

Teaching Difficult Knowledge of World War II in the Philippines with Children’s Literature and Inquiry

Sohyun An

In this article, I describe three inquiry activities based on a children’s book set in the Philippines during World War II. In many U.S. history and modern world history curricula and textbooks, events in the Philippines (and more generally in the Pacific theater) during World War II are not covered well. Because these events cannot be understood outside of the history of U.S. colonization of the Philippines in the early 1900s, I start by providing brief historical context.

“Did We Colonize You?”

The year was 1945. The place was the Philippines after the United States “liberated” Manila from control by the Japanese Empire. Oscar Villadolid, a young Filipino boy at the time, remembers his encounter with U.S. soldiers who were handing out cigarettes and Hershey bars to Filipinos in the war-torn city. When a GI gave him a chocolate bar, Oscar thanked him in English.¹

Oscar: Thank you very much.

U.S. GI: How do you speak English? [perplexed]

Oscar: When you colonized us, you sent over a bunch of schoolteachers, and so the language of instruction in school was English, and I grew up speaking English.

U.S. GI: We colonized you? [more perplexed]

The GI, along with his fellow soldiers, must have been briefed on the mission, shown maps, and told where to go and who they would be fighting on the Eastern Front in World War II. Yet this GI was unaware that the Philippines was a U.S. colony, the Filipino boy was a U.S. national, and the U.S. soldiers were fighting to preserve the rule of one colonizer (the United States) over another (Japan).

Like the GI, many people in the United States today may not know or remember that the Philippines was a U.S. colony

from 1898 until it gained independence in 1946. During the study of U.S. history, elementary students may hear about the Philippines when learning about the Spanish-American War and the subsequent U.S. acquisition of Spanish colonies, including the Philippines. Unfortunately, the information they receive about the Philippines usually stops there. Elementary students would not learn what happened next to the newly acquired U.S. colonies, whereas secondary students may learn about a few more historical events, such as the Philippine-American War. Even then, they may not hear about the inglorious parts of the war or about U.S. colonial rule of the Philippines after the war.

This curricular silence is partly because textbooks, and the lessons based on them, typically avoid knowledge that is disruptive of the dominant national narratives—for example, the narrative that the United States, born out of an anti-colonial revolution against Great Britain, is inherently anti-colonial itself and remains a beacon of liberty, democracy, and anti-colonialism.²

Difficult Knowledge: U.S. Imperialism in the Philippines

Extensive disruptive knowledge is hidden from students by such curricula.³ First, the Philippines was a U.S. colony for several decades, from 1898, when the United States took it over after the war with Spain, until 1946, when the Philippines gained independence. Thus, when Japan invaded during World War II, it was not attacking a sovereign nation called the Philippines—it was attacking a U.S. colony. (**Timeline** page 16)

Second, prior to becoming a U.S. colony, the Philippines had been a Spanish colony for more than 300 years. When the United States came to the Philippines during the Spanish-American War of 1898, Filipinos had already begun their anti-colonial revolution against Spain. Filipino revolutionaries believed that the United States was their ally and helped the U.S. to win the war. In the middle of the war, Filipino General Emilio Aguinaldo proclaimed Philippine independence and announced the establishment of the First Philippine Republic. However, both the United States and Spain ignored this proclamation. Spain even surrendered to and sold the Philippines

(along with Guam and Puerto Rico) to the United States.⁴

Third, when the United States began installing its new colonial regime in the Philippines, Filipinos resisted, and the War of Philippine Independence began. Although commonly called the “Philippine-American War” in the United States, this war was, for Filipinos, a war of independence that continued the fight for sovereignty against foreign empires—first against Spain and then against the United States. The war (1899–1902) was brutal, during which U.S. forces conducted mass killings, torture, and the burning of villages. Many U.S. military leaders dehumanized Filipinos as barbaric savages.⁵

Fourth, U.S. colonial rule of the Philippines was based on white supremacy, which positioned the white race and culture as superior to that of Filipinos and justified U.S. colonization as a “benevolent assimilation” to uplift, educate, and civilize Filipinos for their eventual self-rule.⁶ U.S. colonization did indeed Americanize the Philippines by transforming its political system, language, education, currency, trade, city grids, and many other elements of the country according to U.S. customs. No wonder, then, that the young Filipino boy in the vignette could speak English in his encounter with the U.S. GI.⁷

Fifth, despite the prevalent memory of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii was not the only U.S. colony scarred by Japanese attacks in 1941. Japan attacked most of the U.S. colonies in the Pacific, including the Philippines—the largest U.S. colony at the time. Additionally, the strike on Pearl Harbor was an attack; Japanese forces did not return. In contrast, Japanese forces invaded and occupied the Philippines and other U.S. colonies, such as Guam and Wake Island.⁸

Sixth, the U.S. government continued its Europe-first policy by prioritizing U.S. military resources to win the war against Germany (the Western Front of the war) before focusing resources on the war against Japan (the Eastern Front). This delay contributed to three years of Japanese occupation of the Philippines (1942–1945), which was marked by Filipinos and captured U.S. soldiers suffering torture, internment, and death. In the Bataan Death March, for example, thousands of captured U.S. and Filipino soldiers were forced to walk for days to a prison camp with no provisions for food, water, shelter, or medical care.⁹

Seventh, the U.S. finally returned to reconquer the Philippines in 1944. The process was extraordinarily violent because of the bombing and shelling of suspected Japanese targets from afar. The aim was to protect the lives of U.S. soldiers, but the cost was mostly borne by Filipinos. About one million Filipinos lost their lives during the reconquest. Finally, Japan surrendered in 1945.

Eighth, in the immediate post-war era, many European nations granted independence to a number of their colonies in Asia and Africa. For its part, the United States altered many relationships in the Pacific, for example occupying Japan (1945–52); granting independence to the Philippines (1946); bringing Hawaii into the Union as a state (1959); construct-

ing permanent military bases on numerous Pacific islands (1945-present); and turning the idyllic Bikini and Enewetak atolls into the “Pacific Proving Grounds” upon which ever-more-destructive thermonuclear weapons were detonated (1946–58).¹⁰

Why Trouble (Commonly Held) “Lovely Knowledge”?

What happened to the Philippines during World War II, and the history of the Philippines as a U.S. colony, is “difficult knowledge” in the United States. Difficult knowledge refers to social and historical content that carries an emotional burden for students and teachers because the content often involves state-sanctioned violence, refutes dominant sociohistorical narratives, and thus creates feelings of discomfort or unease.¹¹ The knowledge listed earlier is difficult because it disrupts the dominant U.S. narrative of World War II, which defines the war as a wholly a good one in which the United States was simply a benevolent savior of peoples suffering under the empire-building of Germany and Japan.¹² The knowledge is difficult also because it refutes a comforting, dominant narrative about U.S. wars in general, which defines the U.S. participation in wars as always noble, honorable, moral, and just.¹³ The brutality Filipinos experienced during the War of Philippine Independence, the U.S. bombing of Manila, and the experiences of U.S. soldiers stranded on the Bataan Peninsula serve as evidence that debunks the dominant narrative of U.S. wars. Furthermore, the knowledge is difficult because it unsettles a dominant narrative about the U.S.’s national identity, which defines the United States as inherently anti-colonial and positions U.S. imperialism as a short-lived aberration, existing only around the time of the Spanish-American War.¹⁴ Because it is difficult knowledge, mainstream textbooks are generally silent on the U.S. colonization of the Philippines and the U.S. war with Japan in the Philippines during World War II.¹⁵

This curricular silence, however, is troublesome. Many people find the dominant narratives—World War II was a just war, U.S. wars are always moral and honorable, and the United States is a beacon of anti-colonialism and liberty—to be “lovely knowledge,”¹⁶ which is comforting and familiar. These dominant narratives, however, are dishonest and dangerous,¹⁷ as they have supported a status quo of “endless U.S. wars.” Since its birth, the United States has been at war with or invading other countries in all but 11 years of its existence.¹⁸ Beginning with countless wars against Indigenous Peoples and the conquest of their lands, the United States has conducted wars and military actions around the world, conquering islands in the Pacific and Caribbean; backing pro-U.S. dictators and oppressive regimes in Asia, Africa, and Latin America and inciting coups or waging multiple wars there; and today holding 800 military bases around the world.¹⁹ Regrettably, many of these wars have produced, rather than prevented, more suffering in the world.²⁰

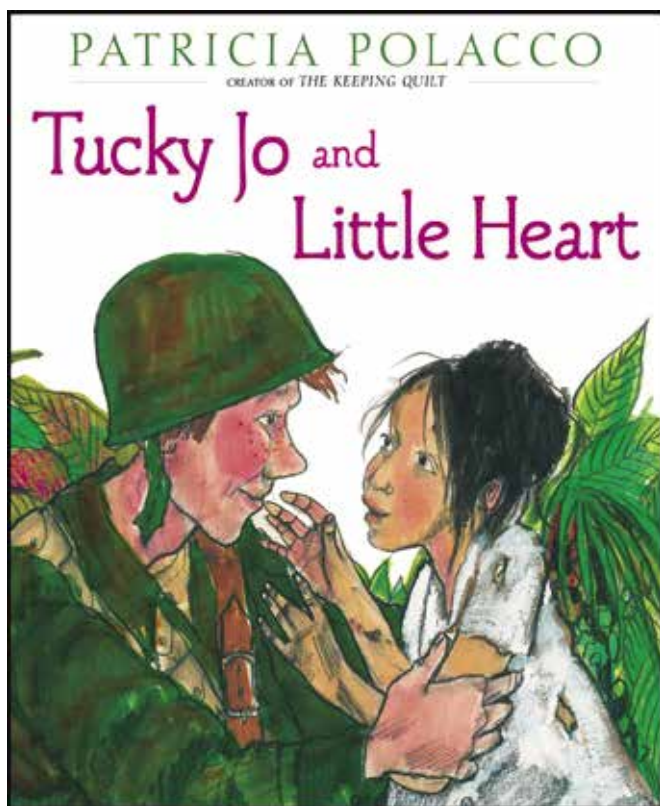
Teaching the difficult knowledge of World War II in the Philippines can help disrupt the dominant but dishonest and

dangerous narratives. Such disruption is difficult, but vital to empower students with a more honest and fuller understanding of U.S. engagement with the world, and to guide them in contemplating alternatives to war.²¹

How to Bring Difficult Knowledge to Children

As a teacher educator, I have noted elementary teacher's general unfamiliarity with the U.S. colonization of the Philippines and the U.S. war in the Philippines during World War II. When I conducted a quick review of state-level standards and popular textbooks, I found a near absence of this topic in the official curriculum.²² Children's literature is not much different. Although a good amount of children's literature examines difficult knowledge of World War II, including the Holocaust in Europe and the incarceration of Japanese Americans in the United States, few children's books address the war in the Philippines.

Tucky Jo and Little Heart, written and illustrated by Patricia Polacco, is one of the few books available on this topic.²³ It was selected by the National Council for the Social Studies as one of the 2016 Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young Children.²⁴ In the following section, I introduce the book and outline its affordances and constraints to bring the difficult knowledge of the war to children. I also present three inquiry activities based on the book along with suggested resources for the inquiries.



Inspiration for the Book: One day, Patricia Polacco passed a hotel banquet room whose occupants were celebrating a reunion of World War II veterans. They invited her to join

them, and there she heard many compelling stories of their experiences of war in the Pacific. Polacco tells one such story in this book, the true story of Johnnie Wallen, who formed a friendship with a little Filipino girl during the war.

Storyline: Johnnie was a young boy from Kentucky. Upon hearing the news about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Johnnie was determined to fight for his country. He enlisted in the U.S. Army and was deployed to the Pacific Theater. After many battles, Johnnie's unit landed in the Philippines. One day in a forest, Johnnie encountered a little Filipino girl. She did not speak at all, but she helped Johnnie by showing him how to soothe his bug bites using a plant leaf. Johnnie thanked her and gave her a chocolate. Johnnie began to call her "Little Heart." Their friendship grew, and Johnnie helped Little Heart and the people in her village by sharing his food and helping them catch fish to ease wartime starvation. His unit soon joined and helped Filipinos in the village by sharing their resources. One day Johnnie heard the news that the United States would bomb the forest to fight the Japanese army nearby. He raced to the village and evacuated Little Heart and the villagers to avoid the bombing. That was the last time Johnnie saw the little girl.

Eventually, the war ended, and Johnnie returned home. Time passed. Now, as an old man in poor health, Johnnie regularly visits the VA hospital. One day a new nurse came in and took good care of him. It turned out she was his Little Heart. She had eventually been able to move to the United States, earn a degree, and had become a nurse. Finally, she could meet Johnnie and thank him for saving her and caring about her when she needed his help.

Benefits from Using the Picture Book

This picture book has so much to offer. First of all, it is a welcome addition to the body of World War II children's literature because it tells about the Pacific theater. Narrated by Johnnie, who lived through the war, this book presents an authentic human story that goes beyond the cold, dispassionate, abstract numbers and dates of war.

Second, this book does not shy away from the difficult knowledge of war. Through Johnnie's eyes and voice, the readers can vividly see the wartime suffering of U.S. soldiers. For example, Johnnie suffered through countless battles in which he saw much killing and dying. Johnnie notes: "Almost as soon as we landed, we were thrown into the worst of the conflict. I had never seen so much killin' and sufferin'. Our division was sent to so many places to fight that everything started blurring together... We had been battling for 219 days straight."

Johnnie also struggled with severe bug bites, homesickness, and loneliness. His views on war changed drastically, from "I could hardly wait to land and get into the thick of the fightin'" at the beginning, to later in the war when he notes, "Now I knew there ain't no glory in war."

Third, this book also poignantly conveys the wartime suffering of Filipino civilians. For example, Little Heart saw her mother being killed by Japanese soldiers. This traumatic event caused her to stop talking. Little Heart and the people in her village also suffered from starvation and family separation because Japanese soldiers took away all the young Filipino men, along with the villagers' food and resources.

Fourth, while depicting tragic realities of the war, this book also highlights humanity and human resilience in the wartime. The friendship, kindness, and caring that Johnnie and Little Heart built and cherished during wartime shows the possibility for a better future.

Constraints and Caveats

In addition to providing benefits, this book has some limitations on its use in the classroom. First is the danger of using only a single story. This book presents an authentic, powerful story of World War II in the Philippines, but it does not represent the whole story of the war. As agents of the United States, Johnnie and his fellow soldiers played an important role in saving Filipinos who were suffering from Japanese occupation. Yet there are other stories untold in the book, as listed above. A caution would be

needed, therefore, so that students would not assume that Johnnie and Little Heart's story represents the experiences of everyone affected by that war.

Second, the book does not give the historical context of the war in the Philippines. The book provides no evidence that Johnnie (either as a young soldier, or as an older man) was aware that the Philippines was a U.S. colony and that the Filipinos were people colonized by the United States. Johnnie's care for Little Heart and the villagers seems to stem from his compassion for other human beings generally. By leaving out the historical context of U.S. colonization of the Philippines, this book keeps intact the dominant narrative of the United States as inherently anti-colonial and benevolent.

Suggested Inquiry Activities

With these affordances and constraints in mind, teachers can use *Tucky Jo and Little Heart* as an introduction to the silenced story of World War II in the Philippines and as a springboard for further inquiry into the relevant history. Compelling questions for inquiry that students may generate from reading the book include the following:

LESSON PLANS

Inquiry Lesson 1: The Philippines as a U.S. Colony

Teachers: The four student handouts for this first lesson appear in the **Pullout** in this issue of *SSYL*.

Compelling question: What was the relationship between the Philippines and the United States in the early 1900s?

Procedure:

1. Provide **Handout 1** to the students, and read the excerpt from Oscar Villadolid's memoir. Pay attention to what Oscar says about the U.S. relationship with the Philippines. As an adult, Oscar Villadolid became a journalist and later a Philippine Ambassador.
2. After reading the book *Tucky Jo and Little Heart* aloud with the class, revisit the excerpt in which Little Heart's grandfather talks to the American G.I., Johnnie, in English. Think about reasons why the grandfather was able to speak English (not only his native Filipino language). What does this say about the U.S.-Philippines relationship prior to World War II? (**Handout 2**)
3. Analyze the excerpt from the 1903 "Interview with President William McKinley." (**Handout 3**) Pay attention to how McKinley justifies the U.S. colonization of the Philippines after winning the Spanish-American War in 1898. Is there evidence that a belief in white supremacy contributes to McKinley's decision to colonize the Philippines? If so, what is it?
4. Study the "Map of the United States," featuring "Territorial

Expansion of a Century—1804 to 1904." (**Handout 4**) Guide students in looking over the title, dates, and regions shown. Help them realize that this map is not based on a "snapshot in time," as are typical political maps. The political boundaries shown on the map developed over decades. U.S. colonies, prominently displayed in insets, appear to be enlarged (with regard to the image of the continental United States), although the scales are arbitrary, varying from one inset map to another. What does this map imply about the status of the Philippines with regard to the United States? Finally, can students discover from the small print on this map who created it, who owned it, and infer what such "pocket maps" might have been used for?

5. Analyze the 1942 letter from Manuel L. Quezon, president of the Commonwealth of the Philippines President, to Franklin D. Roosevelt, president of the United States. (**Handout 5**) Pay attention to Quezon's apparent frustration regarding FDR's Europe-first strategy (of fighting the Axis powers) and his request for FDR to immediately grant the Philippines complete and absolute independence from the United States. Infer from the letter reasons as to why Quezon is frustrated and wants the immediate independence.

6. Discuss what these sources might tell us about the relationship between the United States and the Philippines in the early 1900s. Also, share thoughts about how many Filipinos during that time might have felt about McKinley's policies and later, FDR's policies.

- What is a colony?
- Why would many Americans prefer not to remember that the U.S. government colonized the Philippines and the Filipinos living there?
- How did U.S. military strategies positively or negatively affect people living in the Philippines?
- How did Filipinos feel about U.S. colonization of the Philippines and U.S. military actions during World War II?
- Why do we not hear about what happened to the Philippines in the popular story of World War II?

On the pages below, I suggest three inquiry activities on compelling questions that could be asked based on the book. Handouts for the first activity appear as the **Pullout** in this issue of *Social Studies and the Young Learner*. Designed for upper elementary students who are studying World War II, the overarching goal of the inquiries is to help them develop a more honest and fuller understanding of the war. Specifically, the inquiries aim to support students in building a critical understanding of what happened to the Philippines during the war, why it happened, and what was the role of the United States in the war. Because the inquiries involve critical reading

and analysis of *Tucky Jo and Little Heart*, as well as primary sources, students would enhance skills outlined in the C3 Framework, including D2. His.10.3-5: “Compare information provided by different historical sources about the past”; D2. His.17.3-5: “Summarize the central claim in a secondary work of history”; D2. His.14.3-5: “Explain probable causes and effects of events and developments”; and D2. His.16.3-5: “Use evidence to develop a claim about the past.”²⁵

I hope many teachers find *Tucky Jo and Little Heart* and the inquiry activities featured in the Pullout helpful in bringing the silenced-yet-critical story of World War II to their students. 🌍

Notes

1. Oscar S. Villadolid, *Born in Freedom: My Life and Times* (Quezon City: QC, Philippines, 2004), cited in *How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States* by Daniel Immerwahr (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020), 212.
2. James Loewen, *Teaching What Really Happened: How to Avoid the Tyranny of the Textbook and Teach What Really Happened* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2009); John Marciano, “Civic Illiteracy and American History Textbooks: The U.S.-Vietnam War,” in *Critical Civic Literacy: A Reader*, Joseph DeVitis, ed. (New York: Peter Lang, 2011).
3. U.S. House of Representatives, “The Philippines, 1898–1946” (Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Congress), history.house.gov/Exhibitions-and-Publications/APA/Historical-Essays/Exclusion-and-Empire/Introduction/
4. Immerwahr, 2020
5. Kramer, 2006.
6. Kramer, 2006; Immerwahr, 2020
7. Immerwahr, 2020.
8. Vine, 2020.
9. Immerwahr, 2020.

LESSON PLANS

Inquiry Lesson 2: Japan’s Attack on U.S. Colonies in the Pacific

Compelling question: Why do we rarely hear about what happened to the Philippines in the popular World War II narrative?

Procedure:

1. Read from pages in *Tucky Jo and Little Heart* about Japan’s attack on the U.S. Identify how the attack was described in the text and illustration. Pay attention to whether it only mentions Pearl Harbor, or other U.S. colonies that were attacked as well.
2. Analyze the remarks First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt made regarding Japan’s attack. Notice that in these remarks, given the night before FDR’s famous speech to Congress, she mentions both Hawaii and the Philippines as under attack by Japan. (www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/daybyday/resource/december-7-1941-2)
3. Analyze the draft of FDR’s “Day of Infamy” speech to Congress. Pay attention to the part in the draft where FDR crossed out references to the Philippines when describing Japan’s attack. Infer what might have been his reason for those deletions.

(Online at www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2001/winter/crafting-day-of-infamy-speech.html)

4. Watch FDR’s Infamy Speech video clip. (Online at www.fdrlibrary.org/pearl-harbor-exhibit). In the beginning of the speech, FDR did not mention the Philippines. Later in the speech, he mentions the Philippines, but only as an item on a terse list of Japan’s other targets: Malaya, Hong Kong, Guam, the Philippines, Wake Island, and—Midway—presented in that order. This list mingled U.S. and British colonies together, giving no hint as to which was which. Infer possible reasons for FDR’s reluctance to mention U.S. colonies other than Pearl Harbor in describing Japan’s attack on the United States.
5. Based on these resources, discuss possible explanations as to why we rarely hear about what happened to the Philippines during World War II. Also discuss why many Americans would prefer not to remember that U.S. had many colonies in the Pacific and colonized people living there.

10. Immerwahr, 2020.
11. Deborah Britzman, *Lost Subjects, Contested Objects: Toward a Psychoanalytic Inquiry of Learning* (State University of New York Press, 1998); Sara Levy and Maia Sheppard, "Difficult Knowledge and the Holocaust in History Education," in *The Wiley International Handbook of History Teaching and Learning*, Scott Metzger and Lauren Harris, eds. (John Wiley and Sons, 2018): 365–387; Michalinos Zembylas, "Theorizing 'Difficult Knowledge' in the Aftermath of the 'Affective Turn': Implications for Curriculum and Pedagogy in Handling Traumatic Representation," *Curriculum Inquiry* 44, no. 3 (2014): 390–412.
12. Vine, 2020.
13. Vine, 2020.
14. Immerwahr, 2020.
15. Loewen, 2009.
16. Alice Pitt and Deborah Britzman, "Speculations on Qualities of Difficult Knowledge in Teaching and Learning: An Experiment in Psychoanalytic Research," *Qualitative Studies in Education* 16, no. 6 (2003): 755–776.
17. Vine, 2020.
18. Immerwahr, 2020; Vine, 2020.
19. Immerwahr, 2020; Vine, 2020.
20. Vine, 2020; Costs of War Project (Brown University), watson.brown.edu/costsofwar.
21. Brian Gibbs, "Patriotism, Pressure and Place: Civic Agency in Base Country," *Peabody Journal of Education* 94, no. 1 (2019): 97–113; Brian Gibbs, "So My Grandfather's Two Tours Meant Nothing?: Students Struggle with the Weight and Responsibility of War," *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy* 18, no. 1 (2021): 1–24; Nel Noddings, *Peace Education: How We Come to Love and Hate War* (Cambridge University Press, 2012); Howard Zinn, *Howard Zinn on War* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2011).
22. Sohyun An, "Disrupting Curriculum of Violence on Asian Americans," *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 42, no. 2 (2020), 141–56; "Asian Americans in American History: An AsianCrit Perspective on Asian American Representation in US History Curriculum Standards," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 44, no. 2 (2016), 244–276.
23. Patricia Polacco, *Tucky Jo and Little Heart* (Simon & Schuster, 2015), age range: 5–12; LexileMeasure: AD670L.
24. NCSS, Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People, www.socialstudies.org/notable-social-studies-trade-books.
25. National Council for the Social Studies, *The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards: Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History* (Silver Spring, MD: NCSS, 2013).

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LESSON PLANS

Inquiry 3: World War II in the Philippines

Compelling question: What role did the United States play during World War II in the "Liberation" of the Philippines?

Procedure:

1. Read from pages in *Tucky Jo and Little Heart* that tell of Johnnie and his fellow soldiers saving Little Heart and other Filipinos in her village from the impending U.S. bombing campaign as part of the war against the Japanese occupiers. How might these residents of the village have felt about the U.S. when the US bombed their village while at the same time Johnnie and other U.S. soldiers helped them avoid the bombing.
2. Carefully preview, and then analyze photos of the Bataan Death March with the class. Because of FDR's Europe First policy, many US and Filipino soldiers were captured by the Japanese army and forced to walk to a prison camp with no provisions for food, water, shelter, and medical care. Identify the effect of FDR's Europe First Policy on the suffering of both US soldiers and Filipinos (See resources, below)
3. Carefully preview, and then analyze photos of the Battle of Manila. The U.S. decision to bomb Japanese targets from afar resulted in countless deaths of Filipino civilians and the complete destruction of the city. Consider how Filipinos at that time might have felt about the United State's decision to use bombing to "liberate" Manila and Filipinos from Japan. (See resources, below)

4. Discuss the complicated roles the United States played in the war and how its policies resulted in the suffering of Filipinos as well as U.S. soldiers. Discuss how U.S. military actions affected Filipino's lives during the war. Consider how Filipinos might have felt about the conflicting role of the U.S. on their lives and how U.S. soldiers like Johnnie might have felt about his government's action during the war.

Suggested Resources for Inquiry Activities and Teacher Background Knowledge

- Official Gazette of the Philippines Government provides photos and other primary sources of World War II in the Philippines, <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/featured/ww2>.
- Bataan Legacy Historical Society provides photos and other primary sources as well as lesson plans, www.bataanlegacy.org.
- Pacific Atrocities Education provides photos and other primary sources, lesson plans, and podcasts, www.pacifatrocities.org.
- Immerwahr, Daniel. *How to Hide an Empire: A Short History of the United States* (New York: Vintage, 2020). This book provides content knowledges of the history of U.S. imperialism in the Philippines and the U.S. war in the Philippines during World War II.

Background for Teachers:

A Timeline of the Philippines as a U.S. Colony (1898–1946)

Prelude: Explorer Fernando Magellan claimed the islands as a colony of the Spanish Empire in 1542, naming them Las Felipinas, “the Philippines,” after Prince Philip, later King Philip II of Spain. After 354 years of colonization, Filipinos began organized civil and armed campaigns for independence in 1896.

1898	In April, U.S. forces arrive in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War. Filipino General Emilio Aguinaldo allies with U.S. forces, but also proclaims the first Philippine Republic, with himself as president. Both the United States and Spain ignore this declaration. In December, Spain surrenders and cedes the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico, as colonies, to the United States—thus suppressing independence movements in these Pacific islands.
1899	Filipino revolutionaries launch armed struggle against U.S. forces, known (in the U.S.) as the Philippine-American War, during which upward of 20,000 revolutionaries and 200,000 Filipino civilians starve to death, die of disease, or are killed in combat.
1901	In an infamous episode, U.S. troops on the island of Samar retaliate against the massacre of a U.S. garrison by killing all men on the island above the age of 10. Many women and children are slaughtered as well. General Aguinaldo surrenders. W. H. Taft arrives as first U.S. governor of the Philippines. (He becomes U.S. president in 1909.)
1902	The Philippine-American War formally ends, yet some independence forces fight on until 1913. U.S. military rule is replaced by a U.S. colonial government with limited Filipino participation.
1916	U.S. Congress passes the Jones Act, which establishes the first fully elected Philippine legislature and promises the Philippines more autonomy.
1929	By the late 1920s, goods from America make up 60 percent of the Philippines’ total imports.
1934	The Tydings-McDuffie Act establishes a ten-year transition period for the Philippines to become an independent nation. As late as 1934, the United States was the destination for 83% of the Philippines’ exports (e.g., sugar and tobacco) and accounted for 75% of the colony’s total trade.
1935	The Constitution of the Philippines establishes the Commonwealth of the Philippines with Manuel Quezon as the first directly elected president.
1941	The Japanese Empire attacks Pearl Harbor, the Philippines, and other U.S. territories in the Pacific. The United States declares war on Japan on December 8, 1941. By May 1942, all parts of the Philippines are under Japanese occupation.
1944	U.S. forces clash with Japanese forces in October. The ten-month Philippines campaign has begun.
1945	About 1,000,000 Filipinos lose their lives during the U.S. reconquest, which includes U.S. bombing of rural areas and the capital, Manila, which kills 100,000 residents. The war’s Pacific front ends on September 2.
1946	The U.S. grants independence to the Republic of the Philippines, with Manuel Roxas as the first president.

Sources: See note 3 on page 14 of this issue of *Social Studies and the Young Learner* (September/October 2021)

PULLOUT

Pullout: Handouts for Inquiry Lesson 1: The Philippines as a U.S. Colony. See pp. 10–15 in the article by Sohyun An in this issue of *Social Studies and the Young Learner*

Oscar Villadolid's Memoir *Born in Freedom* (Excerpt)

The year was 1945. The place was the Philippines after the United States “liberated” Manila from Japanese control. Oscar Villadolid, a young Filipino boy at the time, remembers his encounter with U.S. GIs who were handing out cigarettes and Hershey bars to Filipinos in the war-torn city. When a GI gave him a chocolate bar, Oscar thanked him in English.

Oscar: Thank you very much.

US GI: How do you speak English? [perplexed]

Oscar: When you colonized us you sent over a bunch of schoolteachers and so the language of instruction in school was English and I grew up speaking English.

US GI: We colonized you? [more perplexed]

Sources: Oscar S. Villadolid, *Born in Freedom: My Life and Times* (Quezon City: QC, Philippines, 2004), cited in *How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States* by Daniel Immerwahr (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020), 212; <http://prsociety-philippines.blogspot.com/2009/06/in-memorial-amb-oscar-s-villadolid-apr.html>.

HANDOUT 2

Tucky Jo and Little Heart (Excerpt)

Read *Tucky Jo and Little Heart* to get the context of this conversation. It's a picture book about an American G.I. who gets to know a girl and her family in the Philippines during the trauma of World War II.

There, settin' in a hammock, was a very old man that looked weary and spent.

“So you must be Tucky Jo. I'm Linus Zaballa,” he said as he smiled.

“You can speak English!” I said, surprised-like.

“Of course I can...I learned it in school.” He smiled.

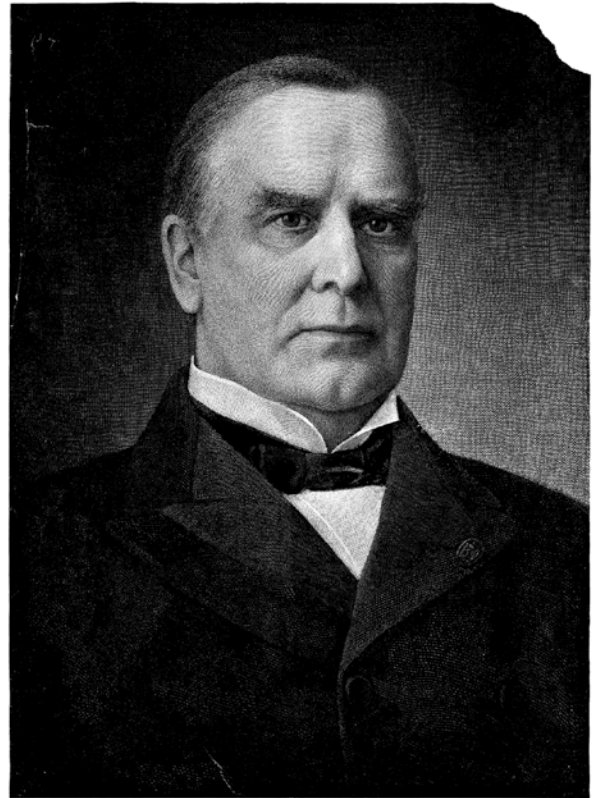
Source: Patricia Polacco, *Tucky Jo and Little Heart* (Simon & Schuster, 2015).

Interview with U.S. President William McKinley, 1903 (Excerpt)

In an interview with a visiting church delegation published in 1903, U.S. President William McKinley defends his decision to support the annexation of the Philippines in the wake of the U.S. war in that country.

When I next realized that the Philippines had dropped into our laps I confess I did not know what to do with them...And one night late it came to me this way.

1. That we could not give them back to Spain—that would be cowardly and dishonorable;
2. that we could not turn them over to France and Germany—our commercial rivals in the Orient—that would be bad business and discreditable;
3. that we not leave them to themselves—they are unfit for self-government—and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's wars; and
4. that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died.



WILLIAM M^C KINLEY.
REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT.

Text Source: William McKinley, "President McKinley Puts the Philippines on the U.S. Map," *SHEC: Resources for Teachers*, <https://shc.ashp.cuny.edu/items/show/878>; General James Rusling, "Interview with President William McKinley," *The Christian Advocate* (January 22, 1903) quoted in *The Philippines Reader*, Daniel Schirmer and Stephen Shalom, eds. (Boston: South End Press, 1987), 22–23.

Map of the United States showing the Territorial Expansion of a Century—1804 to 1904

Within this map, there are curious smaller maps (insets) around the image of the continental United States. One of them features a tiny world map (top inset, imposed over Canada) with the North American continent front and center. Another shows the original 13 states. Large insets show the Pacific territories, which are named: Alaska; Guam Island, Hawaiian Islands; the Panama Canal Zone; Philippines Islands; Puerto Rico; Tutuila, Manua, and Smaller Islands of the Samoan Group; and Wake Island. Examine the details on this map. What can you tell about its origins, and what it might have been used for?



Source: A. R. Ohman, "United States" (pocket map, New York, 1904), mon.academyart.edu.

HANDOUT 5

A letter by President Manuel L. Quezon addressed to President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR), February 8, 1942 (Excerpt)

Despite the fact that the Philippines was a U.S. colony and invaded by Japan, FDR continued a Europe First policy of conducting World War II. Frustrated by FDR's neglect of the Philippines and Filipinos' suffering under Japan's invasion, Manuel L. Quezon, the President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines, sent a message to President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 8, 1942. This is an excerpt:

The Government of the United States under the McDuffie–Tydings law is committed to grant independence to the Philippines in 1946, and the same law authorized the President to open negotiations for the neutralization of the Philippines. On the other hand, the Japanese Government has publicly announced its willingness to grant the Philippines her independence. In view of the foregoing I propose the following:

That the United States immediately grant the Philippines complete and absolute independence;

That the Philippines be at once neutralized;

That all occupying troops, both American and Japanese, be withdrawn by mutual agreement with the Philippine Government within a reasonable length of time;

That neither country maintain bases in the Philippines;

That the Philippine Army be immediately disbanded, the only armed forces being maintained here to be a constabulary of modest size;

That immediately upon granting independence the trade relations of the Philippines with foreign countries be a matter to be determined entirely by the Philippines and the foreign countries concerned;

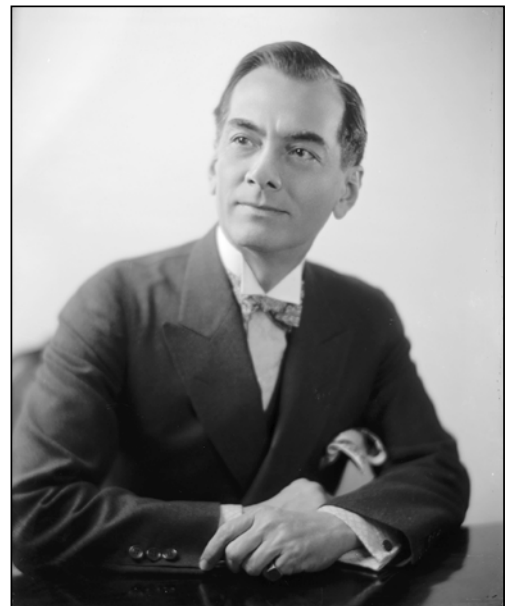


Photo Source: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2016862102/>

Text Source: Read the entire letter at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1942v01/d783>