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READING FOR THE STATE ASSESSMENT

On the end of year assessment for English Language Arts, you will be asked to read several different passages and answer questions based on those passages. The following units will review some of types of texts you will be asked to read and some of the types of questions you will be asked to answer.

Informational Texts



*Download the attached pdf to take notes during the lesson.

Nonfiction writing is factual writing about real people, places, events, ideas, and things.

Informational text is a type of nonfiction writing, written with the purpose of informing the reader about a specific topic. It is usually found in newspaper articles, magazines, and science or history books.

They are often written using special text features that allow the reader to easily find key information and understand the main topic. The author will do this by providing headers over certain sections, by placing important vocabulary in bold type, and by using visual representations with captions.

In an informational text, the author will develop a central idea. The **central idea** is the most important point or points that the author wants to convey about a topic. The author develops the central idea with supporting details such as facts, reasons, examples, statistics, and quotations.

For more on finding the Central (main) Idea of a passage, click on the link below.



Before looking at any of the questions, associated with the text, it is important to read the passage.

Name: _____ Class: _____

The Decision to Drop the Bomb

By USHistory.org

Text Introduction

On August 6 and 9, 1945, the United States used nuclear weapons against two Japanese cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. While the bombings effectively ended World War II, the costs were great and people continue to debate whether or not the bombings were necessary. As you read, take notes on the long-lasting effects of the United States' decision to drop the bombs.

[1] America had the bomb. Now what?

When Harry Truman learned of the success of the Manhattan Project,¹ he knew he was faced with a decision of unprecedented² gravity. The capacity to end the war with Japan was in his hands, but it would involve unleashing the most terrible weapon ever known.

American soldiers and civilians were weary from four years of war, yet the Japanese military was refusing to give up their fight. American forces occupied Okinawa and Iwo Jima and were intensely fire bombing Japanese cities. But Japan had an army of 2 million strong stationed in the home islands guarding against invasion.

For Truman, the choice whether or not to use the atomic bomb was the most difficult decision of his life.



"Boeing B-29A-45-BN Superfortress 44-61784 6 RG 24 BS - Incendiary Journey" by United States Army Air Force is in the public domain.

Sometimes a passage will include a text introduction. The **text introduction** is a short piece of text that provides the reader with background information needed to understand the passage. It is essential to read the text introduction because it will provide context for the rest of the passage- the reader will not be able to understand the passage fully without reading it.

Name: _____ Class: _____

The Decision to Drop the Bomb

By USHistory.org

On August 6 and 9, 1945, the United States used nuclear weapons against two Japanese cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. While the bombings effectively ended World War II, the costs were great and people continue to debate whether or not the bombings were necessary. As you read, take notes on the long-lasting effects of the United States' decision to drop the bombs.

[1] America had the bomb. Now what?

Reference Mark

When Harry Truman learned of the success of the Manhattan Project,¹ he knew he was faced with a decision of unprecedented² gravity. The capacity to end the war with Japan was in his hands, but it would involve unleashing the most terrible weapon ever known.



Most of the passages will include reference marks with corresponding footnotes. A **reference mark** tells the reader that there is a footnote at the bottom of the page. When the reader sees a reference mark, he or she should find the corresponding footnote. The reference mark always comes AFTER the word or phrase it is referencing. For example, in the above passage the reference mark “1” proceeds “Manhattan Project.” The reader should look for the footnote at the bottom of the page with the number “1” before it.

Two days later, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan. On August 9, a second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, where 80,000 Japanese people perished.⁵

Footnotes

1. the code name for the United States' efforts to develop atomic bombs during World War II
2. **Unprecedented** (*adjective*): never done or known before
3. a surrender in which no guarantees are given to the surrendering party
4. exposed to the poisonous chemicals released by the bomb
5. **Perish** (*verb*): to die

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A **footnote** is a note at the bottom of a page in a text which provides more detailed information about something that is mentioned on that page. Just like the text introduction, it is essential to read the footnotes because they will provide context for the passage- the reader will not be able to understand the passage fully without reading them.

Let look at the example from above. In the above passage the reference mark “1” proceeds “Manhattan Project.” The reader should look for the footnote at the bottom of the page with the number “1” before it. This footnote reads “The code name for the United States’ efforts to develop atomic bombs during World War II (USHistory.org 1).” Without reading the

footnote, the reader would not understand what the Manhattan Project was and how it related to the rest of the passage.

Now that you understand how to approach a passage, read the following Informational Article: [The Decision to Drop the Bomb](#)

Once you have read the passage (along with the introduction and footnotes) you can begin to answer the corresponding questions.

REMEMBER: The **central idea** is the most important point or points that the author wants to convey about a topic. The author develops the central idea with supporting details such as facts, reasons, examples, statistics, and quotations.

A **synonym** is a word or phrase that means exactly or nearly the same as another word or phrase. **Context clues** are hints that an author gives to help define a difficult or unusual word. The clue may appear within the same sentence as the word to which it refers, or it may appear somewhere else in the passage.

For more on using Context Clues, click on the link below.



Click [here](#) for more practice reading and answering questions based on Informational Texts.