The observance of Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month is an occasion to remember the patriotism of AAPIs who have served, or are currently serving, in the Department of Defense (DOD), our nation and, specifically, here at the DoD Education Activity (DoDEA).

May was chosen as the observance month to commemorate the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the transcontinental railroad completion on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks of that nation-unifying railway were Chinese immigrants.

In 1978, the AAPI recognition reached the legislative branch of the federal government and Public Law 95-419 was passed by the House and Senate, which designated the week beginning on May 4, 1979 as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week. In 1979, President Jimmy Carter accepted this call to action and issued Presidential Proclamation 4650 in support of the AAPI week-long observance.
In the years that followed, U.S. Presidents annually issued proclamations for Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week; however, in 1990 President George H.W. Bush extended the week-long acknowledgement to a month-long celebration, Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month. In 1992, President George W. Bush permanently designated the month of May as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, via Public Law 102-450. In a 2009 presidential proclamation, President Barak Obama expanded the Asian/Pacific American commemoration to include Pacific Islanders and issued his proclamations in honor of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

Celebrated in May, each year, Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month recognizes the challenges faced by Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, and Native Hawaiians and their vital contributions to the American story.

**DoDEA Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month 2023**

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**DEOMI Products**
AAPI Books (Grades K-5)

Americas K-5 Book List
Europe K-5 Book List
Pacific K-5 Book List

AAPI Books (Grades 6-12)

Americas Grades 6-12 Book List
Europe Grades 6-12 Book List
Pacific Grades 6-12 Book List

Proclamation and Memorandum
Poster

May

ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

dodea
Resources

Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center
Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC)
DoDEA's Asian American Pacific Islander Program
Asian Pacific Islanders in the US Army
Asian Pacific American Heritage Association
Asian American and Pacific Islander Booklist by NEA