

# U.S. History Week 4: April 27th-May 1st

## Big Idea: The Atomic Bomb

**Big Questions:** *Was the dropping of the atomic bomb justified? What should be the historical memory of the dropping of the atomic bomb? What is the best way to end global conflict?*



## This week we will learn about:

Causes and effects of the dropping of the atomic bomb

**Background:** For decades, historians have debated the morality and necessity of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, arguably the most watershed moment of the 20th century. The bombings ended the war with the Japanese, and gave way to a new world order: with America asserting itself as a global superpower. On one hand, some argue that it was the only method to get Japan to surrender and thus save hundreds of thousands of American lives in the process. Others argue this was executed more as a warning to the Soviets, with little care for innocent Japanese civilians. This week's lessons help us think about the legacies of this transformative moment, and evaluate for yourself the legacy of the end of World War II. As you make your way through this week's lessons, think about our big questions of the week: ***Was the dropping of the atomic bomb justified? What should be the historical memory of the dropping of the atomic bomb? What is the best way to end global conflict?***

## YOUR TASK THIS WEEK: 2 Parts!

**PART I: Complete the following 3 Assignments.** These lessons are for the whole week and intended to be accessed in this order:

### Lesson 1: Overview reading of the end of World War II

- To build background knowledge, please read this textbook chapter:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-ft2IZUukyYoXt6\\_iLGQt0fsFO1b3smX/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-ft2IZUukyYoXt6_iLGQt0fsFO1b3smX/view?usp=sharing)

### Lesson 2: Document analysis of two historical narratives of the atomic bomb

- **Step 1:** View these images of the dropping of the atomic bomb (**Warning--some of these are very disturbing**)  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1\\_0jH2drCdMDH6av-yQgEkrcA7QtFR2TU/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_0jH2drCdMDH6av-yQgEkrcA7QtFR2TU/view?usp=sharing)
- **Step 2:** Read these documents which describe two **opposing historical narratives** of the event and accompanying sources that reflect each of these historical narratives
  - [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GTd-1dqjd5\\_NdCua780nmqFKt\\_hpP9sc/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GTd-1dqjd5_NdCua780nmqFKt_hpP9sc/view?usp=sharing)

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### Lesson 3: View America the Story of Us, World War II (44 min)

- VIEW HERE: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xwju0q>
- Also available on Amazon Prime

### **PART II: Journal Response!**

**Directions:** In order to SYNTHESIZE our lessons this week, please thoughtfully respond to the following questions. Make sure to include evidence from all three lessons to support your answers. *If you consult with other students, please make sure your answers are your own and in your own words.*

#### **Week 4 Journal Reflection (Submit via Canvas)**

- From the textbook reading:
  - 1) What issues did Truman consider before using the atomic bomb?
  - 2) How is the United Nations organized?
  - 3) Describe the war crimes trials. What do you think about them?
- From the documents of opposing historical narratives:
  - 4) In 1-2 sentences each, explain the two narratives (stories) about Hiroshima presented in this lesson.
  - 5) Which do you agree with more? Why?
  - 6) Of all the images from this lesson, which image do you feel best reflects what you feel should be the historical narrative of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Why?
- From *America the Story of Us* Episode:
  - 7) Describe America's transformation into "an arsenal of democracy." What new and lasting technologies were developed? What did these technologies come to symbolize?
  - 8) Describe the development of the atomic bomb. Why were even the scientists who worked on the program skeptical about its effectiveness?
  - 9) What was the impact of using the atomic bomb on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki?
  - 10) Overall, what were the consequences of World War II for the United States?