

Misunderstanding the Japanese Canadian experience

Each quote should represent a different aspect of the experience

Using pairs of quotes since Naomi's commentary on her memories and her past allows us to do that

- "It was a terrible business what we did to our Japanese"
 - Speaking possessively of these people makes it seem as if he is apologetic for how he and Canada treated Japanese Canadians during the war, but this grossly understates his part in that treatment
- "This whole matter of the Japanese."
 - Speaking so loosely and so generally about a nuanced and current issue is characteristic of ignorance, which is conveyed so strongly through the single phrase: "matter of the Japanese"
- "Everything is being done to give the Japanese an opportunity to return to their homeland"
 - Not understanding what Japanese Canadians have available to them: Japanese Canadians are being deported, their homes and businesses have been stripped away from them in Canada, and are being asked to go to Japan
 - However, Japanese Canadians would be ostracized for being Canadian if they moved back to Japan
- Examples of Stephen being harassed
 - Stephen is being harassed simply for being Japanese by other boys his age, which demonstrates how pervasive the discriminatory attitude towards Japanese people is, as it's present in adults and their children
 - This has adverse effects on Stephen's development as a Japanese Canadian, he tries to dissociate himself from his Japanese roots through renouncing the language, staying for only a few minutes with his family on the few occasions that he does come home, and refusing Obasan's food in favour of more westernized food with his fiancée.

Two different images of a side and front view representing Japanese and Canadian Gov't perspectives on the same issue