



Lesson 5: Perspectives & Consciousness

How Does My Identity Shape My Experience in America?

Activity I: The Power of Words

How can perspectives dictate the treatment of a race or community?

Objective:

Students utilize primary source documents focusing on Japanese Americans to explore aspects of the racial atmosphere of America in the 1940s.

Procedure:

- ✓ Have the class define connotation and denotation.
- ✓ Pair up students to read the Comparison/Contrast worksheet (located in the Lesson 5 Activity I Resources section) and a copy of the *Life* magazine article “How to Tell Japs from the Chinese” dated December 22, 1941 (located in the Lesson 5 Activity I Resources section). The students will complete the worksheet together.
- ✓ Have the class discuss the worksheet answers and the offensive and inappropriate use of the term “Japs.”
- ✓ Distribute the Propaganda Worksheet (located in the Lesson 5 Activity I Resources section) and have students work in pairs to analyze the text of the article.
- ✓ Regroup the class for discussion and have students share worksheet questions and answers.
- ✓ Ask your class how language and propaganda are used today. Have students provide examples from sources such as television, the internet, newspapers, billboards, etc. (this can also be a homework assignment).
- ✓ Assign individuals or groups a 3-5 minute presentation on their propaganda example of choice. Students then present their propaganda selection.

Grade Level: 10 & 11
Time: 60-90 minutes (class)
 60 minutes (home)

Materials:
 Comparison/Contrast worksheet
Life magazine article, “How to Tell the Japs from the Chinese”
 Propaganda worksheet

Concepts Covered:

- Explore** the use of propaganda.
- Analyze** purpose for a newspaper article.
- Identify** tone.
- Analyze** the use of “loaded words”.
- Identify** use of denotation and connotation of words to draw incorrect conclusions.

CDE Standards:

- 10th Grade English/Language Arts**
- Reading**
 1.1 2.4 2.8 3.8
- Writing**
 1.5 2.3
- Listening & Speaking**
 1.1 2.2
- History/Social Science**
 10.8.6
- 11th Grade English/Language Arts**
- Reading**
 1.3 2.6
- Writing**
 2.4
- History/Social Science**
 11.7.5

Assessment:

1. Student answers on the worksheets.
2. Group reports.
3. Evaluation of oral presentations.

Extension:

1. Have students write an advertisement for television, internet, radio or a magazine, using propaganda to sway classmates' opinions. Have the advertisement pertain to a current event or movement. Provide students with examples such as newspapers, magazines, political advertisements and/or internet access.
2. Read the article “How to Tell Your Friends From the Japs” (*Life* magazine, December 22, 1941) found on www.time.com/time.
3. Access Densho's Teacher Resource Guide, **In the Shadow of My Country: A Japanese American Artist Remembers**-Lesson 1 Analyzing Information: Language, Facts and Opinions, Part B on densho.org/learning/shadow/shadow-TRG-en.pdf



Reprinted from Life magazine, December 22, 1941, pgs. 81-82

Activity 1: The Power of Words

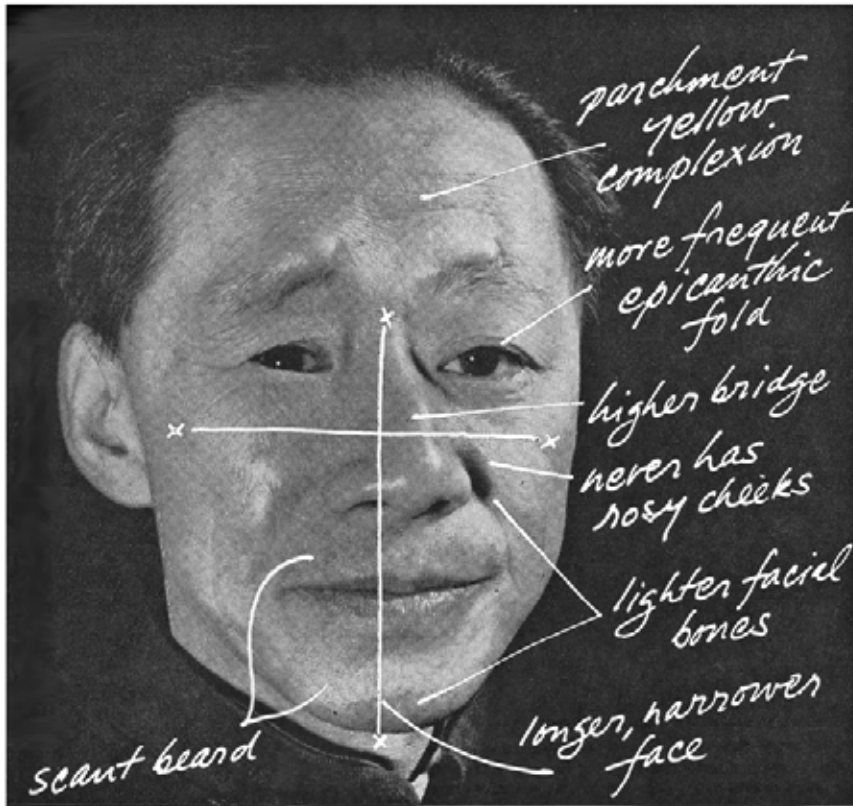
HOW TO TELL JAPS FROM THE CHINESE

ANGRY CITIZENS VICTIMIZE ALLIES WITH EMOTIONAL OUTBURST AT ENEMY

In the first discharge of emotions touched off by the Japanese assaults on their nation, U. S. citizens have been demonstrating a distressing ignorance on the delicate question of how to tell a Chinese from a Jap. Innocent victims in cities all over the country are many of the 75,000 U. S. Chinese, whose homeland is our staunch ally. So serious were the consequences threatened, that the Chinese consulates last week prepared to tag their nationals with identification buttons. To dispel some of this confusion, LIFE here adduces a rule-of-thumb from the anthropometric conformation that distinguish friendly Chinese from enemy alien Japs.

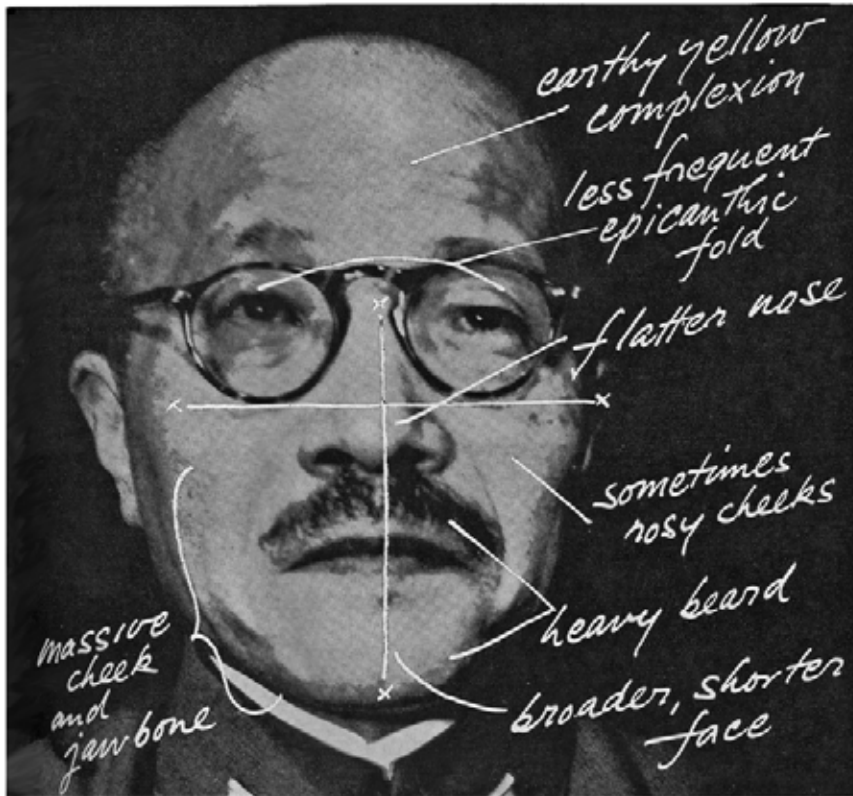
To physical anthropologists, devoted debunkers of race myths, the difference between Chinese and Japs is measurable in millimeters. Both are related to the Eskimo and North American Indian. The modern Jap is the descendant of Mongoloids who invaded the Japanese archipelago back in the mists of prehistory, and of the native aborigines who possessed the islands before them. Physical anthropology, in consequence, finds Japs and Chinese as closely related as Germans and English. It can, however, set apart the special types of each national group.

The typical Northern Chinese, represented by Ong Wen-hao, Chungking's Minister of Economic Affairs (left, above), is relatively tall and slenderly built. His complexion is parchment yellow, his face long and delicately boned, his nose more finely bridged. Representative of the Japanese people as a whole is Premier and General Hideki Tojo (left, below), who betrays aboriginal antecedents in a squat, long-torsoed build, a broader, more massively boned head and face, flat, often pug, nose, yellow-ocher skin and heavier beard. From this average type, aristocratic Japs, who claim kinship to the Imperial Household, diverge sharply. They are proud to approximate the patrician lines of the Northern Chinese.



Chinese public servant, Ong Wen-hao, is representative of North Chinese anthropological group with long, fine-boned face and scant beard. Epicanthic fold of skin above eyelid is found in 85% of Chinese. Southern Chinese have round,

broad faces, not as massively boned as the Japanese. Except that their skin is darker, this description fits Filipinos who are often mistaken for Japs. Chinese sometimes pass for Europeans; but Japs more often approach Western types.



Japanese warrior, General Hideki Tojo, current Premier, is a Samurai, closer to type of humble Jap than highbred relatives of Imperial Household. Typical are his heavy beard, massive cheek and jaw bones. Peasant Jap is squat Mongo-

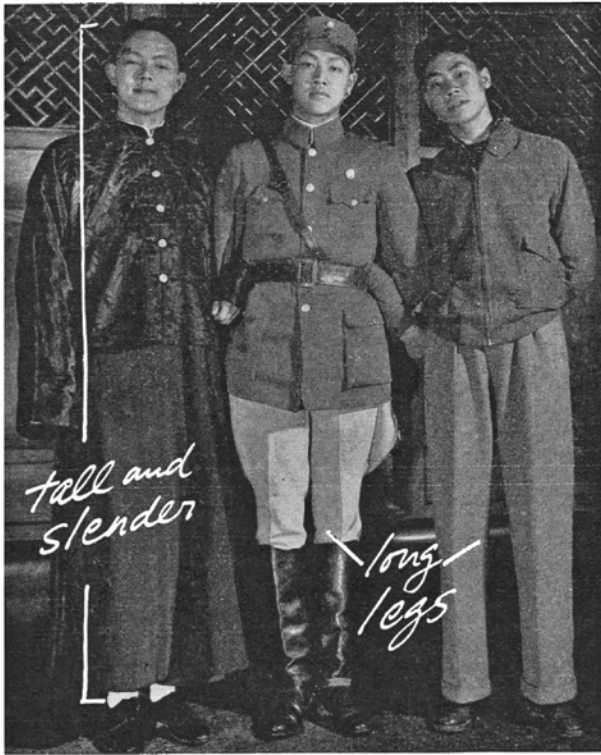
loid, with flat, blob nose. An often sounder clue is facial expression, shaped by cultural, not anthropological, factors. Chinese wear rational calm of tolerant realists. Japs, like General Tojo, show humorless intensity of ruthless mystics.



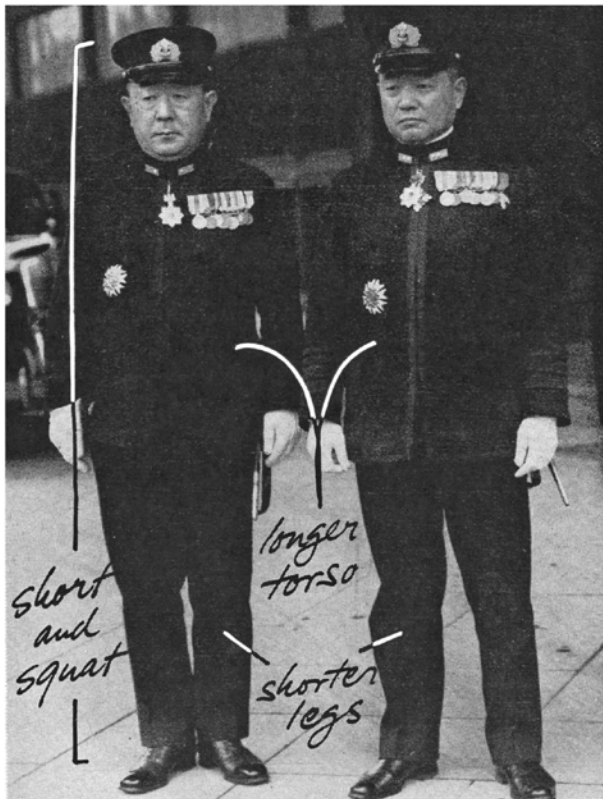
Chinese journalist, Joe Chiang, found it necessary to advertise his nationality to gain admittance to White House press conference. Under Immigration Act of 1924, Japs and Chinese, as members of the "yellow race," are barred from immigration and naturalization.



Japs and Chinese (continued)



Tall Chinese brothers, full length, show lanky, lithe build of northern anthropological group that has suffered most in China's recent history from flood, famine and war with Japs. Average height of Northern Chinese is 5 ft. 7 in., sometimes exceeds 6 ft. Most Chinese in America come from southern and coastal cities, Canton and Shanghai. They are shorter than Northern Chinese, but retain the slight proportions of the young men shown here. When middle-aged and fat, they look more like Japs.



Short Japanese admirals, full length, exhibit the squat, solid, long torso and short stocky legs of the most numerous Japanese anthropological group. Since Navy is relatively new and junior service, Jap naval officer corps numbers fewer Samurai, has more of the round-faced, flat-nosed peasant type. Over 6 ft. tall, Admiral Nomura shows traits of the big, fair-skinned hairy Ainu, aborigines who still live on reservations in Northern Japan. Special Emissary Kuruu, also atypical, looks European.

Activity 1: **The Power of Words**

Reprinted from *Life* magazine, December 22, 1941, pgs. 81-82

HOW TO TELL JAPS FROM THE CHINESE
ANGRY CITIZENS VICTIMIZE ALLIES WITH EMOTIONAL OUTBURST AT ENEMY

In the first discharge of emotions touched off by the Japanese assaults on their nation, U.S. citizens have been demonstrating a distressing ignorance on the delicate question of how to tell a Chinese from a Jap. Innocent victims in cities all over the country are many of the 75,000 U.S. Chinese, whose homeland is our staunch ally. So serious were the consequences threatened, that the Chinese consulates last week prepared to tag their nationals with identification buttons. To dispel some of this confusion, LIFE here adduces a rule-of-thumb from the anthropometric conformations that distinguish friendly Chinese from enemy alien Japs.

To physical anthropologists, devoted debunkers of race myths, the difference between Chinese and Japs is measurable in millimeters. Both are related to the Eskimo and North American Indian. The modern Jap is the descendant of Mongoloids who invaded the Japanese archipelago back in the mists of prehistory, and of the native aborigines who possessed the islands before them. Physical anthropology, in consequence, finds Japs and Chinese as closely related as Germans and English. It can, however, set apart the special types of each national group.

The typical Northern Chinese, represented by Ong Wen-hao, Chungking's Minister of Economic Affairs (left above) [previous page] is relatively tall and slenderly built. His complexion is parchment yellow, his face long and delicately boned, his nose more finely bridged. Representative of the Japanese people as a whole is Premier and General Hideki Tojo (Left, below) [previous page] who betrays aboriginal antecedents in a squat, long-torsoed build, a broader, more massively boned head and face, flat, often pug, nose, yellow-ocher skin and heavier beard. From this average type, aristocratic Japs, who claim kinship to the Imperial Household, diverge sharply. They are proud to approximate the patrician lines of the Northern Chinese.



Activity 1: **The Power of Words**

Comparison/Contrast Worksheet

Directions: With a partner, read the December 22, 1941 *Life* magazine article, “How to Tell Japs from the Chinese.” Then, look through the article and write down words and phrases that describe each group. Use the ideas you generate with this worksheet to answer the questions on the Propaganda Worksheet (located in Lesson 5 Activity 1 Resources section). Be prepared to discuss your answers with the class.

<i>Words and phrases describing the Japanese</i>

<i>Words and phrases describing the Chinese</i>

Activity 1: **The Power of Words****Propaganda Worksheet**

The December 22, 1941 *Life* magazine article “How to Tell Japs from the Chinese” is an example of propaganda. Propaganda is the systematic manipulation of information designed to influence thinking and behavior. Think about the purpose of this article and answer the following questions:

1. Why was this article published? What is the significance about the date it was published?
2. What is the tone of the article? How does the tone influence the interpretation of the text?
3. After reading this article, what conclusions do you think someone would draw about Japanese people?
4. After reading the article, what conclusions do you think the average American during World War II would draw about Chinese people?
5. What conclusions did you and your partner draw about the attitudes of the American press during World War II?
6. In light of what happened on September 11, 2001, do you think an article like this focusing on Arab Americans or Muslim Americans would appear in *Life* magazine today? Why or why not?
7. Do you think that it was appropriate for this article to appear in December of 1941? Why or why not?
8. Do you think attitudes have changed about this type of racial profiling since Pearl Harbor? How?