

Summer Reading Assignment 10CP



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Directions: During the summer break, you are to read ***Farewell to Manzanar* by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston** and James D. Houston. Please note: **you do not need to submit these questions**; they are merely guiding you through each set of chapters. Upon our return to school, we will have a writing assignment pertaining to this novel, along with an assessment.

BEFORE YOU READ: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW NOW

On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, killing over 2,400 Americans and pulling the United States into World War II. The attack created intense fear and anger toward Japanese Americans, who had been living in the United States for generations and were mostly American-born citizens. In February 1942, President Roosevelt signed an order forcing approximately 120,000 Japanese Americans from their homes and into internment camps. They had committed no crime, were given little time to prepare, and did not know when they would be released. The camps were crowded, poorly built, and located in harsh, remote areas. Many families lost their homes, businesses, and savings while imprisoned.

Farewell to Manzanar is the true story of Jeanne Wakatsuki, who was seven years old when her family was sent to Manzanar internment camp in California, where they spent three and a half years. She wrote this memoir as an adult looking back on what she experienced as a child. As you read, pay attention not just to what happened but to how she tells the story and what she wants you to understand.

PART ONE: A DISAPPEARING VILLAGE

Chapter 1: What Is Pearl Harbor?

1. Jeanne opens with a scene of her family watching the sardine boats leave the harbor before getting to the attack on Pearl Harbor. Why do you think she starts here? What does it tell you about her family's life before the war?
2. Jeanne is only seven years old when the attack happens. What details in this chapter show that she does not fully understand what is going on around her?
3. Papa burns his Japanese flag and papers when he hears about the attack. What does this tell you about how he expects to be treated? What does it say about his situation as a Japanese immigrant in America?
4. Papa is taken away by the FBI at the end of the chapter, but Houston does not describe it dramatically. Why do you think she writes it that way? How does that quiet tone affect you as a reader?

Chapter 2: Shikata Ga Nai

1. The chapter title means "it cannot be helped" in Japanese. Who in the family seems to live by this idea, and what does it tell you about how they cope with what is happening?
2. The family is forced to sell their belongings quickly and for very little money. What specific details does Houston include, and why do those details feel more powerful than just saying they lost everything?
3. Mama has to take charge of the family while Papa is gone. What details show her strength, and what details show how hard this is for her?
4. Houston moves through a lot of events quickly in this chapter. How does the fast pace of the writing match what the family is going through?

Chapter 3: A Different Kind of Sand

1. How does Houston describe the landscape when the family arrives at Manzanar? What do those details tell you about what life there will be like?

2. The family is given a single room to live in. What does that say about how the government saw them and their needs?
3. Choose one specific detail from Houston's description of the barracks or the camp. Why do you think she included it? What does it help you understand or feel?
4. Houston was a child when she arrived at Manzanar. Where do you see her childhood perspective in this chapter, and where do you see the adult writer looking back?

Chapter 4: A Common Master Plan

1. Food becomes a big issue in this chapter. How does Houston use the description of meals and eating to show what the camp is doing to the family?
2. Family members start eating separately at different times and places. Why is this detail significant? What does it represent beyond just the meals themselves?
3. Houston includes details about the lack of privacy in the camp. What do those details show about how the internees were treated?
4. Houston never directly says the conditions are terrible, but you understand it anyway. How does she make that argument through specific details without stating it outright?

Chapter 5: Almost a Family

1. Papa returns in this chapter but he is clearly changed. What specific details show that he is not the same person who left?
2. Why do you think Houston titles this chapter "Almost a Family"? What does the word "almost" suggest that "a family again" would not?
3. Papa comes back with a bottle of whiskey. What does this detail tell you about what the experience did to him?
4. The reunion is not joyful in the way you might expect. How does Houston's tone in this chapter reflect the complicated feelings of that moment?

Chapter 6: Whatever He Did Had Dignity

1. This chapter is mostly about who Papa was before the war. Why do you think Houston places this chapter here, after already showing his decline, rather than at the very beginning?
2. How does Houston describe Papa's pride and dignity through specific scenes? What picture of him does she build?
3. Houston is writing about her father as an adult looking back. How does her grown up understanding of him add to or change what she knew as a child?
4. What does this chapter suggest about what internment took from Japanese American men like Papa?

Chapter 7: Fort Lincoln: An Interview

1. This chapter reconstructs what happened to Papa during his interrogation, even though Jeanne was not there. How does Houston handle telling a story she did not personally witness?
2. Papa is questioned about his loyalty to the United States. What is painful or unfair about the questions he is asked given everything you know about his life in America?
3. The interrogation tries to put Papa into a simple category: loyal or not loyal. How does this chapter show that his identity and feelings are far more complicated than that?
4. Looking back at all of Part One, what has Houston shown you about what internment did to this family, not just physically but emotionally?

PART TWO: THE SOUL OF A GHOST

Chapter 8: Manzanar, U.S.A.

1. By this point the camp has developed schools, churches, and shops. How does Houston seem to feel about the camp starting to look like a small town? Does she find it comforting, troubling, or both?

2. Jeanne finds activities she enjoys inside the camp. What does her ability to find moments of happiness tell you about childhood? Does it change how you feel about the camp at all?
3. The title of Part Two is "The Soul of a Ghost." Based on what you have read so far, what do you think that phrase means? Who or what is the ghost?
4. How does Houston use the contrast between the camp looking normal on the surface and the reality underneath to show what is happening to the people living there?

Chapter 9: The Mess Hall Bells

1. A riot breaks out at Manzanar in this chapter. How does Houston explain the causes without making it seem simple?
2. Houston shows real divisions and conflicts within the Japanese American community at the camp. Why is it important that she shows this instead of presenting everyone as unified?
3. Jeanne is a child during these events and does not fully understand what is happening. How does seeing the riot through her eyes shape the way you experience it as a reader?
4. How does this chapter change or complicate your understanding of what life in the camp was like?

Chapter 10: The Reservoir Shack: An Aside

1. Houston labels this chapter "An Aside," meaning she is stepping outside the main story on purpose. Why do you think she makes that choice? What does it tell you about how she sees her own role as the narrator?
2. This chapter focuses on Papa's drinking and his retreat to an isolated shack. How does Houston write about her father's weakness without simply judging him?
3. What does the image of Papa hiding away in an isolated space tell you about what internment has done to him mentally and emotionally?
4. What does this chapter add to your understanding of how the camp affected the adults, especially the men?

Chapter 11: Yes Yes No No

1. The loyalty questionnaire forces families to answer impossible questions. How does Houston explain why there is no good answer for many families?
2. Some young men answer no to both loyalty questions and face further punishment. How does Houston ask you to understand their choice rather than judge it?
3. Papa's reaction to the questionnaire is angry and complicated. What does his anger tell you about his sense of who he is?
4. What does this chapter say about who gets to decide what loyalty means, and who gets hurt by that definition?

Chapter 12: Outings, Explorations

1. Jeanne becomes interested in attending Catholic Mass and is drawn to its rituals. How does Houston explain what Jeanne is looking for? What does she seem to find there?
2. Jeanne also takes up baton twirling. What does her pursuit of this very American activity inside an internment camp suggest?
3. Houston shows Jeanne searching for identity and a sense of belonging through different activities. What does this tell you about what the camp experience is doing to her sense of who she is?
4. How does this chapter connect to the larger theme of what Japanese Americans were being pressured to become?

Chapter 13: Relocation, Once More, Once More

1. Some internees begin leaving Manzanar during this period. How does Houston show that leaving is not simply a relief? What makes it complicated?
2. The world outside the camp has not necessarily changed its attitudes toward Japanese Americans. How does Houston address the fear people feel about going back out into that world?

3. How does this chapter develop the idea of belonging? Where do the internees belong after everything that has happened?
4. What does this chapter suggest about the long-term damage of internment beyond just the time spent inside the camp?

Chapter 14: In the Firebreak

1. Papa begins building a rock garden outside the barracks. How does Houston describe this project, and what does it tell you about what he is trying to reclaim?
2. How does this image of Papa carefully building something beautiful change or add to the picture of him you formed in earlier chapters?
3. Creating something beautiful in a place designed to be bleak is a way of pushing back. How does Houston show that without directly calling it resistance?
4. What does this chapter say about what people need in order to hold onto their sense of self and dignity?

Chapter 15: Departures

1. Jeanne's brother Woody is drafted into the United States Army from inside the internment camp. How does Houston present the painful irony of this without over-explaining it?
2. How do different family members react to Woody leaving? What do their different reactions tell you about how each person feels about America?
3. Houston writes the farewell scene with restraint rather than heavy emotion. How does that quiet style affect the impact of the moment?
4. What does this chapter say about what Japanese Americans were asked to give, and what they were denied in return?

Chapter 16: Free to Go

1. Internees are told they are free to leave but many are afraid to go. How does Houston explain that fear in a way that makes complete sense?
2. Papa does not want to leave. What does his resistance tell you about what Manzanar has come to mean to him even after everything?
3. How does Houston use the word "free" in a way that makes you question what freedom actually means in this situation?
4. What does this chapter say about what home means when yours has been taken from you?

Chapter 17: It's All Starting Over

1. The family leaves Manzanar and faces hostility and racism when they try to return to their community. How does Houston describe these moments, and what do they tell you about what was waiting for Japanese Americans outside the camps?
2. Papa tries to rebuild his life and authority after leaving. How does Houston show both his determination and the limits of what he is able to recover?
3. What does the title "It's All Starting Over" suggest about both the hope and the exhaustion of this moment?
4. Looking back at all of Part Two, how has Jeanne changed from the child who arrived at Manzanar in Part One?

PART THREE: A DIFFERENT KIND OF FAREWELL

Chapter 18: Ka-ke, Near Hiroshima: April 1946

1. This chapter follows Woody traveling to Japan after the war to find his family's ancestral home. Why do you think Houston includes this chapter even though it is outside Jeanne's direct experience?

2. Woody is an American soldier visiting the country his own country assumed he was loyal to. How does his situation capture the impossible position Japanese Americans were placed in?
3. Woody finds family members in Japan who survived the war and the atomic bombing. How does Houston handle this devastating fact, and what does her choice to handle it quietly accomplish?
4. What does Woody's journey suggest about identity and what it means to belong to more than one world?

Chapter 19: Re-entry

1. Jeanne attends a mostly white school after the camp. How does she describe what it feels like to be one of the only Japanese American students there?
2. The racism Jeanne faces is often subtle and social rather than obvious. Why can that kind of racism be harder to deal with than open hostility?
3. Jeanne works hard to fit in and be accepted. How does Houston look back on her younger self's efforts with understanding but also a sense of what that cost her?
4. How does this chapter connect to the theme of identity that runs through the whole memoir? What is Jeanne trying to become, and what is she giving up to get there?

Chapter 20: A Double Impulse

1. Houston describes feeling pulled in two directions: wanting to be fully accepted as American and wanting to hold onto her Japanese identity. How does she show this tension through real experiences rather than just telling you about it?
2. Papa pushes Jeanne toward Japanese traditions while the outside world pushes her toward fitting in. How does Houston show the pressure coming from both sides?
3. How does Jeanne's sense of her own appearance and the way others see her develop in this chapter?
4. What does Houston seem to be saying about what America asked Japanese Americans to do with their identity?

Chapter 21: The Girl of My Dreams

1. Jeanne runs for carnival queen at her high school. Based on everything you have read, what do you think she is really looking for by doing this?
2. Jeanne wins, but the victory feels complicated. How does Houston show that being accepted on the surface does not solve the deeper questions she has been dealing with?
3. Can you fully belong to a community that once imprisoned you? What does this chapter suggest about that question?
4. How does this chapter feel like a turning point for Jeanne's personal story in the memoir? What has she achieved, and what is still unresolved?

Chapter 22: Ten Thousand Waves

1. Jeanne returns to Manzanar as an adult with her husband and children. What is she looking for, and what does she find when she gets there?
2. Most of the physical camp has disappeared and returned to the desert. What does Houston seem to be saying about how America has treated the memory of what happened to Japanese Americans?
3. Houston ends the memoir with an image of waves and wind. What do you think that image means? What does it say about memory and what stays with us?
4. Think about the title Farewell to Manzanar. After reading this final chapter, what kind of farewell do you think this actually is? Is it about moving on, mourning, or something harder to name?