



## FIELD MUSEUM CONNECTIONS:

AANHPI Stories  
and the TEAACH Act

### Teacher Reference Guide

#### Cyrus Tang Grant: AANHPI

Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) history is American history. Yet the centuries-long presence, lived experiences, and transformative contributions of AAPIs—24 million of whom currently call the U.S. home—have largely been excluded from our textbooks, classrooms, and campuses. The institutionalized invisibility of AAPI history, particularly in our nation's K-12 schools, has normalized the prevailing idea that AAPIs do not belong in their own country. As anti-Asian hate dramatically resurged during the COVID-19 pandemic, there too emerged a dangerous consequence of continuing to view AAPIs as “perpetual foreigners.” However, as AAPI history has taught us, moments of crisis have often been met by movements for justice. This truth was demonstrated in July 2021, when Illinois enacted the Teaching Equitable Asian American Community History (TEAACH) Act, becoming the first U.S. state to mandate the teaching of Asian American history in public schools—*The Asian American Foundation TEAACH Field Guide*

### Why AANHPI?

In creating materials and experiences, the Field Museum Education teams have chosen to use the designation “Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander” (AANHPI). There are complex narratives around identity and stereotypes. Often when we think of “Asian American,” there is a tendency to focus on East Asia. For the purposes of our work on this project at the Field Museum, we are using AANHPI while also recognizing that Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are not Asians, and all Pacific Islanders are not Hawaiians. There are limitations to these categories, and we are working within these constraints while also being cautious not to add to the lumping of communities together. It is important to disaggregate Native Hawaiian and Pacific islander from Asian American so that the specific needs of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are not made invisible.

Here, the use of the AANHPI acronym is meant to reflect both the cross-ethnic solidarity expressed by the broad term “Asian American” as well as the diversity within and across varying Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. First used in 1968 by Yuji Ichioka and Emma Gee, the term “Asian American” was community-generated and emerged out of civil rights, Black Power, and anti-war movements. It also reflected the nascent field of Ethnic Studies. By using the designation, Ichioka and Gee hoped to foster a sense of unity amongst varying Asian American communities and their shared experiences/racialized identities (Asian American Research Initiative, 2022). However, by also including “Native Hawaiian” and “Pacific Islander” in the acronym, Education teams acknowledge not just similar experiences but also the ways in which Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders have experiences of U.S. imperialism and colonialism that may not be shared or shared in the same way by other Asian American communities (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, 2024). Such a designation also allows for learning resources and experiences to represent the specific content of AANHPI exhibitions at the Field Museum (*Cyrus Tang Hall of China, Tibet Gallery, Māori Meeting House, Regenstein Halls of the Pacific, Traveling the Pacific*, and the temporary *Chicago's Legacy Hula*). In addition, our choices reflect the museum’s longstanding partnerships with communities such as the Native Hawaiian community of Chicago.

“The names that we humans call ourselves and that others call us are politically, culturally, and spiritually meaningful to the development of both individual and group identities, and to activism performed from and through those identities.” *Lisa Kahaleole Hall*

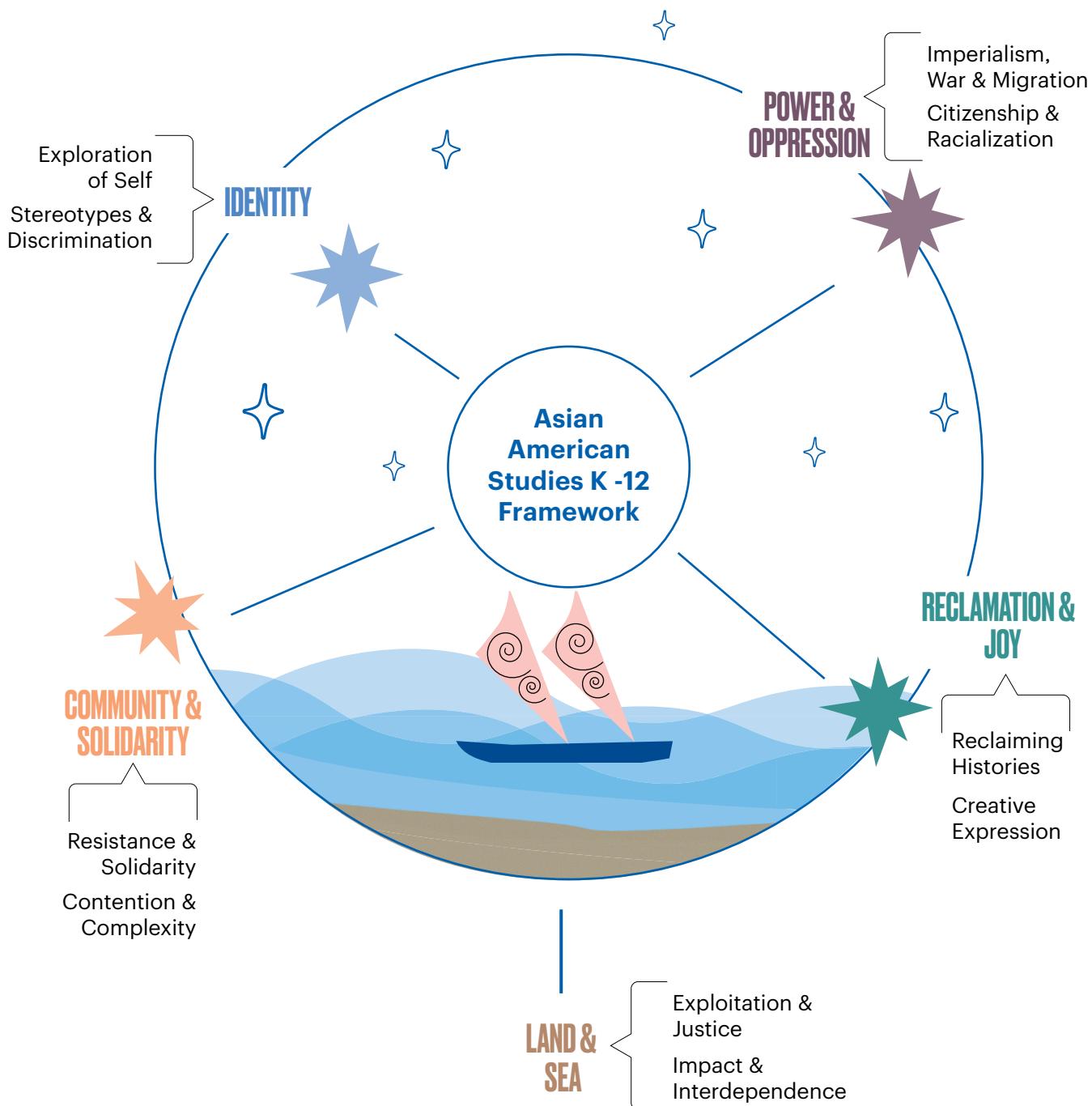


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## Asian American Studies K -12 Framework\*

### Asian American Research Initiative



\*Based on the Asian American Research Initiative framework, with the inclusion of an additional Land and Sea section.



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# Asian American Studies K -12 Framework Asian American Research Initiative

## Essential Questions:

- What identities are viewed as part of the dominant group (what is considered the norm or “normal”) in the society you live in?
- When you imagine “Asian American,” who do you imagine (which groups/communities), and who is left out of your imagination?
- How have U.S. Imperialism, wars, and military interventions in Asia induced Asian migration to the United States?
- What are dominant perceptions of what it means to be “American,” and what has shaped these ideas?
- How have Asian Americans built cross-ethnic and cross-racial solidarity to fight against racism and discrimination?
- How have Asian Americans reclaimed their histories and spaces of belonging that are largely forgotten, misrepresented, or left absent in the dominant society?
- How is representation impacted by both the producer and the audience?

## Glossary:

Forever foreigner myth

Model minority myth

Yellow peril

Dusky Peril

Intersectionality

This framework was developed by Sohyun An (Kennesaw State University) and Noreen Naseem Rodríguez (University of Colorado Boulder) in consultation with Theodore Chao (The Ohio State University), Edward R. Curammeng (California State University, Dominguez Hills), Esther June Kim (William & Mary), Melanie McCormick (Michigan State University), Mohit P. Mehta (University of Texas at Austin/Asian Texans for Justice), Venkat Ramaprasad (The College of New Jersey), Bic Ngo (University of Minnesota), Tran Nguyen Templeton (Teachers College, Columbia University), Van Anh Tran (Stanford Graduate School of Education), Phitsamay S. Uy (University of Massachusetts Lowell), and other reviewers who have asked to remain anonymous.



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### Helpful Links:

- ↗ [Asian American Research Initiative—Asian American Studies Curriculum Framework](#)
- ↗ [Asian Americans Advancing Justice Chicago: Teaching About the Asian American Experience Professional Development](#)
- ↗ [Asian American Education Resource Database: K-12 Resources \(Airtable\)](#)
  - ↗ [Guide: How to Use Airtable](#)
- ↗ [University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign College of Education](#)—online asynchronous training that is eligible for teacher PD credits created by University of Illinois faculty (free)
- ↗ [Asian American Education Project](#)—lesson plans and professional development (free)