

Dear 8th Graders,

Please read the following book:

Houston, Jeanne Wakatsuki. Houston, James D. *Farewell To Manzanar: A True Story Of Japanese American Experience During And After The World War II Internment*. New York: Ember, 2012. Print.

After reading the book, please answer the questions that are attached to this sheet. If you have any questions please feel free to email me at bedwards@cardenarborview.org. Thank you, and enjoy your summer!

Sincerely,
Mr. Edwards



Discussion Questions
Farewell to Manzanar
By Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston

Directions: *Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper. Each question will require a short paragraph to effectively answer.*

1. Jeanne writes that, in order for the internment to happen, “there has to be a kind of acquiescence on the part of the victims, some submerged belief that this treatment is deserved, or at least allowable.” What factors in your opinion, led the majority of Japanese Americans to cooperate with the internment order? If internment camps were proposed now, do you think Americans would cooperate? Why or why not?
2. Jeanne writes that eating in the mess hall led to the collapse of her family as “an integrated unit.” Why do you think that the disruption in mealtime togetherness was so significant to her family?
3. Papa is put in an impossible position when he is questioned about whether the United States or Japan is his country. He asks, “When your mother and your father are having a fight, do you want them to kill each other? Or do you just want them to stop fighting?” How would you answer this if you were in his position?
4. The loyalty oath that the Japanese Americans are asked to sign is tremendously divisive to the Manzanar internees. Do you think that it was legitimate for the U.S. to ask first-generation Japanese-Americans, who were not allowed to become citizens, to renounce their love of Japan? What does “loyalty” mean under these circumstances?
5. As the months turned to years, Manzanar became the only reality for the internees: “It was as if the war was forgotten, our reason for being there forgotten... You learn to contain your rage and despair, and you try to recreate, as well as you can, your normality...” Thus the camp has sports leagues, beauty parlors, glee clubs, Boy Scouts, and other elements of an ordinary American small town. Do you think these social structures and activities had a positive value for the internees? Or were they an example of “normalizing the unthinkable”?