

Atomic Bombs Task: Class Debate

Study your document package and take notes of arguments for and against the use of atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945. Be prepared to participate in a class debate on the following question:

Can the use of atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945 be justified?

You must be capable of arguing both points of view!

Additional Reading Questions

Complete the following questions and be prepared to discuss your answers with the class.

Document Package: Source Analysis Questions

1. Assess the reliability of Document 2 as a source of historical evidence about the use of the atomic bomb.
2. Assess the validity of Document 3 as a source of historical evidence about the strength of the Japanese military in the final stages of World War II.
3. Identify some of the historical questions for which Document 6 could be used as evidence.
4. To what extent were Ralph Bard's urgings in Document 4 to give Japan "representations" about the possible use of atomic weapons and of Russia's position reflected in Document 8 (the Potsdam Declaration – the last official warning given to Japan)?
5. How does Document 8 corroborate and contradict Truman's plans as stated in Document 7?
6. How do Documents 10 and 12 contradict Truman's plans as stated in Document 7?
7. To what extent does Document 11 corroborate Document 2?

Statements by President Harry Truman

8. How did Truman justify the use of atomic weapons against Japan?
9. Did his reasoning or evidence change over time?

Documents relating to the *Enola Gay* exhibit at the Smithsonian, 1994

- EG Perspectives: Tibbets
 - "Hiroshima: A Controversy That Refuses To Die"
10. How might the passage of time affect how Hiroshima and Nagasaki are remembered? How might these events be remembered in another 50 years time?

Two Historical Narratives

11. Which narrative do you agree with more? Why?