

Handout

Word Choice and Japanese American Incarceration

	Language Originally Used by the US Government	Language Advocated by Survivors' Groups
	<i>This column lists language that was originally used to describe Japanese American incarceration.</i>	<i>This column lists language recommended by groups of survivors of Japanese American incarceration and their descendants (the Japanese American Citizens League and Denshō).</i>
1	<p>evacuation</p> <p><i>The Cambridge Dictionary defines evacuation as “the act of moving people from a dangerous place to somewhere safe.”</i></p> <p>Why do you think the US government would choose to use this word in 1943?</p>	<p>forced removal</p> <p>Why do you think survivors' groups recommend using this phrase instead?</p>
2	<p>internment</p> <p><i>Internment is widely understood as the process of holding, for an indeterminate amount of time, civilians who are suspected of working for a country's wartime enemy.</i></p> <p>Why do you think the US government would choose to use this word in 1943?</p>	<p>incarceration</p> <p><i>Incarceration is generally defined as the act of confining someone. This definition does not assign judgment to the reason why a person is detained.</i></p> <p>Why do you think survivors' groups recommend this word instead?</p>

3	<p>relocation centers and assembly centers</p> <p><i>The terms relocation centers and assembly centers suggest a temporary holding location.</i></p>	<p>concentration camps</p> <p><i>Oxford Languages defines a concentration camp as “a place where large numbers of people, especially political prisoners or members of persecuted minorities, are deliberately imprisoned in a relatively small area with inadequate facilities, sometimes to provide forced labor or to await mass execution.”</i></p>
	<p>Why do you think the US government would choose to use this term in 1943?</p>	<p>Why do you think survivors' groups recommend using this term instead?</p>