



World History

KCS home

Summer Edition



There will be a short video lesson of a Knox County teacher to accompany this task available on the KCS YouTube Channel and KCS TV.

[Video for Activity 1](#)

9TH GRADE WORLD HISTORY: WORLD WAR II ATOMIC BOMB FOCUS

Lindsey Parks
West High School

Essential Question: When or is it ever appropriate to use a weapon of mass destruction?

Focus Standard: W.52: Describe the development of atomic bombs, and evaluate both the decisions to use them and the impact of their use. (C, G, H, P, T)

Learning Targets:

- Define the Manhattan Project
- Analyze and evaluate President Truman's decision to utilize the atomic bomb vs. invading Japan
- Locate Hiroshima and Nagasaki on a map
- Outline the impacts of using the atomic bomb (i.e. death toll, radiation poisoning, geographical devastation)

Step 1: WWII OVERVIEW: **Please Note: If you need to make video adjustments:

If the video(s) go too fast; you can...

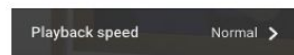
1. make sure the closed caption is on



2. Go to settings and slow down the speed:



Select playback speed



Select 0.75



Step 1: Directions: As you watch this video, answer the guided questions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q78COTwT7nE>

Guided Questions:

1. What do you know about WWII?
2. Who were some of the main leaders of WWII?
3. What were the causes of WWII?
4. How/Why did the US get involved?
5. What were some of the major battles?

OVERVIEW CONTINUED: DIRECTIONS: IF NEEDED; WATCH THE MANHATTAN PROJECT VIDEO & READ ABOUT THE BATAAN DEATH MARCH AND OKINAWA TO INSURE YOU HAVE ADEQUATE BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE ON THESE TOPICS BEFORE MOVING INTO THE ATOMIC BOMB INFORMATION.

- Manhattan Project Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSf3GOMziOg&t=226s>
- Background on fighting in Pacific: Bataan Death March:
<https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/bataan-death-march>
- Background on fighting in Pacific:
Okinawa: <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/battle-of-okinawa>

STEP 2: DIRECTIONS: READ THE **TWO HISTORICAL NARRATIVES** AND ANSWER THE GUIDING QUESTIONS:

Guiding Questions

1. In 1-2 sentences each, explain the two narratives (stories) about Hiroshima.
2. Which narrative do you agree with more? Why?

Two Historical Narratives

Name _____

Source: Excerpts from "Three Narratives of our Humanity" by John W. Dower, 1996. The following is from a book written by a historian about how people remember wars. John W. Dower explains the two different ways that the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is remembered.

Hiroshima as Victimization

Japanese still recall the war experience primarily in terms of their own victimization. For them, World War II calls to mind the deaths of family and acquaintances on distant battlefields, and, more vividly, the prolonged, systematic bombings of their cities.

If it is argued that the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima was necessary to shock the Japanese to surrender, how does one justify the hasty bombing of Nagasaki only three days later, before the Japanese had time to investigate Hiroshima and formulate a response?

Hiroshima as Triumph

To most Americans, Hiroshima—the shattered, atomized, irradiated city – remains largely a symbol of triumph – marking the end of a horrendous global conflict and the effective demonstration of a weapon that has prevented another world war.

It is hard to imagine that the Japanese would have surrendered without the atomic bomb. Japanese battle plans that were in place when the bombs were dropped called for a massive, suicidal defense of the home islands, in which the imperial government would mobilize not only several million fighting men but also millions of ordinary citizens who had been trained and indoctrinated to resist to the end with primitive makeshift weapons. For Japanese to even discuss capitulation (surrender) was seditious (against the law).

Guiding Questions

1. In 1-2 sentences each, explain the two narratives (stories) about Hiroshima.
2. Which narrative do you agree with more? Why?

STEP 3: USE THE FOLLOWING TEXT/VIDEOS FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE BOMBINGS OF HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI:

[HTTPS://WWW.HISTORY.COM/TOPICS/WORLD-WAR-II/BOMBING-OF-HIROSHIMA-AND-NAGASAKI](https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/bombing-of-hiroshima-and-nagasaki)

STEP 4: DIRECTIONS: USING DOCUMENTS A-E: COMPLETE THE GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS BY CLOSE READING THE TEXT.

Close reading Strategy:

- 1st text engagement: read to read (You have not read this text before, so read it to become familiar with it)
- 2nd text engagement: read & **highlight in ORANGE** or UNDERLINE quotes, facts, images, information, etc. that supports the “Hiroshima as Victimization” narrative. In other words, look for information that proves that America was *wrong* to drop the atomic bomb.
- 3rd text engagement: review your annotations and record your points on your graphic organizer “Japanese Experience”

Document A: Textbook

Even before the bomb was tested, American officials began to debate how to use it. Admiral William Leahy, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, opposed using the bomb because it killed civilians indiscriminately. He believed that an economic blockade and conventional bombing would convince Japan to surrender.

Secretary of War Henry Stimson wanted to warn the Japanese about the bomb while at the same time telling them that they could keep the emperor if they surrendered. Secretary of State James Byrnes, however, wanted to drop the bomb without any warning to shock Japan into surrendering.

President Truman later wrote that he “regarded the bomb as a military weapon and never had any doubts that it should be used.” His advisers had warned him to expect massive casualties if the United States invaded Japan. Truman believed it was his duty as president to use every weapon available to save American lives.

Source: American History Textbook, American Vision, pg. 615.

Document B: Thank God for the Atomic Bomb

My division, like most of the ones transferred from Europe was going to take part in the invasion at Honshu (an island of Japan). The people who preferred invasion to A-bombing seemed to have no intention of proceeding to the Japanese front themselves. I have already noted what a few more days would mean to the luckless troops and sailors on the spot.... On Okinawa, only a few weeks before Hiroshima, 123,000 Japanese and Americans killed each other. War is immoral. War is cruel.

Source: Paul Fussell, a World War II Soldier, Thank God for the Atom Bomb, 1990.



Document C: Stopping Russia

“[Byrnes] was concerned about Russia's postwar behavior. Russian troops had moved into Hungary and Romania, and Byrnes thought it would be very difficult to persuade Russia to withdraw her troops from these countries, that Russia might be more manageable if impressed by American military might, and that a demonstration of the bomb might impress Russia.”

Source: James Byrnes was one of Truman's advisors on the atomic bomb. In addition to defeating Japan, he wanted to keep the Soviet Union from expanding its influence in Asia and to limit its influence in Europe. Manhattan Project scientist Leo Szilard met with Byrnes on May 28, 1945. Leo Szilard wrote about his meeting with Byrnes in 1980.

Document D: Survivor

One of my classmates, I think his name is Fujimoto, he muttered something and pointed outside the window, saying, "A B-29 is coming." He pointed outside with his finger. So I began to get up from my chair and

asked him, "Where is it?" Looking in the direction that he was pointing towards, I got up on my feet, but I was not yet in an upright position when it happened. All I can remember was a pale lightening flash for two or three seconds. Then, I collapsed. I don't know much time passed before I came to. It was awful, awful. The smoke was coming in from somewhere above the debris. Sandy dust was flying around. . .

I crawled over the debris, trying to find someone who were still alive. Then, I found one of my classmates lying alive. I held him up in my arms. It is hard to tell, his skull was cracked open, his flesh was dangling out from his head. He had only one eye left, and it was looking right at me. . . . he told me to go away.

I, so, was running, hands were trying to grab my ankles, they were asking me to take them along. I was only a child then. And I was horrified at so many hands trying to grab me. I was in pain, too. So all I could do was to get rid of them, it s terrible to say, but I kicked their hands away. I still feel bad about that. I went to Miyuki Bridge to get some water. At the river bank, I saw so many people collapsed there. . . I was small, so I pushed on the river along the small steps. The water was dead people. I had to push the bodies aside to drink the muddy water. We didn't know anything about radioactivity that time. I stood up in the water and so many bodies were floating away along the stream.

Source: Yoshitaka Kawamoto was thirteen years old. He was in the classroom at Zakoba-cho, 0.8 kilometers away from the hypocenter. He is now working as the director of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, telling visitors from all over the world what the atomic bomb did to the people of Hiroshima.

Document E: Hiroshima and Nagasaki Casualties

TABLE A: Estimates of Casualties

	Hiroshima	Nagasaki
Pre-raid population	255,000	195,000
Dead	66,000	39,000
Injured	69,000	25,000
Total Casualties	135,000	64,000

TABLE B: Cause of Immediate Deaths

Hiroshima	
Cause of Death	Percent of Total
Burns	60%
Falling debris	30
Other	10

Nagasaki	
Cause of Death	Percent of Total
Burns	95%
Falling debris	9
Flying glass	7
Other	7

3RD TEXT ENGAGEMENT: REVIEW YOUR ANNOTATIONS AND RECORD YOUR POINTS ON YOUR GRAPHIC ORGANIZER “JAPANESE EXPERIENCE”

Japanese Experience – Main Points...



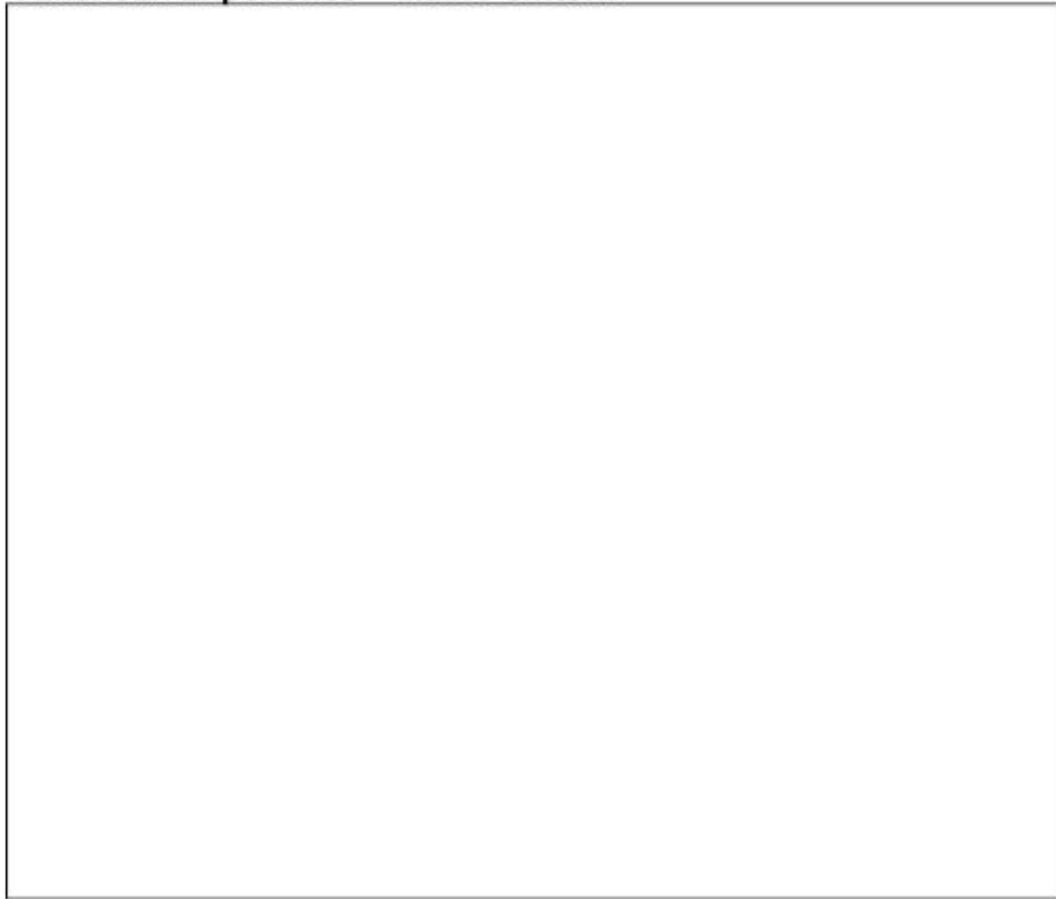
Atomic Bomb

Close reading Strategy:

Now that you have become familiar with the texts, go back and this time look for the opposite ideas: read & **highlight in GREEN** or **BOLD** quotes, facts, images, information, etc. that supports the “Hiroshima as Triumph” narrative. In other words, look for information that proves that America was right to drop the atomic bomb.

3rd text engagement: review your annotations and record your points on your graphic organizer “AMERICAN Experience”

American Experience – Main Points...



Atomic Bomb

STEP 5: DEBRIEF: NOW THAT WE HAVE REVIEWED WWII AND LOOKED AT BOTH VIEWS OF USING THE ATOMIC BOMB, TAKE A MINUTE TO DEBRIEF ON THE TOPIC. DIRECTIONS: In a short response, answer the following questions:

- Should the United States have dropped the bomb? Why is that a difficult question?
- Do you feel like we can judge Truman’s decision? Why or why not? What would we need to know to feel qualified to judge?