

Grace Tan

Mrs. Gomez

Honors World History 2

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When the World History Day project first came about, my original idea was the Japanese occupation of Singapore, because my dad and his parents are from Singapore. My grandparents had lived through the Japanese occupation of World War II. I have heard stories from my grandmother about having to learn Japanese in school and from my grandfather about how he was removed from school to work for the Japanese. I was also told of the brutality of the Japanese and the atrocities that occurred.

I began a generalized web search of Japanese imperialism in Asia. As I read, I found that China was an American ally during WW II. I hadn't known this. In addition, I didn't see China's involvement in WW II being depicted in popular culture (movies). I thought this was a story worth telling. Initially, I began by reading everything I could on the subject on the internet. From these articles, I found citations to several books that I was interested in. I borrowed these from local libraries. I realized that this was a huge story about two neighbors whose pasts intertwined throughout history. For the purpose of my website, this story started in the mid 19th century when the Europeans opened trade with China and Japan, and ended in 1949. I formulated my thesis that Japanese imperialism in China galvanized the Chinese people in unifying and ultimately forming the PRC. Then, I formed an outline and filled it in.

I chose to present my work as a website. This category stuck out to me the most because I have always been interested in web design. This allowed me to explore a medium that I feel is very relevant to my generation. I looked to other websites as examples. Through this process, I realized my likes and dislikes. I then took all of my ideas, and created a basic outline of my website, using *Weebly* to bring my ideas to life! I used primary and secondary quotes and visual sources to help tell the story and aid in keeping under the 1,200 word count.

My work relates to the NHD theme of Exploration, Encounter, Exchange in History and fulfills California standard 10.4 because Japan explored imperialism which led to the invasion of China. Their encounter with Japan made the Chinese realize that vast reformation was needed in China. In a reversal of roles, China now saw Japan as a mentor and sent thousands of students to study there in the early 20th century as an exchange. From this research, I have a better understanding of history. Especially, how the older generation of Chinese (my grandparents) may distrust Japanese today. I also came to realize that history is not a concrete subject. It may be recounted to the bias of the teller (eg Nanking Massacre). In order to understand current events, you have to understand the history.

(480 words)