Korematsu v. United States / A Question of Loyalty—Answer Key

Directions:

1. Read the Background information.
2. Read the Loyalty Questionnaire (page 2).
3. Answer the Questions to Consider (page 7).
4. Complete the Extension Activity if your teacher assigns it (page 8).

Background

Justice Black’s majority opinion in *Korematsu v. United States* never questioned the judgment of military authorities that there were disloyal members of the Japanese and Japanese American population. The opinion also never questioned the military’s claim that they could not quickly determine the number of disloyal people.

*We cannot reject as unfounded the judgment of the military authorities and of Congress that there were disloyal members of that population, whose number and strength could not be precisely and quickly ascertained.*

Nonetheless, while in the internment camps, a loyalty questionnaire was distributed. The loyalty questionnaire had two purposes: the first was to determine who could have been eligible to serve in the military and the second goal was to determine who might require further confinement in the camps. Justice Black made reference to this questionnaire in his decision:

*That there were members of the group who retained loyalties to Japan has been confirmed by investigations made subsequent to the exclusion. Approximately five thousand American citizens of Japanese ancestry refused to swear unqualified allegiance to the United States and to renounce allegiance to the Japanese Emperor.*

While accepting the military’s claim that the entire group had to be confined because they could not quickly ascertain who was loyal and disloyal, Justice Black used the numbers from this simple questionnaire to support the military’s opinion that some people of Japanese origin were disloyal.

Putting aside this contradiction in logic, an examination of the loyalty questionnaire reveals the difficulties it must have presented for the internees and their families.
Loyalty Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WRA-126 Rev.</th>
<th>Budget Bureau No. 13-RO22-43</th>
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<td>Approval 1 Expires 7/31/43</td>
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**WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY**

**APPLICATION FOR LEAVE CLEARANCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relocation Center</th>
<th>Family No.</th>
<th>Center Address</th>
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</thead>
</table>

1. ____________________________  (Surname)  (English given name)  (Japanese given name)
(a) Alias________________________

2. Names and ages of dependents you propose to take with you

3. Date of Birth_______________  Place of birth__________________________

4. Citizenship________________________

5. Last two addresses at which you lived 3 months or more (exclude residence at relocation center and assembly center):

   __________________________ From ___________ to ___________

   __________________________ From ___________ to ___________

6. Sex________________________  Height________________  Weight________________

7. Are you a registered voter?_____________  Year first registered__________
Where?_________________________  Party________________________

8. Marital status________________  Citizenship of spouse________________
Race of spouse________________

9. ___________________________  (Father’s name)  (Town or City)  (State or Country)  (Occupation)

10. ___________________________  (Mother’s name)  (Town or City)  (State or Country)  (Occupation)

In items 11 and 12, you need not list relatives other than your parents, your children, your brothers and sisters. For each person, give name, relationship to you, citizenship, complete address, and occupation.
11. Relatives in the United States (if in military service, indicate whether a selectee or volunteer):
(a) 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Name)</th>
<th>(Relationship to you)</th>
<th>(Citizenship)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Complete address)</td>
<td>(Occupation)</td>
<td>(Volunteer or selectee)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Name)</th>
<th>(Relationship to you)</th>
<th>(Citizenship)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Complete address)</td>
<td>(Occupation)</td>
<td>(Volunteer or selectee)</td>
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(c) 
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<tr>
<th>(Name)</th>
<th>(Relationship to you)</th>
<th>(Citizenship)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Complete address)</td>
<td>(Occupation)</td>
<td>(Volunteer or selectee)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(If additional space is necessary, attach sheets)

12. Relatives in Japan (see instruction above item 11):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Name)</th>
<th>(Relationship to you)</th>
<th>(Citizenship)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Complete address)</td>
<td>(Occupation)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Name)</th>
<th>(Relationship to you)</th>
<th>(Citizenship)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Complete address)</td>
<td>(Occupation)</td>
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</table>

13. Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Years of attendance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From _______ to _______</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Kindergarten)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Grade School)</td>
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<td>(Japanese language school)</td>
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<td>(High School)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Junior college, college, or university)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Type of military training, such as R.O.T.C. or Gunji Kyoren)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Other schooling)</td>
<td>(Years of attendance)</td>
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</table>
14. Foreign travel (give dates, where, how, for whom, with whom, and reasons therefore):

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

15. Employment (give employers' names and kind of business, addresses, and dates from 1935 to date):

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

16. Religion________________________ Membership in religious groups________________

17. Membership in organizations (clubs, societies, associations, etc.)
  Give name, kind of organization, and dates of membership

__________________________________________________________________________

18. Knowledge of foreign languages (put check mark in proper squares):

(a) Japanese__________ (b) Other__________ (specify)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
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19. Sports and hobbies

__________________________________________________________________________

20. List five references, other than relatives or former employers preferably persons resident in areas where you formerly resided, giving address, occupation, and number of years known:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Name)</th>
<th>(Complete Address)</th>
<th>(Occupation)</th>
<th>(Years known)</th>
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</table>

21. Have you ever been before an Alien Enemy Hearing Board?  (Yes) (No)

If so, give date and disposition of case:

(a) Have you ever been arrested or similarly detained? (Yes) (No)

If so, state offense, date, court and disposition of case:
(b) Have you ever been subjected to any disciplinary action since your evacuation?

(Yes)  (No)
If so, state the circumstances and disposition of your case.

22. Give details of any foreign investments:
   (a) Accounts in foreign banks. Amount $________________________
       Bank________________________ Date account opened________________________
   (b) Investments in foreign companies. Amount $________________________
       Company________________________ Date acquired________________________
       Contents________________________

23. List contributions you have made to any society, organization, or club:
   Organization________________________ Place________________________ Amount________________________ Date________________________

24. List magazines and newspapers to which you have subscribed or have customarily read:

   ________________________________________________________________

25. To the best of your knowledge, was your birth ever registered with any Japanese governmental agency for the purpose of establishing a claim to Japanese citizenship?

   (a) If so registered, have you applied for cancellation of such registration?

   (Yes or No)

   When________________________ Where?________________________

26. Have you ever applied for repatriation to Japan?

27. If the opportunity presents itself and you are found qualified, would you be willing to volunteer for the Army Nurse Corps or the WAAC?

28. Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power, or organization?

29. Have you ever worked for or volunteered your services to the Japanese or Spanish government?

   (Yes)  (No)
   If so, indicate which and give dates:
30. Have you ever registered any of your children with a Japanese or Spanish Consul? 
   ____ (Yes)   ____ (No) If so, indicate which and give dates:

   Names               Dates               Names               Dates
   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________
   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________
   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________

31. Have you ever sent any of your children to Japan? 
   ____ (Yes)   ____ (No)

   Names               Dates               Names               Dates
   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________
   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________
   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________

32. State any type of leave previously applied for, and indicate whether leave clearance has
    previously been applied for, giving date and place of application.

33. If employment is desired, but no definite offer has been received, list the kinds of
    employment desired in order of preference:
    First choice __________________________________________________________
    Second choice _______________________________________________________
    Third choice _________________________________________________________

   a) Will you take employment in any part of the United States?
      ____ (Yes)   ____ (No)
      b) Give location preference
         ________________________________________________________________

         (Date)   (Signature)   

         (Seal of Selective Service System)   Form Approved
         Budget Bureau No. 26-R645-43

         (Local Board Date Stamp With Code)
Questions to Consider

1. Which questions on the form do you think are relevant and important to determine a person’s loyalty to the United States? Explain.
   Student answers will vary. Students may list #4, #11, #25, #26, #27, #28, #29, #30. Students should explain their choices.

2. Which questions on the form do you think are irrelevant or not important to determine a person’s loyalty to the United States? Explain.
   Student answers will vary. Students may list #5, #11, #24, #27, #29, #30, #31. Students should explain their choices.

3. Look carefully at questions 27 and 28. These were given special attention by the military authorities and are referred to in Justice Black’s opinion. People who answered “no” to these questions were considered to be disloyal.
   a. Can you think of reasons why a person would answer “no” to question 27 other than disloyalty?
      Answers will vary. Students may point out that a person might not want that type of job, is not physically able to do that type of job, or they may not know what the job entails.
   b. First generation Japanese immigrants (Issei) were unable to obtain American citizenship. How might this have complicated their ability to answer question 28?
      If they are not able to become American citizens, it would be difficult to swear allegiance to a country that will not accept you as a citizen. Also, if they swear allegiance to another country, they may lose their Japanese citizenship and then be without a country of citizenship.
   c. Are there other challenges or issues you see with these questions?
      Student answers will vary.

4. What surprised you about the questionnaire?
   Student answers will vary.

Extension Activity

Visit the Smithsonian’s A More Perfect Union website to read what the internees thought about the questionnaire and to see an original copy of it. (https://amhistory.si.edu/perfectunion/non-flash/loyalty_questionnaire.html)