

Process Paper

My history day performance explains how Japanese Americans took a stand following the end of World War II when they stood up to government policies and domestic discrimination after *Korematsu vs United States*, garnered significant support for the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, and initiated change within the nation. I chose this topic because I was eager to learn about my cultural history, since my own family was interned in camps, in the hopes of shedding light on the dark moments of the Japanese American past. In the status quo, Muslims are facing the same racial prejudice the nation has worked to dissipate. It is important to understand that the government can make mistakes, but the nation must learn from the past to prevent mistakes from recurring in the future.

I conducted research by referring to archives that produced many sources available for my use. I started by viewing websites that gave a generalized idea of events that occurred, then expanded my search by finding sources pertaining to a particular event. Peering through research papers and interviews gave me a better scope of understanding from a different perspective. Such sources provided further analysis and personal connections to how its historical significance impacts society.

I selected to create a performance because understanding the loss, trauma, and hope that derived from Japanese internment allows me to share my own Japanese heritage through acting rather than textual expression alone. I want to interact with the past and demonstrate that even without experiencing such historical events directly, I can emotionally connect to the performance. With continuous research, many articles sparked character and setting ideas that I used to develop my performance.

Japanese American internment relates to the National History Day theme of “Taking A Stand.” Japanese Americans stood up to wartime hysteria and racial prejudice and spread awareness to ensure that such mistakes are learned from and prevented in the future. This project reflects what individuals should draw from the past to lead a stronger future, which is necessary for understanding the importance of taking a stand. Overcoming adversity by taking a stand has shaped the nation.