The Nisei feels, thinks, acts and moves about like his fellow Americans. And this alone is a great slap in the face of the Robber Empire and a sublime compliment to America.

The Japs spent many a thousand yen before Pearl Harbor to "Japanize" their second generation in America. With money, scholarships, free vacations, they coaxed thousands of Nisei in the past 15 years to return to the Land of the Rising Sun for a little reeducation in the Japanese spirit. These Nisei they called Kibeis - the returned ones. And they gave them a hell of a good time. But they spent their money in vain.

It was not so easy for a Nisei Marauder to kill his first Jap. "I had a terrible feeling," said a sergeant who doesn't want to be named, "when the first Jap I have shot collapsed and expired with a heartbreaking 'Banzai' on his lips, but my second shot came easy, the third even easier. I can't tell you exactly how many I have shot. It is very difficult to know in the jungle where everything melts into the background."

Once these boys were in the fight, you couldn't get them out of it. When a Nisei Marauder was wounded or when he fell ill, he would hide his ailment until he collapsed on the spot. T/Sgt. Tommy K. Tsubota, from Honolulu, suffered from a bad hernia during a forced march through the jungle. With small bamboo splints, he trussed his rupture, marched on through the thicket until he collapsed and had to be evacuated by air. Sgt. Henry Gosho, from Seattle, was very ill with malaria, but hung on to the tail of a mule and was able to drag himself through the campaign.



*SERGEANT YASUI
Nisei Sgt. York*

Brig. Gen. Frank Merrill's Nisei Marauders proudly wear the sky blue citation ribbon of their unit, though three of them - S/Sgt. Russell K. Kono, from Hilo, Hawai'i , S/Sgt. Roy Matsumoto from Los Angeles and Gosho - were cited individually. Other Nisei units in other parts of the Theater were men of the same mettle. Sgt. Eddie Sakaue, who was loaned to the British, saved the life of an English captain under fire. Then, of course, we have Baby York.

It happened on the Irrawaddy River, during our mopping up operations after the collapse of organized resistance. A group of about 17 Japanese were isolated on an island. There was a call for volunteers to capture the Japs. Kenny Yasui and three non-Nisei Americans stepped out, stripped and swam over. Little Kenny took charge.

The Jap hid in the underbrush. None was seen. Then California-born Kenny Yasui yelled into the bush in the Japanese he learned while a student of Waseda University, Tokyo. He ordered the enemy to come out to surrender. The hidden men in the bush must have been stupefied to hear their native tongue. Instantly, a Nip sergeant appeared, looked amazed at the little naked man who said he was Japanese colonel working with the Americans and ordered him to show the hiding places of his comrades. The Jap was impressed and bewildered, terribly so. He took Kenny around on an inspection tour and out of many foxholes jumped many a Nip, fully armed, 20 rounds of ammunition in each man's belt. Kenny Yasui asked for their arms, ordered them to line up. In that second, a Jap officer sprang from the thicket, threw a hand grenade to blow up Yasui and himself. Yasui jumped into a foxhole and the Japanese officer into the other world. Then Kenny took his sword. While all this happened, a couple of recalcitrant Japanese soldiers were killed by the other Americans, but 13 prisoners waited shamefacedly for the orders of the little olive-skinned "colonel." Kenny remembered the close order drills he had to take while he was at Kibei in Tokyo. And he gave them the words:

"Kio tsuke! Hidari muke hidari! Mae susume."

The drill over, Yasui solved the problem of getting the party across the Irrawaddy by having the prisoners swim, pushing a raft against the swift current. And on the raft sat Kenny with the sword in his hand and two of the weaker prisoners at his side.

I happened to serve in Shangri-La in the same camp with Yasui. We were barrack mates and when we came overseas I was the only non-Nisei in a small Nisei unit of which Kenny was a member, too.

So we came together to CBI, shared a lower berth up to the West Coast. In the embarkation port, Kenny taught me the famous Nisei three-dice crap game:4-5-6. Kenny was the most intriguing gambler I have ever known. Back in our Shangri-La camp, he lost or won \$500 a night as if it were two bits. The first night at sea, he sized up how much cash there was on board. The sum of it, he assured me, would be in his money

belt before we reached India. And so it was. At the first Indian port, Kenny bought a sparkling star ruby and two star sapphires. And then he made a vow. He made up his mind to make \$10,000 in CBI by gambling.

We knew Yasui's aims, and we worried. We knew our unit would have an important job to do and such a ferocious little gambler might bring the whole team into difficulties. We discussed Yasui for hours and hours with our team leader, who was T/Sgt. Koji Ariyoshi, a Honolulu boy. Yasui gambled on, and yet the team leader wouldn't condemn him. "Wait, wait," Ariyoshi told us. "Watch how he'll turn out at the front. It's not always the ideal garrison soldier who makes a good fighter. Extraordinary people are capable of doing extraordinary things."

We arrived in Delhi. We had about a week in town and looked around. The place teemed with G.I.'s and it was just after payday. Well, we thought, this was the day for Yasui. But Yasui stopped gambling and has never gambled since. He was willing to play occasional poker at low stakes, but he spent his free time in Chinese restaurants eating good food. He began to study war maps and followed with a sudden and genuine interest the course of the global struggle. He realized he was in a theater of war. He wanted to help. He wanted to fight. His life captured meaning. His mind pursued a task. The rest you know.

My life among the Nisei was an exceedingly happy one. They surely will remain my intimate friends until distant times when this war will be but a memory. But I must confess: When I was detached from the unit for other duties it was in some ways a relief. It was a relief from a little too much discipline and from too good behavior. The average Nisei is a model soldier. He is aware of the burden of an unpopular ancestry, yet he knows that he is a good American and wants to prove it. Our team leader made our unit the best disciplined group at all staging camps we had to pass. We often had to march in formation when it wasn't absolutely necessary. Our carbines were the cleanest, our uniforms the neatest. We appeared on the minute everywhere we were told. To sum it up: They were too good for me. Still, my happiest moments in CBI are the days when I come across them from time to time at places often distant and remote. And I remember the long way we went together.

I remember the midnight lunches in our barracks, when they cooked rice and spiced it with Japanese radish. Their faces were dimly lit by the burning stove. The scene could have been somewhere in Japan, but inside every shadowy figure the American flame burned and I seemed to see it all the time.



Col. Chun Lee, Merrill's Chief of Staff, pictured at left, introduces Yoshimura, center, and Miyazaki, right, to a group of Chinese soldiers in North Burma.

And I remember them individually. Koji, the leader, was a Hawaiian longshoreman but worked himself up to graduate with honors from the University of Georgia. Kitsu, the dishwasher from Los Angeles, burned the midnight oil to read John Gunther's *Inside Europe*. Chris, the talented artist of the Walt Disney Studios, was able to express every thought by a quick and forceful sketch. Then there was young Kenjiro, who used to work on Nisei farms all over the Coast, and Sam whose dream is a mechanic's job in any plant anywhere in the United States.

And there was Clarke, the man of the world and honor student at Harvard, and Kenny, the ex-gambler. And Alex, and lastly, Karl, a labor leader in San Francisco.

Karl, 38, was the oldest of us. His name is a hallmark. It is believed by many oppressed, exploited, humble and starving farmers and workers in Japan. It is feared and hated by the Japanese police. The longshoremen of Los Angeles and San Francisco know him, also the fishermen of Seattle and Alaska. This man organized unions in Japan - was blacklisted by the Japanese police - suffered in Japanese dungeons. Back in his American homeland, he became a union organizer and also ran for Assembly in San Francisco on a labor ticket. The dizzy speed of events after Pearl Harbor temporarily called Karl from the waterfront into a relocation center for Americans of Japanese ancestry. From there, Karl volunteered to fight for the U.S. Army for a better world in which his son may live as a free man.

DIG DEEPER: The Japanese American Citizens League's *Anti-Hate Program* states that the word "Jap" is a derogatory term and a racial slur. Words like "Jap" have a long and bitter history. When immigrants first began arriving from Japan, the use of "Jap" became a convenient expression of contempt and hate. Bigots and racists used the term to exploit the fictitious "Yellow Peril." Today, even the term "oriental" is considered offensive. The State of Washington has prohibited the use of "oriental" in statutes, codes, rules and regulations. Historically, the term conveyed negative stereotypes of Asians as being inscrutable, untrustworthy, threatening or unable to assimilate. The term "Asians" is preferred.

Download the brochure, *Words Can Kill the Spirit* and do further research on racial slurs.
<https://jacl.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Brochure-Words-Can-Kill-the-Spirit.pdf>

Activity 2

Dig Deep: Merrill's Marauders

Legends of the Burma Campaign – Frank Merrill and the Marauders



Left: General Frank Merrill, leader of the famed Merrill's Marauders. Army Signal Corps Photo.
Right: General Merrill with two Nisei Marauders, Herbert Miyasaki and Akiji Yoshimura. Army Signal Corps Photo.

Read the following article adapted from the Merrill's Marauders website. Identify central issues, and formulate and answer appropriate questions regarding the article.

Focus Questions:

1. What was the major mission of the Merrill's Marauders? Why was the mission a secret?
2. What made the capture of Myitkyina and the airfield significant for the war in CBI?
3. Study the maps that trace the major engagements of the Merrill's Marauders. What are some factors that made the route and operations so difficult?
4. Research and read more about the Merrill's Marauders and their operations. Determine what caused certain events, and discuss the importance of the Nisei linguists in Burma in the defeat of the Japanese 18th Division Army.

Introduction

The major objective of the Allies in the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater of World War II was to supply and assist Chinese armies in their struggle against the Japanese. The seizure of China's seaports by the Japanese Army had severed its traditional supply lines. To counter this, the Allies transported equipment, men, and supplies to China through Burma by building roads and pipelines, and to India by flying the "Hump" route over the Himalayas. In addition, the Allies aided China by conducting ground and air offensives.

In August 1943 at the "Quebec Conference", President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and other allied leaders decided that an American Long Range Penetration Mission behind the Japanese Lines in Burma was needed to destroy the Japanese supply lines and communications and to disrupt the enemy forces while an attempt was made to reopen the much needed Burma Road.

Overview

President Roosevelt issued a call for volunteers for "A Dangerous and Hazardous Mission" which was answered by approximately 3,000 American soldiers. Organized into six combat teams, two to each battalion, the volunteers came from troops across the globe. Some came from stateside, some from the jungles of Trinidad and Panama. The remainder were battle-hardened veterans of battles in Guadalcanal, New Georgia, and New Guinea. In India some Signal Corps and Air Corps personnel were added, as well as pack troops with mules. Fourteen Japanese Nisei linguists trained in Military Intelligence were also part of this group.

The Unit was officially designated as the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional) with the Code Name: "GALAHAD". They were later popularly known as Merrill's Marauders named for their leader, Brigadier General Frank Merrill.

Merrill's Marauders

After preliminary training operations were undertaken in great secrecy in the jungles of Central India, the Marauders began the long march up the Ledo Road and over the outlying ranges of the Himalayan Mountains into Burma. The Marauders, with no tanks or heavy artillery to support them, walked over 1,000 miles through extremely dense and almost impenetrable jungles.

In five major (Walawbum, Shaduzup, Inkangahtawng, Nhpum Ga, and Myitkyina) and thirty minor engagements, the Marauders defeated the veteran soldiers of the Japanese 18th Division, who vastly outnumbered the Marauders.

Always moving to the rear of the main forces of the Japanese, who had occupied Singapore and Malaya, the Marauders completely disrupted enemy supply and communication lines. Their behind-the-lines operations culminated in the capture of Myitkyina Airfield, the only all-weather airfield in Northern Burma at that time.

At that point, they had behind them over 800 miles of marching over jungle and mountain roads and tracks. They carried all their equipment and supplies on their backs and on the backs of pack mules. Re-supplied by air drops, the Marauders often had to make a clearing in the thick jungle to receive the supplies.

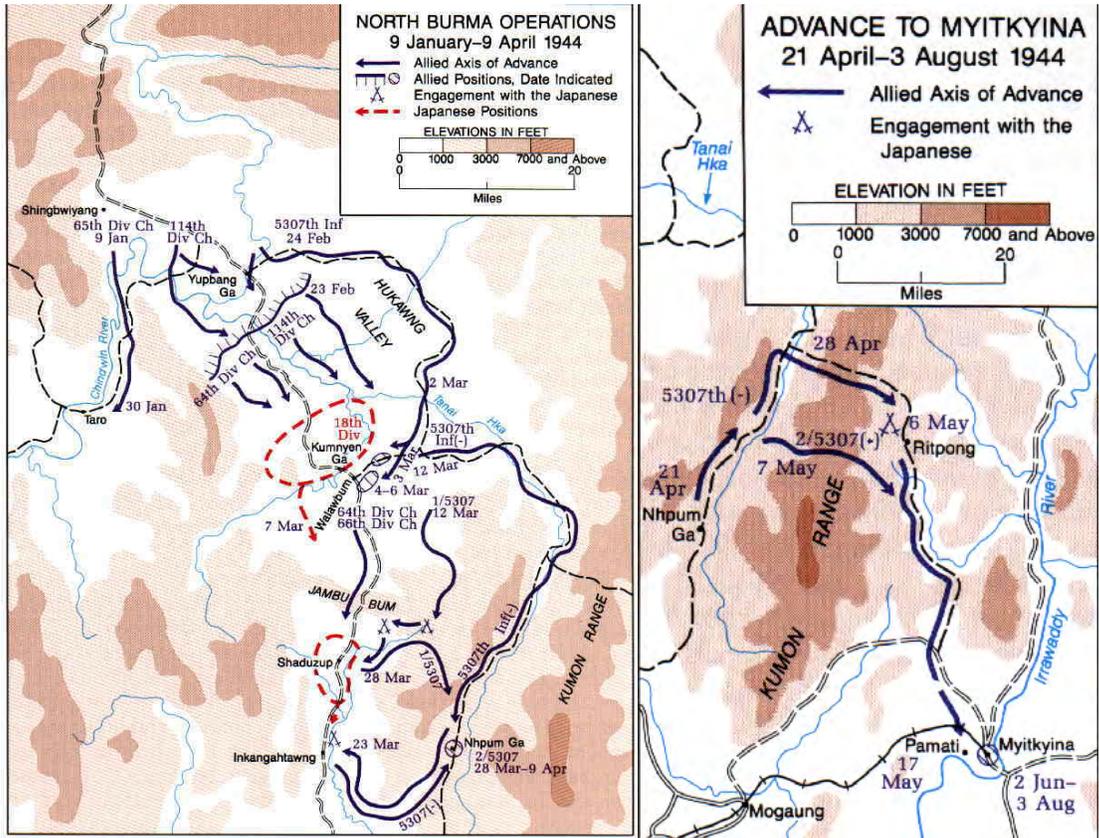
Wounded Marauders were evacuated by air, an extraordinary feat in itself. Wounded men had to be carried on makeshift stretchers, usually made by their comrades from bamboo and field jackets or shirts, to an evacuation point. These points were usually small jungle villages, where the Marauders would then have to hack out a landing strip for the small Piper Cub evacuation planes. The brave sergeant-pilots of the air rescue unit would then land and take off in these very hazardous conditions. The small planes, stripped of all equipment except a compass, only had room for the pilot and one stretcher.

At the end of their campaign all remaining Marauders still in action were evacuated to hospitals suffering from tropical diseases, exhaustion, and malnutrition. The medical tags on their battered uniforms read "AOE", for "accumulation of everything".

For their accomplishments in Burma the Marauders were awarded the "Distinguished Unit Citation " in 1944, redesignated in 1966 as the "Presidential Unit Citation". The Marauders also have the rare distinction of having every member of the unit receive the "Bronze Star."

Adapted from the Merrill's Marauders website: <http://www.marauder.org/history.htm>

Maps of Major Operations and the “March of the Merrill’s Marauders” in Burma, 1944.



Activity 3

Dig Deep: Research Using Oral Histories and Other Artifacts Roy Matsumoto, Hero of Nhpum Ga

From *The Marauders* - By Charlton Ogburn:

"... their persistent volunteering to go forward to intercept the commands of the enemy when the lead units were engaged by trailblocks. What was unspeakably hard for the others can only have been harder still for them. Some had close relatives living in Japan, all had acquaintances, if not relatives held in the concentration camps in the United States on the grounds that persons of Japanese descent and feature must be presumed disloyal. . . . What were their thoughts in the solitude of soul that jungle warfare enforces? I have no way of knowing. But in the case of Sergeant Roy Matsumoto, whose mother was living in Japan, we may perhaps justifiably surmise that he took some comfort from the reflection that she was not in one of the major cities but in a smaller one less likely to attract attack by American bombers - - Hiroshima."

There have been many accounts of the heroism of Roy Matsumoto in books and on websites dedicated to WWII Veterans and Japanese Americans. Listen to some of the oral history interviews on the websites listed below, or read accounts of Roy Matsumoto's life and experiences before, during, and after WWII.

Focus Question:

What did you learn about the Nisei experience during WWII from the story of one man's personal journey?

Websites:

Oral History Video Interviews

Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project: <https://densho.org/archives/>

The Densho Digital Archive holds over 900 visual histories consisting of 1,700 hours of recorded video interviews, and over 10,000 historic photos, documents, and newspapers. This archive is growing as Densho continues to record life histories and collect images and records. These primary sources document the Japanese American experience from immigration in the early 1900s through redress in the 1980s with a strong focus on the World War II mass incarceration.

Roy H. Matsumoto Interview
Date: December 17 & 18, 2003
Location: Seattle, Washington
7 hours 40 minutes - 93 segments

Grant Hirabayashi Interview
Date: January 11, 2006
Location: Seattle, Washington
3 hours 9 minutes - 42 Segments

Go for Broke: http://www.goforbroke.org/learn/archives/oral_histories_archives.php

The Hanashi Oral History Video Archive of the Go For Broke National Education Center is a valuable, professional-quality audio-visual resource for World War II Japanese American veteran information. The archive enables the Go For Broke National Education Center to create multimedia presentations that educate the public through technology on the legacy of the Nisei WWII veteran.

- Roy Matsumoto Interview – 8 tapes
- Grant Hirabayashi Interview – 6 tapes

Japanese American National Museum:

www.discovernikkei.org/en/interviews/profiles/27/

Discover Nikkei: Japanese Immigrants and their Descendants: Stories of Nikkei from around the world through life history video interviews. For each interviewee, there are a selection of clips that share about specific subjects or memories.

Roy Matsumoto Interview, 12 segments

Biography and Photos

Japanese American Veterans Association

<http://www.javadc.org/matsumoto.htm>

Biography of Roy Matsumoto

Merrill's Marauders Association

<http://www.marauder.org/matsumot.htm>

Biography of Roy Matsumoto

Books

Crost, Lyn. 1994. *Honor by Fire: Japanese Americans at War in Europe and the Pacific*. Novato, CA: Presidio Press.

Falk, Stanley L. and Warren M. Tsuneishi. 1995. *MIS in the war Against Japan: Personal Experiences Related at the 1993 MIS Capital Reunion, "The Nisei Veteran: An American Patriot."* Washington, D.C.: Japanese American Veterans Association.

Hopkins, James E. T. 1999. *Spearhead: A Complete History of Merrill's Marauder Rangers*. Baltimore: Galahad Press.

McNaughton, James. 2007. *Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II*. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Defense, U.S. Army.

Mortimer, Gavin. 2013. *Merrill's Marauders: The Untold Story of Unit Galahad and the Toughest Special Forces Mission of World War II*. Minneapolis, MN: Zenith Press.

Ogburn, Charlton. 1959. *The Marauders*. New York: Harper.

Activity 4

Dig Deep: Timeline of Nisei and the U.S. Military

Timeline Questions:

From the timeline, research connecting events in history to answer one of the following focus questions. Use the provided graphic organizers to help you organize your information.

1. List and compare policies of the U.S. government at various times, with regard to Japanese Americans and their capability to serve in the military. How did these policies change and why?
2. What were some of the special difficulties faced by Nisei soldiers? Compare and contrast the experience of Japanese American and Caucasian American soldiers in WWII.
3. Compare and contrast the ways Nisei linguists were valuable during the war and after the war.
4. Describe the decision-making process for volunteering for the U.S. Army before and after the incarceration of Japanese Americans in concentration camps. How was this process different for Nisei from Hawai'i versus the mainland United States? What do you think would motivate a Nisei to volunteer from the camps?

Timeline of Nisei and the U.S. Military from 1931 to 1952

1931

Gero Iwai, often referred to as the “father of the Military Intelligence Service” is recruited as an undercover agent in Honolulu. Iwai was a Nisei born in Honolulu who conducted widespread and detailed investigation of the Japanese population in the Hawaiian Islands. These activities and accomplishments earned Iwai a Bronze Star. The Roberts Commission report, published on Jan 25, 1942, alluded to widespread espionage in Hawai‘i by Japanese consular agents and by the Japanese residents of Hawai‘i . Largely as a result of Iwai’s investigations, these allegations, as far as they concerned the Japanese American residents in Hawai‘i, were proved to be entirely false.

1940

The Navy Intelligence Language School is started by the U.S. Navy at Harvard University and the University of California, Berkeley. The instructors are mostly first generation Japanese (*Issei*) or Japanese Americans born in the United States and educated in Japan (*Kibei*).

1941

Two *Nisei* from Hawai‘i , Richard Sakakida and Arthur Komori are recruited by the U.S. Army in Hawai‘i and sent to the Philippines for undercover work.

The Fourth Army Intelligence School is started at the Presidio of San Francisco. Sixty students led by four Nisei instructors begin training in the Japanese language. The school is later named the Military Intelligence Service Language School, or MISLS.

Japan attacks Pearl Harbor on December 7th, and the United States declares war on Japan, entering World War II. Japanese troops land in the Philippines, French Indochina (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia), and British Singapore. By April 1942, the Philippines, Indochina, and Singapore are under Japanese occupation.

The U. S. Army takes command of the Hawai‘i Territorial Guard, made up of ROTC cadets and volunteers from Honolulu high schools, the majority of them Nisei.

Many male Japanese community leaders in Hawai‘i and the mainland are arrested by the FBI and sent to so-called “justice camps” around the country.

1942

The 317 Nisei members of the Hawaiian Territorial Guard are discharged without explanation and classified as 4-C, "enemy aliens."

Japanese Americans in the military on the mainland are segregated out of their units.

In February, Executive Order 9066 is signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, authorizing the War Department to evacuate and incarcerate over 120,000 Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans. Two-thirds of those interned are U.S. citizens; three-fourths are elderly, women, or children.

The War Department declares that all Nisei are "enemy aliens not desired for the armed service" and classifies them 4-C. Many of the over 5,000 Nisei in the armed forces are discharged. The War Department announces that it will not "accept for service with the armed forces, Japanese or persons of Japanese extraction, regardless of citizenship status or other factors."

Elmer Davis, Office of War Information Director, recommends to President Roosevelt that Japanese Americans be allowed to enlist for military service. This provided the initiative for the concept of an all-Japanese American military unit.

The first graduating class of the Fourth Army Intelligence School graduates forty-five students.

The Fourth Army Language School is moved to Camp Savage, Minnesota, and becomes known as the MISLS. The first class has over 200 students. Over 6,000 students eventually graduate from the MISLS, a total of 21 graduating classes.

MISLS recruits several hundred Japanese American volunteers from concentration camps and from Hawai'i, including Roy Matsumoto.

An all-Nisei battalion is formed in Hawai'i, later called the 100th Infantry Battalion.

1943

The all-Nisei army regiment known as the 442nd Regimental Combat team is formed. They later join with the 100th Infantry Battalion. The 442nd goes on to become the most decorated unit for its size in U.S. military history.

Nisei women are accepted into the Women's Army Corps (WACs). Forty-seven Japanese American WACs report to Fort Snelling, Minnesota, for Japanese language instruction.

Fourteen Nisei are assigned to Merrill's Marauders in Northern Burma.

1944

MISLS moves to Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

Merrill's Marauders captures Myitkyina, the vital junction for opening the Burma Road into China.

100th/442nd RCT rescues the "Lost Battalion," 200 Texans who were cut off and surrounded by the German enemy in France.

1945

More than 50 MIS Nisei soldiers land with the U.S. Marines on Iwo Jima, one of the last battles in the Pacific. Nisei are also present in the Tinian Island operation.

The battle of Okinawa is shortened by the work of Nisei MIS linguists who translate Japanese documents revealing defense plans, troop positions, and maps of artillery positions.

The 522nd Field Artillery Battalion help liberate Jewish prisoners of the Landsberg-Kaufering Dachau Death March and Dachau sub-camps.

May 7th, Germany surrenders.

August 6th, the United States drops an atomic bomb on Hiroshima

August 9th, the United States drops an atomic bomb on Nagasaki.

August 14th, Japan agrees in principle to unconditional surrender.

1945

Japan formally surrenders on September 2, 1945, ending World War II.

1945 to 1952

Tule Lake, the last of the ten U.S. concentration camps, closes on March 28, 1946.

MIS members provide translation services for war crimes tribunals and trials.

During a reception held in Washington, D.C. President Truman pins the Presidential Unit Citation on the 100/442nd RCT colors. "You fought not only the enemy, but you fought prejudice-and you have won." - President Truman

MIS Nisei serve during the Occupation of Japan in military government, civil affairs, education, and intelligence through 1952. Roy Matsumoto is stationed in Okinawa, Japan during this time.

Use the graphic organizers below to use with the Timeline Activity to help organize ideas for your report or presentation.

SIMILARITIES

Japanese Americans and Caucasians serve in military to protect their country/values

Many relatives were first generation immigrants from opposition countries

DIFFERENCES

| Japanese | Caucasians |
|--|---|
| Families in U.S. concentration camps, civil liberties taken away | Families maintain civil liberties |
| Suffered racial discrimination | No racial discrimination, but ethnic prejudices |

Activity 5

Dig Deep: Role-Playing Exercise

“Japanese Americans in the Pacific War had to fight three wars. One was obviously the enemy. And discrimination at home. But we in the MIS had to fight another war to prove ourselves in battle, because we were always suspect of our loyalty.”

--Col. Thomas Sakamoto, MIS, U.S. Army 1941-69

From Teacher’s Guide for Uncommon Courage, Institute for International Studies, Stanford University

Directions for the Role Play Exercise:

It is April 1943. Imagine yourself a young Nisei in your early twenties and in a concentration camp with your family. In your imagination, choose your age and occupation, and decide whether you will enlist in the U.S. military. Read each scenario and answer the following questions on an index card. Then share with your group who you are and how you answered each question.

Scenario 1

In January 1943 federal officials announced that Japanese Americans, including those held in concentration camps, would be allowed to volunteer for a segregated U.S. Army unit. In February 1943 the U.S. War Department and the War Relocation Authority (WRA) decided to test the loyalty of all people of Japanese ancestry who were incarcerated in the WRA camps. They required all those 17 years of age and older to answer a questionnaire that became known as the "loyalty questionnaire." Their answers would be used to decide whether they were loyal or disloyal to the United States. Two questions became the focus of concern and confusion for many people. *(from Densho.org website)*

Question #27 asked:

“Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?”

Question #28 asked:

“Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any and all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance to the Japanese Emperor or any other foreign government, power, or organization?”

1. How would you answer these two questions? Why?
2. Would you volunteer to enlist in the U.S. Military? Why or why not?

Scenario 2

You are a Japanese American citizen born in the United States, but raised in Japan. You are in a concentration camp in Minidoka, Idaho. Your family is living in Tokyo, Japan, where there have been repeated fire bombings by the U.S. Army. Your two older brothers are in the Japanese Army. You are lonely for your family and miss them very much. Many of your friends are enlisting in the U.S. military from the camp to join the all-Japanese 442nd Regimental Combat Team which will fight in Europe. The Military Intelligence Service Language School is looking for volunteers to become Japanese linguists in the MIS in the Pacific. What will you do?

1. What kinds of prejudicial attitudes and loss of civil liberties do you think you might already have encountered from incarceration in the camps? How would these affect your decision to enlist in the military?
2. If you choose to enlist in the military, would you choose to join the 442nd or the MIS? Why?
3. Many Americans not of Japanese descent often said to the Nisei soldiers, "You are fighting against your fatherland." The Nisei were American by birth, and many of their upbringings were typically American. How would you decide who the enemy is? Would you feel that Japan was your fatherland if your parents had been born there?

Try the excellent interactive program on volunteering for the military on the Go for Broke website, *Volunteering from Camp* at:

<http://www.goforbroke.org/learn/archives/multimedia/VFC/default.php>

Volunteering From Camp is an interactive program geared toward educating students and the general public about the values of citizenship, patriotism, and leadership embodied in the stories of Japanese American World War II veterans. It features over 20 video clips from the Go For Broke National Education Center's oral history archive. The interactive program teaches about the decision making process of young men whose families were incarcerated by the U.S. government, as they considered whether or not to volunteer for the U.S. Army.

Activity 6

Dig Deep: People of Color in World War II

Research the participation of other people of color who played valuable roles in WWII . The U.S. military had a critical need to recruit minorities and women, despite the fact that members of these groups were discriminated against and not given full military benefits. Some continued to experience discrimination even after returning from the war. In many cases, their courageous actions were not recognized until long after the war ended.

Other Japanese Americans

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team



National Archives Photo

The 442nd was a segregated U.S. Army regiment. It was made up entirely of Nisei except for the officers, and it saw some of the heaviest action in Europe during World War II. They were joined by the 100th Infantry Battalion made up of Nisei soldiers from Hawai'i. The 442nd fought in Italy, France and Germany and played a key role in the Allied war effort. The best known mission of the 442nd was the rescue of the "Lost Battalion," a group of 200 Texans surrounded by the Germans with no way of escape. This heroic action resulted in more casualties to the 442nd than the number of those they rescued. The 442nd also liberated the survivors of the Dachau concentration camp. Their famous motto, "Go for Broke" reflects their reputation that they were willing to give their all for their country. It was the most decorated unit for its size and length of service in U.S. military history.

For more information:

http://www.goforbroke.org/learn/history/military_units/442nd.php

Women's Army Corps (WACs)



Ansel Adams – Library of Congress

The Women's Army Corps (WACs) was created in 1943 to employ women in the military in non-combat positions. Over 150,000 women signed up, including many Japanese American, Native American, and African American women.

WACs worked as clerks, electricians, radio operators, air-traffic controllers, and other jobs that would "release men for combat". WACs served in the European, North African, and Asian theaters.

For more information:

www.history.army.mil/brochures/wac/wac.htm

African Americans

Tuskegee Airmen



National Archives Photo

The U.S. military was still segregated during WWII, and many in the military leadership thought that African Americans lacked intelligence, skill, courage, and patriotism. The Tuskegee Airmen enlisted to become the country's first African American military pilots. They came from every part of the country, with large numbers from New York City, Washington, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Detroit. Each one accepted the challenge and proudly displayed skill, determination, and patriotism. They often had to do this

while suppressing feelings of humiliation and indignation caused by experiences of racism and bigotry, both at home and overseas.

The Tuskegee Airmen far exceeded the low expectations of their Caucasian officers. While in Europe, their fighter escort group prevented the loss of even a single bomber to enemy planes. They flew over 1,500 missions, and won over 850 medals and earned three Distinguished Unit Citations. Like the Japanese American soldiers during WWII, these airmen fought two wars, one against forces overseas and another against racism at home and abroad.

For more information:

<http://www.tuskegeairmen.org>

Native Americans

Sherman Alexie is a popular author and a member of the Spokane Indian Tribe. In the title story of his recent book, *War Dances*, he describes a fictional conversation between an 85-year old Caucasian veteran and the narrator. The old man served in the U.S. Tenth Army with the narrator's grandfather, who was killed on Okinawa Island in 1946.

LE: "[Your grandfather]...An Indian named Adolph...Your grandfather caught plenty of grief over that. But we mostly called him "Chief," did you know that?"

Me: I could have guessed.

LE: Yeah, nowadays, I suppose it isn't a good thing to call an Indian "Chief," but back then, it was what we did. I served with a few Indians. They didn't segregate them Indians, you know, not like the black boys. I know you aren't supposed to call them boys anymore, but they were boys. All of us were boys, I guess. But the thing is, those Indian boys lived and slept and ate with us white boys. They were right there with us. But anyway, we called all them Indians "Chief." I bet you've been called "Chief" a few times yourself."

Sherman Alexie is a writer and screenwriter/director who won the National Book Award for Young People's Literature for his book, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*.

Private Norman Janis, Ogala Sioux Marauder



Merrill's Marauder PFC Norman Janis with his M1 Garand that he named "Betsy."
U.S. Army Photo

Private First Class Norman Janis, an Ogala Sioux and descendent of Red Cloud, won the admiration and respect of his platoon members for his expertise as a scout and sharpshooter for Merrill's Marauders. Private First Class Janis, nicknamed "Chief," participated on patrols deep into the jungle-clad spurs of the Himalayan Mountains in Burma. Early in the Japanese Pacific campaign, Private Janis demonstrated his sharpshooting skills against enemy snipers. Once when his platoon was fighting from Hsam Shingyang to Nhpum Ga to relieve the 2nd Battalion, Marauder platoon officers were standing in a small clearing studying a map. An enemy sniper, located in a distant tree, fired a single shot. Private Janis observed a slight movement in the vines not obvious to anyone else. At a range of about 300 yards, he killed the sniper with one bullet. Later examination proved it to be a heart shot.

Private Janis was awarded the Sioux Tribal Red Feather, equivalent of a Medal of Honor. This is the highest award bestowed by the Sioux Nation for exceptional valor in combat. Janis was also inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame in Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1996 for his extraordinary feats of courage and other actions as a member of Merrill's Marauders during World War II. In his quiet, unassuming manner, Private Janis preferred to work alone and identified himself as an Army Ranger. Norman Janis was the Tribal Chief of the Sioux and lived on the Sioux Tribe Reservation in Kyle, South Dakota, until his death in 1997.

Navajo Code Talkers

The stereotypical image of the “Indian warrior” aided in the recruitment of Native Americans into the military during WWII. Most of them were accepted or drafted into Caucasian regiments. Like the policies that sent Indian children to boarding schools, conventional wisdom ruled that the assimilation of Native American soldiers into white regiments would break down ties to native traditions and make them a part of mainstream America.

The Navajo Code Talkers was the only unit made up entirely of Native Americans. They took part in every U.S. Marines action in the Pacific from 1942-1945, transmitting radio messages in their native language. Navajo is a very complex, unwritten language spoken only by Navajos in the American southwest, which acted as a “natural code”, the Japanese were never able to break.

Because of the military value of the “Navajo code,” its secret was not declassified until 1968. The Federal government did not acknowledge the critical contributions of the Navajo Code Talkers until 2000, thirty-two years later, when President Clinton signed a bill to grant Congressional Gold Medals to the original twenty-nine Code Talkers, and Silver Medals to 300 Navajo soldiers who were later trained as Code Talkers. By the time the Gold Medals were awarded in 2001, only five of the original Code Talkers were still living.

For more information:

<http://www.navajocodetalkers.org/>



Navajo Code Talkers, Pfc. Preston Toledo and Pfc. Frank Toledo, cousins in a Marine artillery regiment in the South Pacific, relay orders over a field radio in their native lanauaae. (NARA 127-GR-137-57875)

Activity 7

Dig Deep: Using Historical Photographs

Use the following photographs as a catalyst for discussion or as a supporting artifact in your research or presentation on Nisei in WWII. A photograph can have a powerful emotional impact. Careful use of photographs can enhance your work, and lead the viewer to a particular point of view. Analyze each photograph and let it tell a story.



“A soldier and his mother in a strawberry field. The soldier, age 23, volunteered July 10, 1941, and is stationed at Camp Leonard Wood, Missouri.”

Dorothea Lange, WRA
Florin, CA
May 11, 1942



Little Peggy and Bobby Miyaki won't have a Christmas tree in their barracks room home at the Granada Relocation Center...But Christmas is still Santa Claus to them, as mother unwraps early gifts, among them, a picture of their father, Bill Miyaki, who is a soldier in the Army of the United States.

Tom Parker, WRA
Amache, Colorado
December 24, 1943

Pictures and mementoes on phonograph on top: Yonemitsu home, Manzanar Relocation Center.

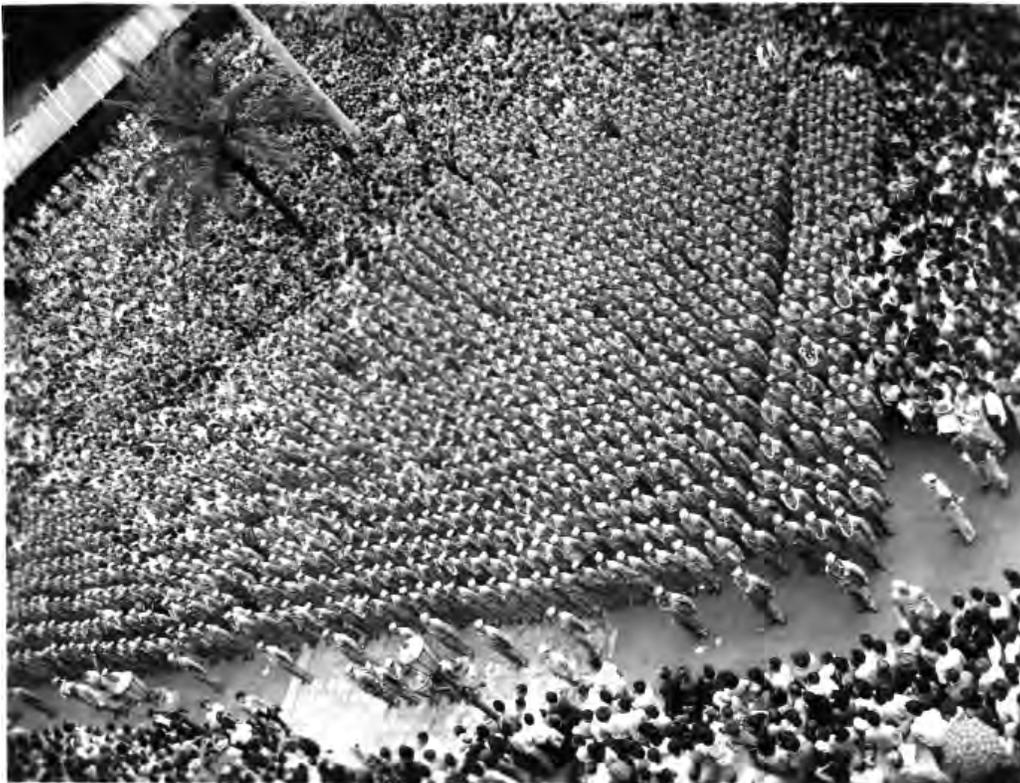
Ansel Adams, WRA
Manzanar Relocation Center
October, 1943





Mrs. Kuni Sakamoto, Honolulu, Hawaii, receives the Bronze Star Medal, posthumously awarded to her son Private Robert I. Sakamoto for outstanding bravery in battle from Chaplain H. Olds, Chaplain Middle Pacific, representing Major General George F. Moore, as Chaplain R.C. Pickhardt, Assistant Chaplain Middle Pacific, looks on.

U.S. Army Signal Corps
Honolulu, Hawaii
March 27, 1946



2,600 AJA (Americans of Japanese Ancestry) Volunteers in 'Iolani Palace Grounds, Honolulu
Honolulu Star Bulletin
Honolulu, O'ahu, Hawaii, March 28, 1943



"U.S.-built Army trucks wind along the side of the mountain over the Ledo supply road now open from India into Burma..." (45th Engineer General Service Regiment and 823rd Aviation Engineer Battalion - All African-American Units built the Ledo Road.) National Archives and Records 208-AA-45L-1 no date



Tuskegee Airmen – Circa May 1942 to August 1943
Location unknown, likely southern Italy or North Africa
U.S. Army photo

Definition of Terms:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Burma | Burma is the largest country by geographical area in mainland Southeast Asia, bordered by China on the northeast, Thailand on the southeast, India on the northwest and the Bay of Bengal to the southwest. During World War II, Burma became a major frontline in the Southeast Asian Theater. It is currently under a military dictatorship, officially called the Union of Myanmar. |
| casualties | A member of the armed forces lost to service through death, wounds, sickness, or capture. It also refers to a loss in numerical strength through any cause, such as death, wounds, sickness, capture, or desertion. |
| CBI | China-Burma-India Theater (CBI) was the name used by the U.S. army for its forces operating in conjunction with Allied air and land forces in China, Burma, and India during WWII. |
| concentration camp | A camp where civilians, enemy aliens, political prisoners, and sometimes prisoners of war are detained and confined, typically under harsh conditions. The concentration camps where persons of Japanese ancestry were confined during WWII are more recently referred to as “internment” or “relocation” camps. |
| dialect | Regional differences in a language that are distinguished by pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. |
| Executive Order 9066 | A presidential order signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942 that authorized the evacuation and mass incarceration of 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast, most of whom were U.S. citizens or legal permanent resident aliens, and half were children. According to the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, the causes for this unprecedented action "were motivated largely by racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership." |
| foxhole | A small dugout with a pit for individual shelter against enemy fire. |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Issei | First generation Japanese citizen who immigrated to the United States (or other country). |
| Jap | The word “Jap” is an ethnic slur and derogatory term. An ethnic slur is demeaning and can cripple the spirit by causing a person or an entire racial or ethnic group to feel vulnerable and isolated. It was popularized during WWII to promote hate toward people of Japanese ancestry in the U.S. and Japan. |
| Kibei | A second generation person of Japanese ancestry who was raised in Japan for a period of time and returned to the United States (or other country). |
| linguist | One who studies linguistics; A person skilled in languages; A human translator; an interpreter, esp. in the armed forces. |
| Merrill’s Marauders | The 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional) with the Code Name: "GALAHAD", later popularly known as "Merrill’s Marauders" named for their leader, Brigadier General Frank Merrill. |
| M.I.S. | Abbreviation for Military Intelligence Service. |
| MISLS | Abbreviation for Military Intelligence Service Language School. |
| Nisei | Second generation person of Japanese ancestry who has United States (or other country’s) citizenship by birth. |
| Pacific War | The Pacific War was the part of World War II that took place in the Pacific Ocean, its islands, and in East Asia. The war began as a conflict with the Empire of Japan and the Republic of China on July 7, 1937, but by December 1941, became part of the greater World War II, and lasted until August 14, 1945. |
| Sansei | A third generation person of Japanese ancestry that has United States (or other country’s) citizenship by parental citizenship or birth. |