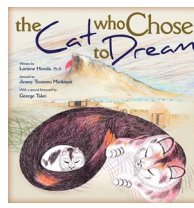


# The Cat Who Chose To Dream

## Activity Sheet for Pre-Teens to Adults



Do you feel the imprisonment of Japanese Americans during WWII was fair?

Why or why not?

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On Page 11, Jimmy the Cat said, *“How can I truly be free if the people I love most are not?”* This is similar to what was explained by Ralph Lazo, a teenager of Mexican Irish heritage from Los Angeles, who bravely volunteered to live in the Manzanar prison camp because he felt it was unjust for his Japanese American best friends to be incarcerated while he remained free.

*How do you think you’d react if this happened to your best friends?*

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On his comment: *“Others may have the power to shackle my body, but I always hold the power to free my mind.”*

*What do you think Jimmy the Cat meant?*

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Many important Japanese symbols are used in the book such as:

Koi Carp.....Perseverance  
Pine Tree.....Long life  
Cherry Blossoms.....Transient Nature of Life  
Tiger.....Power  
Bamboo.....Resilience  
Dragon.....Strength  
Rabbit.....Luck

*Why do you think the artist, Jimmy Tsutomu Mirikitani, chose to include these symbols in the illustrations?*

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*What type of symbol best represents you? How about your family?*

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*What do you think is the meaning of the title, The Cat Who Chose to Dream?*

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Create an illustration of the symbol that best represents you. In the illustration, attempt to recreate the feelings you have when your mind is *unshackled*.

