



LIBERATED ETHNIC STUDIES

MODEL CURRICULUM COALITION

Origins of “Asian American”

Time: 4-5 class periods

Grade Level: 9-12

Purpose (What will students learn from this lesson?):

Students will learn the historical context and origins of the label, “Asian American;” students will also have an opportunity to problematize the label and identify its limitations.

Unit Enduring Understandings Alignment:

- The Third World Liberation Front, Civil Rights Movement, and the antiwar movement during the 60s created a ripe context for people to coalesce based on shared political analysis of oppression
- The “Asian American” label was created in this specific context to unite Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino people under one Pan-Asian label in order to advocate on behalf of their needs
- The Asian American activists in the 60s understood that each Asian community experienced similar forms of racism not only domestically but also abroad due to U.S. imperialism
- Today, the Asian American community is much more diverse than it originally was in the 60s, so the label is limiting because it prioritizes certain communities and erases others

Lesson Guiding Questions:

- How can names/labels be empowering?
- How can names/labels be limiting?

Essential Skills:

- Primary/secondary source reading and summarizing

- Interpersonal speaking and listening skills
- Analyzing graphs and interpreting data

Cultural Wealth (Yosso, p. 78):

- Resistant capital

Ethnic Studies Principles Alignment:

- Cultivate empathy, community actualization, cultural perpetuity, self-worth, self-determination, and the holistic well-being of all participants, especially Native peoples and people of color.
- Critique empire and its relationship to white supremacy, racism, patriarchy, and cis-heteropatriarchy.
- Connect ourselves to past and contemporary resistance movements that struggle for social justice on the global and local levels.

Standards Alignment:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2 - Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

Materials:

See folder for all materials.	
PLEASE MAKE COPIES OF ALL MATERIALS. DO NOT ASK FOR EDIT ACCESS.	

Modifications, Accommodations, Resources for Multilingual Students :

Students have scaffolded questions for reading comprehension and graphic organizers with guided reading questions	
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Critical Vocabulary:

CRITICAL VOCABULARY	Definition and Rationale for choosing this word, phrase, or concept	Idea for pre-teaching or front-loading the concept.
Oriental	Refer to Unit 1 LP1 for “oriental”	
Asian American		

Pacific Islander	Refer to Unit 1 LP2 Vocab activity	
Middle Eastern/SWANA		
Desi		
Empowerment		
Solidarity		
Resilience/ resistance		

C1: Cultural Ritual and/or Energizer

STEP	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Step 1	Land Acknowledgement	5 min
Step 2	Ancestor Acknowledgement	5 min
Step 3	Who am I?	

C2: Critical Concepts

Title of Lecture, Slidedeck/Presentation, and/or Activity:

[Click here to force copy the slides](#)

Description: In this lesson, students will learn about the history of the label “Asian American”

STEP	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Part 1	Intro: slides 5-11 1. Introduce the essential question to students 2. Engage students in an image discovery discussion (“I see, I think this means, I wonder”) 3. Present slides 9-10 to explain the context of the images <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Main point: Prior to the 1960s there was no cohesive pan-Asian identity or label 	20 minutes
Part 2	Article reading: slide 13 1. Students will read the NBC article on the history of the label “Asian American”	20 minutes

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. As students read the article, they will answer the guided reading questions on the right hand margin of assignment. 3. After reading the article and answering the guiding questions, students will answer the two reflection questions at the end of the assignment. 	
Part 3	<p>Mixer activity: slide 15-17</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assign students or allow students to choose one of the Asian American Political Alliance figures to read about. Provide students time to read, find vocabulary, and annotate as needed. Click here to force a copy of the readings. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Vicci Wong b. Steve Wong c. Bruce Occena d. Harvey Dong e. Jeffrey Thomas Leong f. Keith Kojimoto 2. After students finish reading, instruct them to create either a digital character trading card or a physical character trading card. 3. In this mixer activity, have students introduce themselves to a classmate as their assigned person. Instruct students to trade character cards, learn their new assigned person, then meet someone else. Continue until they have met all 5 other AAPA figures. 4. Use slide 17 for reflection questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Based on the people you met and learned about in the mixer, what were some similarities between each person’s family immigration story? ● Why was the Asian American label so empowering to these activists? ● Predict: why might the Asian American label be limiting? 	1.5-2 hours
Part 4	<p>Limitation discussion: slide 19-22</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give students this graphic organizer and have them use UC San Diego’s definition of APIMEDA to complete the vocabulary terms. 2. After completing the vocabulary, students will answer the two reflection questions at the end of the assignment. 	15-20 minutes
Part 5	<p>Lesson takeaways: slide 23-24</p>	5-10

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Third World Liberation Front, Civil Rights Movement, and the antiwar movement during the 60s created a ripe context for people to coalesce based on shared political analysis of oppression 2. The “Asian American” label was created in this specific context to unite Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino people under one Pan-Asian label in order to advocate on behalf of their needs 3. The Asian American activists in the 60s understood that each Asian community experienced similar forms of racism not only domestically but also abroad due to U.S. imperialism 4. Today, the Asian American community is much more diverse than it originally was in the 60s, so the label is limiting because it prioritizes certain communities and erases others 	minutes
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C3: Community Collaboration and/or Critical Cultural Production

Title of Main Activity(ies): Comic Page Assignment

Description: Students will demonstrate understanding of the history of the Asian American label by illustrating a comic page

STEP	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Step 1	<p>Introduce comic prompt to students</p> <p>Prompt: Tell the history of how the Asian American label emerged, why it was significant to the Asian American activists, and how the label can be limiting today in light of how many ethnicities fall under the Asian American label.</p> <p>Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each box must have at least a speech bubble OR a narration/description • Must be in color • Must answer the prompt and summarize the history and complexities of the label 	5 min
Step 2	Provide students with this graphic organizer to brainstorm what they might depict in each box in the comic	20-30 min

Step 3	Illustrate the comic on paper or digitally using this template	30-60 min
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C4: Conclusive Dialogue/Critical Circular Exchange

<p>Connection: How is this relevant to students? How is it relevant to the unit? How do you bring back to the PURPOSE of the unit?</p>	<p>After completing their comic assignment, students can participate in a digital or in-person gallery walk to showcase their work.</p> <p>Within this Self Unit, students will link their understanding of labels that dehumanized Asian Americans pre-1960s to their new knowledge about the emergence of the Asian American label.</p>
<p>Assessment: How will the students be assessed?</p>	<p>Comic book page summative project</p>
<p>Evaluation: How will the effectiveness of this lesson plan be evaluated?</p>	<p>Evaluate students' speech bubbles, narration text, and illustrations to see if they understand the Enduring Understandings and are able to address all of the project questions.</p>

RESOURCES AND NOTES

<p>Worksheets and Handouts: See folder</p>

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