



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 8: Module 3A: Unit 2: Lesson 5

Building Background Knowledge: The Internment of Japanese-Americans during WWII, Part 1



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Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)

I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for an analysis of literary text. (RI.8.1)

I can analyze how specific dialogue or incidents in a plot propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. (RL.8.3)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can use “The Life of Miné Okubo” to build background knowledge about the internment of Japanese-Americans during WWII.
- I can analyze how words, phrases, and incidents in “The Life of Miné Okubo” reveal aspects of Okubo as a character.
- I can cite evidence that supports my analysis of “The Life of Miné Okubo.”

Ongoing Assessment

- “The Life of Miné Okubo” structured notes, gist notes (from homework)
- Understanding Miné: Character Traits graphic organizer
- Understanding Miné: Character Traits QuickWrite



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Engaging the Reader :Discussing the Gist (5 minutes) B. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minute) 2. Work Time <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Character Study: Miné Okubo (25 minutes) 3. Closing and Assessment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Quick Write and Preview Homework (10 minute) 4. Homework <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Read “The Life of Miné Okubo” and complete the “The Life of Mine Okudo” structured notes (from Lesson 4) Answer the focus question: “How did war affect Okubo? Cite two specific examples from the text to support your answer” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the first in a series of lessons in which students enrich their understanding of <i>Unbroken</i>’s historical context by building background knowledge about Japanese-American internment and the effects of war on individuals and society during WWII. • “The Life of Miné Okubo” is the central text for these lessons. It frames Okubo’s internment through the lens of “invisibility” (both the internal struggle to maintain dignity, identity, and self-worth while captive, and the external isolation of being closed off from the outside world while in captivity), which parallels similar themes about Zamperini’s imprisonment in <i>Unbroken</i>. Reading “The Life of Miné Okubo” helps students build background knowledge about internment, provide source material for the End of Unit 2 Assessment, and serve as a model for the Module 3A final performance task (“Narrative Writing: Becoming Visible after Internment”). • “The Life of Miné Okubo” is narrative nonfiction. However, as with Louie Zamperini in <i>Unbroken</i>, Okubo is developed as a character in the text. So the Reading Literature standards are a useful lens for analyzing this text. • Review: QuickWrite (in preparation for the Closing). • Post: Learning targets; Understanding Louie: Character Traits anchor chart.



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
internment, character traits; dedicated, infer; student-selected vocabulary words from “The Life of Miné Okubo”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “The Life of Miné Okubo” (from Lesson 4)• Understanding Louie: Character Traits anchor chart (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 3)• Understanding Miné: Character Traits graphic organizer (one per student and one to display)• Document camera• Understanding Miné: Character Traits QuickWrite (one per student)• “The Life of Mine Okubo” structured notes (from Lesson 4)

Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Engaging the Reader: Discussing the Gist (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite students to take out last night’s homework (“The Life of Miné Okubo” structured notes) and sit with their Marshall Islands discussion partner. Then, ask them to discuss the gist of “The Life of Miné Okubo.”• After 2 minutes, cold call several pairs to share the gist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Giving students time to talk through ideas supports comprehension and builds class culture• This short break from reading <i>Unbroken</i> can give students who are behind on their reading some time to catch up.



Opening (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>B. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students read along while you read the first learning target aloud: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can use “The Life of Miné Okubo” to build background knowledge about the internment of Japanese-Americans during WWII.” • Invite students to turn and talk with their partner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Based on what you read in ‘The Life of Miné Okubo,’ what does <i>internment</i> mean?” • After a moment, ask for a volunteer to define the term. Listen for a response such as: “Internment was when Japanese-Americans were forced to move out of their houses and live in camps during World War II.” Clarify as needed. • Ask for another volunteer to explain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “How does internment connect to the attack on Pearl Harbor?” • Listen for him or her to say that internment was the U.S. government’s response to the attack on Pearl Harbor. Clarify as needed. • Tell students they’ll take a break from reading <i>Unbroken</i> for the next three days to learn more about Japanese-American internment from Miné Okubo’s story. • Ask students to read along while you read the next two learning targets aloud: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can analyze how words, phrases, and incidents in ‘The Life of Miné Okubo’ reveal aspects of Okubo as a character.” * “I can cite evidence that supports my analysis of ‘The Life of Miné Okubo.’” • Refer students to the Understanding Louie: Character Traits anchor chart. Invite them to turn and talk about how the class came up with the character traits listed on the left-hand side of the anchor chart. • After a moment, ask for a volunteer to explain her thinking. Listen for an inference about Louie based on evidence from the text. Explain that today, students will use these same skills to analyze Miné Okubo as a character. Remind them that even though “The Life of Miné Okubo” is a nonfiction text (just like <i>Unbroken</i>), the author uses some narrative techniques, like transition words and description, to make the text more engaging, so they will sometimes analyze her as if she were a fictional character. 	



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Character Study: Miné Okubo (25 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students that you will reread “The Life of Miné Okubo” aloud, and they will specifically look for details that reveal Okubo’s character. • In a fluent manner, read “The Life of Miné Okubo” aloud as students follow along silently in their heads. Do not stop to discuss. • Tell students that they will work with their partners to analyze the text. Distribute and display the Understanding Miné: Character Traits graphic organizer using a document camera. Refer students to the Understanding Louie: Character Traits anchor chart and remind them that character traits are adjectives that describe a character’s personality, like “resilient” or “optimistic.” • Say something like: “Based on what I read in this text, I can infer that one of Miné Okubo’s character traits is that she is dedicated, because she is devoted to her artwork and puts a lot of time and energy into it.” Invite students to write “dedicated” in the Trait column of their graphic organizer as you do the same on the displayed copy. • Focus students on the “Details from “The Life of Miné Okubo”” column. Say something like: “One detail from the text that tells me Miné is dedicated is that she painted a different picture of a cat every day when she was a child.” Write this into the Details column and invite students to do the same on their own handout. • Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What is another detail from the text that tells us Miné is dedicated to her art?” • Call on a volunteer and listen for him to say that Miné earned two degrees in art, studied art in Europe, painted murals for the U.S. Army, or continued creating art even when she was interned. Add this detail to the displayed handout and invite students to do the same. • Give students time to work together to finish filling in the character traits chart on the handout. As they work with their partners, circulate and monitor to ensure that students are writing down adjectives in the Trait column and supporting their inferences with textual evidence. • After 15–20 minutes, refocus students whole group. Cold call students to share character traits and details from the text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassure students who struggle with writing that the Written Conversation is meant to collect their ideas, questions, etc. and provide practice for putting these things down in writing.



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. QuickWrite and Preview Homework (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribute the Understanding Miné: Character Traits QuickWrite. Tell students this QuickWrite asks them to <i>infer</i>, which means to make an educated guess based on the evidence in the text. Remind students that when they complete a QuickWrite, they need to answer the prompt completely, use the strongest evidence, explain the evidence, and include a focus statement and conclusion.• Invite students to complete the QuickWrite.• Collect the QuickWrite and preview the homework.	
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain to students that for homework in the previous lesson they read “The Life of Mine Okubo” and wrote the gist of what they read on the Structured Notes. For homework in this lesson, they are going to reread “The Life of Miné Okubo” and complete the focus question, “How did war affect Okubo? Cite two specific examples from the text to support your answer.” on the same Structured Notes from the previous lesson.	



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Supporting Materials



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Understanding Miné:
Character Traits Graphic Organizer

Name: _____

Date: _____

Based on the information in this text, what are Miné Okubo's character traits?

Trait	Details from <i>The Life of Miné Okubo</i>



Date:

In *The Life of Miné Okubo*, Okubo describes being interviewed at the assembly center when she reported for internment: “As a result of the interview ... my family name was reduced to No. 13660. I was given several tags bearing the family number, and was then dismissed.” What can you infer about Okubo based on the way she describes these events?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.