Objective:
Students will learn about the personal experiences of Japanese American incarcerees during World War II and will practice communicating information concisely by developing an original comic.

Common Core State Standards:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7
Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

Description:
According to the School Library Journal’s article *Teaching with Graphic Novels*, the advantages of teaching with comics and graphic novels as supplemental texts includes:

- supporting low readers and promoting memory through pairing of image and text
- modeling concise verbiage for skilled readers
- reinforcing left-to-right sequence
- communicating ideas efficiently

Martin Luther King, Jr. contributed to a comic book titled *The Montgomery Story*, a copy of which can be found in the museum’s archive (a related teacher guide can be found [here](http://americanhistory.si.edu/citizenship/pdf/School_MLK.pdf)). That work inspired Congressman John Lewis to tell his own story of the civil rights movement through comics in the *New York Times* bestseller *March*. Some famous examples of graphic novels on civil-rights topics are *Maus*, Art Spiegelman’s series about his family’s experiences during the Holocaust, and *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi’s autobiographical series about her childhood in Iran.

In addition, graphics and illustrations have a long tradition in Japanese art, including scroll paintings, anime, and manga (literally “random sketches” or doodles, but now used to refer to comic books or illustrated entertainment). See [this video](http://pulverer.si.edu/node/184) from the Smithsonian’s museums of Asian art on the evolution of Japanese graphic art. Comics were also a method for Japanese American incarcerees in World War II to express their experiences. Most famous among these artists was Miné Okubo, who was incarcerated in the Topaz War Relocation Center in Utah during World War II. Okubo’s drawings take the reader through her time at the Tanforan Assembly Center in San Bruno, California, and eventually the Topaz camp. Her artwork inspired her book *Citizen 13660*, which was published in 1946.
Teen participants in the National Museum of American History’s Youth Civic Engagement Program collaborated with Evan Keeling, an artist and exhibits fabricator from the Smithsonian Exhibits, and teens at the Hirshhorn Museum’s ARTLAB+, to create this series of original comics on the Japanese American experience during World War II. The comics represent oral histories from survivors of Japanese American incarceration camps.

Use these comics to introduce this period in history to students or to prepare students to view and participate in the National Youth Summit on Japanese American Incarceration [http://americanhistory.si.edu/nys/national-youth-summit-japanese-american-incarceration-world-war-ii]. As an assessment for this or other topics, use the comic template included here to allow students to create their own comics based on their studies, including examining primary sources such as oral histories. Find oral histories and other primary sources on Japanese American incarceration at the Densho Digital Archive.

*The vivid imagery in comics and graphic novels may cause concern among some parents, so graphic novels should be carefully chosen and discussed with parents and administrators.*
Resources


Yuri Kochiyama: http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Yuri_Kochiyama/
http://www.democracynow.org/2006/2/21/civil_rights_activist_yuri_kochiyama_remembers

Fred Korematsu: http://www.korematsuinstitute.org/fred-t-korematsu-1/

Chizu Iiyama: http://www.tellingstories.org/internment/ciiyama/index.html

Masaru Kawaguchi:
http://www.tellingstories.org/internment/mkawaguchi/index.html

Paul Ohtaki: http://www.tellingstories.org/internment/pohtaki/index.html
Dad! They took away my baseball bat!

“I’ve only seen my dad cry three times... The second time was when we were leaving San Jose, not knowing if we would ever see it again.”

- Norm Mineta

Dust storms and -30 degree temperatures plagued the Heart Mountain War Relocation Center.

Some scouts from the town of Cody are going to join our scout meeting.

We are going out to the Jap camp for a Scout meeting. Are there any Scouts out there?

Alan K. Simpson: Yes, these are American citizens. I thought they were spies.

Norm, why don’t you work with Alan?

Come on boys, time to go...

They remained friends and both went into politics, while Norm was a Congressman and Alan was a Senator, they sponsored H.R. 442, which became the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

On September 21, 2001, Mineta sent a letter to all U.S. airlines forbidding them from practicing racial profiling, or subjecting Middle Eastern or Muslim passengers to a heightened degree of pre-flight scrutiny. He stated that it was illegal for the airlines to discriminate against passengers based on their race, color, national or ethnic origin or religion.

This law included an apology and provided reparations to thousands of surviving Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II.

Norm was appointed United States Secretary of Transportation by President George W. Bush in 2001.

Dad! They took away my baseball bat!
Fred was arrested in San Leandro, California on May 30, 1942. He was charged with defying Executive Order 9066, which authorized the internment of Japanese Americans. Despite his efforts, on September 8, 1942 Fred was convicted of defying the order and sentenced to five years probation and ordered to spend several months at Tanforan Assembly Center before he was transferred to the Topaz concentration camp.

In 1980, a presidential commission found the incarceration of Japanese American unconstitutional. This allowed for Fred's case to be re-opened. On November 10, 1983 Judge Marilyn Hall Patel overturned Fred's conviction in California. His goal was realized in 1988 when President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act. In 1998 Fred was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. He passed away in 2005.

Fred started lobbying the U.S. government for a bill that would grant a formal apology and compensation for the surviving Japanese Americans who were incarcerated.

His work is carried on by his daughter Karen Korematsu, founder and executive director of the Fred T. Korematsu Institute.
Can I help you?

I keep begging for them to send him to a hospital. He needs care!

Mom, come home! The FBI just took Pop! They are holding your father because he is a fisherman and might be helping the Japanese.

What's going on? Is there a Seichi Nakahara living here? We are from the FBI. Seichi was released to a hospital where he was surrounded by servicemen wounded at the Battle of Wake Island.

I'm sorry, but Mr. Nakahara has died.

April 2, 1942

The next day

I'm sorry, but Mr. Nakahara has died.

Now they are putting us all in prison!

Yuri's experiences led her to become a lifelong civil rights activist. She fought for Asian American rights, Puerto Rican independence, African American rights and the release of political prisoners...

Yuri's experiences led her to become a lifelong civil rights activist. She fought for Asian American rights, Puerto Rican independence, African American rights and the release of political prisoners...

While incarcerated Yuri organized welcoming parties for new arrivals and a group called the Crusaders that wrote letters to Nisei soldiers. The Jerome Camp newspaper shared samples of the letters with Yuri's column, Nisei in Khaki.

* Term for 2nd generation Japanese Americans

And famously cradled Malcolm X's head after he was shot on February 21, 1965.

Smithsonian Institution

http://americanhistory.si.edu/getinvolved/youth-civic-engagement-program
Land of the Free? I don’t think so.

The Story of Paul Ohtaki

I never looked back.

Manzanar. We were moved to.

I was arrested. We passed the time with board games and sports.

The FBI came... They put up posters. Our homes were searched.

Land of the free? I don’t think so.

We were moved to Minidoka.

A sugar farm recruited some of us, and... I never looked back.

Everything was fine when we were young...

We had unfinished barracks waiting.

Days were long and boring.

They had unfinished barracks waiting. We had to finish building them.

Nothing would happen to us.

They searched our homes.

FBI came... But then the Japs bomb Pearl Harbor.

A man discovered that our rations were being sold outside the camp.

One day a riot broke out at Minidoka.

We thought nothing would happen to us.

They put up posters. We took all we could fit in two suitcases.

Everyone was young... We thought nothing would happen to us.

...They searched our homes.

Nothing would happen to us.

...They searched our homes.

We took all we could fit in two suitcases.

We thought nothing would happen to us.

They searched our homes.

A sugar farm recruited some of us, and... I never looked back.

...They searched our homes.

Nothing would happen to us.

Pearl Harbor.

A sugar farm recruited some of us, and... I never looked back.

...They searched our homes.

Nothing would happen to us.

Japs bomb Pearl Harbor.

Everything was fine when we were young...

We had unfinished barracks waiting.

Days were long and boring.

They had unfinished barracks waiting. We had to finish building them.

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FBI came... But then the Japs bomb Pearl Harbor.
My name is Masaru Kawaguchi.

Every day after school, my friends and I would go to the basketball court. But then every day when I've finished my work... the guards gave us new chores. There was a new school. The basketball court.

I heard from the others that it looked more like a prison.

Why? We're not sure. It has to do with the war.

1941.

*A negative racial epithet.

I saw the poster. What's going on?

Pack your things. We have to leave tomorrow morning.

Why? We're not sure. It was to do with the war.

Poster. What's going on?

1941.

Every day after school, my friends and I would go to the basketball court.

But one day, I noticed a sign...

*A negative racial epithet.

Poster. What's going on?

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Poster. What's going on?
**December 7, 1941**

The Imperial Japanese Navy attacked Pearl Harbor, killing 2,403 U.S. service personnel.

**October 26, 2001**

President George W. Bush signed into law the Patriot Act, greatly expanding the government's ability to monitor the daily activity of ordinary individuals.

**April 13, 1943**

Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt wrote: "It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen, he is still a Japanese. American citizenship does not necessarily determine loyalty. But we must worry about loyalty..." Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, April 13, 1943

**February 19, 1942**

President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which ultimately led to the incarceration of approximately 120,000 men, women, and children of Japanese ancestry.

**September 11, 2001**

The terrorist group Al-Qaeda coordinated attacks on the U.S., killing 2,977 people.

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**Smithsonian Institution**

**How Does Fear Affect National & International Policy?**

On December 7, 1941, the Imperial Japanese Navy attacked Pearl Harbor, killing 2,403 U.S. service personnel.

On September 11, 2001, the terrorist group Al-Qaeda coordinated attacks on the U.S., killing 2,977 people.

**Together we need to protect civil liberties for everyone.**

*If you have the feeling that something is wrong, don’t be afraid to speak up.*

-Fred T. Korematsu

**What are examples of people acting out of fear that you see today?**

**What should we do to make a difference?**

Youth Civic Engagement Program

[http://americanhistory.si.edu/getinvolved/youth-civic-engagement-program](http://americanhistory.si.edu/getinvolved/youth-civic-engagement-program)
Now draw!

Get a zine!

Now you've...

You're welcome.

How to make this zine:

1. Get some paper 8.5 x 11

2. Hamburger it

3. Holdog it

4. Butterfly it