

Process Paper

How did I choose my topic?

As a Japanese American, I sought to find a topic that held a connection to an aspect of my culture. After watching the Broadway play “Allegiance,” I learned that during World War II, many interned Nisei, or second generation Japanese Americans, volunteered to join a segregated combat team. As I researched further, I realized that this group was the 442nd Regimental. While in internment camps, the members of the 442nd took a stand for their country as they swore their undivided devotion to America and joined the armed forces. My interest piqued, I quickly decided that this subject perfectly suited this year’s History Day theme.

How did I conduct my research?

My inspiration for this project began after watching the play “Allegiance.” This reenactment depicted the story of the internment of the Japanese during World War II and the creation of a Nisei combat team through the lives of the Kimura family. The play had a tremendous impact on me, as it showed the unjust treatment and discrimination Japanese Americans faced during World War II. As I delved into my research, I began gathering basic information on both Japanese internment and the 442nd from various websites, databases, books, and autobiographies. I conducted personal interviews with former internees, Madeline Sugimoto and Mary Murakami, former 442nd trainee and MIS member, Kaz Yamaguchi, former 442nd Terry Shima, and Irene Inouye, the wife of former 442nd Daniel Inouye. Additionally, I visited the “Japanese American National Museum” and “Go for Broke Museum” in Los Angeles to gain further information on the 442nd. Photographs from these two museums are included throughout my project.

How I select my presentation category and create my project?

I chose to present my project in a website format, because I had already planned the interviews. I recognized that multi-media aspects should be easily included into my project. As a result, I concluded that a website would allow me to incorporate the necessary photographs, videos, quotes, and content into a concise project. I chose a common theme for the entirety of the website and divided the website into sections relating to my topic. A website also would be easy to access and edit.

How does my topic relate to the theme?

The 442nd Regimental took a stand to prove their American citizenship and showed that although they shared the physical characteristics of the enemy, they were loyal American citizens. These Japanese Americans, behind the barbed wire of internment camps, pledged their loyalty as they formed the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. Although they faced opposition from fellow Americans and high-ranking government officials, the 442nd fought for their liberty under heavy enemy artillery. The legacy of their war efforts helped to change the view on the Japanese American population immediately after the war itself. However, the

442nd's actions are still visible today as their sacrifices show that despite discrimination against an ethnic group, individuals of a nation can fight and stand together united as one.