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Karen Kasmauski
Kathryn Tolbert

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Lucy Craft, Karen Kasmauski, Kathryn Tolbert; Directors
Megumi Nishikura, Producer
Professor Elena Creef, Professor of Women’s and Gender Studies, Wellesley College

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Photo courtesy of Michael Cantineri
Dear Educators and Students,

This film began with two women meeting in a coffee shop. Karen mentioned to Lucy that she was shooting photos for a memoir Kathryn wanted to write about Hiroko, her mom. Lucy impulsively suggested the three—journalists and first-born daughters of Japanese war brides—produce a documentary, instead. A passion project was born.

Journalists are hardwired to search for the next great story, so it may seem odd that a saga so compelling and ostensibly familiar had been left unexplored for most of our lives. And yet, retelling the Japanese war bride tale would prove surprisingly difficult. Conventional histories—particularly those of the mid-20th century—don’t dwell on the lives of ordinary citizens, especially women. From the American side, the brides were regarded as a postwar footnote at best, a curiosity that briefly captured the popular imagination. On the Japanese side, the women fared worse—a symbol of shame and humiliation.

For their part, our mothers were not the best narrators of their own experiences, having spent decades trying to bury the trauma of bombing raids, near-starvation, and lost childhoods. If the war brides—an extremely fraught term they generally abhor—have one thing in common, it’s a single-minded focus on living in the present and making the most of their adopted homeland. Our film’s title, from an old Japanese saying about positivity and picking yourself up again and again, seemed especially apt.

So our research relied not simply on trying to draw these women out, but also on filling in the times in which they lived, through a handful of dissertations and sociological studies, and period accounts in the Japanese and English-language mass media. Our understanding of the life and times of the war brides has been greatly enriched by interviews with some scholars of that period, as well as accounts of postwar Japanese society and culture and Japan’s relationship with the United States.

We were fortunate to work with Blue Chalk Media, a production company that conducted long interviews with our mothers and the three of us, and then shaped a story that was as much about the brides trying to navigate life with their husbands and neighbors, as with their relationships with their own children. We have been gratified to learn that our film has something for virtually everyone—resonating with audiences of all ages and diverse backgrounds.

We hope you enjoy it, too.

Yours truly,
Lucy Craft
Karen Kasmauski
Kathryn Tolbert
Directors, Fall Seven Times, Get Up Eight: The Japanese War Brides © 2015

Questions
1. How have conventional histories regarding the war brides differed between the United States and Japan?
2. The filmmakers describe “a single-minded focus on living in the present and making the most of their adopted homeland” as a common trait that the war brides shared. Through the
readings, discussions, and documentary film, can you think of other traits or attitudes that the war brides held that you admired?

3. At the end of their letter, the filmmakers express their gratitude that this film has resonated with audiences of all ages and diverse backgrounds. In what ways have the war brides’ stories and experiences resonated with you?

4. Prepare a short, two-minute summary of your discussion regarding the above questions with the class.
Dear Educators and Students,

In 2013, I directed and produced the documentary film *Hafu—the Mixed-Race Experience in Japan*, which followed the lives of five individuals who identify as half-Japanese or “hafu” as they are called in Japan. As a hafu myself, growing up in Japan, I learned to speak both Japanese and English and had the privilege of traveling back and forth between Japan and the United States to visit family. For a few years, I attended international schools in Tokyo where I met other hafu who had experiences similar to mine. It wasn’t until I returned to Japan after living in the United States for high school and university that I started to meet hafus whose experiences were vastly different. I began to see that when you were born, where you were raised, the nationality of your parents, and what languages you spoke all factored into a vast spectrum of experiences and identities. In particular, I found the impact of our parents—the circumstances under which they met and how they chose to raise their children—to be the greatest of them all.

For me, *Fall Seven Times, Get Up Eight: The Japanese War Brides* tells one of the incredible journeys that our parents made. Whether for love or for other reasons, these Japanese women overcame language barriers and cultural differences in order to marry their “former enemy.” They encountered one obstacle after another, not the least of which was to raise mixed-race children in the United States—children whose mere presence continue to challenge people’s ideas of race, ethnicity, and nationality even today.

This film is also about telling the stories from a community that sees so little of themselves reflected in the world. The Japanese war brides and their children often lived far apart from each other. Their immediate environments made them feel isolated and misunderstood. When we kicked off the production of the film with a crowdfunding campaign there was a tremendous response from the community. In one Facebook group, people started sharing photos of their parents from the ’40s and ’50s. It was clear that there was a deep yearning to see these stories light up the big screen.

I was lucky to have connected with Lucy Craft while I was still living in Tokyo and am forever grateful I was brought on to produce this film. From consulting on the Kickstarter campaign, to planning the logistics, conducting the interviews, and working with the editors, it was a remarkable experience to help bring the directors’ vision to life and help tell their mothers’ stories. Whether you are mixed race or not, my hope is that something in this film resonates deeply with you and leaves you with a desire to know your own family’s story.

Megumi Nishikura
Producer, *Fall Seven Times, Get Up Eight: The Japanese War Brides* © 2015

Questions

1. Ms. Nishikura discusses how in meeting other “hafu,” she began to see their “vast spectrum of experiences and identities.” In what ways does this documentary film reflect a vast spectrum of experiences among the war brides? In what ways are the war brides’ experiences similar? In what ways are they different?

2. Ms. Nishikura describes how the war brides “encountered one obstacle after another, not the least of which was to raise mixed-race children in the United States—children whose mere presence continue to challenge people’s ideas of race, ethnicity, and nationality even today.” In what ways do you think the war brides’ mixed-race children challenged people’s ideas of
race, ethnicity, and nationality at the time? Do you think people’s perceptions have changed in recent years? If so, how?

3. At the end of her letter, Ms. Nishikura expresses her wish that this film leaves you with a desire to know your own family’s story. Think of some aspect of your family’s history that you don’t know much about. Describe what you know and what questions you would like to ask your family (but please share only what you feel comfortable with).

4. Prepare a short, two-minute summary of your discussion regarding the above questions with the class.
Dear Educators and Students,

My name is Elena Creef. My mother, Chiyohi Creef, is featured in a beautiful oral history/video (“For the Love of English”) created by Kathryn Tolbert, with photographs by Karen Kasmauski, two of the filmmakers for Fall Seven Times, Get Up Eight: The Japanese War Brides. My mother is also a World War II Japanese war bride from the same generation as the women featured in the documentary film. My father, Gilbert Creef, served in the U.S. Army and was stationed in Japan after World War II during the Allied Occupation. He was the first boyfriend my mother ever had. They courted in between his rotation from Japan to the Korean War, got married, and then thanks to the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952, my mother was allowed to immigrate to the United States where she and my father raised our family across a series of Army bases. They were married for 42 years.

Japanese war brides tend to disappear from Asian/American historical view, so I am very happy that you are remembering this generation of women in your studies of World War II.

I like to think that the story of Japanese war brides is a reminder that love can flourish in the aftermath of war. Certainly, my two brothers and I are living proof of this. When we were growing up outside Fort Sill in Lawton, Oklahoma, there weren’t a lot of other mixed-race kids in our neighborhood—except for the children of other Japanese war brides. Multiculturalism wasn’t established yet. We were raised on Coca-Cola, McDonald’s hamburgers, homemade sushi, rice balls, and mac and cheese. Our Japanese moms were told by the American Red Cross ladies not to teach their children how to speak Japanese because it might “confuse” us. Our mothers did their best to raise us to be 100 percent American citizens and not feel like we were lost somewhere in the tug of war between East and West.

The last time someone asked me what it was like to grow up as the daughter of a war bride, this is what I said:

I am the daughter of a World War II Japanese war bride
who met and married my North Carolinian father
one fine Tokyo day in 1949 while she was hanging up the laundry to dry.

There is no escaping this body made out of history,
war and peace, two languages, and two cultures.

My name is Elena June,
I am the youngest daughter of Chiyohi,
who is the youngest daughter of Iso,
who was the daughter of the Mayor of Yokoze
and once was the Village Beauty
born in the last century to a Japanese woman
whose name is now forgotten
but who lived in the Meiji era
and loved to tell ghost stories.
Thank you for taking the time to learn about these strong, resilient Asian women who bravely chose to pursue dreams of love, marriage, and family and make America their “home.”

Sincerely,
Elena Tajima Creef
Advisory group member for The War Bride Experience, Inc.
Professor of Women’s and Gender Studies
Wellesley College
Wellesley, MA 02482

Questions
1. Professor Creef describes how she and her siblings were raised on, “Coca-Cola, McDonald’s hamburgers, homemade sushi, rice balls, and mac and cheese.” In what ways did their food reflect their culture? In what ways does the food you eat reflect your family’s culture and background?
2. Professor Creef describes how “there weren’t a lot of other mixed-race kids in our neighborhood…” and how “Japanese moms were told by the American Red Cross ladies not to teach their children how to speak Japanese because it might ‘confuse’ us. Our mothers did their best to raise us to be 100 percent American citizens and not feel like we were lost somewhere in the tug of war between East and West.” Do you agree with this approach? Why or why not?
3. Professor Creef shares a poem she had written to describe what it was like to grow up as a daughter of a war bride. Write your own poem using the template below. Please feel free to adjust, add, or omit lines so that you can create a poem that reflects who you are, and that you are comfortable sharing.

   I am the (son/daughter/child) of __________
   who met and married/had a child with __________
   (When?)
   There is no escaping this body made out of __________
   My name is __________.
   I am the (youngest/middle/oldest/only) (son/daughter/child) of (parent’s name)
   who is the (youngest/middle/oldest/only) (son/daughter/child) of grandparent’s name
   who was (detail about grandparent)
   and once was (detail about grandparent)
   born (when?)
   whose name is __________
   but who lived in __________
   and loved (detail about grandparent).

4. Prepare a short, two-minute summary of your discussion regarding the above questions with the class.
Synopsis

*Fall Seven Times, Get Up Eight: The Japanese War Brides* is an award-winning documentary short film about three Japanese war brides, produced and directed by their daughters: Lucy Craft, Karen Kasauski, and Kathryn Tolbert.

Despite lingering wartime enmity, tens of thousands of Japanese wives—the biggest influx of Asian women in U.S. history up to that point—crossed the Pacific. They began new lives in difficult and to them mysterious circumstances, scattered across the country in places where they were often the first Japanese ever seen. What was it like to leave their family, friends, and country, and marry a former enemy? Even for those whose choice of spouse proved to be a tragic mistake, there was no turning back. Many in Japan viewed them as social outcasts and even today the words “war bride” in Japanese carry such a stigma—of bar girls, even prostitution—that people don’t like to say them. Now these women are in their 80s and 90s. This is their story, of lives shaped by one irrevocable decision.

Most of all, the film is a glimpse into a compelling episode in modern U.S.–Japan history that tells viewers as much about the United States and Japan as it does about these families.¹

Terminology, Grade Level, and Subjects

Note that the term “Oriental” is used on Handout 2, *Japanese Immigration and the Allied Occupation*. Please make sure to clarify with students that this is an outdated term used to describe people of Asian or Pacific heritage, but is now considered offensive when used to describe people.

This teacher’s guide is recommended for the following secondary and community college classes:

- Asian American Studies
- Asian Studies
- Contemporary Issues
- Debate
- Global/International Issues
- Government
- Law
- Political Science
- Social Studies
- U.S. History
- World Cultures

Connections to Curriculum Standards

This teacher’s guide has been designed to meet certain national history and social studies, geography, and common core standards as defined by the National Center for History in the Schools and the National Council for the Social Studies. The standards for the lesson are listed here.

¹Text adapted from the film website: [https://www.fallsevengetupeight.com/about.html](https://www.fallsevengetupeight.com/about.html).
National History Standards (from the National Center for History in the Schools)

U.S. History

• Era 4, Standard 2C, Grades 5–12: Analyze the push-pull factors which led to increased immigration, for the first time from China but especially from Ireland and Germany. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]

• Era 4, Standard 2C, Grades 7–12: Explain how immigration intensified ethnic and cultural conflict and complicated the forging of a national identity. [Interrogate historical data]

• Era 6, Standard 2A, Grades 5–12: Assess the challenges, opportunities, and contributions of different immigrant groups. [Examine historical perspectives]

• Era 8, Standard 3B, Grades 7–12: Describe military experiences and explain how they fostered American identity and interactions among people of diverse backgrounds. [Utilize literary sources including oral testimony]

• Era 8, Standard 3C, Grades 7–12: Explore how the war fostered cultural exchange and interaction while promoting nationalism and American identity. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]

• Era 10, Standard 2B, Grades 9–12: Identify the major issues that affected immigrants and explain the conflicts these issues engendered. [Identify issues and problems in the past]

• Era 10, Standard 2E, Grades 9–12: Evaluate the continuing struggle for e pluribus unum amid debates over national vs. group identity, group rights vs. individual rights, multiculturalism, and bilingual education. [Consider multiple perspectives]

World History

• Era 7, Standard 6A, Grades 7–12: Describe major patterns of long-distance migration of Europeans, Africans, and Asians and analyze causes and consequences of these movements. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]

• Era 9, Standard 3A, Grades 9–12: Analyze connections between globalizing trends in economy, technology, and culture in the late 20th century and dynamic assertions of traditional cultural identity and distinctiveness. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]

• World History Across Eras, Standard 1, Grades 5–12: Analyze how ideals and institutions of freedom, equality, justice, and citizenship have changed over time and from one society to another.

National Social Studies Standards (from the National Council for the Social Studies)

• Culture; Thematic Strand I: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural
diversity.

- Time, Continuity, and Change; Thematic Strand II: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.
- People, Places, and Environments; Thematic Strand III: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.
- Individual Development and Identity; Thematic Strand IV: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of individual development and identity.
- Global Connections; Thematic Strand IX: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of global connections and interdependence.
- Civic Ideals and Practices; Thematic Strand X: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ideals, principles, and practices of citizenship in a democratic republic.

**Essential Questions**

- Who were the Japanese war brides and why are their stories an important chapter in the history of the United States?
- What factors in Japan contributed to the decisions of tens of thousands of Japanese war brides to leave their home country?
- What were some of the challenges the Japanese war brides faced in their lives in the United States?
- How did the social, political, and economic post-World War II climate in the United States affect the experiences of Japanese war brides?
- What are some factors that shaped the identities of Japanese war brides?
- What factors influence identity formation?
- In what ways can a deeper understanding of our identities help us to understand other people’s perspectives?
- What challenges did Japanese immigrants—including Japanese war brides—face in terms of assimilation into U.S. society?
- How did the experiences of early Japanese immigrants compare with Japanese war brides?
- How did the experiences of Japanese war brides—married to a U.S. citizen of a different race—differ from those who married Japanese Americans?
- What were some of the experiences of the children of the Japanese war brides, and what sorts of unique challenges did their families face?

**Objectives**

Through the activities outlined in this teacher’s guide, students will

- learn a general history of Japanese immigration to the United States;
- consider the impact discriminatory laws had on the Japanese American community in the United States;
• compare the early Japanese immigrant experiences with that of Japanese war brides;
• appreciate the challenges Japanese immigrants—including Japanese war brides—faced in terms of assimilation into U.S. society;
• recognize how issues of immigration, discrimination, and assimilation are significant issues in U.S. society today;
• consider identity-related issues of Japanese war brides who immigrated to the United States; and
• appreciate multiple perspectives.


Handout 1, *Pre-test*, p. 15, 30 copies
Handout 2, *Japanese Immigration and the Allied Occupation*, pp. 16–19, 30 copies
Handout 3, *Note-taking Sheet*, pp. 20–22, 30 copies
Handouts 4A–E, *Examination of Quotes*, pp. 24–29, six copies each (optional)
Handout 5, *Letter to Filmmakers*, p. 30, 30 copies (optional)
Answer Key to Handout 1 (*Pre-test*), pp. 31–32
Answer Key to Handout 2 (*Japanese Immigration and the Allied Occupation*), pp. 33–34
Answer Key to Handout 3 (*Note-taking Sheet*), pp. 35–36
Letters to Educators and Students, pp. 1–6, 10 copies each (optional),
Magazines, scissors, glue, poster board or heavy stock paper (for Handout 4D, *Examination of Quotes*, collage activity) (optional)

Equipment

Computer projector and screen
Computer speakers (optional)

Teacher Preparation

Instructions and materials are based on a class size of 30 students. Adjust accordingly for different class sizes.

1. Familiarize yourself with the letters to educators and students, the documentary, handouts, and answer keys.
2. Set up and test computer, projector, and speakers. Confirm ability to play video and project sound audibly to students.
3. Determine which activities the class will complete. Gather materials and make the appropriate number of copies of handouts accordingly.
Procedures: Day One

1. Inform students that they will be studying immigration through the lens of the Japanese war bride experience.
2. Distribute one copy of Handout 1, Pre-test, to each student and direct them to answer the questions on the handout. Inform them that their answers will not be graded. However, they should answer them to the best of their ability.
3. Collect students’ answers to the questions on Handout 1.
4. Distribute one copy of Handout 2, Japanese Immigration and the Allied Occupation, to each student.
5. Divide the class into small groups of three students each. Instruct students to read the handout and respond to the questions. Allow the remainder of the class period for students in their small groups to read the handout and answer the questions.

Procedures: Days Two and Three

1. Divide the class into the same small groups as in Day One and instruct groups to discuss their responses to the questions at the end of Handout 2, Japanese Immigration and the Allied Occupation. You may also want to discuss the questions as a class, using the Answer Key to Handout 2 (Japanese Immigration and the Allied Occupation) as a guide.
2. Inform students that they will now be looking in depth into one of the major periods of Japanese immigration to the United States—that is, when the Japanese war brides immigrated to the United States following the end of World War II. Explain that their examination will be through the viewing and analysis of the documentary film Fall Seven Times, Get Up Eight: The Japanese War Brides.
3. Distribute one copy of Handout 3, Note-taking Sheet, to each student. Instruct students to take notes in the space provided on the handout as they view the approximately 25-minute film. Collect the handouts after students have viewed the entire film.

Activity: Examination of Quotes

1. Divide the class into five groups and distribute one of the five small-group activities on Handouts 4A–E, Examination of Quotes, to each group. Inform students that important quotes from the film were grouped into five categories. These categories are:
   - Handout 4A: Changing perceptions
   - Handout 4B: Immigration
   - Handout 4C: “Melting pot” versus “mixed salad”
   - Handout 4D: What does it mean to be an American?
   - Handout 4E: Cultural differences within the family
2. Point out that each small-group activity has a “For Discussion” section for students to consider while examining the quotes, and an activity.
Allow students the rest of the class period to discuss the questions and to work on their activities.

3. Ask each group to present a summary of its work.

**Activity: Letters to Educators and Students**

1. Divide the class into ten small groups of three students each. Distribute one copy of each of the three “Letters to Educators and Students” to each small group.

2. Mention the following:
   - The directors—Lucy Craft, Karen Kasmaski, and Kathryn Tolbert—are all daughters of Japanese war brides.
   - Megumi Nishikura is the producer for the documentary film *Fall Seven Times, Get Up Eight: The Japanese War Brides*.
   - Elena Creef is a professor of Women’s and Gender Studies at Wellesley College in Massachusetts. She is also a daughter of a war bride.

3. Ask students to spend ten minutes taking turns reading the “Letters to Educators and Students.”

4. Once all students have finished reading all three letters, direct each student to choose which letter they would like to discuss in more depth. Then ask students to re-group with other students who chose the same letter.

5. Instruct students to bring the letter they chose with them to their large group. The class should now be divided into three large groups of 10 students each.

6. Divide the groups further so that there are now five students in each group. Each letter should have two groups discussing its content. For your reference, the questions at the end of each letter are also included below:

   - **Letter from the directors: Lucy Craft, Karen Kasmaski, and Kathryn Tolbert**
     - How have conventional histories regarding the war brides differed between the United States and Japan?
     - The filmmakers describe “a single-minded focus on living in the present and making the most of their adopted homeland” as a common trait that the war brides shared. Through the readings, discussions, and documentary film, can you think of other traits or attitudes that the war brides held that you admired?
     - At the end of their letter, the filmmakers express their gratitude that this film has resonated with audiences of all ages and diverse backgrounds. In what ways have the war brides’ stories and experiences resonated with you?

   - **Letter from producer Megumi Nishikura**
     - Ms. Nishikura discusses how in meeting other “hafu,” she began to see their “vast spectrum of experiences and identities.” In what ways does this documentary film reflect a vast spectrum...
of experiences among the war brides? In what ways are the war brides’ experiences similar? In what way are they different?

- Ms. Nishikura describes how the war brides “encountered one obstacle after another, not the least of which was to raise mixed-race children in the United States—children whose mere presence continue to challenge people’s ideas of race, ethnicity, and nationality even today.” In what ways do you think the war brides’ mixed-race children challenged people’s ideas of race, ethnicity, and nationality at the time? Do you think people’s perceptions have changed in recent years? If so, how?

- At the end of her letter, Ms. Nishikura expresses her wish that this film leaves you with a desire to know your own family’s story. Think of some aspect of your family’s history that you don’t know much about. Describe what you know and what questions you would like to ask your family (but please share only what you feel comfortable with).

• Letter from Professor Elena Creef

- Professor Creef describes how she and her siblings were raised on, “Coca-Cola, McDonald’s hamburgers, homemade sushi, rice balls, and mac and cheese.” In what ways did their food reflect their culture? In what ways does the food you eat reflect your family’s culture and background?

- Professor Creef describes how “there weren’t a lot of other mixed-race kids in our neighborhood…” and how “Japanese moms were told by the American Red Cross ladies not to teach their children how to speak Japanese because it might ‘confuse’ us. Our mothers did their best to raise us to be 100 percent American citizens and not feel like we were lost somewhere in the tug of war between East and West.” Do you agree with this approach? Why or why not?

- Professor Creef shares a poem she had written to describe what it was like to grow up as a daughter of a war bride. Write your own poem using the template below. Please feel free to adjust, add, or omit lines so that you can create a poem that reflects who you are, and that you are comfortable sharing.

I am the (son/daughter/child) of ________
who met and married/had a child with ___________
(When?)
There is no escaping this body made out of ________
My name is ________.
I am the (youngest/middle/oldest/only) (son/daughter/child) of (parent’s name)
who is the (youngest/middle/oldest/only) (son/daughter/child) of (grandparent’s name)
who was (detail about grandparent)
and once was (detail about grandparent)
born (when?)
whose name is _________
but who lived in _________
and loved (detail about grandparent).

7. Allow time for students to discuss the questions at the end of their letters and to prepare their short two-minute summaries of responses to the questions. Groups should select presenters.

8. Facilitate group presentations.

Activity: Letters to Filmmakers

1. Inform students that they now they have an opportunity to write to the filmmakers to let them know their thoughts and impressions regarding the film, and to ask any questions that they might have.

2. Distribute one copy of Handout 5, Letter to Filmmakers, to each student and review the directions as a class.

3. Allow students to write their letters in class or as homework. Instruct students to email their letters to you.

4. Once you have reviewed and assessed the letters, forward them to the filmmakers at warbride@zoho.com. Alternatively, create a summary and forward a shortened class compilation of the letters to the same email address.

Final Day

Once your choice of activities has been completed, revisit Handout 1, Pre-test. Return students’ pre-tests to them and use the Answer Key to Handout 1 (Pre-test) to evaluate students’ answers and invite discussion. Suggested discussion questions for debriefing the curriculum module are provided throughout the Answer Key as well as at the end.

Assessment

The following are suggestions for assessing student work in this lesson:

1. Evaluate student responses to Handout 2, Japanese Immigration and the Allied Occupation, using Answer Key to Handout 2 (Japanese Immigration and the Allied Occupation) as a guide.

2. Evaluate student responses to Handout 3, Note-taking Sheet, using Answer Key to Handout 3 (Note-taking Sheet) as a guide.

3. Evaluate group projects from Handouts 4A–E, Examination of Quotes, using the criteria given on each handout as a guide.

4. Evaluate letters from Handout 5, Letter to Filmmakers, using the criteria given on the handout as a guide.

5. Assess student participation in group and class discussions, evaluating students’ ability to:
   • clearly state their opinions, questions, and/or answers;
   • provide thoughtful answers;
   • exhibit sensitivity toward different cultures and ideas;
   • respect and acknowledge other students’ comments; and
   • ask relevant and insightful questions.
PRE-TEST

Directions: Answer the following questions in the space provided below. Note that you will not be graded, however, please answer to the best of your ability.

1. After Japan was defeated in World War II, the country came under the control of the Allied forces. Approximately how many American GIs and civilians came to Japan during that time?

2. Approximately how many war brides came to live in the United States after World War II?

3. When you think about Japan, what are some impressions you have? (Is it wealthy? Urban or rural? Are your impressions positive or negative?)

4. What are some factors that “pushed” Japanese war brides to leave Japan? What are some factors that “pulled” them to the United States?

5. Imagine you were a Japanese war bride and you wore a kimono to impress your new husband’s family in the United States. How do you imagine they might react?
Japanese Immigration and the Allied Occupation

Directions: Read the following handout with your group and answer the questions at the end on a separate sheet of paper. You may work together with your group, but everyone should turn in their own answer sheet.

The first Japanese came to the United States as the result of shipwrecks in the Pacific Ocean during the mid-19th century. Two of the most famous were Manjiro Nakahama and Hikozo Hamada. In 1868, an American businessman sent a group of about 148 Japanese contract laborers to Hawaii. A year later, 23 Japanese established a silk and tea farm in California. This group, the Wakamatsu Colony, is often cited as the first Japanese settlement in the mainland United States.

After the 1868 Meiji Restoration, Japan began a period of Westernization and modernization—in large part to protect itself from U.S. and European imperialism. The costs of modernization had a negative impact on farmers. In prefectures like Hiroshima, Yamaguchi, Fukuoka, and Kumamoto, farmers were hit especially hard. In 1885, the first group of 944 government contract laborers from Japan arrived in Hawaii. With the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy and the annexation of Hawaii by the United States in 1898, emigration companies assumed the role of recruiting and transporting Japanese laborers to Hawaii and the U.S. mainland.

Between 1885 and 1924, approximately 200,000 Japanese immigrated to Hawaii and the U.S. mainland. By 1900, there were about 60,000 Japanese in Hawaii and about 24,000 Japanese on the U.S. mainland. In addition to the challenging economic situation in Japan, there were a couple of other reasons for this large increase in numbers of Japanese immigrants to Hawaii and the U.S. mainland. First, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act stopped immigration from China to the United States, resulting in a labor shortage in the western United States. California farmers, for example, needed laborers to work in the fields. Thus, there was an increase in demand for Japanese immigrants who would work as farm laborers. Second, the Emigrants Protection Act was passed by the Japanese government in 1896 to regulate the activities of emigration companies. This law required each Japanese emigrant to have someone responsible for his/her financial support in the country of destination. Through the Emigrants Protection Act, the Japanese attempted to protect its people going abroad.

Like the Chinese immigrants before them, for many Japanese immigrants or issei (literally, first generation), the stories they heard about the wealth and comfort of the United States were exaggerated. Most encountered tremendous hardships upon arriving in the United States. The types of employment found by Japanese were primarily in farming, railways, factories, canneries, plant nurseries, and fisheries.

Most of the immigrants were young men. In the 1900 census, only 1,000 of the approximately 24,000 Japanese in the United States were women. As a result of this, a practice that became known as “picture bride” marriage developed. Most young Japanese immigrant men couldn’t afford to travel back to Japan for a bride, so requests were made to their parents, relatives, or friends in Japan to find prospective brides for them. Since these types of marriages often involved the exchange of photographs between the Japanese men in the United States and Japanese women in Japan, the practice was referred to as “picture bride” marriages. There was much U.S. resentment of the practice and the Japanese government stopped issuing passports to Japanese picture brides in 1920.

Japanese and all other Asian immigrants were not allowed to become citizens of the United States. They were “aliens ineligible to citizenship.” This meant that Japanese in the United States...
could not vote or work in occupations requiring U.S. citizenship. The Naturalization Act of 1790 granted naturalization privileges to “free white” immigrants. In 1868, this was extended to “people of African nativity or descent.” The 1790 Act would deny citizenship to Japanese and most other Asian immigrants until 1952. Chinese became eligible to citizenship in 1943.

On October 11, 1906, the San Francisco School Board of Education ordered the segregation of 93 Japanese and Japanese American (meaning Americans of Japanese ancestry) school students into an “Oriental School” with Chinese and Korean students. Many leading educators in California and throughout the United States protested this decision, including President Theodore Roosevelt, who himself was for restricting Japanese immigration but was aware of Japan’s military power and didn’t want to anger Japan. This segregation met with severe protest by the Japanese government. At the heart of the segregation of the Japanese students was exclusion of Japanese broadly. The school board decision was rescinded in 1907. Following this, Roosevelt issued an executive order that prohibited the remigration of Japanese immigrants from Hawaii to the U.S. mainland. He also began to negotiate a limitation on Japanese immigration with Japan.

In 1908, Japan, under pressure from the United States, agreed to restrict further emigration of Japanese laborers to the United States. This was known as the Gentlemen’s Agreement. The agreement contained loopholes that allowed for immigrant’s family members from Japan and “picture brides” to enter the United States. The large increase in the number of Japanese women immigrants changed the make-up of the Japanese immigrant community from one of primarily Japanese male laborers to one of families seeking permanent residence.

In 1913, the California legislature passed a law prohibiting Japanese from owning land. This law was called the Alien Land Law. Japanese were not directly mentioned in the law. However, the law specified that aliens ineligible to citizenship were prohibited from purchasing land. Farming represented the path to becoming Americans for many European immigrants, and farming was critical to the success of the Japanese immigrants. There were loopholes in the law, however. Japanese immigrants were able to purchase or lease land in the name of their American-born children, the *nisei* (literally, second generation) who were U.S. citizens. In fact, by 1920, there was a dramatic increase in Japanese owned and leased land. In 1920, the agricultural production of Japanese farms was valued at $67 million—approximately 10 percent of the total value of California’s crops. Important to keep in mind is that the Alien Land Law sent a clear anti-Japanese message to the Japanese immigrants.

A 1920 law attempted to close these loopholes—prohibiting aliens ineligible to citizenship from leasing and sharecropping land. This resulted in a decrease in Japanese owned and leased land. Similar alien land laws were enacted in Washington, Arizona, Oregon, Idaho, Nebraska, Texas, Kansas, Louisiana, Montana, New Mexico, Minnesota, and Missouri.

The Immigration Act of 1924, which was passed by Congress, prohibited aliens ineligible to U.S. citizenship—including the Japanese—from immigrating to the United States until 1952. Japanese immigration to the United States stopped except for a few isolated cases of Japanese entering the United States for family or special occupational reasons, and after the end of World War II in 1945 when Japanese brides of American servicemen started to receive special permission to enter despite the ban on Asian immigration.

Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 and the U.S. declaration of war on Japan on December 8, 1941, Japanese immigrants and their U.S.-born children were suddenly thrust into a very difficult situation. The Japanese immigrants were Japanese nationals
who were ineligible for U.S. citizenship and their U.S.-born children were U.S. citizens. In 1941, there were approximately 158,000 people of Japanese descent in Hawaii and approximately 127,000 people of Japanese descent on the U.S. mainland.

From 1942 to after the end of World War II in 1945, approximately 120,000 people of Japanese descent (mostly issei and nisei) from the West Coast and some from Hawaii were incarcerated—without due process—by the U.S. government. After they were released, some returned to the West Coast and others moved to other regions of the United States. During World War II, approximately 33,000 Japanese Americans served in the U.S. military, mostly in Europe but also in the Pacific War (Military Intelligence Service), and during the Allied Occupation of Japan, 1945–1952.

August 14, 1945, marked the end of the war between the United States and Japan. The ceremony of Japan’s official surrender occurred September 2, 1945, which also officially began the Occupation of Japan, a time during which Allied forces controlled and ran every aspect of Japanese society—from land redistribution, to school textbooks and mass media, to giving women the right to vote.

The Occupation of Japan covered the time period from September 2, 1945, until April 28, 1952, when Japan became independent. While the Occupation was technically undertaken by the Allied forces, in practice, the United States dominated Occupational control. American General Douglas MacArthur was appointed Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) and retained that position until April 1951, when he was replaced by General Matthew Ridgway. Japan was virtually isolated from other contact, and communication was monitored and censored by the American government.

From the outset, the main objectives of the Occupation were the disarmament of Japan and the establishment of conditions to prevent the revival of a Japanese military threat in the Pacific. It was believed that democratization would best achieve this second objective, and therefore the democratization of Japan became a major emphasis of the Occupation.

One of the first things General MacArthur pushed to reform was the Meiji Constitution, Japan’s first Constitution. The Meiji Constitution was promulgated in 1889. Article III of the Meiji Constitution states that “the person of the Emperor is sacred and inviolable.” The American forces wrote a draft for a new and completely revolutionary constitution for Japan. After some minor revisions by the Japanese government, the new constitution was accepted and went into effect May 3, 1947. This constitution still remains in effect today. The new constitution declared the emperor to be the “symbol of the state and of the unity of the people,” and decreed that the “sovereignty resides with the people.”

During the Occupation, approximately 500,000 American GIs and about 5,000 civilians who were working for the Occupation came to Japan. It was an era of abrupt changes in political, economic, and educational affairs. However, this was also the first large-scale meeting of the American and Japanese cultures. Neither the Americans nor the Japanese knew exactly what to expect or what would happen.

The War Brides Act of 1945 allowed American servicemen who married abroad to bring their wives home following the end of World War II. Japanese brides could not initially take advantage of this law because they were ineligible for U.S. citizenship. Some were admitted into the country by private legislation sponsored by a member of Congress. Others received visas during short periods when exceptions were made for them as a group. All that changed with the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, which allowed Asians to apply for
naturalization. More than 45,000 Japanese brides came to the United States through the 1950s and early 1960s. This was the largest group of Asian immigrant women to enter the United States in U.S. history up to that point. Immigrating to various regions of the United States, many of them faced hardships, including language and cultural barriers, financial difficulties, and racism. Those who married Black GIs arrived during a time in which the United States was highly segregated. Although some war brides married *nisei* soldiers, many of them were rejected by the established Japanese American community who might have seen these young women as interlopers. Some Japanese Americans viewed the war brides as benefiting from generations of their own struggles without having to pay the price they felt they had paid.

The Korean War began on June 25, 1950, during the Allied Occupation of Japan. Japan played a key role as a rear base for the supply and transit of soldiers and materials and equipment. This was significant as Japan established itself as an ally of the United States and its efforts to fight communism in Asia.

With the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 and the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which replaced the 1952 Act, Asians were able to come to the United States in larger numbers.

**Questions:**

1. What impact did the following laws and practices have on the Japanese immigrant and Japanese American community?
   - The Naturalization Act of 1790:
   - October 11, 1906, San Francisco School Board of Education decision:
   - 1908 Gentlemen’s Agreement:
   - 1913 Alien Land Law passed by California legislature:
   - The Immigration Act of 1924:

2. How did the status of being “aliens ineligible to citizenship” affect the lives of Japanese immigrants?

3. How has your family or someone you know been affected by U.S. naturalization or immigration laws?

4. How did the World War II climate in the United States affect people of Japanese descent who were living in the United States?

5. What was the Occupation of Japan?

6. How is the Japanese immigrant and Japanese American experience similar and different from that of another immigrant group with which you are familiar?

7. Considering the social, political, and economic post-World War II climate in the United States (following the Japanese surrender), what might it have been like for Japanese war brides, who married a former enemy, to experience a new life in the United States? This question will be explored further in the next class period.
NOTE-TAKING SHEET

Directions: Use the space provided to take notes while watching the documentary film, *Fall Seven Times, Get Up Eight: The Japanese War Brides*.

1. Describe the different paths each of the following women took from Japan to their lives in the United States.
   - Emiko Kasmauski
     How she and her husband met:
     
     Japanese family reaction:

   - Atsuko Craft
     How she and her husband met:

     Japanese family reaction:
U.S. family reaction:

- Hiroko Tolbert
  How she and her husband met:

Japanese family reaction:

U.S. family reaction:

2. From what you see and hear in the “Brides School” footage, what kind of lessons did the new Japanese war brides receive?
   • The Kasmauskis:

   • The Crafts:

   • The Tolberts:

4. How do these women view their identity? Do they think of themselves as more Japanese or more American?
   • Atsuko Craft:

   • Hiroko Tolbert:

   • Emiko Kasmauskis:
EXAMINATION OF QUOTES

Discussion: The media plays a large role in both expressing and shaping public opinion. For some people, the only exposure they have to other people, cultures, and ideas is through the media. Stereotypes are often depicted and reinforced by the media. Political cartoons, for example, can both reflect and form public opinion. Examine the Japanese cartoon depiction of President Franklin D. Roosevelt during the war (top image), and note how he is portrayed. This is the cover of *Manga* Magazine.

Following the end of the war in August 1945, Japanese media images of the United States and Americans (in some instances) changed dramatically. For example, in an Occupation-period edition of the same magazine, *Manga*, the cartoon (bottom image) was on the cover.

Popular media manages to shape society’s opinions even about former enemies, such as some films made in the 1950s depicting passive Japanese women. In some ways, they contributed to making the arrival of the war brides in United States less threatening.

How did Japan’s depiction of Americans change? How did many Japanese people come to view the United States after the war? In what ways do you believe this perception was accurate, and what ways do you think it was not?

Activity:

Use some form of art to symbolize the essence of one or more of the following quotes, and how the war brides’ perceptions of the United States changed from “enemy” to something more positive. You can choose to work together (for a larger piece of art) or individually. Group members should strive to do an equal amount of work.

ATSUKO CRAFT: To put it crudely, Americans did look more attractive. They’re well-fed, happy-go-lucky. They had tremendous appeal to young girls.

EMIKO KASMAUSKI: You know, everything changed. It was peaceful. American soldier came over, but, my goodness, the GI was so nice and so gentleman. I could hardly believe it.

HIROKO TOLBERT: Before I even set foot in America, America is the country, very wealthy. Everybody have a beautiful home. Everyone’s so beautifully dressed. But then, Bill from farm family. And I have seen picture of his family. Doesn’t look very good. I know that I’m not gonna have nice things that I seen in the pictures. I’m going to be living in a farm.
EXAMINATION OF QUOTES

Discussion: Immigration has been integral to the history of the United States. Over the centuries, millions of individuals representing a vast array of nationalities, cultures, and ethnicities have come to the United States and have helped make up the social fabric of America. Have you ever wondered what it would be like for you to move to another country? What are some reasons why you would move? What factors would make the decision to move difficult?

Activity: The quotes below illustrate what a momentous decision it was for the war brides to come to the United States. *Tanka* is a form of poetry similar to *haiku*, except it follows a 5-7-5-7-7 syllable pattern. Read the quotes regarding the war bride’s journey and how they were able to make their homes in the United States. Then, write two *tanka*, one from the perspective of a war bride, and one from the perspective of their children. Each group member should complete the above task. For the presentation, the group should decide on which two *tanka* to share with the class.

HIROKO TOLBERT: My mother, my brother, they are just devastated that I even think of marrying American. My mother’s only one who came when I left. And she come to the Yokohama port and she cried. And I thought, this is it, I’m never gonna see Japan again. I never gonna come back. Were you scared? Scared and sad, I cried. But I have no future there. If I did not marry Bill, I probably married some Japanese man with very meager existence. No matter I have chosen to come to this country. That was a wise thing for me to do.

KAREN KASMAUSKI: I think it’s just amazing that somebody from the United States could come in through rural Michigan, join the military, end up in Yokosuka Japan, and marry a Japanese woman and come back to the United States. I mean, to me that pathway is pretty incredible. Many of us are made up of that kind of background. You know, I think that’s sort of the glorious thing about being an American, is that those kind of people can exist in the United States.

KAREN KASMAUSKI: I do not think I would have had the courage without any support of anyone, moving with a man who I didn’t know, whose language I didn’t speak, to a country that I wasn’t really aware of, and to move there just without any backup.
EXAMINATION OF QUOTES

Discussion: The metaphor of America being a “melting pot” of cultures has often been used to describe the immigrant experience in the United States. During the time many of the war brides arrived in the United States, the media promoted the idea that newcomers should blend in, and “become Americans.” Many people expected the war brides to assimilate (adopt the custom and attitudes of the prevailing/majority culture) and not make efforts to preserve many aspects of their Japanese culture. As a result, many children of war brides were encouraged to speak only English. Thus, critics of the “melting pot” theory argue that assimilation was very one-sided, expecting the minority cultures to become like the majority, as opposed to the majority also adopting and/or accepting aspects of a variety of minority cultures.

The “mixed salad” or “salad bowl” metaphor, on the other hand, differs from that of the “melting pot” because the ingredients are not melted together. Instead, they retain their unique shapes and tastes that contribute toward an overall tasty and healthy salad. Likewise, proponents of a more “mixed salad” model encourage immigrants and other minority cultures to retain and celebrate aspects of their cultural identities, such as language and customs. Recently, the media has promoted more of a “mixed salad” mentality in which diversity is celebrated.

Discuss the potential positive and negative effects to each approach. Who benefits from a “melting pot”- versus “mixed salad”-type of mindset? Are there policies that clearly favor one approach more than the other?

Activity: Write a 250–300-word letter to an editor of a newspaper that focuses on one of the following questions: Do you believe the United States should be more of a “melting pot” or a “mixed salad”? Or, is there a different model or metaphor that you think would be better than either the “melting pot” or “mixed salad”? Each group member should complete the above task. For the presentation, the group should decide on which letter to share, or compile elements from each group member’s letter to create a new letter that represents the views of the entire group.

HIROKO TOLBERT: I want to look nice. So I said to Bill, for my first day, I’m gonna see my future in-law, and his other family, I’m gonna wear kimono. Bill is very much against it. But I want to wear. I didn’t have any other nice things. That made him so angry… Bill’s family all said, oh Hiroko… They don’t want to call me Hiroko. They call me Susie. And my in-law want me to change. And so I went upstairs and I put it on something else. And the kimono been put it away for many years.

ARCHIVAL NEWSREEL

INTERVIEWER: Mrs. Hammond, you and your husband, General Hammond, have taken great deal of interest in this project. Would you tell us how the idea got started?

MRS. HAMMOND: Yes. It started because the American service husbands wanted some sort of a school for their Japanese brides.

INTERVIEWER: So that they would learn the American way of life…
MRS. HAMMOND: The American customs and the Japanese customs are just a wee bit different. For instance, when we meet somebody, we say “how do you do?” We nod our heads, and we don’t bow. Like this. It’s very nice, but we don’t do it.

INTERVIEWER: What is the most difficult thing that you have to teach the girls as far as American customs are concerned?

MRS. HAMMOND: Well, I think the most difficult thing for the girls to learn here has been walking on high heels, because you see they are used to walking in low heels.

KATHRYN TOLBERT: Because it was 1950s America, they had to assimilate quickly. So they were not encouraged to speak Japanese at home. I mean, they raised their children at a time when everybody was supposed to blend in as best they could.
EXAMINATION OF QUOTES

Discussion: With the members of your group, discuss the following questions: Who is American? What does it mean to be an American? Based on comments made by the war brides, what do you think “being an American” means to them? What are some rights and responsibilities that all Americans have?

Visit the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website and compare the answers from your group members with the list of “Citizen Rights and Responsibilities” provided on its site. How many of these rights and responsibilities affect your daily lives and how? What rights and responsibilities had you not been aware of before?

Activity: Using the magazines provided by your teacher, create two collages: (1) a collage that depicts your personal feelings about what it means to be an American and aspects of your own identity; and (2) a collage that depicts the war brides’ view and aspects of their identity. In addition to images, feel free to use a maximum of three words (in large font so that they would be easily viewed from a distance) in your collages.

LUCY CRAFT: So at the end of the day, what is your identity? How do you feel about your identity? Transplanted Japanese? Or Japanese American?

ATSUKO CRAFT: Am I part of Japan? Not exactly. Although I have Japanese television on all the time. I don’t like to be left behind. When I go back to Japan and walk on the street or go to stores, I look so much like any one of them over there. So they assume I know what I’m supposed to. And they expect too much from me. It just amounts to that I don’t fit in there anymore. I’ve been away from Japan and I’m not Japanese, I’m completely American.

EMIKO KASMAUSKI: Yeah, since, you know I’ve become a citizen, and I’ve lived here long enough. Yeah, I feel like American. Now here, it’s easy for me. Because it is a big country. The people from all over place and settle down here. So for me it’s comfortable. Easy to live here.

KAREN KASMAUSKI: My mother lives in the moment. It’s always about what is her next move, what is her next move, responding to her environment. Responding to things that happen to her. That is interesting because I don’t think she thinks of herself as, you know, assessing whether or not she’s an American or not. I think that she just is. Because she’s here. And that’s why she would say, yeah, I’m an American because I’m here. I live here.
EXAMINATION OF QUOTES

Discussion: Broadly speaking, some Japanese social customs can seem complex to people who might not be familiar with them, for example, the “uchi-soto” concept. “Uchi” is the Japanese word for “home,” (and also refers to those within the “in-group” in which one feels secure). The term “soto” means “outside,” and refers to people outside of the “in-group.” The concept of “uchi” and “soto” can play out in a number of ways. For instance, members of an “in-group” might treat members outside of their group—an “out-group”—with a greater politeness and more positive attention than they would to people in their own “in-group.” At times the “uchi-soto” mindset can lead people to add extra humility to humble themselves and everyone inside their “in-group,” when interacting with people in an “out-group.”

This type of interaction might feel quite different for those who come from cultures outside of Japan. For instance, in some other cultures, people show outward pride and praise toward family members and people close to them.¹

For many Japanese families, education is also of great importance. According to the renowned Japanese anthropologist Dr. Takie Sugiyama Lebra, many Japanese people “subject themselves to a long-range effort to elevate their status through education…” She goes on to elaborate, “Not only doryoku (‘strenuous effort’) but kurō (‘suffering’) is expected of a young person who has ambition.”²

What dynamics between the Japan-born and raised mothers and the children raised in the United States can you see illustrated in the above descriptions of Japanese culture? What are interactions between you and your own family members like? What is your family’s approach toward education? How are your interactions within your own family similar or different from the situations described above, and the interactions you viewed in the film?

Activity: Read the quotes below and develop a three-minute role play that captures your thoughts on your discussion above, and that also illustrates the differences in culture between the U.S.-born children and their Japan-born mothers. Group members should strive to do an equal amount of work.

KAREN KASMAUSKI: It’s funny. I never really saw her as a mother. I always saw her as sort of somebody who lived in our house. Because compared to the other mothers I knew, she didn’t act at all like them. My girlfriends’ parents were very classic midwestern parents. Very loving, very supportive. And I always thought, well, why is my family so different from theirs? She was always angry, always criticizing, very negative, all the time to us.

LUCY CRAFT: We were so afraid of us being less than perfect. And you pushed us really, really hard. The low point of this for me was when I was in junior high, and of course junior high kids are extremely hypersensitive about their appearance and everything else. And I had some kids over, girls over for a sleepover. And we were sitting in the living room and at one point mom

marched into the room, you know to welcome everybody, and she goes, “I didn’t know why anybody would want to be friends with my daughter. She is so stupid and ugly.”

ATSUKO CRAFT: I didn’t, didn’t say that.

LUCY CRAFT: You did say that mom, you own that, you gotta own that.

ATSUKO CRAFT: Go to another Japanese family, you’ll get the same thing.

HIROKO TOLBERT: I thought people think my children is half and half. Inferior human beings. But you just good as anyone else. I have lived my life through my kids. The kids was my life. Nothing else matters. But I was a little bit too hard. I observed other people, and how patient they are to their children or to husband. I want you to do good in school, because I’m living your life.
LETTER TO FILMMAKERS

The filmmakers for *Fall Seven Times, Get Up Eight: The Japanese War Brides*—Lucy Craft, Karen Kasaukis, and Kathryn Tolbert—are in the process of putting together a follow-up, hour-long film about the Japanese war brides.

Using the following template, write them a letter. It should be approximately 200–300 words.

Salutation:

Dear Ms. Craft, Ms. Kasaukis, and Ms. Tolbert,

Introduction:

Introduce yourself and when and where you viewed *Fall Seven Times, Get Up Eight: The Japanese War Brides*.

Body of the letter:

In this section of the letter, cover the following topics:

• Your impressions of the film (Was there anything in the film that surprised you? That you identified with? Was the material new to you? If so, what did you learn?)

• Aspects of the film that resonated with you

• Any questions you have for the filmmakers about the Japanese war bride experience

• Issues you would like them to cover more deeply in their follow-up film

• Anything else you’d like the filmmakers to know

Closing:

End your letter with any one of the following (or something similar):

• Thank you, and best wishes,

• Best regards,

• Thank you for creating the film,

• Sincerely,

Signature:

At the bottom of your letter, type your first and last name

When you have completed and proofread the letter, email it to your teacher with the heading, “Letter to filmmakers.”
PRE-TEST

Directions: Answer the following questions in the space provided below. Note that you will not be graded, however, please answer to the best of your ability.

1. After Japan was defeated in World War II, the country came under the control of the Allied forces. Approximately how many American GIs and civilians came to Japan during that time?
   Approximately 500,000 GIs and 5,000 U.S. civilians came to Japan during the Occupation.

2. Approximately how many war brides came to live in the United States after World War II?
   More than 45,000 Japanese brides came to the United States through the 1950s and early 1960s. This was the largest group of Asian immigrant women to enter the United States in U.S. history up to that point.

   Do these numbers (from Questions 1 and 2) surprise you? How many of you thought the numbers were greater? How many thought the numbers were fewer? (Ask for a show of hands.)

3. When you think about Japan, what are some impressions you have? (Is it wealthy? Urban or rural? Are your impressions positive or negative?)
   Student answers will vary. Some students might mention the Japan they envision today (urban, wealthy, technologically advanced). Some students might mention Japan’s pop culture with which they are familiar, including manga and anime.

   How did the images presented in the documentary film compare with your initial impressions or thoughts about what Japan is like? (Students might comment on the images of wartime devastation.)

4. What are some factors that “pushed” Japanese war brides to leave Japan? What are some factors that “pulled” them to the United States?
   Push factors: After the war, Japan was a defeated country that had sustained a great deal of damage. (You may also want to note to students that Japan’s so-called “feudal” society and patriarchal mores were also often cited as a prime motivation by the women themselves for leaving Japan).

   Pull factors: Many of the women who became war brides were influenced by the impression that the U.S. servicemen would provide for them, that the United States was a very wealthy country (the idea that everyone had a beautiful home, was beautifully dressed, etc.), and so on.

5. Imagine you were a Japanese war bride and you wore a kimono to impress your new husband’s family in the United States. How do you imagine they might react?
   Student answers will vary.

Continue to debrief the lesson with the following questions:
• In the film, what actually happened when Hiroko Tolbert decided to wear a kimono? Why
did she choose to wear a kimono when meeting her in-laws? She wore a kimono because she “didn’t have any other nice things.” Instead of supporting her decision, however, her husband Bill was angry at her choice. Her in-laws also wanted her to change out of her kimono, so she did.

- Did the family’s reaction surprise you? How would you have felt if you were Hiroko? Remind students how the image of kimono has changed in the postwar years. Today, wearing a kimono might invite admiration and interest among many young people and their parents in the United States. It is important to keep in mind that Hiroko first met her in-laws just after a major war where many people still considered the Japanese to be the enemy. Wearing a kimono might have been considered an insult to those who had relatives who died in the war.

- Have your answers changed since you took the Pre-test before watching the documentary film? If so, how?

- What were some of the most surprising aspects of the Japanese war bride experience to you?

- What were some of your impressions of the Brides School depicted in the film?

- When the war brides arrived in the 1950s, they had certain ideas of what it meant to be an American housewife — inspired by Hollywood movies and, for a few thousand of them, the lessons of the Brides Schools. They expected to be dutiful housewives, but their circumstances meant that they weren’t going to spend much time walking in high heels and serving tea. If you were in charge of putting together a school for immigrant women (or more broadly, all immigrants) coming to the United States, what lessons do you think would be important to include?

- In what ways did the Japanese war brides continue to practice their Japanese culture? What are some ways that Japanese culture was discontinued? In what ways were Japanese war brides discouraged from continuing aspects of their culture?

Example of continuity: Some Japanese war brides promoted Japanese culture (e.g., Japanese food) in their new U.S. community. Example of discontinuity: Some Japanese war brides decided not to teach their children the Japanese language and simply encouraged them to use English. Example of ways Japanese war brides were discouraged from continuing aspects of their culture: Some were told to assume American names and not to wear kimono.

- Can you think of any examples of cultural continuity and discontinuity in your family? If so, what are they?

- Can the media create and reinforce positive and/or negative perceptions of immigration-related issues? If so, how? What are some examples?

- Through producing this film, the filmmakers sought to tell the story of a community that saw so little of themselves “reflected in the world,” and how their “immediate environments made them feel isolated and misunderstood.” In what ways have you seen your stories and communities that you belong to represented in books, TV, or film? If you feel that your stories or communities are not reflected accurately in the world does this lack of representation perpetuate misunderstandings or feelings of isolation? If so, how?

- What is the current U.S. government’s stance on immigration? How has it changed over time?

- What are your thoughts on current immigration-related issues concerning the United States? Explain.
JAPANESE IMMIGRATION AND THE ALLIED OCCUPATION

1. What impact did the following laws and practices have on the Japanese immigrant and Japanese American community?

- **The Naturalization Act of 1790**: Granted naturalization privileges to “free white” immigrants. In 1868, this was extended to “people of African nativity or descent.” However, the 1790 Act would deny citizenship to Japanese and most other Asian immigrants until 1952.

- **October 11, 1906 San Francisco School Board of Education decision**: Segregation of 93 Japanese and Japanese American school students into an “Oriental School” with Chinese and Korean students. Although the school board decision was rescinded in 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt then issued an executive order that prohibited the remigration of Japanese immigrants from Hawaii to the U.S. mainland.

- **1908 Gentlemen’s Agreement**: Japan, under pressure from the United States, agreed to restrict further emigration of Japanese laborers to the United States. However, the agreement contained loopholes that allowed for immigrants’ family members from Japan and “picture brides” to enter the United States.

- **1913 Alien Land Law passed by California legislature**: Prohibited Japanese from owning land. Although Japanese were not directly mentioned in the law, it specified that aliens ineligible to citizenship (such as the Japanese) were prohibited from purchasing land.

- **The Immigration Act of 1924**: Prohibited aliens ineligible to U.S. citizenship—including the Japanese—from immigrating to the United States until 1952. Japanese immigration to the United States stopped except for a few isolated cases of Japanese entering the United States for family or special occupational reasons, and after the end of World War II in 1945 when Japanese brides of American servicemen started to receive special permission to enter the United States.

2. How did the status of being “aliens ineligible to citizenship” affect the lives of Japanese immigrants?

This meant that Japanese in the United States could not vote or work in occupations requiring U.S. citizenship. According to the Alien Land Law, “aliens ineligible to citizenship” were not allowed to own land, either. This was highly problematic for the Japanese since farming represented a path to success for many Japanese immigrants.

3. How has your family or someone you know been affected by U.S. naturalization or immigration laws?

Student answers will vary. Please note that some students will not feel comfortable answering this question and should not be pressured to do so.

4. How did the World War II climate in the United States affect people of Japanese descent who were living in the United States?

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and the U.S. declaration of war on Japan on December 8, 1941, Japanese immigrants and their U.S.-born children were suddenly thrust into a very difficult situation. The Japanese immigrants were Japanese nationals who were ineligible to U.S. citizenship and their U.S.-born children were U.S. citizens. In 1941, there were approximately 158,000 people of Japanese descent in Hawaii and approximately 127,000 people of Japanese descent on the U.S. mainland. From 1942 to after the end of World War II in 1945, approximately 120,000...
people of Japanese descent (mostly issei and nisei) from the West Coast and some from Hawaii were incarcerated—without due process—by the U.S. government.

5. What was the Occupation of Japan?
The Occupation of Japan (September 2, 1945–April 28, 1952) refers to the time period when Allied forces occupied Japan after its surrender in World War II. It was a time during which Allied forces controlled and ran every aspect of Japanese society—from land redistribution, to school textbooks and mass media, to giving women the right to vote. American General Douglas MacArthur was appointed Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) and retained that position until April 1951, when he was replaced by General Matthew Ridgway. During the Occupation, Japan was virtually isolated from other contact, and communication was monitored and censored by the American government. The main objectives of the Occupation were the disarmament of Japan and the establishment of conditions to prevent the revival of a Japanese military threat in the Pacific. It was believed that democratization would best achieve this second objective, and therefore the democratization of Japan became a major emphasis of the Occupation.

6. How is the Japanese immigrant and Japanese American experience similar and different from that of another immigrant group with which you are familiar?
Student answers will vary.

7. Considering the social, political, and economic post-World War II climate in the United States (following the Japanese surrender), what might it have been like for Japanese war brides, who married a former enemy, to experience a new life in the United States? This question will be explored further in the next class period.
Student answers will vary.
NOTE-TAKING SHEET

1. Describe the different paths each of the following women took from Japan to their lives in the United States.

- Emiko Kasmauski
  How she and her husband met: She worked in a dance hall which is where she met her future husband.
  Japanese family reaction: Her mother encouraged her to marry him because she thought he would be a good husband. Emiko’s four brothers-in-law also approved of him.

- Atsuko Craft
  How she and her husband met: She and her classmates put an ad in the newspaper for Japanese-English conversation partners. The American man she met through it then asked her to come back to the United States with him, where he would pay for her education.
  Japanese family reaction: Felt that her parents would not have approved of her dating a GI, so she met someone who was not a soldier.
  U.S. family reaction: “Dead set against” the marriage, mainly because she was not Jewish

- Hiroko Tolbert:
  How she and her husband met: On a streetcar where Bill Tolbert asked her if she was headed home and if he could go with her. Even though she said “no,” it was the beginning of their friendship.
  Japanese family reaction: Her mother and brother were very much against the idea of her marrying an American. However, Hiroko felt she had no future in Japan.
  U.S. family reaction: Hiroko wanted to look nice when she met her in-laws for the first time, so she wore her kimono. Her husband was very much against it, and her in-laws also asked her to change out of it. In addition, they decided to call her “Susie” since they felt “Hiroko” was too difficult to pronounce.

2. From what you see and hear in the “Brides School” footage, what kind of lessons did the new Japanese war brides receive?

Student answers will vary, but will most likely include some of the following:

- How to make “American-style” food (like toast, pies, cake)
- How to make beds
- How to serve tea
- How to greet someone (Say, “How do you do,” and nod and smile instead of bowing)
- How to apply makeup
- How to walk in high heels

You might also wish to inform students that while the Brides Schools are a great window on American attitudes towards the war brides, only a small percentage of brides actually attended. For instance, none of the three war brides featured in this documentary attended.


- The Kasmauskis:
  Karen described her mother as not so much a mother as “somebody who lived in our house” because she was different from her friends’ mothers (who were very loving and supportive). In contrast,
Karen perceived her mother as “always angry, always criticizing, very negative.” She believed that her mother’s biggest challenge was that she was raising American kids, but she expected unquestioning loyalty and reverence. When her kids did not give her that, that was a shock for her.

- **The Crafts:**
  Lucy said, “we were so afraid of being less than perfect.” Her mother pushed them “very hard,” and at one point told her friends she didn’t know why anyone would want to be friends with her daughter because she was “so stupid and ugly.” Atsuko denied saying this at first, then she responded with, “Go to another Japanese house, you’ll get the same thing.”

- **The Tolberts:**
  Hiroko mentioned that she probably had too many children, and she could have been a better mother if she only had two and not four. Although she worried people would think her kids were “inferior” because they were half-Japanese, she also lived her life through them. She acknowledged that maybe she was a little bit too hard on them.

4. How do these women view their identity? Do they think of themselves as more Japanese or more American?

- **Atsuko Craft:** Although she still watches Japanese TV often, she views herself as completely American.
- **Hiroko Tolbert:** Even though she makes miso soup every morning, she also says how American she is.
- **Emiko Kasmauski:** She is now a U.S. citizen and she has lived here long enough that she feels like an American. She says it’s comfortable in the U.S. because it’s a place where people have come from all over to live.