

Celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage and History: A K-12 Teacher's Toolkit



Make Us
VISIBLE

In Partnership with the Virginia Department of Education

Welcome to the Educator Toolkit!

May is a powerful opportunity to celebrate the histories, cultures, and contributions of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities; however, use this toolkit anytime. Across classrooms and campuses, educators play an integral role in creating spaces where students can learn about and uplift stories that have often been left out of textbooks, and this toolkit offers an intentional moment to do just that.

This toolkit was created with K-12 educators in mind. It reflects the input of Virginia educators, constituents, higher education educators, and Virginia Asian Advisory Board council members. Whether you are working with kindergarteners or high schoolers, just getting started or deepening year-round work, the resources here are designed to be flexible and engaging. Inside, you will find:

- Classroom activities and discussion prompts
- Grade-level adaptations
- Printable worksheets and coloring pages
- Book and media recommendations
- Opportunities to connect history to students' lived experiences

All resources are free to use, adapt, and share. While May is often referred to in different ways (Asian Pacific American Heritage Month/APAHM, AAPI Heritage Month, AANHPI Month, and others), we believe what matters most is that students see themselves reflected in the curriculum and that all students gain a more robust understanding of American history.

We hope this toolkit supports you in making May meaningful and in continuing the conversation all year long.

Make Us Visible (MUV) is a 501(c)(3) grassroots nonprofit organization that empowers local communities to integrate Asian American contributions, experiences, and histories in K–12 classrooms.

Their free resources include

- coloring pages featuring AANHPI historical figures representing different ethnicities, states, and professions
- book lists highlighting AANHPI representation that can be filtered by identity group, grade level, and themes
- story books with lessons plans for some of the historical figures featured in the coloring pages

Website: makeusvisible.org

Instagram: [@make.us.visible](https://www.instagram.com/make.us.visible)

Facebook: [Make Us Visible](https://www.facebook.com/MakeUsVisible)

LinkedIn: [Make Us Visible](https://www.linkedin.com/company/makeusvisible)

More about this toolkit:

This first iteration of our toolkit was developed for the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) by educators, parents, and community members of Make Us Visible, a national nonprofit empowering local communities to integrate Asian American contributions, experiences, and histories in K–12 classrooms.

Through actions of the [2024 Virginia General Assembly \(HB30\)](#), the following was passed:

“N. Out of this appropriation, \$100,000 the first year from the general fund is provided to identify and create model curriculum, tools, and resources to support local school divisions in teaching Asian American history, including the history of Virginians of Asian descent, as part of the History and Social Science Standards of Learning and supporting programming for Asian American and Pacific Islander History Month.”

In February 2025, the VDOE contracted Make Us Visible to lead the development of Asian American History & Training Resources. In the coming months and years, we will be expanding this toolkit and developing additional material alongside the VDOE for all K–12 educators in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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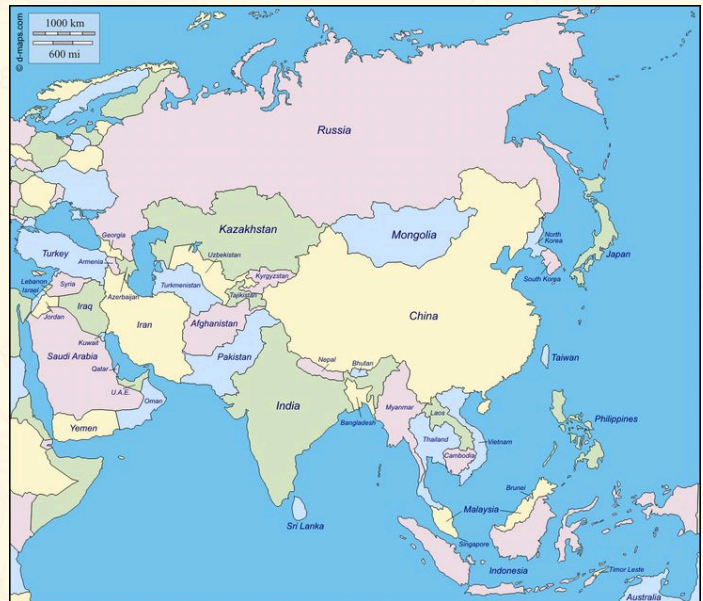
An Introduction to the Significance of May

What Do We Call This Month?

As you explore this toolkit, you will see the month referred to in a few different ways. That is because over time, the language used to recognize this heritage month has evolved and continues to reflect the range of the communities being celebrated. Here is a quick guide to the most common terms you may encounter:

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (APAHM)

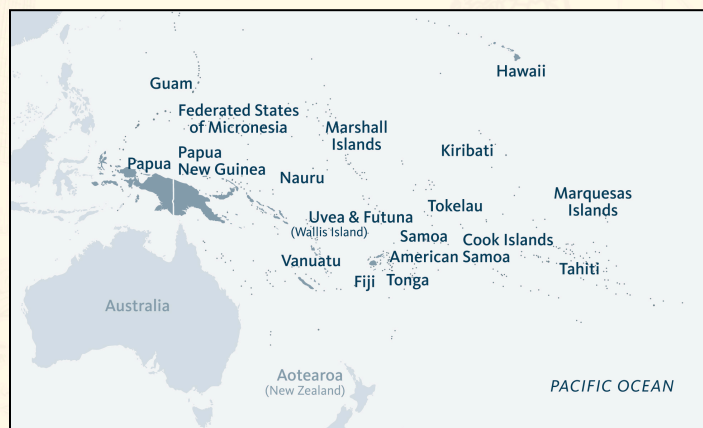
This was the original designation when the month was first officially recognized by the U.S. government. In 1990, Congress expanded a week-long observance into a full month and passed a law in 1992 to make it an annual commemoration. *Asian Pacific American* was the term used at the time to encompass Americans with ancestry from the Asian continent as well as the Pacific Islands.



A map of the countries in the Asian continent

AAPI Heritage Month

AAPI stands for Asian American and Pacific Islander. This term became more widely used in education throughout the 2000s and 2010s. It emphasizes the shared and individual experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders within the U.S.



A map of the Pacific Islands

APIDA Heritage Month

Some schools, campuses, and organizations use the term APIDA,

which stands for Asian Pacific Islander Desi American. This version of the acronym explicitly includes South Asians, such as those with heritage from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. While South Asians are included under the broader “Asian American” umbrella, APIDA highlights the richness within Asian American communities and addresses the ways South Asian experiences can sometimes be overlooked in pan-Asian narratives.

AANHPI Heritage Month

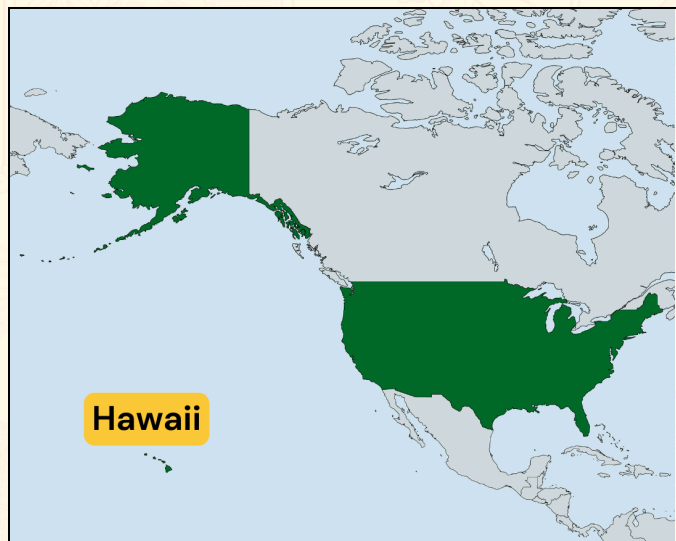
More recently, many communities and organizations have begun using AANHPI, which stands for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander. This term specifically names Native Hawaiians, recognizing their distinct identity and history, and reflects a growing effort to be more accurate and thoughtful in how these communities are represented.

What term should I use?

There is no single “right” answer. The most important thing is to be intentional and thoughtful. Some schools or districts may use one version officially. In other cases, students or families may have a strong preference for how their identities are named. Whenever possible, reflect the language of the communities you serve.



A map of Pakistan, India, Nepal, and Bangladesh



A map of Hawaii's location in relation to the continental U.S. and Alaska

Please note: In this toolkit, we use Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) to align with the language of the Virginia Department of Education, as this resource was designed specifically for K–12 educators in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

How to Use this Toolkit

Whether you're just beginning to explore Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) stories in your classroom or looking to deepen your existing curriculum, this toolkit is here to help. It is designed to be flexible, approachable, and adaptable to a wide range of classroom settings, schedules, and experience levels.

Here is how to get started:

1. Start with your students and classroom.

Look for entry points that connect to what you are already teaching – identity, civic engagement, community, storytelling. AAPI history is American history, and it can be embedded into units on U.S. history, geography, government, language arts, and even art or advisory.

2. Choose a theme and grade band.

The toolkit is organized by grade level (K–2, 3–5, 6–8, 9–12) and themes. Each section offers sample activities, discussion questions, and printable resources tailored to students' developmental stages.

3. Use what works. No need to do everything.

You can pull a single activity for a class period, feature a community leader on morning announcements, or build a full lesson plan around one of the themes. Everything is designed to stand alone or work in combination.

4. Make space for reflection and connection.

These topics may be new for many students and for educators, too. Invite curiosity, hold space for identity exploration, and connect stories from AAPI communities to broader themes of belonging and contribution.

5. Keep going beyond May.

While May offers a powerful starting point, AAPI histories and voices belong in classrooms all year long. Use this toolkit to spark long-term integration of AAPI perspectives into your curriculum not just for heritage month, but as a regular part of your students' learning.

All materials in this toolkit are free to use, adapt, and share. There is no one right way to begin. Just start with what feels doable for you and your students.

Virginia: AAPI History & Heritage Themes by Grade Level

Early Elementary (Grades K-2)

Theme:

- **Family & Community:** Help students explore AAPI traditions, family stories, and celebrations to understand that families may come from many different backgrounds, and that every family has its own way of showing love, care, and community.

Teacher Guidance: Use books, music, and art to explore AAPI family traditions and help students see their own families and those of their peers reflected in the classroom. Activities should center on recognizing similarities and differences in family life, and celebrating the role of family and community in shaping who we are.

Grade-level Virginia History Standards:

- **VA History Standard of Learning 2.10c** – The student will describe the contributions and roles of changemakers in United States history including, but not limited to Reformers and Champions: Senator Daniel Inouye.

Activity for VA History Standard of Learning 2.10c

Introducing Senator Daniel Inouye. Focus on his early life helping his family in Hawaii and his later leadership. Use simple visuals or a brief story to highlight his service and accomplishments. This helps students understand how family and community values like responsibility, care, and service can shape a person's path.

- Resource: [U.S. Senate: Daniel K. Inouye: A Featured Biography](#)
- Resource: [Daniel K. Inouye Papers](#)

Activity Ideas for *Family & Community*

Mapping AAPI Heritage Around the World. Use a map or globe to introduce the many places around the world where Asian American and Pacific Islander families may trace their heritage—including countries such as Vietnam, Korea, India, the Philippines, China, Japan, and Pacific Islands like Samoa and Hawaii. Explain that while some students may have cultural roots in these regions, others may not—and that learning about AAPI heritage helps us better understand the many communities that make up American history and society. Explain that some families have been in the U.S. a long time, and others are newer arrivals.

Celebrating Culture Together. Invite parents of AAPI heritage to lead simple classroom activities. If parent volunteers are not available, teachers can also consider showing short online video tutorials that demonstrate these activities step-by-step. This can help bring cultural traditions to life in a visually engaging way and offer flexibility for classrooms with limited community access.

Stories That Connect Us. Read storybooks by AAPI authors that highlight AAPI traditions such as Lunar New Year meals, storytelling, or multigenerational gatherings. Discuss the traditions described in the book and have students share their own family traditions. This activity helps students recognize that family traditions are meaningful in every culture. *Sensitivity to unique family circumstances is encouraged.*

If you are looking for books, using the [AANHPI Book List K-8](#), located on [Make Us Visible's Resources page](#), can be an option to find titles.

1. Select "Filter," then in the first dropdown box, select "Age Group"
2. In the third dropdown box, select "K-1st Grade" and "2nd-3rd Grade"
3. Select "Add Condition," then in the first dropdown box, select "Themes"
4. In the third dropdown box, select "Festivals and Traditions"

Discussion Prompts:

- What special traditions does this family have?
- How are their traditions like or different from yours?
- What do you think makes a family strong?

Music and Stories from AAPI Communities. Introduce students to traditional and contemporary music from different AAPI cultures as a way to explore heritage and identity through sound. For example, listen to a Korean folk song, a Pacific Islander drum performance, or a modern AAPI artist. Encourage students to notice rhythms, instruments, and the emotions the music conveys. Discuss how music tells stories and reflects family and community traditions, offering a rich way to learn about AAPI heritage beyond surface-level celebration.

Discussion prompts:

- What instruments do you hear? Are they different from instruments you have seen before?
- How does the music make you feel?
- What do you think this song might be about?
- Can you think of a time music was important to you, your friends, or your family?

Upper Elementary (Grades 3-5)

Themes:

- **Migration & Identity:** Encourage students to explore reasons people move, what it feels like to be new, and the meaning of names while learning about the journeys and contributions of AAPI inventors, artists, athletes, and community helpers.
- **Civic Contributions:** Introduce AAPI individuals who made a difference through talent or service, and guide students to reflect on how everyday people can contribute to their communities in meaningful ways.

Teacher Guidance: Connect literature with biography and hands-on activities to support engagement. Encourage students to process what they have learned through class discussions, drawing, or short written reflections to help them connect personally with AAPI stories and contributions.

Activity Idea for *Migration & Identity*

Exploring Migration Through AAPI Books. Read *The Name Jar*, *A Different Pond*, and *Ánh's New Word*; use story mapping to show the journey of each character. This activity helps students explore the AAPI theme of *Migration & Identity* by examining why characters move, how they adapt, and what parts of their identity they bring with them. Story mapping also supports students in understanding the emotional experience of migration and building empathy through the lens of personal narrative.

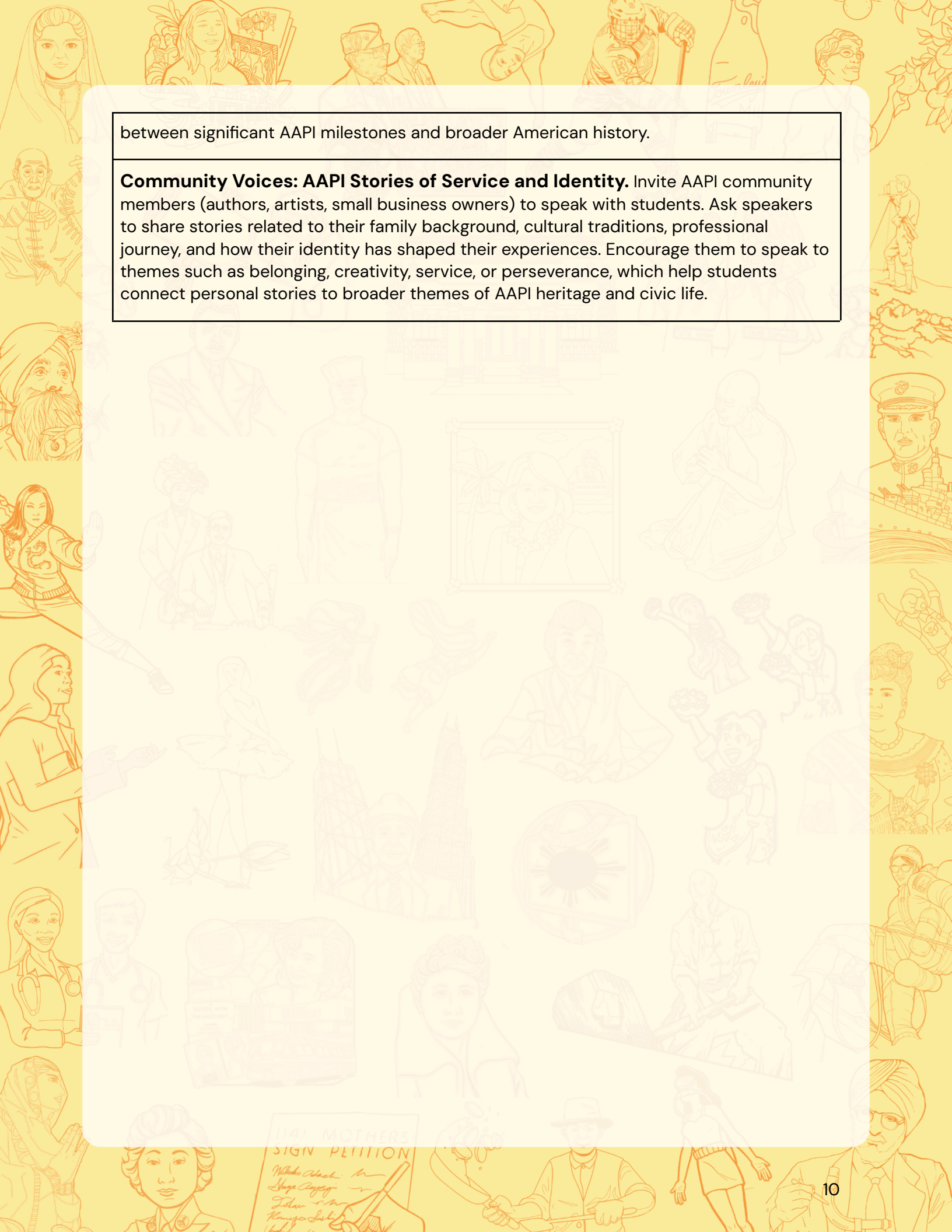
- Resource: [The Name Jar K-5 Discussion Guide](#)

Activity Ideas for *Civic Contributions*

Color & Learn: AAPI Figures. MUV AAPI coloring book pages can be used to introduce students to a wide range of real-life AAPI figures and their accomplishments. The coloring pages serve as an accessible visual and biographical tool for engaging younger learners in discussions about representation, identity, and achievement, while helping students connect with the real stories of AAPI individuals who have shaped American history and society.

- Resource: [Make Us Visible Coloring Book](#)
- Resource: [Make Us Visible x National Park Service Coloring Book](#)

AAPI History Timeline. Build a class timeline showing moments in AAPI history and achievements. Include sample entries such as the arrival of Filipino sailors in the 1700s, the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, the heroism of the 442nd Regiment during WWII, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, and beyond. This visual project helps students organize historical knowledge chronologically and makes connections

The background of the page is a vibrant yellow-orange collage of line-art illustrations. It features a diverse array of AAPI individuals, including historical figures, modern professionals, athletes, and community members. Symbols like the Japanese rising sun flag and the Chinese zodiac are also depicted. The illustrations are scattered across the page, with some appearing larger and more prominent than others, creating a rich, textured backdrop for the text.

between significant AAPI milestones and broader American history.

Community Voices: AAPI Stories of Service and Identity. Invite AAPI community members (authors, artists, small business owners) to speak with students. Ask speakers to share stories related to their family background, cultural traditions, professional journey, and how their identity has shaped their experiences. Encourage them to speak to themes such as belonging, creativity, service, or perseverance, which help students connect personal stories to broader themes of AAPI heritage and civic life.

Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Themes can include:

- **Migration & Identity:** Focus on deeper exploration of refugee experiences, immigration journeys, and the meaning of citizenship, helping students understand how identity is shaped by movement, adaptation, and belonging.
- **Civic Contributions:** Highlight nuanced stories of AAPI individuals involved in labor movements, civil rights struggles, public service, and community leadership to show how people contribute to society in different ways.
- **Overcoming Barriers and Shaping Change:** Explore how Asian American and Pacific Islander individuals and communities have responded to challenges such as exclusion laws and barriers to participation by engaging in civic life, advocating for equal treatment, and contributing to positive change throughout U.S. history.

Teacher Guidance: Encourage empathy and inquiry with firsthand accounts, visual resources, and interviews. Support critical thinking by guiding students to analyze cause and effect, make historical connections, and consider multiple perspectives within AAPI experiences.

Grade-level Virginia History Standards:

- **VA History Standard of Learning USII.3f** – Explain how governmental actions including, but not limited to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, caused harm to Chinese Americans and other immigrants.
- **VA History Standard of Learning USII.6** – Identifying the roles and sacrifices of U.S. armed forces, including but not limited to the contributions of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team; evaluating the effects of the war on the home front, including but not limited to the incarceration of Japanese Americans.
- **VA History Standard of Learning USII.7** – Examining the role of the United States in fighting communism and defending freedom during the Cold War, including but not limited to the conflicts in Korea and Vietnam.

Activity for VA History Standard of Learning USII.3f

Chinese Exclusion Act And Its Impact. Use primary sources to analyze the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and its consequences. Use primary sources—like the law itself (in full or excerpts), newspaper articles or testimonies from Chinese American leaders or laborers—to help students understand what the Chinese Exclusion Act was and how it affected Chinese immigrants.

- Resource: [Citizenship and Acts of Exclusion Against the Chinese](#)
- Resource: [Affidavit and Flyers from the Chinese Boycott Case](#)

Discussion Prompts:

- Why was this law passed?
- How did it impact Chinese American communities?
- What can we learn about immigration and exclusion from this time?
- How do the stories of AAPI immigrants or refugees in history connect to what you know or hear about immigration today?

Activity for VA History Standard of Learning USII.6

Incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII. Use primary sources to analyze WWII-era Japanese American internment.

- Resource: ["Honoring the 125,284 Japanese Americans imprisoned in WWII"](#)
- Resource: ["In Between: Japanese and Japanese Americans In Jim Crow Virginia"](#)

Activity for VA History Standard of Learning USII.7

Korean & Vietnam Wars: U.S. Involvement and AAPI Impacts. Encourage exploration of local AAPI history by using the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' historical marker database to find any markers related to AAPI communities. This can serve as a jumping-off point for students to research local contributions or reflect on the visibility of AAPI history in their own communities.

To access the database:

1. Visit: [The Virginia Department of Historic Resources Highway Markers](#)
2. Click on "SEARCH THE MARKER DATABASE"
3. Search markers by keyword (enter the historical marker of interest, or type in the AAPI community of interest)
 - a. Suggested markers:
 - i. **The Kim Kyusik (1881–1950) historical marker (K-115)** in Salem, Virginia, honors a prominent Korean independence leader and Roanoke College graduate. After WWII, he opposed the division of Korea and was later kidnapped by North Korean forces during the Korean War, dying in captivity in 1950. The marker reflects both his legacy and the historical connection between Virginia and Korea.
 - ii. **The "Vietnamese Immigrants in Northern Virginia" marker (C-49)** commemorates the arrival of Vietnamese refugees after the fall of Saigon in 1975. Many settled in Arlington's Clarendon area, creating "Little Saigon," before relocating to the Eden Center in Falls Church. The marker highlights how the Vietnam War shaped immigration and honors the lasting contributions of Vietnamese Americans to Northern Virginia's cultural and economic life.

b. Other AAPI historical markers to explore:

- i. **Dr. W. W. Yen (1877–1950) (Q–52)** in Charlottesville
- ii. **Filipinos in the U.S. Navy (KV–36)** in Virginia Beach
- iii. **Arthur Azo Matsu (1904–1987) (W–114)** in Williamsburg

Activity Ideas for *Migration & Identity*

Case Study: Migration Stories. Provide students with a list of AAPI individuals or communities (e.g., Hmong refugees, Filipino nurses, Vietnamese boat people) and curated research materials or primary sources. Have them create one-pagers or slideshows highlighting reasons for migration, challenges faced, and ways culture was preserved. Support with guiding questions and optional graphic organizers, and allow visual or oral presentations. Scaffold with guiding questions like: Why did they leave? What challenges did they face? How did they keep their culture alive?

- Resource: [Echoes of Little Saigon](#)
- Resource: [Hmong Refugees in the United States](#)
- Resource: [Care Beyond National and Color Lines: Filipino Nurses in Virginia Across the 20th Century](#)
- Resource: [Post-1965 Immigration Wave](#)

Citizenship Timeline. Build a class timeline of key citizenship laws (e.g., Wong Kim Ark case) to explore how ideas of citizenship and belonging have changed over time. Assign student groups specific laws to research—providing dates, a brief summary, and the law's impact on AAPI communities—and use the completed timeline to spark discussion about who has been included or excluded from citizenship throughout U.S. history.

Activity Ideas for *Civic Contributions*

Civic Contributions Gallery Walk. Have students choose an AAPI changemaker—such as an inventor, artist, or public servant—and create a mini-poster with their name, photo, contribution, and a brief description of their impact. Display the posters around the classroom and host a gallery walk where students circulate, take notes, and reflect on the different ways AAPI individuals have contributed to their communities and the nation. Wrap up with a discussion about shared themes like leadership, service, or perseverance.

Local Impact Map. Have students research AAPI individuals, businesses, or organizations that have made contributions to their local community, using interviews, news articles, or websites. As a class, create a collaborative map marking each contribution with a short summary, photo, or audio clip, highlighting the impact of AAPI civic life close to home. Wrap up by reflecting on how local stories connect to broader

themes of belonging, service, and identity.

Activity Idea for *Overcoming Barriers and Shaping Change*

Then & Now Comparison. Have students compare a historical exclusion law (e.g., Chinese Exclusion Act) with a modern example of shaping change (e.g., Stop AAPI Hate). In pairs or small groups, students can examine the goals, language, and impact of each, then present their findings through a short written summary, chart, or discussion. Use this comparison to highlight recurring challenges faced by AAPI communities and their resilience, and explore how communities have worked to promote safety, opportunity, and belonging over time.

High School (Grades 9-12)

Themes can include:

- **Migration & Identity:** Focus on the movement of AAPI individuals and families across time, including reasons for migration, patterns of resettlement, and the impact on identity formation in the U.S. Encourage exploration of intergenerational experiences and personal narratives that connect the past to present-day communities.
- **Civic Engagement & Contributions:** Highlight the ways AAPI individuals have shaped American society through leadership, military service, arts, science, and community involvement. Emphasize both historical and contemporary examples of AAPI civic participation and public service.
- **Strength in the Face of Challenge:** Examine legal, political, and social challenges faced by AAPI communities, such as exclusionary immigration laws and wartime incarceration. Discuss how these challenges influenced U.S. history and how AAPI individuals and communities responded with perseverance and civic participation.

Teacher Guidance: As students explore AAPI narratives, encourage critical thinking around how these stories are told and represented. Remind students that not all AAPI individuals have the same experiences, and caution against generalizations. Prompt them to ask thoughtful questions, reflect on individual stories with nuance, and consider how structural factors—such as immigration law, war, or exclusion—have shaped community outcomes. Provide frameworks for reflection, debate, and real-world application of AAPI history through inquiry, critical writing, and public speaking.

Grade-level Virginia History Standards:

- **VA History Standard of Learning VUS.14** – Apply history and social science skills to examine the causes and events that led to U.S. involvement in World War II, including [Executive Order 9066](#), the incarceration of Japanese Americans, and the Supreme Court case [Korematsu v. United States](#).
- **VA History Standard of Learning VUS.15** – Apply history and social science skills to examine U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War era by analyzing the nation's changing role in Asia—including in Korea, Vietnam, and China—and the experiences of refugees from those countries.

Activity for VA History Standard of Learning VUS.14

Theme: Strength in the Face of Challenge

Japanese American Internment and Legal Challenges. Have students explore the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II by analyzing primary sources,

personal narratives, photographs, and excerpts from the *Korematsu v. United States* case. Guide students to examine how government actions affected the rights, lives, and sense of belonging for Japanese American individuals and families. Use class discussion, visual timelines, or case analysis activities to help students connect this historical injustice to broader questions about civil liberties and citizenship.

- Resource: [Executive Order 9066](#)
- Resource: [Korematsu v. United States](#)
- Resource: [Primary Source Set: Japanese American Internment](#)

Activity for VA History Standard of Learning VUS.14 & VUS.15

Theme: Strength in the Face of Challenge

Exclusion, Incarceration, and Refuge. Have students examine key U.S. immigration policies—such as the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), Executive Order 9066 (1942), and the Refugee Act of 1980—using short readings or primary source excerpts. In small groups or individually, students should answer guiding questions: Who was affected? Why was it passed? What were the long-term effects? Conclude with a class discussion or reflection on how these policies shaped the lives of AAPI individuals and the nation’s approach to immigration.

- Resource: [Chinese Immigration and the Chinese Exclusion Acts](#)
- Resource: [Japanese American Incarceration Education Resources](#)
- Resource: [History of Korean Immigration to America, from 1903 to Present](#)
- Resource: [Citizenship and Immigration during the Civil Rights Movement Era](#)
- Resource: [Refugee Crisis](#)

Activity Idea for *Migration & Identity*

Exploring AAPI Immigration Stories. Have students explore AAPI immigration stories across generations by examining why individuals or families migrated. Use personal narratives, oral histories, or literature to help students understand how people maintain cultural traditions, language, and a sense of identity while adapting to new places. Encourage students to reflect on their own experiences or family histories, if they feel comfortable, to build empathy and personal connection.

- Resource: [Vietnamese Boat People Discussion Guide](#)
- Resource: [“Mom” by Jane Kim](#) and [“My Korean American Story: Assembling the Sunday New York Times at the Choi’s” by Mauricio Matiz](#)

Activity Idea for *Civic Engagement & Contributions*

Serving, Leading, Organizing. Discuss examples of AAPI individuals engaging in civic life—through voting, leadership, military service, and community organizing. Have students research and present short profiles to highlight the many ways AAPI individuals have contributed to their communities and the nation across time.

- Resource: [The Congressional Gold Medal is awarded to Chinese Americans who served in World War II](#)
- Resource: [SAUND, Dalip Singh](#)

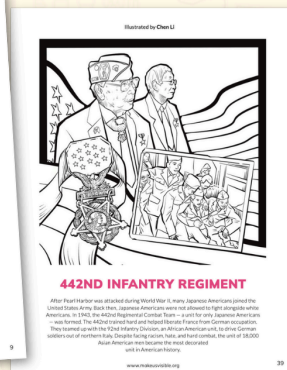
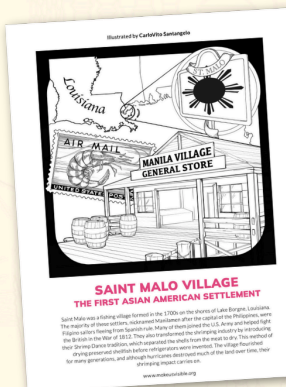
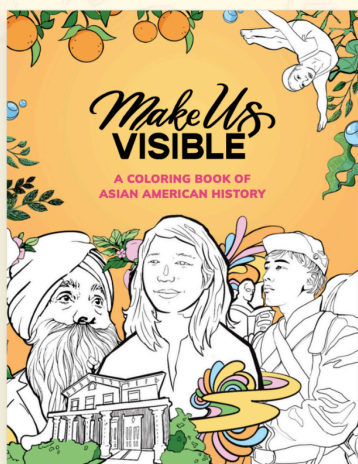
Community Stories and Perspectives. Invite guest speakers from Virginia or the local AAPI community to share personal stories (in-person or virtual) related to identity, culture, and community impact. Speakers may discuss experiences such as growing up in the U.S., expressing their heritage through art or writing, or contributing to their communities through civic leadership or service. Use this activity to help students connect real voices to broader themes of belonging, creativity, and civic participation.

- Resource: [Virginia Asian Advisory Board](#)

Make Us Visible Resources

Make Us Visible has many free educational resources that can be an option for teaching AAPI history and topics in your classroom. **All of our resources are found at makeusvisible.org/resources.**

Coloring Sheets



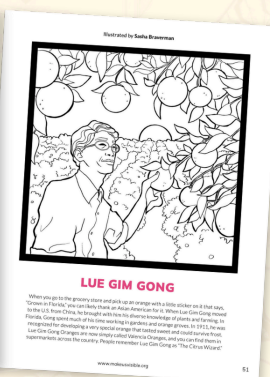
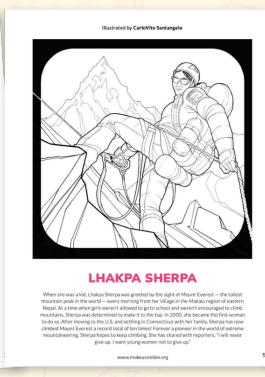
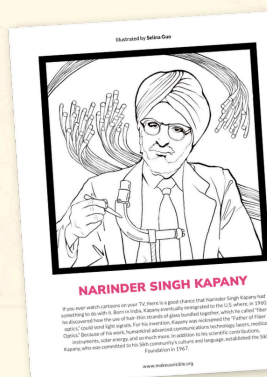
PDF for *Make Us Visible: A Coloring Book of Asian American History* (2023)

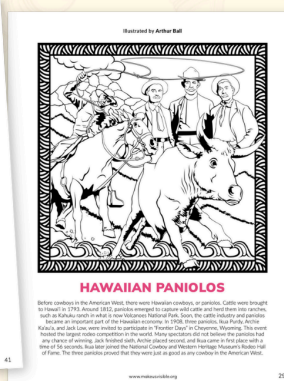
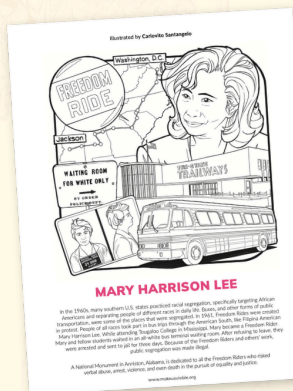
Completed in partnership with ADMERASIA, our first coloring book features 24 Asian American figures and communities spanning 14 ethnicities and 15 states.

Use this [link](#) to identify demographic breakdowns of our books.

Included figures:

- **Saint Malo Village** – the first Asian American settlement
- **442nd Infantry Regiment** – the most decorated military unit in U.S. history
- **Narinder Singh Kapany** – the inventor of fiber optics
- **Lhakpa Sherpa** – the first Nepali woman to summit Mount Everest
- **Lue Gim Gong** – horticulturist who revolutionized Florida's citrus industry





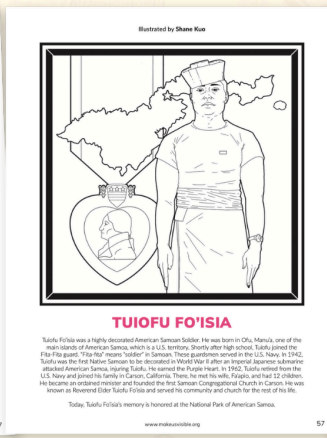
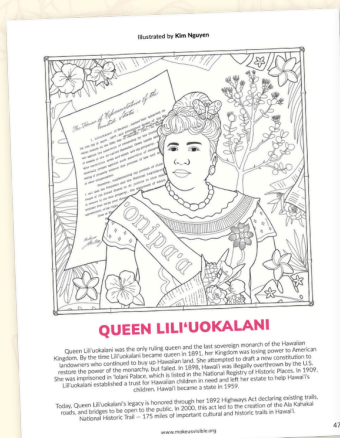
PDF for Make Us Visible x National Park Service: A Coloring Book of AANHPI Who Contributed to Our Country's History (2024)

Completed in partnership with ADMERASIA, Pacific Historic Parks, the National Park Service, and the Japanese American Museum of Oregon, this coloring book features 25 figures and communities spanning 11 ethnicities and 24 states and territories.

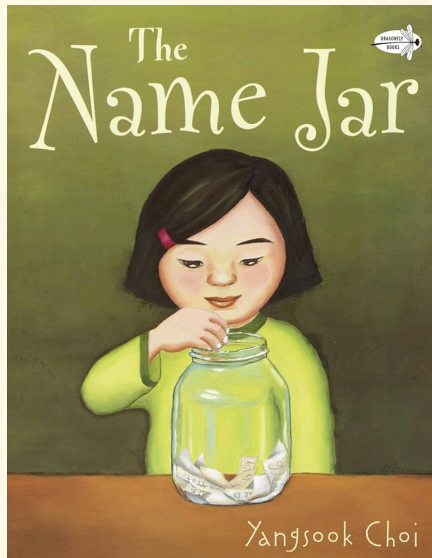
Use this [link](#) to identify demographic breakdowns of our books.

Included figures:

- **Mary Harrison Lee** – a Freedom Ride participant who challenged racial segregation on buses
- **Hawaiian Paniolos** – Hawaiian cowboys who captured and herded wild cattle
- **Queen Lili'uokalani** – the last sovereign monarch of the Hawaiian Kingdom
- **Tuiofu Fo'isia** – the first Native Samoan to be decorated in World War II
- **Margaret Chung** – helped create WAVES, a unit for women in the U.S. Navy
- **Susan Ahn Cuddy** – enlisted in WAVES, becoming the first Asian American woman to join the U.S. Navy



The Name Jar Discussion Guide



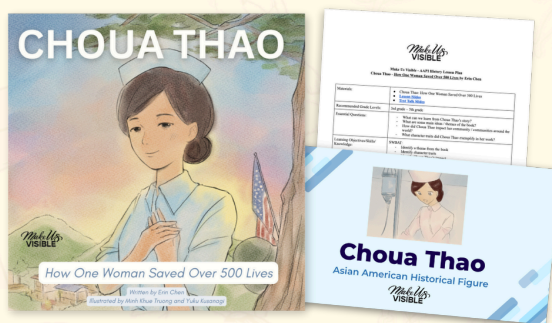
Explore themes of identity, cultural inclusivity, and acceptance through the story *The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi.

The discussion guide is designed for grades K–5.

Lesson Plans

We have developed lesson plans for book titles about select figures from our coloring books. Each lesson plan comes with story slides and vocabulary slides.

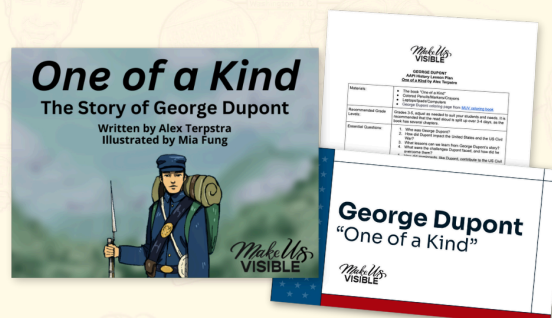
The first two lesson plans listed below come with a free digital storybook.



Choua Thao: How One Woman Saved Over 500 Lives

chronicles the life of the Hmong American nurse who tended to injured soldiers during the U.S.'s "Secret War" in Laos.

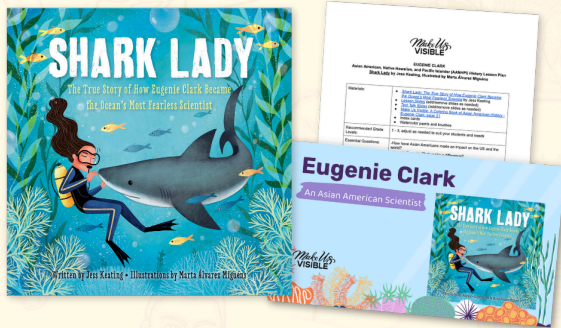
Designed for Grades 3–5



One of a Kind: The Story of George Dupont

follows the life of the only immigrant from Siam (present-day Thailand) to fight in the American Civil War.

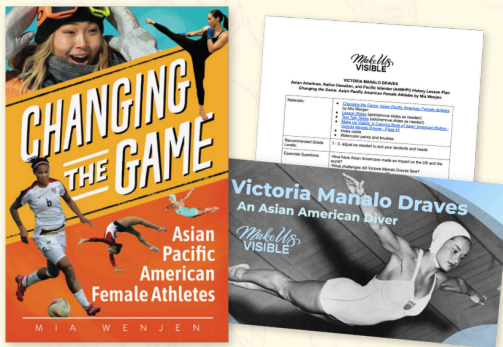
Designed for Grades 1–3



Shark Lady: The True Story of How Eugenie Clark Became the Ocean's Most Fearless Scientist

is about how Eugenie Clark devoted her life to learning about sharks, teaching the world that sharks were to be admired rather than feared.

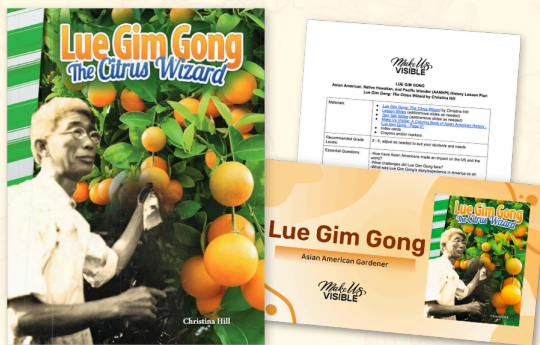
Designed for Grades 1-3



Changing the Game: Asian Pacific American Female Athletes

includes information about Victoria Manalo Draves, a competitive diver who persisted in the face of segregation to become an Olympic gold medalist.

Designed for Grades 1-3



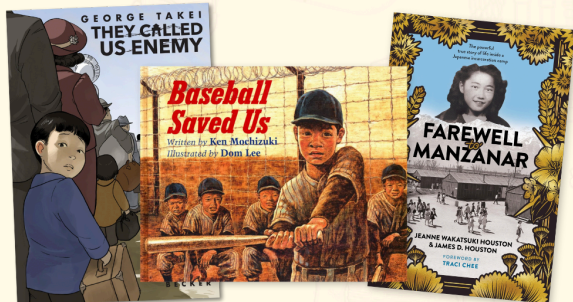
Lue Gim Gong: The Citrus Wizard

shares about the horticulturist who saved Florida's citrus industry by developing a hearty orange variety that is still sold in grocery stores today.

Designed for Grades 2-5

Americans as well as family and religious traditions, the significance of names, and leadership.

In 2025, Prince William County officially proclaimed April as Sikh and Punjabi Heritage Appreciation Month, honoring the contributions of the Sikh and Punjabi communities to the county's cultural and economic landscape. Also, Fairfax County has acknowledged Sikh Awareness and Appreciation Month in April.



February 19: The Day of Remembrance

President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942. This anniversary is a day to remember and learn about the resulting incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II.

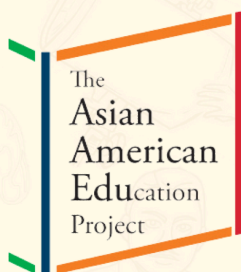
April 30: The Fall of Saigon

The War in Vietnam ended on April 30, 1975, prompting many Vietnamese civilians to escape persecution by fleeing the country. The anniversary is a significant day for Vietnamese Americans and the broader Vietnamese diaspora. The books offered in this collection provide firsthand stories of the Vietnamese refugee experience.



Additional Resources

The Asian American Education Project



The [Asian American Education Project](#) (AAEP) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to bringing a full and accurate accounting of Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) histories and narratives to K-12 classrooms across the nation by providing free curricula (80+ lesson plans) and professional development opportunities. They also offer customized and private professional development sessions through their fee-for-service projects.

South Asian American Digital Archives



[SAADA](#) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization based in Philadelphia, PA focused on creating a more inclusive society by giving voice to South Asian Americans through documenting, preserving, and sharing stories that represent their unique and diverse experiences.

PBS Docuseries *Asian Americans*



[Asian Americans](#) is a five-hour film series that chronicles the contributions, and challenges of Asian Americans, the fastest-growing ethnic group in America. Personal histories and new academic research will cast a fresh lens on U.S. history and the role Asian Americans have played in it.

Please Note: References within this document to any specific commercial or non-commercial product, process, or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer or otherwise does not constitute or imply an endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the Virginia Department of Education.

Reflection

Thank you for taking the time to explore and use this toolkit. Whether you implement a single activity or incorporate multiple lessons throughout the month, your efforts make a difference. By creating space for students to learn about Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) histories, cultures, and contributions, you are taking an important step toward building a more welcoming and representative classroom.

We know that for many educators, teaching AAPI content may be new and that stepping into unfamiliar space takes time, intention, and courage. You showed up. You tried something new. You invited your students into stories they may never have heard before. And that matters.

We hope this toolkit helps spark meaningful conversations, deepen student learning, and open doors for ongoing reflection. Representation is not a one-month initiative, it is a practice. And we hope the tools, questions, and stories here continue to support you well beyond May.

Please share your feedback, ideas, and classroom experiences with us and stay in touch. Email us at hello@makeusvisible.org. This work is stronger when it is shaped by educators like you.

With deep gratitude for all you do for your students and for your communities, thank you!

Make Us
VISIBLE