

## Interpreting Documents and Synthesis ●●● *Hiroshima & Nagasaki... Using Atomic Weapons*

**From the 2015 Revised Framework:**

### **INTERPRET DOCUMENTS...**

Analyze a historian's argument, explain how the argument has been supported through the analysis of relevant historical evidence, and evaluate the argument's effectiveness.

Analyze diverse historical interpretations.

### **SYNTHESIZE...**

Make connections between different course themes and/or approaches to history (such as political, economic, social, cultural, or intellectual) for a given historical issue.

**Directions:** Read the two excerpts, complete your HIPP analysis, and answer the Short Answer Questions that follow. Write in complete sentences, ensure your answers stand alone, and ensure your answers include at least one piece of historical evidence that cannot be found in the documents.

The justification for these atrocities was that this would end the war quickly, making unnecessary an invasion of Japan. Such an invasion would cost a huge number of lives, the government said—a million, according to Secretary of State Byrnes; half a million, Truman claimed was the figure given him by General George Marshall. (When the papers of the Manhattan Project—the project to build the atom bomb—were released years later, they showed that Marshall urged a warning to the Japanese about the bomb, so people could be removed and only military targets hit.) These estimates of invasion losses were not realistic, and seem to have been pulled out of the air to justify bombings which, as their effects became known, horrified more and more people. Japan, by August 1945, was in desperate shape and ready to surrender. New York Times military analyst Hanson Baldwin wrote, shortly after the war.

Source: “*A People’s History of the United States*, Howard Zinn, 1980

In retrospect, three central reasons justified the dropping of the atomic bombs. First, and most important, the invasion of Japan would cost more American lives—up to a million, perhaps far more. The interests of the United States demanded that the government do everything in its power to see that not one more American soldier or sailor died than was absolutely necessary, and the atomic bombs ensured that result. Second, Japan would not surrender, nor did its leaders give any indication whatsoever that they would surrender short of annihilation. One can engage in hypothetical discussions about possible intentions, but public statements such as the fight-to-the bitter-end comment and the summoning of Japan’s top atomic scientist after the Hiroshima bomb was dropped demonstrate rather conclusively that the empire planned to fight on. Third, the depredations of the Japanese equaled those of the Nazis. The Allies, therefore, were justified in nothing less than unconditional surrender and a complete dismantling of the samurai Bushido as a requirement for peace.”

Source: “*A Patriot’s History of the United States*, Larry Schweikart and Michael Allen, 2007

- Briefly explain how ONE of the following differs between the two documents: Theme, Approach to History, Point of View.
- Briefly explain how ONE event from the WWII era supports Zinn’s point of view.
- Briefly explain how ONE event from the WWII era supports Schweikart and Allen’s point of view.