

# TEACHER'S GUIDE

## Part 1: "Behind Barbed Wire"

### Writing Prompts

#### MISSION US: "Prisoner in My Homeland"

---

---

*A NOTE TO THE EDUCATOR: You will need to decide how best to share these writing prompts with your students. You might share them all and ask students to choose one for response. You might assign one or more to the entire group. You might make one or more of the topics the basis for in-class discussions. Make your decisions according to the needs of your group.*

*You may notice that many of the topics contain some version of the phrase, "Write about a time in your life..." The intention of these prompts is twofold: first, since students remember the content of their own lives, they can more easily respond to the questions and they are more likely to want to express themselves if they feel competent to do so; second, these questions can form a meaningful bridge between what happens in the lives of ordinary people today and the lives of people in history or in historical events themselves. For these reasons, you might decide to use some of those prompts before students encounter the history because thinking about them sets the students up to understand it and to relate to it.*

*Since students vary in their degree of comfort and skill in writing, you should decide when students write and how much students should write. We do suggest, though, that since students need to share their writing with each other to make personal and historical connections, you encourage them to focus on content rather than on mechanical skills. Pieces can be revised and edited later if you decide they should be shared more formally (such as on a bulletin board or newsletter).*

# TEACHER'S GUIDE

## Part 1: "Behind Barbed Wire"

### Writing Prompts

#### MISSION US: "Prisoner in My Homeland"

---

---

Read through all the topics. Then choose one of them to write about. Write the title of the piece at the top of your page. Write in complete sentences. After you are finished, proofread your work for correctness.

**NEW HOME.** *[This prompt should be given prior to playing Part 1]*

If you had to move to a new home and neighborhood what would you be most concerned about? What would you definitely need to live comfortably? Why?

**WRONGFULLY BLAMED.**

The Tanaka family was among 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent who were seen as potential enemies of the U.S. during WWII even though no one was ever found guilty. How would you feel if anyone of your cultural background were blamed for something that happened to the U.S. and was forcibly moved and imprisoned in the same way that Henry was? What would you have done in this situation? Why?

**TAKING ON MORE RESPONSIBILITIES.**

Henry suddenly took on more responsibilities with his family when his father was imprisoned elsewhere and he and the rest of his family were imprisoned in Manzanar. He often had to make choices between doing things for himself or his family. What responsibilities do you have within your family? How do they compare to what Henry had to do for his family?

**"FREELY" ROAMING.**

Lily and other children were able to roam around on their own more within prison camps like Manzanar. What were the positive and negative effects of Lily being able to go off on her own? What do you think are the effects of being able to live this way as a young child? What are you allowed to do on your own? Are you obligated to tell your parents/guardians about your whereabouts? If so, in what type of situations?

**DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES COMING TOGETHER.**

Soon after Henry arrives at Manzanar, he meets people from California with different backgrounds and life experiences, customs, cultures, etc. At times, it's difficult for him to navigate the differences. For many students who start at a new school (middle or high school), the process of acclimating to a new school can be hard. When you started middle school, did you feel as though you needed to change or conform to the attitudes of a larger group with students from other schools? What differences did you see with students from other schools? Were there conflicts? If so, how were they resolved?

---

---

# TEACHER'S GUIDE

## Part 1: "Behind Barbed Wire"

### Writing Prompts

#### MISSION US: "Prisoner in My Homeland"

---

---

##### **EARNING YOUR WAY.**

Henry was able to have a job and earn a little bit of money while he was imprisoned, and had some choices in what to buy. If you were able to earn money from anyone, whether it's a job or not, what would you buy and why? How does this compare to the types of decisions Henry had to make for the money he earned?