

“Chattels” Video & Reading Questions Workbook on Japanese Canadian Items Confiscated in Internment



Student Activity: Listen to the multimedia video “Chattels”, read the artist’s statement, and review the items mentioned in the song. Follow the lesson flow below.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVdwiKoqmDw>

How to share with students: These pages are sized for printing or can be assigned digitally using an LMS (like Google Classroom), where students can work on their own slide decks via “Make a Copy for Each Student.” Each slide is set up with text boxes for students to type in.

Suggested Lesson Flow:

1. Students complete a Image Analysis to start thinking
2. Have students read the passage and answer questions.
3. Have students complete the Short Answer Questions.
4. Have students complete the Open Ended Questions and discuss with partners or groups their responses.

Image Analysis: Notice & Wonder

Instructions: Look at the image and write down 2-3 things you notice (key details, main ideas, themes) and then write down 2-3 things you wonder (questions you have because of the image, things you are curious about when you look at the image.)

What do you notice?

Item confiscated from Japanese Canadians before Internment. This is one item mentioned in the song "Chattels" that we'll be studying.

Sewing machine has European design element. There is a cross on the base of the machine. Singer must be the brand name. The sewing machine is installed on the table.



What do you wonder?

I wonder how much it weighs and how it was transported to someone's home.

I wonder what the sewing machine has to do with the song.

Read: Take Notes

Instructions: Read the passage and take notes on facts or details that help answer the questions..

Artist's write up:

"Chattels" is a multimedia track from Brava Kilo & Annie Sumi's collaborative EP called "Kintsugi." It was inspired by archival documentation, from the Japanese Canadian internment, that listed their ancestors' belongings that were confiscated and auctioned off during that period of time.

The song acknowledges the impact of stolen heirlooms and the process of healing ancestral trauma. "Kintsugi" was primarily a multi-media interactive art installation that was exhibited at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre in Toronto (2022.)

Items mentioned in the song:

An ice box, an incubator, arrested seven horsepower motor, a set of drawers, a tarnished mirror, a picture frame, and chicken wire. A well-used set of garden tools, a chest of ceremonials, a baby buggy, and the dining room chairs. A gramophone and a box of records, a General Electric push button radio, a treadle-powered Singer sewing machine.

A 50-gallon crock, a wash tub, a thermos flask, a wooden wagon with the wheels attached, a double-hinged fold-up ironing board, a brass blade gasoline torch, an AJ Donahue Winnipeg chair, a gramophone and a box of records, a General Electric push button radio, sewing machine.

1. What are the listed items used for? What might they suggest about the owner?

Practical tools and appliances

Sentimental and Decorative items

Entertainment

Owner of items was self-reliant and connected to their heritage and family history.

2. What is the significance or symbolism of the confiscated gramophone and the box of records in the text?

The confiscated gramophone and the box of records likely symbolize a loss of cultural and personal identity. Gramophones and records are often associated with memories and emotions tied to specific pieces of music. Their confiscation could represent an attempt to strip the owner of their personal history and joy. This act might symbolize a broader theme of repression or control.

3. What might be some things that you'd leave behind if you were forced to leave your house with only a few suitcases?

Large furniture/appliances

Sentimental items - photo albums, heirlooms or collectables

Big coats for winter or enough gear to live through a cold storm

TV

Short Answer Questions

Question

1. Digging deeper, why were these items confiscated, taken away, or left behind as families were interned?

Space and Transport Limitations: Interned families could only take what they could carry or fit into limited luggage, leaving behind bulky and non-essential items.

Security and Control: Authorities confiscated certain items to maintain control, prevent potential resistance, and eliminate perceived threats.

Disruption of Lives: The forced nature of internment meant families had to quickly abandon their homes, often leaving behind valuable and sentimental items.

Question

2. How should Japanese Canadians have been compensated for their confiscated property, many of which were auctioned off very cheaply or lost forever?

Fair Market Value Compensation: Restitution based on the current fair market value of the confiscated or lost property, not the devalued auction prices.

Interest and Inflation Adjustments: Payments adjusted for inflation and including interest to account for the time elapsed since the confiscation.

Personal and Emotional Losses: Additional compensation for the emotional and personal losses suffered due to the forced relocation and loss of heritage items.

Public Apology and Acknowledgment: Formal recognition and apology for the injustices suffered, as part of the healing and reconciliation process

Question

3. In 1988, Japanese Canadians were given an apology by the Canadian government and given a redress payment, not only for property but for years of suffering. Can money ever be just repayment for injustice? Explain.

Money alone can never fully compensate for the injustice and suffering endured by individuals or communities. While financial compensation can help address some of the economic losses and provide resources for rebuilding lives, it cannot erase the trauma, loss of dignity, and long-term psychological impact of such experiences. True redress also requires public acknowledgment of the wrongs, sincere apologies, and measures to ensure such injustices do not recur. Comprehensive reparations involve both material compensation and efforts to restore the affected community's rights, history, and cultural heritage.

Answer and Explain

Instructions: For each question, answer the question and then explain why you picked the answer you did using specific evidence from the text.

Question:

1. Which item mentioned in the text is NOT related to household items?

Pick the Answer

- A) A gramophone and a box of records
- B) A brass blade gasoline torch
- C) A wooden wagon with the wheels attached
- D) A set of garden tools

Explain: Why did you pick that answer?

Item not listed in lyrics

Question:

2. What is the purpose of the General Electric push button radio mentioned in the text?

Pick the Answer

- A) To play music from a box of records
- B) To entertain the family at night
- C) To show status and wealth in a family
- D) To listen to radio broadcasts

Explain: Why did you pick that answer?

The music video illustrated documents mentioning the broadcasting from radio

Question:

3. Which would be the most difficult to leave behind / get confiscated by the government?

Pick the Answer

- A) A double-hinged fold-up ironing board
- B) A baby buggy
- C) A box of records
- D) A chest of ceremonials (religious items)

Explain: Why did you pick that answer?

Sentimental value and there may not be enough room to bring it over essential items.

Government may have interest in confiscating as a form of assimilation

Reflect and Discuss

Instructions: Respond to the following question using the reading and your own knowledge and experiences. Be as thorough as possible.

1. Listen / watch the video of the song “Chattel” and respond below. What are some of the images that you recognize? How might they relate to Japanese Canadian Internment? Below is QR code.

Write Your Response Here. Be sure to use what you learned in the reading and your own knowledge and experiences to answer the question thoroughly.

Custodian Office case files- formal government documents confiscating property and possessions
Official seizure of land and displacement records.

Hastings Race course bunkbed set up.

Image of train - used to transport Japanese Canadians.

Fishing Nets - Japanese Canadians were primarily in the fishing industry prior to internment



Instructions: When instructed, you will share your responses with your group. Take notes on their responses in the boxes below. Be sure to write their names at the top of each box.

Student #1: _____

Student #2: _____

Student #3: _____

Student #4: _____

Reflect and Discuss

Instructions: Respond to the following question using the reading and your own knowledge and experiences. Be as thorough as possible.

2. Think about the different objects described in the text. Which ones resonates with you the most and why?

Write Your Response Here. Be sure to use what you learned in the reading and your own knowledge and experiences to answer the question thoroughly.

Answers may vary

Instructions: When instructed, you will share your responses with your group. Take notes on their responses in the boxes below. Be sure to write their names at the top of each box.

Student #1: _____

Student #2: _____

Student #3: _____

Student #4: _____

Reflect and Discuss

Instructions: Respond to the following question using the reading and your own knowledge and experiences. Be as thorough as possible.

3. How have the objects and images in the video been constructed, visually, by the artists? What does this add to the effect?

Write Your Response Here. Be sure to use what you learned in the reading and your own knowledge and experiences to answer the question thoroughly.

Images are layered on top of one another. Often from notices and newspapers containing racist text and historical photographs. The newspapers are formed into the shape of a train. A white shadowed railroad continues to reappear throughout the video.

Instructions: When instructed, you will share your responses with your group. Take notes on their responses in the boxes below. Be sure to write their names at the top of each box.

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