“EXCLUSION AND EMPIRE, 1898–1941”

RECOMMENDED GRADE LEVEL: Grades 7 to 12

OVERVIEW
This activity is designed to accompany the contextual essay “Exclusion and Empire, 1898–1941,” from the Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Congress website, https://history.house.gov/Exhibitions-and-Publications/APA/Historical-Essays/Exclusion-and-Empire/Introduction/. Students have the opportunity to learn more about the Asian and Pacific Islander Americans (APA) who served in Congress from 1898 to 1941. Students are encouraged to analyze the role APA Delegates and Resident Commissioners played in Congress during the era, as well as the ways in which they may have changed the institution.

CURRICULUM CONNECTION
• U.S. History, American Government, Social Studies, Asian Studies, Native Hawaiian Studies
• U.S. Expansion, Immigration Restriction, Philippines, Hawaiian Territory

OBJECTIVES
1. Students should be able to identify the Asian Pacific Islander Americans who served in Congress from 1898 to 1941.
2. Students should be able to recognize the ways in which Asian Pacific Islander Americans won elective office from 1898 to 1941.
3. Students should be able to identify important issues and trends surrounding the Asian Pacific Islander Americans who served in Congress from 1898 to 1941.

LESSON PLAN
1. To introduce students to the upcoming activity, lead a brief discussion using the questions below:
   a. What were some of the important issues and events in the United States from 1898 to 1941?
   b. If asked to describe an average Member of Congress (House or Senate) during this period, how would you answer?
   c. Have there been many Asian and Pacific Islander Americans who have served in Congress? (Ask students to compile a quick list.) Why or why not?
2. Ask students to read the contextual essay “Exclusion and Empire, 1898–1941,” either independently or in groups. Encourage students to take notes and to write down any unanswered questions they encounter during the reading.
3. After students have completed the reading, have them answer the Comprehension Questions. Review the answers as a class.
4. Next, have students answer the Critical Thinking Questions. Review the answers as a class.
5. Choose one of the options listed under the category Main Exercise (Cooperative or Hypothetical).
6. Time permitting, conduct one of the Suggested Extended Activities.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS ON THE SURFACE
1. What attracted Asian immigrants to the United States and Hawaii? Describe the treatment they received from many Americans and the U.S. government.
2. What is the role of the Resident Commissioner in Congress? Compare or contrast this role to that of a Representative. Describe the background and attributes of a typical Resident Commissioner.
3. Who was Samuel Wilder King? What issues did he promote?
**CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS**

**DIGGING DEEPER**

1. How did immigration restrictions affect Asian immigrants? What long-term effects did immigration restriction have on Congress?

2. Explain the arguments for and against U.S. expansion. How might the work of Asian Pacific Islander American Members be impacted by these arguments?

3. Considering their limited power in Congress, could Resident Commissioners successfully represent the Philippines? What could they do to ensure that their voices were heard? What resources and powers would have helped Resident Commissioners be more successful?

4. Why were committee appointments especially important to Hawaii’s Delegates?

**MAIN EXERCISE**

**OPTION 1: COOPERATIVE**

Working in small groups, choose an APA Member of Congress from this era and follow the directions below:

a. Read the profile for your Member.

b. Write down any important notes.

c. Scenario: You have been assigned the task of designing a museum exhibit to describe the life of your Member. The exhibit should include information on all aspects of his or her life but should focus on the Member’s congressional service.

What should be included:

- Original title of exhibit that helps explain his or her legacy
- 50-word exhibit label that summarizes his or her congressional career
- Three artifacts chosen by you that best represent the Member’s legacy
- A creative teaching tool for museum visitors that covers the highlights of his or her career in Congress (committees, key legislation, state or district he represented, etc.)

**OPTION 2: HYPOTHETICAL**

1. You are a Native Hawaiian candidate for Delegate to Congress from the 1910s. You want to convey how Hawaii is different from mainland states and why the territory deserves federal resources. How will you get elected? What is your campaign slogan? What issues will you focus on during your campaign?

2. You are a Filipino Resident Commissioner. You are determined to communicate the important issues of the territory, but you are unable to vote in Congress. How do you gain attention for the issues that are important to the Philippines? Write a one-page letter to the Philippine legislature outlining the hurdles you face in Congress and how you are handling them.

3. You are a Congressperson in the early 1900s. You disagree with the restrictions on immigration being passed in the legislature. Draft a speech explaining your stance on the issue and deliver it to your class.

**SUGGESTED EXTENDED ACTIVITIES**

1. Create a timeline of significant events for the Philippines or Hawaii during this era.

2. Write a 100-word obituary for one of the Resident Commissioners who served during this era.

3. Design a campaign poster for a Hawaiian candidate for delegate during this period.

4. Moderate a class debate over the issue of U.S. expansion during this period.