

Pre-viewing & Viewing Introduction for Students

Day One—viewing time 25 minutes

Segment One/*The Untold Story* (14 minutes)

Segment Two/*Invasion, Evacuation, Relocation* (11 minutes)

Day Two—viewing time 30 minutes

Segment Three/*The Camps* (19 minutes)

Segment Four/*Hardest Childhood Days* (11 minutes)

Day Three—viewing time 31.5 minutes

Segment Five/*Home At Last* (8 minutes)

Segment Six/*Seeking Simple Justice* (17 minutes)

Segment Seven/*Restoration* (6.5 minutes)

PRE-VIEWING QUESTIONS

Documentaries represent a unique genre of filmmaking. Although documentary films and feature films may use some of the same equipment, creative techniques and storytelling devices, there are critical differences between the two types of film.

1. What is a documentary film? List some of the characteristics of a documentary film?
2. An increasing number of documentary films are incorporating dramatic re-enactments or scenes of historical events performed by actors. What do you think of this creative approach?

When renting or buying a DVD, often the first thing we look at is the packaging. Take a good look at the cover and then answer the following questions. (If viewing a copy recorded off air, answer only questions 6, and 8—10)

3. What information does the DVD cover provide about the film? What information isn't on the cover that you'd like to have?

4. Using only this information, what might you conclude about the film?

5. Does the information on the cover make you want to know more? Why or why not?

6. Based only on the film's title, what might you expect to learn from the film?

7. Based on what you know from the cover, and your understanding of documentaries, list three concepts, ideas or experiences you expect to see explored in the film.

8. Before beginning this unit of study, did you know anything about Aleut Americans? If yes, briefly describe.

9. Do you know anyone who has experienced war, or been held in a government relocation facility? Briefly describe how this affects your expectations for the film?

10. Think about what you know about American citizens' efforts to protect their constitutional rights. Relate this to your expectations for the film in a short paragraph.

VIEWING

Documentary films chronicle the lives of real people. However, the central characters are often “cast” much like actors in a feature film. Documentary producers and directors seek out people they believe will do the best job telling a given story.

The script provides a framework for the story. Often, a narrator reads part of the script in order to present facts and other information. The script also includes excerpts of interviews with subject experts and people having first-hand knowledge of an event.

Information is presented in a variety of ways—by the narrator, in interviews with subject experts, and through interviews and activities with central characters.

Visual elements such as location cinematography, archival footage and photographs, maps and text on screen also present important information. Music provides important cues as well.

Dramatic elements such as music, lighting, text on screen, re-enactments, special camera effects, and editing are also used to create a compelling story.

As you view the film, watch and listen carefully. Consider the central characters and the many, different dramatic elements and how they were intended to shape your understanding of events.

To complete the worksheets, you will need to recall facts, events, people and places—as well as discuss some of the basic film techniques used to tell the story. You’ll also be asked to reflect on how the film made you feel, whether it challenged any of your views, and how knowledge of the Aleut experience might be useful today.

Your film worksheets may be used as a reference when working on related *Aleut Story* lesson plans.