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Terminating the War between the Allies and Japan

Purpose: To examine the arms race that took place in the period leading up to and during World War II that produced the atomic bomb and to analyze differing perspectives on terminating the war between the Allies and Japan. This lesson will be followed by group research and a role playing simulation in which students take and defend a position on whether the United States should have dropped the atom bombs on Japan in August of 1945.

Grade Level and Subject: 9th grade World Studies, a required course enrolling students with a broad range of educational needs

Length of Lesson: 3 50 minute class periods

Essential Questions: Which country began the development of the atomic bomb?

What was Einstein's overall reaction to human conflict? How did his views change once he was aware that Germany was developing the atom bomb?

How did the United States become engaged in the Manhattan Project that produced the atomic weapons used in 1945?

Why did the Allies, as represented by Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt and supported by the English and American populace, insist on unconditional surrender by Japan?

What were Japanese naval leaders willing to do to end the war?

What did the Japanese army leaders and militarists suggest was the proper course of action in mid-1945?

What did the Soviets expect to gain from participating in an invasion of Japan?

What role did the Japanese emperor play in the leadership of his country when it became obvious that the Japanese cause was lost?

What decision did Harry Truman face regarding the ending of the war when he assumed the presidency in 1945

Materials:

Text

McDougal Littlell, *Modern World History: Patterns of Interaction*, McDougall Littel Inc.. (2003) pg. 459-461 and 464-465.

Kenneth B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan*, D. C. Heath and Company. (1996) pg. 208-214.

Video

Arming for War: Modern and Medieval Weapons., *Patterns of Interaction: Videocassette Four* (see McDougal citation above)
Ten Days That Unexpectedly Changed America: Einstein's Letter, DVD, The History Channel.

Primary Source

Albert Einstein's Letter to President Franklin Roosevelt, August 2, 1939
(http://www.geocities.com/einstein_library/letters.htm)

Skillbuilders

Following Chronological Order: Chapter 16 Section 4 (in teacher materials for McDougal Littell text - see citation above)

Teacher prepared perspective chart

Activities:

Day 1

Individual

Reading : Students read text and Pyle handout to prepare for topic.

Large Group

Viewing and Discussion : Students watch *Arming for War* and class discusses how the creation of new weapons leads to pressure for their use in combat situations.

Individual Assignment/Assessment

Chapter 16 Section Four Skillbuilder Practice: Following Chronological Order
Students read and fill in timeline to demonstrate understanding of events leading to the surrender of Japan.

Day 2

Follow-Up

Teacher cruises class to see that they have correctly completed timeline assignment.

Large Group

1. Teacher places perspective chart on overhead and distributes individual copy to students.
2. Class reads aloud excerpts from Einstein's first letter to FDR dated August 2, 1939.

Students state what Einstein's perspective on the development of nuclear weapons in Germany meant the United States must do to defend America.

3. Students fill in chart section with their initial impressions of Einstein's perspective on nuclear weapons.
4. Class begins viewing Einstein's Letter DVD.

Day 3

Large Group

1. Class finishes viewing DVD. Students state how Einstein's perspectives on the development and use of nuclear weapons changed from 1939 - 1945 and enter revised statement about Einstein's perspective on the topic on the chart.
2. Using the text and Pyle handout, teacher engages students in discussion and completion of the chart about differing perspectives of war tactics and the termination of the war with Japan.

Individual Follow Up Assessment

Students will complete an OGT-style practice question:

American political advisors to President Truman, American military leaders, the Soviets, American scientists, the Japanese military, Japanese civilians, and the Japanese emperor all held differing views of the proper course of events as the conflict with Japan was nearing a close in 1945. Ultimately Harry Truman, the American Commander in Chief, made the final decision about how to end the war. Identify any four of individuals/groups listed above and write an effective analysis of his/their perspective of the ending of the war with Japan.

Rubric:

- 1 point: Student clearly identifies and analyzes perspective of one individual/group.
- 2 points: Student clearly identifies and analyzes perspective of two individuals/groups.
- 3 points: Student clearly identifies and analyzes perspective of three individuals/groups.
- 4 points: Student clearly identifies and analyzes perspective of four individuals/groups.

Standards:

History D: Connect developments related to World War I with the onset of World War II

9. Assess the global impact of post-World War I economic, social and political turmoil including:

rise of militarist and totalitarian states in Europe and Asia

10. Analyze the causes of World War II including:

Axis expansion

the role of the allies

History E: Analyze connections between World War II, the Cold War and contemporary conflicts

11. analyze the consequences of World War II including atomic weapons
civilian and military losses

Sample Perspective Chart

Differing Perspectives on Military Tactics and Ending the Conflict between the Allies and Japan

Directions: Using information from the video, DVD, the text, primary sources, and handouts complete the chart examining differing perspectives about ending the war between the Allies and Japan.

Individual/Group	Perspective
1. American political advisors	
2. American military leaders	
3. Soviets	
4. American scientists	
5. Japanese military	
6. Japanese Emperor	
7. Japanese civilians	