

## Overview

### Summary

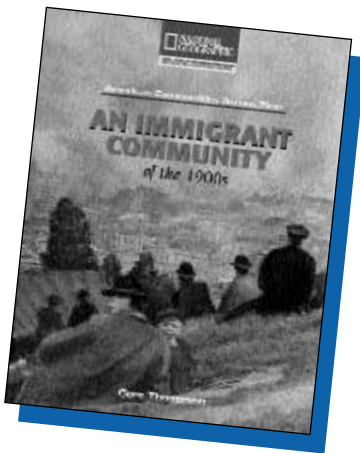
The fictional Toru Oshiro, a twelve-year-old boy, narrates this story about his life in Japantown, a community in San Francisco, California. Before Toru was born, his parents immigrated there from Japan. In 1905, Toru's father runs a small grocery store. In 1906, an earthquake devastates San Francisco. The larger community and the government work to rebuild the city. Over the next few years, treatment of the Japanese begins to change. Some people worry that the Japanese will take away jobs. The U.S. government limits immigration of Japanese workers. Toru's uncle marries a "picture bride," and the family embraces Japanese traditions in this celebration. New laws continue to restrict opportunities for Japanese immigrants. Yet the Oshiro family is proud to be Japanese and happy to be in the United States.

### Background Information

By 1910, there were about 72,000 Japanese residents on the mainland. Like the Chinese, the Japanese faced anti-Asian sentiment. In 1905, San Francisco labor leaders formed the Asiatic Exclusion League to demand an end to Japanese immigration. A year later, the San Francisco board of education passed a resolution to place Asian children in separate schools. In the "Gentlemen's Agreement," President Theodore Roosevelt persuaded San Francisco officials to drop the segregation order in return for Japan limiting emigration to the United States. An immigration quota system set up by Congress in the 1920s barred Japanese immigration altogether. With the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, anti-Japanese sentiment increased to the point of forcing Japanese Americans into internment camps. Not until 1952 did first generation Japanese get the right to obtain citizenship.

# An Immigrant Community of the 1900s

By Gare Thompson



## Learning Objectives

### Genre/Text Features

- first-person narrative
- historical photographs/artifacts
- captions
- map
- contents and glossary

### Reading Skills

#### Skill Focus

- draw conclusions
- use word origins

#### Supporting Skills

- summarize
- make judgments
- compare and contrast
- use graphic organizers

### Writing Skills

#### Writing Focus

- write a letter to the editor (persuasive)

#### Supporting Skills

- prewrite
- conduct research

#### Speaking and Listening

- give oral presentation

### Social Studies Skills

- explain how cultures exchange knowledge and traditions
- describe roles of government
- identify the short- and long-term impact of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake
- explain how fairness and justice were compromised in Japantown
- construct a mental map of Japantown

## Before Reading

### Activate Prior Knowledge

Direct students' attention to the photo on page 21. Explain that this photo was taken in the early 1900s and shows one community in the city of San Francisco. Locate San Francisco on a map. Ask:

*How is the community in this photo different from your community?*

*How is it the same?*

Have students copy a Venn diagram. Explain that on the left side of the diagram, they should write words to describe their community. On the right side, they should write words that describe the photo. The center area should contain words that describe both communities. Students can use other photographs from the book to add additional information to their diagrams.

### Preview

Give students time to preview the book by looking at the photographs, reading the captions, and reading the chapter titles. Ask:

*Will you be reading about the present time? What makes you think as you do?*

*What time period will you be reading about? What clues help you figure this out?*

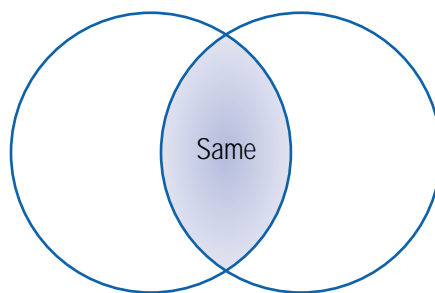
### Set Purpose

Help students set a purpose for reading. Ask:

*What do you hope to find out by reading this book?*

Encourage students to give reasons for their answers.

**My Community, The Present**      **San Francisco, 1905**



### Vocabulary Strategy: Use Word origins

#### Activity Master, Page 44

Explain that many words in the English language come from other languages. Some of these words can be figured out by looking at the meaning of the words' parts. For example, the word *tsunami* is a Japanese word used in English. This word is made up of the parts *tsu-*, which means "port" and *-nami*, which means "wave." Ask students to suggest a definition for *tsunami*. Then have them check their ideas in a dictionary. (A *tsunami* is a large ocean wave caused by an earthquake or volcano eruption.) Students can use the Activity Master on page 44, to write definitions for each vocabulary word that comes from the Japanese language. Students will use these words:

haiku                      kimono  
judo                        origami

## Correlation to National Standards

### Language Arts

- read to build an understanding of the cultures of the United States
- apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend and interpret texts
- use written and spoken language for learning
- use the writing process
- use a variety of resources to gather information

### Social Studies

- culture
- people, places, and environments
- individuals, groups, and institutions
- power, authority, and governance
- civic ideals and practices

### Geography

- the world in spatial terms (2)
- places and regions (4, 6)
- physical systems (7)
- human systems (9, 12)

### State/Local

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See Standards Chart on pages 282–287.

## During Reading

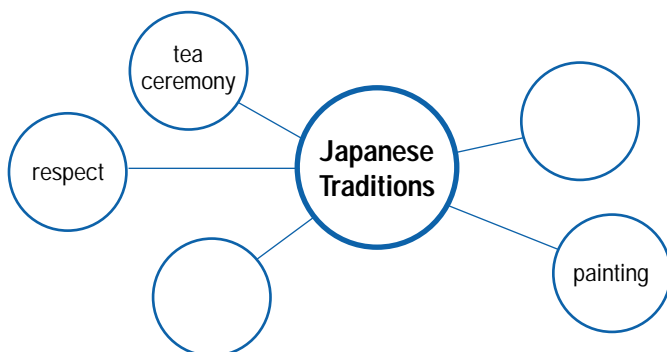
 **Read Strategically: Draw conclusions**

**Activity Master, Page 45**

Assign each chapter of the book as independent reading. As students read, they can draw conclusions about Japantown and the challenges Toru and his family faced. Students can use the Activity Master on page 45 to record their ideas. Remind students that when they draw conclusions, they make a decision about something based on information in the book and what they already know. Explain that they draw conclusions on their own every day. In this case, they'll draw conclusions based on details in the book they'll be reading.

**Strategy Tip: Use graphic organizers**

To help students remember the new information in the book, encourage them to create a web to organize details related to main topics, for example, Japanese traditions, government actions, or changes in Japantown.



Remind students to keep track of parts of the story they found confusing so they can ask for clarification during discussion.

 **Meeting Individual Needs**

For specific strategies on meeting individual needs, see pages 264–269.

## After Reading

### Responding

Initiate a class discussion to assess reading comprehension.

*How did the people of San Francisco react to the earthquake? (summarize)*


*Compare life before and after the earthquake. (compare and contrast)*

*What are two examples of discrimination faced by the Japanese immigrants? (summarize)*

*How did the government both help and disappoint the Japantown community? (draw conclusions)*

*Was the action against the Japanese fair? Why or why not? (make judgments)*

*How is our community similar to Japantown? How is it different? (compare and contrast)*

 **Writing and Research: Write a letter to the editor**  
**Activity Master, Page 46**

Toru discusses newspaper articles that portray the Japanese as bad workers and bad people. Have students discuss what the articles meant to Japantown. Then have students imagine they are Toru or Toru's sister and will write a letter to the newspaper's editor to persuade people that these statements are not true. Students can use the Activity Master on page 46 to help them generate and organize ideas.

Encourage students to use the Internet and library to find additional background information for their letters.

**Communicating: Speaking/listening**  
**Give oral presentation**

In small groups, students can read their letters.

Students reading aloud should

- ✓ speak clearly
- ✓ make eye contact with listeners
- ✓ adapt speech as appropriate

**Listeners should**

- ✓ listen politely
- ✓ determine the main points of the letter
- ✓ ask questions to clarify ideas they didn't understand

## Focus on Social Studies

### The Role of Government

Discuss with students the roles the government of the United States played in this book. For example,

- ▶ Government helps in emergencies.
- ▶ Government decides which and how many immigrants can enter the country.
- ▶ Government decides who can be a citizen.

Students can then work in pairs or independently to create a poster showing at least two examples of the role of government. Students can use the big ideas from the story, as well as other ideas they may have. Pairs can draw pictures or use pictures and words from old magazines to create their posters.

### Posters should

- ✓ be carefully prepared
- ✓ use color effectively and accurately
- ✓ portray the topic accurately
- ✓ use labels and captions



### Map Activity

#### Activity Master, Page 47

Students can use the Activity Master on page 47 and *An Immigrant Community of the 1900s* to create a simple map of Toru's community. Students can work in pairs to discuss how to organize their maps. Remind students that their maps will show approximate locations. You might have students compare completed maps and discuss differences.

## Assessment Options

Use the following assessment options to assess students' understanding of *An Immigrant Community of the 1900s*.

### Questions

During individual conferences or independently in their notebooks, students can answer the following questions:

- 1 What is one reason people immigrated to the United States from Japan?
- 2 Briefly explain what life was like in Japantown at the beginning of the book.
- 3 What are three examples of the Japanese culture?
- 4 How did the community respond to the earthquake?
- 5 Name one positive way and one negative way the government affected Japantown.
- 6 Why is culture important to people?

### Assessment Activity

Students create a simple collage or draw pictures to represent one of these three ideas from *An Immigrant Community of the 1900s*:

- 1 Government serves many purposes.
- 2 Culture is important to people.
- 3 Each community is unique.

Students should write labels and captions for their pictures.

### Collages should

- ✓ clearly address one of the ideas
- ✓ be well organized and carefully prepared
- ✓ include captions that use correct spelling and grammar

## Multiple-Choice Test

See the multiple-choice test in the Assessment Booklet.

## Cross-Curricular Connection

### Science

Students can create a diagram showing how earthquakes change the surface of Earth. Students might want to focus on earthquakes in California, or specifically on the California earthquake of 1906. They can find information in encyclopedias, science texts, or on the Internet.

## Home-School Connection

In *An Immigrant Community of the 1900s*, Isayo writes a haiku in honor of the family's celebration of the New Year. Students and family members can create haiku to honor a family member or event. You might want to prepare guidelines reminding the family that haiku is three lines long. The first and last lines are five syllables, while the second line is seven syllables. Typically, haiku does not rhyme. Consider providing a sample haiku, such as

*My funny father,*

*His wide smiles make me giggle.*

*Each day brings new fun.*

## Vocabulary: Word Origins

The English language contains many words that come from other languages. The meanings of some of these words can be figured out based on the meaning of the words' parts.

The words below come from the Japanese language. Use the definitions of the word parts to write a definition for each vocabulary word. Then check your definition using the glossary and write any new information about the word in the third column.

### What the Word Parts Mean

<b>do</b>	way	<b>ki</b>	to wear or "for wearing"
<b>gami</b>	paper	<b>ku</b>	verse or "line of a poem"
<b>hai</b>	amusement	<b>mono</b>	thing
<b>ju</b>	soft	<b>ori</b>	a folding

Word	Using Word Parts	Glossary Definition
kimono (ki-mono)		
judo (ju-do)		
origami (ori-gami)		
haiku (hai-ku)		

## Reading: Draw Conclusions

As you read *An Immigrant Community of the 1900s*, think about the people in the story and the community they live in. After reading each chapter of the book, draw conclusions about life in the community during the early 1900s. Remember that when you draw conclusions, you make a decision about something based on the information you are given and from what you already know. Write answers to the questions below.

### Introduction

Why was Japantown formed?

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### Chapter 1

What things or ideas are important to the Oshiro family?

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### Chapters 2 and 3

Why did people work together to rebuild the community?

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### Reading Strategies

### Check Your Thinking

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. How did I reach this conclusion?    | 3. Does this conclusion make sense? Is it logical?   |
| 2. Is the information I used accurate? | 4. Are there other conclusions that make more sense? |

### Chapter 4

How is culture important to the Oshiro family?

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### Chapter 5

Why do fewer people come to the Oshiro store?

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### Epilogue

Why did life get harder for many Japanese living in the United States?

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## Writing: Prewriting

### A Letter to the Editor

You are either Toru or Isayo, and you have just read an article in a newspaper that says bad things about the Japanese people. You plan to write a letter to the newspaper to clear up misunderstandings about your community and culture. To write your letter, you might want to use other resources in addition to *An Immigrant Community of the 1900s* to gather information about your topic. Organize your ideas for writing below.

1. In your letter, tell who you are and why you are writing to the editor.

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2. Explain why you think the newspaper articles are incorrect and harmful to your community.

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3. Give examples of how your community and culture are good for California and the United States as a whole.

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4. Explain why printing the letter will help your cause.

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5. Thank the editor and the newspaper for thinking about your point of view.

## Social Studies: Sketch a Map of Japantown

Think about *An Immigrant Community of the 1900s*. What picture did you create in your mind of Japantown? Sketch a map of Japantown to show the different places in and around the community. Include the places listed below. Label each place and include a compass rose. Use maps of California, your imagination, and *An Immigrant Community of the 1900s* as resources.



**Label these places**



- |                      |               |                                    |
|----------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Oshiro family home   | Japantown     | tailor shop and other shops nearby |
| Oshiro grocery store | the dock      | strawberry fields                  |
| San Francisco        | Market Street | Golden Gate Park                   |