



Recommended for Grades 6-12

“Skate Manzanar” Worksheet and Discussion Guide Remembering the Camps

BACKGROUND

During World War II, Japanese Americans were forced to leave their homes and live together in faraway military-style camps. Manzanar War Relocation Center was one of these camps, located far from any cities, in a barren and dusty desert in California. Skater Michael Louie is visiting Manzanar and thinking about the past.

WATCH

Visit <https://www.buildinghistoryproject.com/video-skate-manzanar1> and watch the video called “Skate Manzanar.”

RECALL

1. How does Michael describe the weather at Manzanar?
2. Some say that Manzanar is “haunted” because so many people have been displaced there. Besides Japanese Americans, who else has been displaced at Manzanar, and why?

INTERPRET

3. Visit the [Building History Timeline](#). The Japanese American incarceration camps closed after the end of World War II, between 1945 and 1946. Which American president first apologized to Japanese Americans for their unjust incarceration?
4. Visit the [Building History Map](#). On the map, can you find the incarceration camp where Michael is skating?

APPLY

5. What do you think life would have been like at a camp like Manzanar? What would have been some of the challenges faced by Japanese Americans who were incarcerated there?

ANALYZE

6. What signs are there today at Manzanar that help us to remember the Japanese Americans who were forced to live there? Who do you think visits those monuments?
7. Do you think that it is important for us to remember the people who lived at Manzanar? Why?

EXTENSION

Minecraft activity: Visit [Building History’s Minecraft activities](#) and install the Manzanar virtual camp. (You can play alone or with a friend on a separate device!) What items listed in the scavenger hunt can you find in the camp?

Historical documents: Today, Manzanar is an historic site that is run by the National Park Service. Every year starting in 1969, groups of people, including survivors of the camp, have traveled to visit Manzanar for what is called the Manzanar Pilgrimage. (A “pilgrimage” is a journey to an important place.) Visit the [National Park Service’s web page about Manzanar](#) and explore the flyers that invite people to join the Pilgrimage. What are some reasons that people might want to visit Manzanar today? Would you ever want to visit a camp like Manzanar? Why?