

TEACHERS' MANUAL

ATOMIC BOMBINGS: E-LEARNING COURSES



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INTRODUCTION

This manual provides practical guidance on how to integrate the two **Future Witness** e-learning courses on the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki into classroom teaching.

The courses are designed for students aged 14–18 and explore the historical events and their consequences. They offer an opportunity to introduce students to one of the most significant and consequential events of the Second World War while encouraging historical inquiry, critical thinking and reflection.

The courses have distinct but complementary areas of focus:

- **Course 1: The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki** introduces students to the historical context and the events of August 1945.
- **Course 2: The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Aftermath and Legacy** explores the consequences of both bombings, including their effects on people and communities and their wider historical significance.

The courses are designed to be used in a flipped classroom. Students engage with the e-learning content before the lesson, allowing teachers to use classroom time for discussion, collaborative activities, source analysis and reflection.

The courses can be used together as a short learning unit or individually, depending on the curriculum and the time available.

THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM APPROACH

In a flipped classroom, students engage with new content before the lesson, usually through digital-learning materials. Classroom time is then used for activities that require discussion, collaboration, analysis and the application of knowledge.

Before the lesson

Students complete the assigned e-learning course independently. They engage with the content at their own pace and prepare for the classroom activities.

During the lesson

The teacher builds on the knowledge students have acquired. Instead of repeating the entire course, the lesson focuses on questions, historical sources, discussion, and critical thinking.

After the lesson

Students consolidate their learning through a short reflection, written assignment, research task, or creative activity.

The key principle is simple: use the e-learning courses to introduce and explore the topic, and use class time to deepen understanding.

SUGGESTED LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing the courses and related classroom activities, students should be able to:

- Describe the historical circumstances surrounding the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.
- Identify important consequences of the bombings for individuals, communities and the wider world.
- Recognize that historical events can be interpreted from different perspectives.
- Examine historical claims and evidence critically.
- Consider how the bombings affected survivors, communities and subsequent generations.
- Reflect critically on the historical significance of the bombings and their continuing relevance.
- Discuss the ethical, humanitarian and political questions raised by the use of nuclear weapons.

Teachers can adapt these objectives to the students' age, existing knowledge and curriculum requirements.

COURSE 1

The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Before the lesson

Ask students to complete the e-learning course before the related classroom session.

You may ask students to note down responses to any of the *Over to You: Learning Journal* questions in the course or:

- One question they still have.
- One aspect of the bombings they would like to understand better.

These notes provide a useful starting point for classroom discussion.

During the lesson

Begin with a short recap. Invite students to share what they learned and identify questions that emerged during the course.

Possible classroom activities include:

Historical timeline: Students work in small groups to place key events in chronological order, connecting the bombings to the final stages of the Second World War.

Experiences of survivors: Students discuss the video testimony of the Hibakusha and others which is included in the courses. Encourage them to consider whose experiences are represented and what each source can and cannot tell us.

COURSE 1

The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

During the lesson (continued)

Consequences and memory: Students investigate the effects of each bombing on the population, infrastructure and subsequent development of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, including how the event is remembered today.

Reflection questions: Students discuss questions posed in the *Over to You: Learning Journal* sections.

After the lesson

Ask students to write a short reflection on an *Over to You: Learning Journal* question or some other topic.

Alternatively, students can prepare one question to investigate further in the second course.

COURSE 2

The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Aftermath and Legacy

Before the lesson

Ask students to complete the second e-learning course before the next classroom session.

Encourage students to pay attention to the consequences for individuals and communities, the experiences of survivors and the wider significance of the events in the years that followed.

You may ask students to note down responses to any of the *Over to You: Learning Journal* questions in the course or:

- One consequence of the bombings that they found particularly significant.
- One question they still have about the aftermath or long-term effects of the bombings.

Students should be encouraged to consider how the consequences have developed over time.

During the lesson

Start by inviting students to share their observations. Use their responses to explore the different dimensions of the aftermath.

COURSE 2

The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Aftermath and Legacy

During the lesson (continued)

Choose from the following activities.

Immediate and long-term consequences

Ask students to work in small groups to categorize the consequences of the bombings. Depending on the content of the course and the available sources, these may include:

- Human consequences, including deaths, injuries and the experiences of survivors.
- Health consequences, including the effects of radiation exposure.
- Social consequences, including displacement, family loss and the challenges of rebuilding communities.
- Physical and environmental consequences, including destruction and reconstruction.
- Historical and political consequences, including the development of public memory and the wider significance of nuclear weapons.

Ask each group to select one category and explain why the related consequences matter for understanding the aftermath.

Survivors' experiences and historical memory

Provide students with further age-appropriate testimonies, photographs or other historical sources documenting the experiences of survivors.

COURSE 2

The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Aftermath and Legacy

During the lesson (continued)

Ask them to consider what these sources reveal about the aftermath and why first-hand accounts are important for understanding history. Some recommended sources:

- [The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.](#)
- [The Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum.](#)

Encourage students to treat personal testimonies with respect and to recognize that individual experiences cannot represent every survivor's experience.

From historical event to global significance

Ask students to explore how the aftermath of the bombings influenced public awareness of nuclear weapons and debates about war, peace and disarmament. Students can discuss how the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki continue to shape remembrance, education and international discussions about nuclear weapons.

After the lesson

Ask students to write a short reflection on an *Over to You: Learning Journal* question or some other topic.

Encourage students to draw on specific information from the e-learning course, classroom activities, and when appropriate, other sources.

COMBINING BOTH COURSES INTO ONE LEARNING SEQUENCE

Stage	Student activity	Sample time
Prep 1	Complete e-learning Course 1	30 minutes
Lesson 1	Recap, historical context and discussion	45 minutes
Prep 2	Complete e-learning Course 2	30 minutes
Lesson 2	Analyze consequences, and reflect	45 minutes

These timings are suggestions and can be adapted to the class and curriculum.

The sequence moves from understanding the historical event to exploring its consequences. This helps students build a foundation of historical knowledge before considering the human and wider significance of the bombings.

If students cannot access the courses at home, teachers can arrange for them to complete the e-learning during a supervised study period or as part of a lesson.

TEACHING SENSITIVE HISTORICAL CONTENT

The atomic bombings caused mass civilian casualties, severe injuries, widespread destruction and long-term suffering. Some students may find accounts of these events distressing, particularly when learning about survivors' experiences and the effects of radiation exposure.

Teachers should approach the subject sensitively and provide a respectful learning environment.

Consider the following recommendations:

- **Prepare students:** Explain the topic and provide an appropriate content warning before using distressing materials.
- **Respect survivors:** Present personal accounts in their historical context and avoid using suffering merely for dramatic effect.
- **Encourage critical inquiry:** Help students distinguish between established historical facts, interpretations and ethical judgements.
- **Avoid oversimplification:** Recognize the complexity of the historical context while giving appropriate attention to the consequences for civilians.
- **Allow different responses:** Students should be able to express questions, uncertainty and emotional reactions safely.
- **Avoid forced debate:** Students should not be required to defend the killing of civilians or adopt a particular moral position.

A balanced historical approach does not mean treating every claim as equally credible. Students should be encouraged to assess interpretations according to the quality of the available evidence.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR TEACHERS

- Assign each course early enough for students to complete it before the lesson.
- Explain how the course connects to the classroom activities.
- Use students' questions to guide discussion instead of repeating all the e-learning content.
- Allow sufficient time for reflection when discussing survivors' experiences and long-term consequences.
- Have an alternative plan for students who cannot complete the courses at home.
- Connect the aftermath to broader themes, such as civilian experiences of war, historical memory, reconstruction, peace and contemporary nuclear disarmament.

FURTHER RESOURCES

Teachers may wish to supplement the courses with materials from established historical and educational institutions, such as:

- [The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs](#)
- [The International Committee of the Red Cross](#)

When selecting additional resources, consider their historical accuracy, suitability for the students' age group, accessibility and treatment of different perspectives.

DIFFERENTIATION AND INCLUSION

Students will have different levels of prior knowledge, reading ability and confidence in discussing complex historical topics.

Teachers can support different learning needs by:

- Sharing guiding questions before students begin each course.
- Offering sentence starters for discussions and written reflections.
- Providing written instructions and alternative ways to record learning.
- Organizing pair or small-group activities for students who benefit from collaborative work.
- Offering extension tasks on survivor testimony, historical memory or the development of nuclear weapons after 1945.

Where possible, ensure that students have access to appropriate devices and accessibility features.

CONCLUSION

Used in a flipped classroom, these two courses allow students to engage with the historical content independently and then use classroom time to examine sources, compare experiences, discuss consequences and reflect critically.

By moving from the historical event to its immediate and long-term effects, teachers can help students develop a deeper understanding of the human impact of the bombings and their continuing historical significance. The aim is to equip students with the knowledge and critical-thinking skills to engage thoughtfully with this complex chapter of modern history and to consider its relevance to questions of war, peace and humanity today.