

## Analytical task: Hiroshima

The 6<sup>th</sup> August 2005 will see the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in the southern part of Japan.

This analytical task for secondary schools will look into the media documentation of this tragic event – in a more general context as well as in relationship to this year’s anniversary.

### Justification and national perspectives

The Hiroshima bombing offers us again a wealth of different perspectives of how an event can be mediated and interpreted. We are interested in the different justifications we have encountered in different forms of media documentation.

"All told, we cannot escape the conclusion that the atomic bombs saved Japanese lives as well as American. None of which lessens the fact that the atomic bomb was a fearsome weapon and that humanity would no doubt be considerably happier had it never been invented." (Goldstein)

Does the acceleration of the end of the Second World War justify the atomic bombing? There is still much material praising the scientific efforts which developed the first atomic bombs, the advanced flight technology and the professional crew who managed to drop the bomb on its target with such precision. At the same time there is also a consensus that no kind of atomic bomb should ever have been developed.

Are the different perspectives of the documentation and justifications of the bombing linked to national attitudes? The coverage of this year’s anniversary may reveal tendencies in individual countries, either confirming or opposing our presuppositions.

### **Web activity**

The web activity will ideally take place on 6<sup>th</sup> August and concentrate on news websites (ideally from different countries). If you plan to do the exercise later you can either save the pages on your harddisc on the day or include the date of 6<sup>th</sup> August in your web search.

We would be happy to receive your answers.

### **Explore further sources**

The questions from the template can be applied to other media sources as well. You will find a list of further suggestions on the final page of this task.

## Web Activity “Hiroshima”

### Name of source

Name of the internet source?		
Web address of the source?		
Who is behind the source? (a newspaper, a television station, ...)		

### Headline of article

What is the headline of the article?		
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### Content of article

What is the article about?		
What is the main point?		

### Justification of the bombing

Is there a justification given why the bomb has been dropped? If yes, what?		
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### National perspective

Which countries are mentioned in the article?		
How are the countries portrayed?		
What perspective, if any, are you aware of in your own country?		



## Additional options for going further

Explore the representation of the Hiroshima bombing in different source materials ...

### .. on the internet

- What information can you find when you search for 'Hiroshima'?
- What images can you find with search using e.g. google image?

### .. in newspapers (on 6<sup>th</sup> August)

- In which section of the newspaper does the Hiroshima article appear?
- How long is the article? What images are shown?

### .. in photographic books

- What images are shown?
- Which people are presented? What nationality are they?
- *Example: Donald M. Goldstein et al, 1995: Rain of Ruin: Photographic illustration of the planning and execution of the Hiroshima bombing.*

### .. in biographical books

- What kind of stories are based around the bombing? How do personal accounts differ from a more general documentation?
- *Example: John Hersey, 1946: Hiroshima: personal accounts of how Hiroshima people experienced the bombing*

### .. in other printed material

- What information is there for example in magazines, school history books, or encyclopaedias?

### .. in films

- In which country was the film produced? What perspective was chosen?
- How are Japanese and American people portrayed? Who do you identify with?
- How is the process of justification laid out in the film?
- *Example: Hiroshima: docu-drama, 2002 produced by Hallmark Entertainment*

