

Objective: To introduce students to Japanese American Internment by having them generate relevant, researchable questions (such as the reasons for, experience, and effects of Japanese American Internment) that could be addressed by looking at [other primary sources](https://www.loc.gov/item/2004665381/) and secondary source information on the topic.

QFOCUS A

<https://www.loc.gov/item/2004665381/>



California, March 1942, During WWII

1. What does "Wanto Co." mean?
2. Why is the car in front of a grocery store?
3. Were cars in the 1940s expensive?
4. Is this store still around today?
5. Are White and Pollard the owners of the store?
6. Does the store only sell fruits and vegetables?
7. What is the shadow in the window that kind of looks like a figure skater?
8. Why is there a sign "I am an American"?
9. On the column of stone next to the mailbox, there are the ripped remains of what seemed to be a paper or poster of some sort. What did that say or is supposed to mean?
10. **Does this have anything to do with the discrimination against Japanese people?**
11. Was the shopkeeper trying to deter people from shopping in places run by Japanese people?
12. Why are there no people in the picture?
13. Did someone we know from the past take the picture?
14. Why is the store dark because it looks like it is the middle of the afternoon judging by the shadow of the car?
15. **Was the picture staged, or was it just a picture of a car that happened to be in front of the store?**

QFOCUS B

<https://www.loc.gov/item/2004665381/>



California, March 1942, During WWII

"In February 1942, the US government started removing thousands of Japanese American citizens from their homes and businesses and moving them to internment camps in isolated locations."

1. What is Wanto Co?
2. Was Wanto Co a Japanese organization?
3. Why is there a sign saying I am an American?
4. **Was the person who put the sign on the store scared of being put in an internment camp?**
5. What would happen to their store if someone was sent away?
6. What does the car have to do with any of this?
7. Did that car belong to the people who were in charge of rounding up Japanese people to send them to the camps?
8. I know all grocery store have vegetables, so the fact that there are signs saying that this place has vegetables makes me wonder were there shortages at that time?
9. Why were Japanese Americans removed from their homes?
10. **Is that store in an internment camp?**
11. Where were the internment camps located?
12. If this was an isolation camp, why are there no people? Don't they cram people into isolation camps?
13. What did the Japanese Americans do in the internment camps?
14. People can be cruel to each other just because we look different. I wonder how people have such big hearts to forgive what happened?
15. **Why did the government do this when their main goal was to stop the Nazis and Hitler from doing this to Jews? Are they not doing the same thing?**