

SURVIVING THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION: WAR AND ITS LEGACIES

An exhibition presented by the
National Archives of Singapore
at Former Ford Factory

Activity Guide (FOR CHILDREN AGED 9 – 10 YEARS OLD)

This activity guide will help you explore the 'Surviving the Japanese Occupation: War and its Legacies' exhibition.

Singapore fell to the Japanese Army when Lieutenant-General Percival signed the surrender of the Allied forces on 15 February 1942, in this building. This marked the start of the Japanese Occupation until 12 September 1945.

In this gallery, you will learn about:

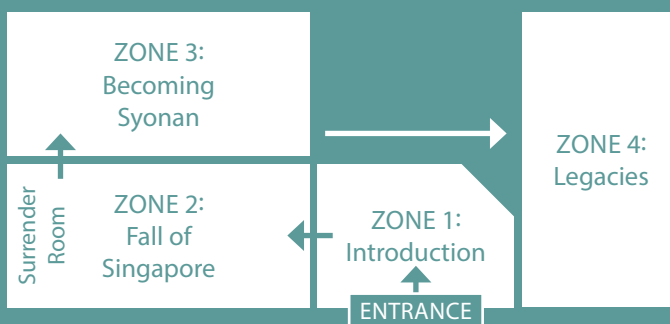
- the Japanese Occupation
- the impact of war and occupation on the people in Singapore



Name: _____ School: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

This worksheet will help you explore the various exhibition zones, however it is not compulsory to follow the sequence of questions within each zone.

Please use the map on the right to navigate through the exhibition.



Suggested Pre-Visit Activity

Before your visit to Former Ford Factory, let us look at some important words that you will come across in the gallery. You may wish to learn more about these words and names from dictionaries or the internet.

Can you find the following words in the word search puzzle below?

- Occupation
- Percival
- Yamashita
- Changi
- Invasion
- Surrender
- Malaya
- Japan
- British
- Inflation

(Hint: search up, down, left, right and diagonally across)

O	G	R	A	B	M	E	N	B	Z
R	C	H	A	N	G	I	O	R	P
E	D	C	F	E	Y	H	I	I	E
D	M	T	U	R	V	L	S	T	R
N	A	J	A	P	A	N	A	I	C
E	L	G	Q	U	A	F	V	S	I
R	A	V	E	I	Y	T	N	H	V
R	Y	A	M	A	S	H	I	T	A
U	A	X	B	K	C	M	W	O	L
S	I	N	F	L	A	T	I	O	N

On the afternoon of 15 February 1942, Lieutenant-General Percival and three of his officers left the Battlebox at Fort Canning to meet Lieutenant-General Yamashita at the Ford Factory in Bukit Timah. The meeting was to discuss the surrender of Allied forces to the Japanese Army. The Ford Factory was, at that time, being used as the headquarters of the Japanese 25th Army.

ZONE 1

FORMER FORD FACTORY: An Introduction

Ford Motor Factory was opened in Upper Bukit Timah in 1941. This was a good location for the factory because it was close to a major road, Bukit Timah Road, and also to the Bukit Timah Railway station. This allowed the company to easily transport materials and the finished products to and from the factory.

3D Exhibit of Bukit Timah

Look at the model of the Bukit Timah area.

Q1

The photograph shows a railway bridge nearby. Can you find the location of this railway bridge on the map?

Hint:

Press the button for 'Bukit Timah Road' and pay attention to the point where Bukit Timah Road and the Bukit Timah Railway cross one another.



TIP!
Pull out the panels on the side of the display to explore more.

DID YOU KNOW?

The train services no longer run, but parts of the former railway still remain. In fact, you can discover this section of the railway next to Rail Mall across Upper Bukit Timah Road.

The Singapore Strategy

In 1921, the British decided to build a naval base in Singapore. The British would then be able to station a fleet of ships to maintain power and protect their influence in the region.

Q2

Why did the British decide to build a naval base in Singapore?

Q3

How long did it take the British to build the naval base in Singapore?

a) 5 years ☐

c) 17 years ☐

b) 32 years ☐

d) 11 years ☐

ZONE 2

FALL OF SINGAPORE

In this zone, you will see three different perspectives of the war: the Japanese, British and Civilian.

The Japanese Empire in Asia

USA, Britain and the Netherlands placed an *embargo on oil and steel against Japan. Japan thus decided to invade Southeast Asia for its rich resources. Look at the map of mineral resources showing the abundance of raw materials and resources in Southeast Asia.

***Embargo:**
An official ban on trade or other commercial activity with a particular country.

FALL OF SINGAPORE

The Japanese Attack

The Japanese invaded northern Malaya and began air raids on Singapore on 8 December 1941.

The fighting between the Japanese and Allied forces was intense. The Japanese fought aggressively and gained control of Malaya by 31 January 1942.

Q4

What are the names of the two British warships that the Japanese attacked?

Q5

How many days did it take for the Japanese to gain control of Malaya?

Documentary Video

Watch the video to see some of the scenes of war and hear oral history accounts from *civilians who lived through the war.

***Civilian:**

A person not on active duty in the armed forces (e.g.: military, police, naval, fire-fighting).

Q6

List down some of the words they used to describe how they felt about the war.

Civilians Caught Up in War

Even though the civilians felt tremendous fear, many also bravely volunteered to fight against the Japanese.

Defenders of Singapore: Volunteering as Soldiers

Most of the soldiers defending Singapore came mainly from India, Britain and Australia. However, there were many people from Singapore who joined the fight as well.



Q7

Name one of the three Singapore groups that volunteered to help defend Singapore.

Britain's 'Impregnable Fortress'

In the 1920s and 1930s, the British built up the island's defences and were confident that it would be difficult for the Japanese to capture Singapore. Hence, the British called Singapore an '*impregnable fortress'.

***Impregnable:**

Strong enough to resist attack, not to be taken by force.

ZONE 2

FALL OF SINGAPORE

Surrender Room

By 15 February 1942, the British were running out of supplies and their troops were exhausted and *demoralised. Lieutenant-General Percival finally had no choice but to surrender.

Lieutenant-General Yamashita met him in this room to discuss the surrender.

Look at the storyboard on the wall near the entrance of the room.

During the war, many Japanese artists were assigned to military units to record the war in paintings. This painting was done by Saburo Miyamoto. He based his paintings on films and photographs of the surrender negotiations.



Q8

Compare the photograph and the painting done by the Japanese artist. Spot the differences and circle them.

***Demoralised:**
refers to the fact that the soldiers were losing the will to fight.

ZONE 3

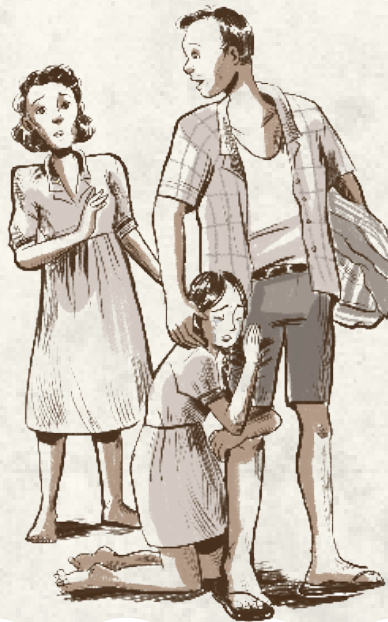
BECOMING SYONAN

Sook Ching Operation

Shortly after the Japanese forces took over Singapore, they took action to identify people suspected to be anti-Japanese. Thousands of Chinese were arbitrarily rounded up and killed in what is referred to as the Sook Ching Operation.

The Japanese were angry that local Chinese had supported China's fight against Japan's invasion of China. They also wanted to punish those who had fought for the British against Japan.

Watch the video presentation on the truck and answer the question on the right.



Q9

What does "Sook Ching" mean?

DID YOU KNOW?

Eurasians and Jews were also called up for registration. They had to go to specific locations to be registered.

Life as a Prisoner-of-War

The Allied soldiers captured by the Japanese were made to live in extremely cramped conditions in Changi Prison.

The white outline on the floor represents the layout of a jail cell meant for a single person. During the Japanese Occupation, three or four men were squeezed into a single cell.



BECOMING SYONAN

The Struggle to Survive

Life under the Japanese Occupation was tough for everybody. In this section you can find out how jobs, education, food and money were affected under Japanese rule.

Play with the 'Choices' interactive in the middle of the room. Choose the girl and see her experiences of the Japanese Occupation.

Q10

What happened to her when she refused to speak Japanese?

Q11

What happened to her when she was found stealing food?

Nippon-Go: Back to School

The Japanese forced students to learn Japanese in school.

Q12

Look at the magazine spread titled 'The Japanese Language is Popular in Syonan City' – Do you think this was an accurate portrayal? Explain your answer.

TIP:
Look at the photographs and the short passage featured in the magazine spread to help you answer the question.

Money Matters

During the Japanese Occupation, there was very little food available. The Japanese gave out small amounts of rationed items to each family. Some people had to buy food from black markets, which were illegal markets where goods were sold in violation of the rations and usually at high prices. As food became less easily available, prices increased sharply and the value of money became extremely low. This is known as inflation.



Look for the basket of eggs on display.

Q13

Match the price of a basket of 12 eggs at different times during the Japanese Occupation.

Feb 1942	<input type="radio"/>	● \$12
Dec 1942	<input type="radio"/>	● \$0.50
Dec 1943	<input type="radio"/>	● \$432.60
Feb 1945	<input type="radio"/>	● \$0.60
Sep 1945	<input type="radio"/>	● \$240

Q14

How much did 1 egg cost in Sep 1945?

Endau and Bahau

During the Japanese Occupation, 300,000 people were relocated to settlements in southern Malaya. Eurasians were transferred to Bahau and the Chinese to Endau. In addition, Malays and Indians were sent to the Riau Islands. They became farmers and had to grow their own food. The work was laborious and many suffered and died from diseases such as malaria.



Self-Reflection:

To understand what the people went through, imagine you and your family being transported to an unfamiliar new place and being forced to grow your own food.

The Japanese Surrender



In order to quickly end the war, the United States dropped atomic bombs on two Japanese cities – Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The Japanese government surrendered on 15 August, and the British returned to Singapore shortly after.

The official Japanese surrender ceremony only took place on 12 September 1945, after the British returned.

Watch the Newsreel of the Japanese Surrender in Singapore and answer the following questions:

Q15

Name the senior British officer who received the Japanese Surrender.

Q16

Where was the Surrender held?

Q17

Do you know what the building is called today?

Rebuilding the Colony

The British tried to rebuild the colony upon their return, but there were serious social, economic and political problems to be addressed.

Education

Many students had their education disrupted during the war years. When war ended, many started or continued their education in classes where they were overaged.

Q18

Imagine you had just returned to school in 1947, after the end of war. Looking at your age group, what percentage of students would be older than you in your class?

Remembering the War and Occupation

Watch the video and hear oral history accounts as survivors of the war give their reflections on the war.

Q19

Name two people whose quotations were featured in the video.

Self-Reflection:

Why is it important to learn about the Japanese Occupation?