

BEST FRIENDS FOREVER: A World War II Scrapbook by Beverly Patt
Teacher's/Reader's Guide

1. Dottie and the other Japanese Americans could only take two suitcases apiece to the internment camps. If this happened to you, what would be in your suitcases? What would be the hardest thing to leave behind?
2. What are some reasons the Japanese Americans were put into internment camps and not the Italian Americans or the German Americans? Was this fair? Discuss.
3. One of the roots of prejudice is fear. Have you ever been fearful of any 'type' or race of person? If so, what were your fears based on? If you still have those fears, what steps could you take to overcome them?
4. Marion made fun of Louise because of Louise's friendship with Dottie. Have you ever been teased because of a friend? Or have you ever had a friend who was teased because of you? And (be honest!) have you ever been the teaser? What did you learn from any of these experiences? Looking back, is there anything you would have liked to have done differently?
5. How did Dottie's feelings toward her Japanese Heritage change over time? What do you think caused this change? Are there any cultural traditions your family practices - maybe a special food you eat or a game you play at a holiday meal? If so, share.
6. Louise's brother enlisted in the Navy and her friend Nick was injured on his ship. Do you think you would ever want to serve in the armed forces? Why or why not?
7. Dottie's friend Robert becomes much more studious in the internment camp. What do you think caused this change? Have you ever changed as a result of something that happened in your life? Explain.
8. Many people who have lived through a tough time can look back and see some good that came out of the experience. Can you think of anything positive that resulted from this experience for Dottie? For Louise? If you've ever experienced a traumatic change in your life, such as a move, a divorce, an illness, etc., discuss the unexpected positives that may have come about as a result.
9. Louise and Dottie correspond by letters and usually had to wait over a week for a response. Now we have email, instant messaging and texting. How are these forms of communication better than the old-fashioned letters? How are they worse? Do you ever send or receive traditional letters and if so, do you enjoy it?
10. Louise put items into her scrapbook that reflected what was going on in the world as well as personal items that reflected what was going on in her own life. If you made a scrapbook, what would you put in it? Would you show your scrapbook to anyone? If so, who? If not, why not? Discuss.

Suggested Activities

- A. **Fill a Suitcase Memory Game** - People take turns saying, "*I'm going away to who-knows-where for who-knows-how-long so I am going to bring...*" and they name an item that would fit into a suitcase. The next person in line has to recite the same line, name what the person in front of him said and then add his/her own item. The winner is the person who remembers what everyone ahead of him/her named.
- B. **Interview a Senior** - Talk to someone that was alive during WWII and ask them anything you learned about in *Best Friends Forever*, such as the Japanese internment camps, rationing, prices of food/movies, victory gardens, etc. You could even read *Best Friends Forever* together to get them talking. Write a report, record the interview, make a powerpoint presentation or just savor the memory.
- C. **Write a Friendship Letter** - Sometimes we take our friendships for granted. Surprise your friend with a letter, telling her why you're happy he/she is your friend.
- D. **Origami** - Learn origami! Display your work, demonstrate a how-to or teach a pal.
- E. **Nature Arrangement** - Flower arranging is a Japanese art form that Dottie and Mrs. Y had to adapt, using whatever items from nature they could find. Using books or websites as guides, use items from your yard (or recycling items from around your house?) to make your own arrangements. Give awards for creativity or beauty!
- F. **Fill-a-Suitcase Show and Tell** - Using either a real suitcase/duffle or a drawn one, "fill" your suitcase with items you would insist on bringing with you to the internment camp. Remember to save space for clothes, coats, boots, etc.
- G. **Plant a 'Victory' Garden** - One modern version of a community victory garden is called a "cooperative" garden. Investigate ideas for cooperative gardening and start one with your school, neighbors or community group. Use the produce yourselves or donate it to your local food bank/soup kitchen.
- H. **Veteran Visit** - Visit a veteran's hospital or send patients home-made cards. Invite a WWII veteran to talk about his experiences, perhaps on Veteran's Day.
- I. **Bake Lou Lou's Sugar Cookies** - Click [here](#) for the recipe!
- J. **Start Your Own Scrapbook** - Use anything from a spiral notebook to a store-bought kit. And who knows? It could become a book one day!