

The Atomic Bomb

Background:

On April 12, 1945, President Franklin Roosevelt died in office. Since Harry S. Truman was vice-president, he became president when Roosevelt died. At that time, the United States was fighting World War II against Germany and Japan. In May, Germany surrendered but Japan did not. Harry needed to figure out how to get Japan to surrender. The United States had a secret weapon called the atomic bomb, a bomb that causes a very large, devastating nuclear explosion. Harry commanded the American military to use the atomic bomb, hoping to force Japan to surrender. On August 6, 1945, Americans dropped the atomic bomb, "Little Boy," on the city of Hiroshima. On August 9, 1945, Americans dropped a second atomic bomb, "Fat Man," on the city of Nagasaki. Eight days later, Japan announced their plans to surrender.

Standard:

5.S.7.B.a Use visual tools to interpret, draw conclusions, make predictions, and communicate information and ideas. (e.g. maps, graphs, statistical data, timelines, cartoons, charts and diagrams).

5.TS.7.B.b Create products such as maps, graphs, timelines, charts, models, diagrams, etc. to communicate information and understanding on social studies' topics.

Materials Needed:

Copies of artifact photographs
Japan vs. American perspective Venn diagram
Pencil

Vocabulary:

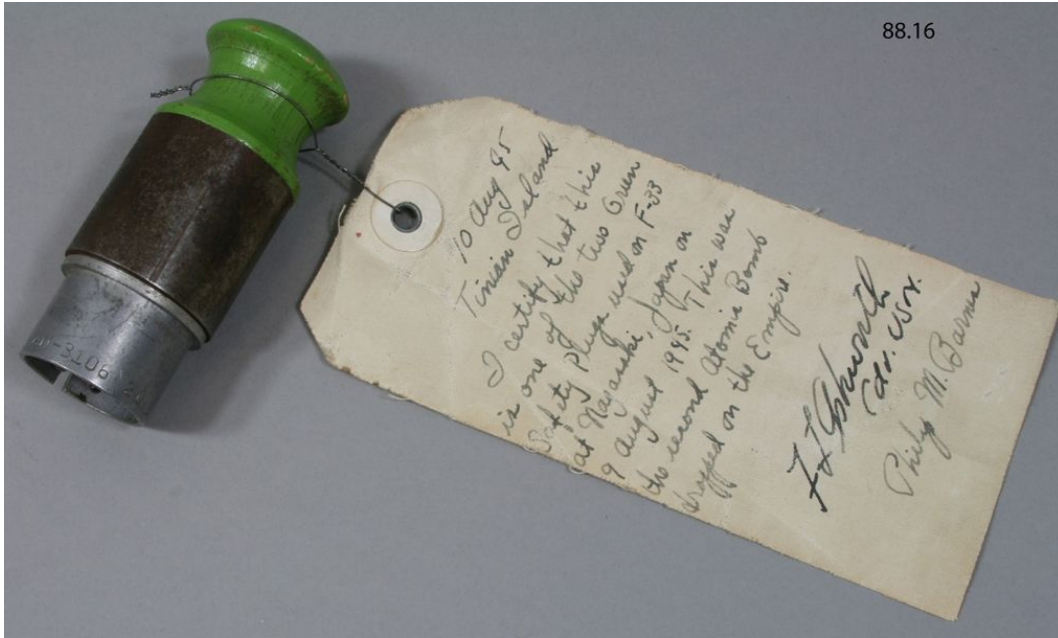
World War II- a global war that started in Europe in September 1939 and lasted until September 1945

Atomic Bomb- a bomb that uses nuclear reactions to cause a massive, deadly explosion with poisonous effects

Procedure:

1. Discuss background information with the class
2. Define *World War II* and *Atomic Bomb*
3. Allow students to observe artifact photographs and discuss
4. Ask students: What do these objects tell us about how Japanese people experienced the atomic bomb? How did it affect them? What did the atomic bomb mean to Americans? To the rest of the world? Could Americans and Japanese have had similar feelings about the bomb?
5. Instruct students to fill out their responses in the diagram

Assessment: Venn Diagram worksheet

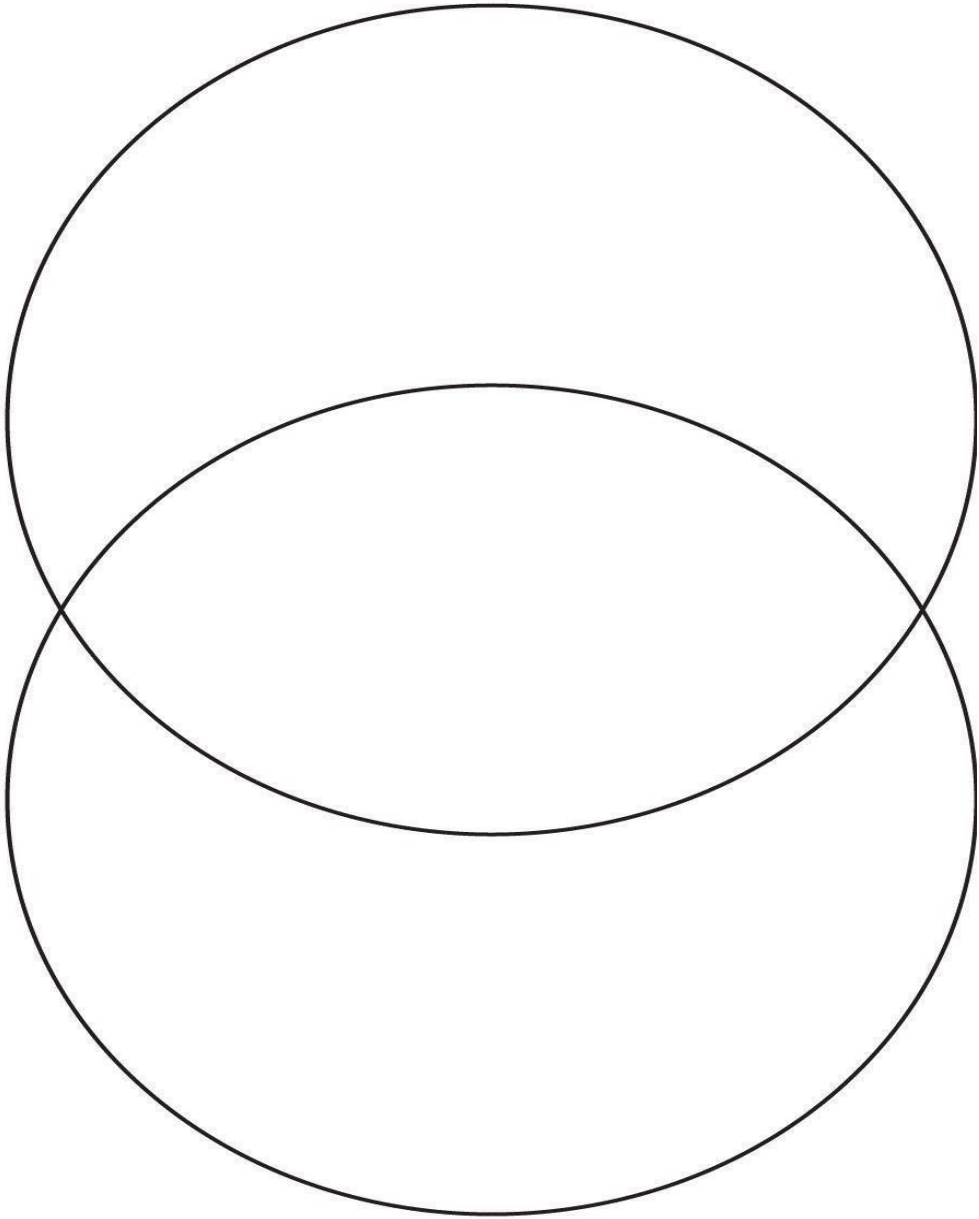


Bomb Fuse Safety Plug from "Fat Man." Airmen removed this green plug and replaced it with a red plug to activate the atomic bomb before dropping it.



Sadako Sasaki was just two years old when Americans dropped an atomic bomb a mile from her home in Hiroshima, Japan. Although she survived the explosion, exposure to the bomb's radiation made her very sick. At twelve years old, doctors hospitalized her and predicted she would die within a year. Japanese tradition told that if one folded one thousand origami cranes, one's wish would come true. Above is just one of over a thousand origami cranes Sadako folded while in the hospital due to radiation sickness. She died in 1955.

Instructions: Use the Venn diagram below to compare and contrast the perspectives of Japanese and American people during and after the atomic bomb.



ANSWER KEY: The Atomic Bomb

Japanese:

The atomic bomb devastated Japan. An estimated 150,000 died due to the Hiroshima bomb and 75,000 due to the Nagasaki bomb. However, these estimates are conservative; the actual number casualties will never be fully known.

Even though some people survived the explosion, the bombs' nuclear radiation continued to cause suffering in the following years.

Not all Japanese people were enemies of America. Thousands of civilians like Sadoko Sasaki died as well.

The atomic bombs seemed extremely brutal and severe.

Americans:

The atomic bomb allowed the United States to win the war against Japan.

The only Americans to physically witness the explosions were the airmen on the planes that dropped them.

The atomic bombs saved a lot of lives by ending the war sooner.

The atomic bombs made the United States seem very powerful.

Both:

American and Japanese people both understood the destruction the bomb could cause.

American and Japanese people both mourned the lives lost and accepted the tragedy resulting from the use of the bombs.

Politicians today from all over the world continue to gather each year in Japan to remember the lives lost.

People from all over the world understood that the nuclear bomb changed warfare forever.