

Atomic Bomb

Subject/Grade: US History/11

Unit Title: World War II: Pacific Front

Lesson Title: Atomic Bomb

Approximate Timeframe: 2 class periods

Content TEKS:

US (6) History. The student understands the impact of significant national and international decisions and conflicts from World War II and the Cold War to the present on the United States. The student is expected to:

(B) analyze major issues and events of World War II such as fighting the war on multiple fronts, the internment of Japanese-Americans, the Holocaust, the battle of Midway, the invasion of Normandy, and the development of and Harry Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb.

Related TEKS:

US (22) Science, technology, and society. The student understands the impact of science and technology on the economic development of the United States. The student is expected to:

(A) explain the effects of scientific discoveries and technological innovations such as electric power, the telegraph and telephone, petroleum-based products, medical vaccinations, and computers on the development of the United States;

(B) explain how scientific discoveries and technological innovations such as those in agriculture, the military, and medicine resulted from specific needs.

US (24) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology. The student is expected to:

(A) locate and use primary and secondary sources such as computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about the United States;

(B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;

(C) explain and apply different methods that historians use to interpret the past, including the use of primary and secondary sources, points of view, frames of reference, and historical context;

(D) use the process of historical inquiry to research, interpret, and use multiple sources of evidence.

US (25) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:

(D) create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information.

US (26) Social studies skills. The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings. The student is expected to:

(A) use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution; and

(B) use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision.

Key Understanding(s):

The decision to drop the Atomic Bomb caused political, social and environmental changes that had unintended consequences for years to come.

Guiding Questions for Key Understanding(s):

How did the bomb affect the environment? What were the major physical effects of the bomb? Why did Truman use the bomb? What were the social effects of the bomb for both the United States and Japan?

Performance Indicator(s):

Students will debate the pros and cons of the dropping of the atomic bomb.

Vocabulary of Instruction:

unconditional surrender

Manhattan Project

casualty

fallout

Materials/Resources: (handouts & video clips are on the enclosed DVD & at <http://www.esc16.net/kacvww2lessons>)

- Computer with Internet access, student's history book, any other print resources about WWII that could be made available.
- Film: Atomic Café (98 minutes) if time allows, Nuclear Bomb Calculator at the website: http://www.fas.org/programs/ssp/nukes/nuclear_weapon_effects/nuclearwpneffctcalc.htm
- Website for Truman library: www.trumanlibrary.org/whistestop/study (use March – August documents) paper, pencils, and/or pens.

KACV WWII Video Clips

- [abombkneill.mpg](#)
Kenneth Neill recalls the dropping of the atomic bomb.
- [abombdsmith.mpg](#)
Donald Smith recalls propaganda during the war.
- [abombwcsimpson.mpg](#)
W. C. “Flea” Simpson, discusses the Atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki.

Instructional Procedure:

- **Focus**

Show KACV WWII Video Clips of veterans talking about the dropping of the bomb. Next, show film Atomic Café if there is time. Third, go to the Nuclear Bomb Calculator website to demonstrate what would happen if bomb was dropped on American cities.

- **Explain**

Tell students that the United States dropped bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to end the war. Explain that the students are going to debate whether the bombing was necessary and if it was the best way to end the war.

- **Explore**

Divide students into two groups; one is pro bombing and one is con. Next, tell students that they are to research and gather information for their stand. After completing their research, each side is to write an opening argument and be prepared to ask opponents questions, and to give a rebuttal at the end of debate.

- **Evaluate**

Three point rubric:

3 points: Students completed their research carefully and thoroughly, actively participated in the debate, and actively engaged in discussion.

2 points: Students completed their research, participated somewhat in debate, and actively engaged in discussion.

1 point: Students did not complete their research, participated minimally in the debate, and did not engage in discussion.

- **Closure**

Following the debate, discuss with students their thoughts about the dropping of the atomic bomb. Was dropping the bomb the best solution at the time? Ask students if people knew then what we know now about the effects of the bomb, would they still use it to end the war? Do students believe that there are times when the ends justify the means? Conclude by telling students that these are important questions they will have to consider as they assume leadership roles as adults.