

LESSON PLAN: Atomic Bomb Discussion
(Cooperative Learning - Academic Controversy Model)

Author: Morgan Wintsch

Date Created: March 2012

Subject(s): World History, US History

Topic or Unit of Study: World War II, Japan

Grade Level: 9

Materials: Graphic organizer

Summary (and Rationale): By using the Academic Controversy Model, students will examine and discuss varying opinions regarding the US dropping of the atomic bombs in Japan in 1945, in order to better understand the various aspects of the situation.

Discussion Summary (Academic Controversy Model):

- Students prepare their positions
- Students present and advocate their positions
- Open discussion and rebuttals
- Reverse positions
- Synthesize and integrate the best evidence into a joint position
- Present group synthesis
- Group processing of the controversy and participation of members

I. Focus and Review (Establish Prior Knowledge): [10 minutes]

Review that the United States dropped the first atomic bomb (named “Little Boy”) on Hiroshima, Japan on 6 August 1945. The atomic bomb instantly killed more than 70,000 people. Many more suffered long-term sickness and disability. Three days later, the United States dropped a second, larger bomb (named “Fat Man”) on Nagasaki, which killed approximately 40,000 civilians. Japan surrendered to the Allies on 14 August 1945.

II. Statement of Instructional Objective(s) and Assessments:

Objectives	Assessments
When given a topic for discussion, the students will discuss their original positions, as well as the opposing positions with the class, in order to form a better grasp of the dropping of the atomic bombs. Students will complete the graphic organizer with at least five reasons for each (for and against) position.	During the class discussion, students will complete the graphic organizer supplied by the teacher. Students must identify <i>at least</i> five reasons for each for and against position, and the joint position. Rubric: Joint Position = 5 pts. 10+ reasons = 95 pts. 9 reasons = 85 pts. 8 reasons = 75 pts...

State the objective: [>5 minutes]

Assessment: [during class discussion]

III. Teacher Input (Present tasks, information and guidance): [class period]

At the beginning of the class period, the teacher will inform the students about what is on the agenda:

- 1) Give a brief review of the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan (Be sure to highlight the information listed above under 'I. Focus and Review')
- 2) Distribute the graphic organizer and explain its function and rubric
- 3) Guide the class discussion by focusing the class on the Pros and Cons of dropping of the atomic bombs.
- 4) At the conclusion of the class period, collect the graphic organizers for grading.

IV. Guided Practice: The students will work cooperatively to discuss the dropping of the atomic bombs, in order to compose well-rounded opinions of event, as well as formulate a greater understanding of the actions of the US. The teacher will be present to guide the discussion to ensure the students finish the task of completing the graphic organizer.

At the end of the guided practice (class period), the students should have come up with pros and cons similar to the following:

Pros/Justifications:

- The Japanese had demonstrated near-fanatical resistance, only the atomic bomb could persuade Japan's leaders to surrender.
- The dropping of bombs instead of an invasion of Japan prevented further loss of American lives.
- The use of the bombs demonstrated American power to the Soviet Union, during a time when tensions were brewing and the Cold War was beginning.
- The cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki would probably have been destroyed anyway, had the US decided on more typical bomb dropping.
- The horrible effects of atomic weapons have prevented their use to the present.

Cons/Why it was unjust:

- A less devastating attack may have caused the Japanese to surrender.
- The bombs killed millions of innocent Japanese civilians, and caused painful, mutilating and cancerous side affects.
- Japan would probably have surrendered soon, anyway, since more than 60 of its cities had been destroyed by conventional bombing, the home islands were blockaded by the American Navy, and the Soviet Union recently entered the war against Japan.
- The U.S. did not give the civilians adequate time nor warning to evacuate the cities.
- The dropping of the atomic bombs was terrorism: the effort to kill civilians in large numbers so the government will abide by a groups wishes.

STANDARDS:

NCSCOS 9TH Grade World History:

5.03 Analyze the causes and course of World War II and evaluate it as the end of one era and the beginning of another.

8.03 Classify within the broad patterns of history those events that may be viewed as turning points.

Plans for Individual Differences: Determine group or individual tasks by learning profiles: Because students are being graded based on the graphic organizer, shy and introverted students are not forced to verbally participate, however, they must show participation by completing the graphic organizer. Students with writing issues or learning disabilities may write less when giving reasons in the graphic organizers.

References (APA style):

Ellis, E.G & Esler, A. (2007). *World History* (Teacher's Edition). Boston: Pearson Education.

department of public instruction. (2006). Retrieved April 8, 2012, from NC Standard Course of Study website: <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/curriculum/socialstudies/scos/2003-04/058ninthgrade>