

Extended Response (ER) Sample Items Grades 3 – 5
Social Studies

In a speech on August 9, 1945, President Truman said:

“The world will note that the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, a military base. That was because we wished in this first attack to avoid, insofar as possible, the killing of civilians. But that attack is only a warning of things to come. If Japan does not surrender, bombs will have to be dropped on her war industries and, unfortunately, thousands of civilian lives will be lost. I urge Japanese civilians to leave industrial cities immediately, and save themselves from destruction.”

Part A

What is President Truman trying to tell Japan in this speech?

Part B

Why did President Truman decide to drop the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima instead of sending American soldiers to invade Japan?

Part C

Why did President Truman think it was necessary to drop a second bomb on Nagasaki three days after the first bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima?

Part D

Since the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there has been a debate about whether or not the bombings were necessary.

If you had been President Truman, would you have chosen to drop the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Why or why not?

Justify your answer with details.

Exemplar

Part A

President Truman was trying to tell Japan that if it did not surrender, he would drop more bombs that would destroy industries and kill citizens.



AND

Part B

President Truman wanted to end the war as quickly as possible and he knew that many American soldiers would have died in an invasion of Japan.

AND

Part C

Japan did not surrender immediately after the first bomb was dropped.

AND

Part D

Sample answers could include:

- If I were President Truman, I would have dropped the bombs. Dropping the bombs would help encourage Japan to surrender and bring an end to the war between Japan and America. The bombings could help end the war sooner than was expected and end the need for the United States to invade Japan. I would have made the decision to drop the bombs because I needed to help bring the war to an end.
- If I were President Truman, I would not have dropped the bombs. The bombs could kill many people including innocent women and children. Thousands of others could be injured. I would not have been able to make the decision to drop the atomic bombs when I did not know what the outcome would be.

NOTE: Count as correct answers that take a position and support their answer with details.

Rubric				
0	1	2	3	4
<i>Response demonstrates limited to no understanding of the standard.</i>	<i>Response demonstrates a limited understanding of the standard.</i>	<i>Response demonstrates partial understanding of the standard.</i>	<i>Response demonstrates sufficient understanding of the standard.</i>	<i>Response demonstrates a complete understanding of the standard.</i>
Student earns 0 points for not	Student earns 1 point for 1 part	Student earns 2 points for 2	Student earns 3 points for 3	Student earns 4 points for the



meeting any of the requirements for score point 1.	<p>correct and complete.</p> <p><i>OR</i></p> <p>Student earns 1 point for 2 parts partially correct and partially complete.</p>	<p>parts correct and complete.</p> <p><i>OR</i></p> <p>Student earns 2 points for 1 part correct and complete AND 2 parts partially correct and partially complete.</p> <p><i>OR</i></p> <p>Student earns 2 points for 4 parts partially correct and partially complete.</p>	<p>parts correct and complete.</p> <p><i>OR</i></p> <p>Student earns 3 points for 2 parts correct and complete AND 2 parts partially correct and partially complete.</p>	<p>student identifying all parts completely and correctly.</p>
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