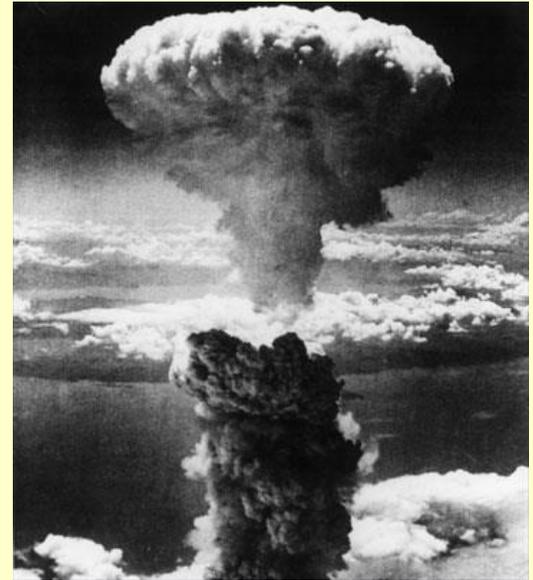


# Should America have dropped the Atomic Bomb?



## Learning outcomes:

1. To describe different viewpoints on the Atomic bomb.
2. To categorise arguments into points for and against the bomb.
3. To judge whether America was justified in dropping the Atomic Bomb.

# Starter

## The facts

- On August 6, 1945, during World War II (1939-45), an American B-29 bomber dropped the world's first atomic bomb over the Japanese city of Hiroshima.
- The explosion wiped out 90 percent of the city and immediately killed 80,000 people.
- Tens of thousands more would later die of radiation exposure.
- Three days later, a second B-29 dropped another A-bomb on Nagasaki, killing an estimated 40,000 people.
- Japan's Emperor Hirohito announced his country's unconditional surrender in World War II in a radio address on August 15.

**Summarise the above points into your exercise books.**

# No surrender for Japan

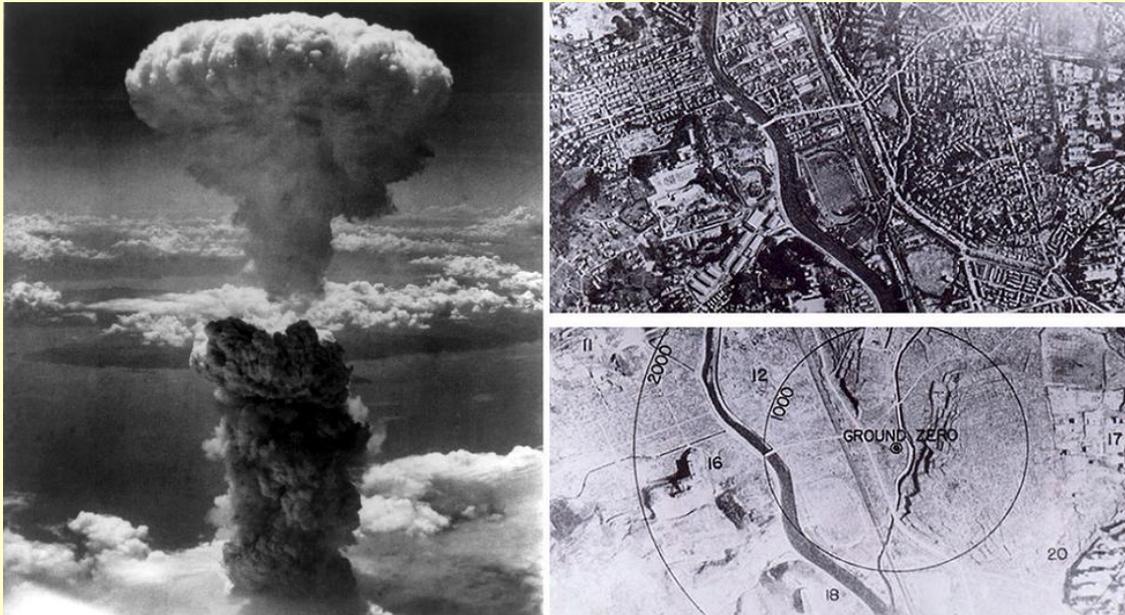
- The Allied powers had already defeated Germany in Europe.
- Japan, however, vowed to fight to the bitter end in the Pacific, despite clear indications (as early as 1944) that they had little chance of winning.
- In fact, between mid-April 1945 (when President Harry Truman took office) and mid-July, Japanese forces inflicted Allied casualties totalling nearly half those suffered in three full years of war in the Pacific, proving that Japan had become even more deadly when faced with defeat.
- In late July, Japan's militarist government rejected the Allied demand for surrender put forth in the Potsdam Declaration, which threatened the Japanese with "prompt and utter destruction" if they refused.

# Days That Shook the World

## TASK

Watch the video as a brief introduction to the dropping of the bomb.

- Did the people of Hiroshima expect it?
- Were the pilots of the plane fully aware?
- What happened upon impact of the bomb?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wxWNAM8Cso>

# Why did Truman decide to drop the bomb?

- General Douglas MacArthur and other top military commanders favoured continuing the conventional bombing of Japan.
- They advised Truman that an invasion from Japan would result in U.S. casualties of up to 1 million.
- In order to avoid such a high casualty rate, Truman decided-over the moral reservations of Secretary of War Henry Stimson, General Dwight Eisenhower and a number of the Manhattan Project scientists-to use the atomic bomb in the hopes of bringing the war to a quick end.
- Proponents of the A-bomb-such as James Byrnes, Truman's secretary of state-believed that its devastating power would not only end the war, but also put the U.S. in a dominant position to determine the course of the post-war world.

Write down in your own words why Truman decided to drop the bomb, even though some advisors told him not to.

# "Little Boy" and "Fat Man"

- Hiroshima, a manufacturing centre of some 350,000 people located about 500 miles from Tokyo, was selected as the first target.
- After arriving at the U.S. base on the Pacific island of Tinian, the bomb was loaded aboard a modified B-29 bomber.
- The plane dropped the bomb-known as "Little Boy"-by parachute at 8:15 in the morning, and it exploded 2,000 feet above Hiroshima in a blast equal to 12-15,000 tons of TNT, destroying five square miles of the city.
- Hiroshima's devastation failed to elicit immediate Japanese surrender, however, and on August 9 Major Charles Sweeney flew another B-29 bomber, from Tinian.
- Thick clouds over the primary target, the city of Kokura, drove Sweeney to a secondary target, Nagasaki, where the plutonium bomb "Fat Man" was dropped at 11:02 that morning.
- More powerful than the one used at Hiroshima, the bomb weighed nearly 10,000 pounds and was built to produce a 22-kiloton blast.
- The topography of Nagasaki, which was nestled in narrow valleys between mountains, reduced the bomb's effect, limiting the destruction to 2.6 square miles.

# Japan surrender

- At noon on August 15, 1945 (Japanese time), Emperor Hirohito announced his country's surrender in a radio broadcast.
- The news spread quickly, and "Victory in Japan" or "V-J Day" celebrations broke out across the United States and other Allied nations.
- The formal surrender agreement was signed on September 2, aboard the U.S. battleship Missouri, anchored in Tokyo Bay.



**What can you learn about the affect the Nuclear Bomb had on Hiroshima from the photograph?**



The charred remains of a corpse after the Nagasaki bomb.



The outline of a human and a ladder burnt onto a wooden building after the Hiroshima bomb.



Clothing that has been burnt onto the skin of a survivor of the atomic bomb.

# Source Analysis

You have looked at some of the reasons why Truman dropped the bomb and have looked at the consequences, you are now going to do that in more detail.

- Read through the sources and complete the table.

<u>Facts offered about the Atomic Bomb</u>	<u>Reliability -Time, Author, Purpose, Audience</u>	<u>Support/ not support the dropping of the bomb</u>

Should America have dropped the bomb?

# Plenary

**Should America have dropped the Atomic Bomb?**

Write a concluding paragraph, what do you believe? Use some of the sources to support your view.

