***Farewell to Manzanar* Excerpt**

***Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston***

In her book *Farewell to Manzanar*, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston tells the story

of what it was like to be a Japanese American in California during the 1940s.

Jeanne was born in California in 1934, the youngest child of parents who had

immigrated to the United States from Japan. In 1945, she started sixth grade

in a new school.

That afternoon, during a reading lesson, [the teacher] finally asked me

if I’d care to try a page out loud. I had not yet opened my mouth,

except to smile. When I stood up, everyone turned to watch. Any kid

entering a new class wants, first of all, to be liked. This was uppermost

in my mind. I smiled wider, then began to read. I made no mistakes.

When I finished, a pretty blond girl in front of me said, quite innocently,

“Gee, I didn’t know you could speak English.” She was genuinely

amazed. I was stunned. How could this have even been in

doubt?

***What do the experiences of Jeanne and the bear have in common? How are they different?***

***Identify a time when you have been labeled by others. How did it feel? How did you respond?***

***Identify a time when you labeled someone else. Why did you do it?***

***Why do you think we are quick to place labels on each other?***