

This assessment is based on a now-expired version of the achievement standard and may not accurately reflect the content and practice of external assessments developed for 2024 onwards. No part of the candidate's evidence in this exemplar material may be presented in an external assessment for the purpose of gaining an NZQA qualification or award.



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

## Level 1 History RAS 2023

**92027 Demonstrate understanding of perspectives on a historical context**

# EXEMPLAR

**Excellence**

**TOTAL 08**

## INSTRUCTIONS

The task in this assessment consists of a report that will be submitted digitally as follows:

- a written report (PDF)

OR

- orally (audio file)

OR

- visually (video file).

Choose ONE historical context to respond to the task below. The historical context can be an event, person, place, group of people, or historical movement.

You should aim to write no more than **800 words in total**. (Where an audio/video file is submitted, it should not exceed **4 minutes in total**.)

## ASSESSMENT TASK

**Historical perspectives** may include consideration of an individual or group's historical actions, responses, motivations, experiences, beliefs, values, and concepts.

In what ways do the historical actions of TWO individuals or groups from your chosen historical context demonstrate their perspectives on an event, person, or place?

In your report, you should:

- identify TWO individuals or groups from your chosen historical context
- include historical evidence
- consider the immediate and wider historical context
- explain how the perspectives may differ.

At 8:15am on the 6th of August 1945, the world's first atomic bomb 'little boy' was dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima by the United States. Following the bombing of Hiroshima the American and Japanese governments took specific actions in response to the devastating event. The American government occupied Japan between 1945 - 1952 in response to the bombing of Hiroshima. The action of America occupying Japan after the bombing of Hiroshima shows that they viewed the dropping of the bomb as a necessary action to successfully end WW2. The Japanese government responded to the bombing of Hiroshima with their surrender to the allies, which led to the end of WW2. The action of Japan's surrender shows us that the Japanese government was faced with no choice but to surrender because of the potential threat America had to Japanese society, and that there was no alternative.

The American Government responded to the event of the bombing of Hiroshima by occupying Japan after the war between 1945 - 1952, which shows that they saw the bombing as a necessary action to end the war and save further American losses. They also wanted to create a 'political ally' to ensure Japan would no longer hold significant power and be a threat to world peace. America was already one of the most powerful nations in the world. With the cold war brewing the United States wanted to spread their power to ensure the Soviet Union wasn't a threat to them. The possible 'plan' by the US to occupy Japan was mentioned as early as February 1942. During the war the allied powers decided to try to take over and divide Japan between them, much like what happened to Germany. Initially the plan was to appoint a supreme commander for the allied powers (SCAP) who would have ultimate control over the main Japanese islands, while the smaller islands were divided between the United States, China and the Soviet Union. On the 26th of July 1945 the Potsdam declaration was issued by the US, Great Britain and the USSR. The Potsdam declaration was a document sent to the Japanese government before the bomb was dropped calling for the unconditional surrender of Japan. The

declaration ended with the warning of 'complete and utter destruction' if the Japanese government refused to surrender. The American government was faced with no response by the Japanese which led them to drop the bomb on Hiroshima. However the bombing of Hiroshima was part of a much bigger political plan to occupy Japan. The United States 'initial post-surrender policy for Japan' states America's ultimate objectives in regard to Japan. These objectives were 'to insure that Japan will not again become a menace to the United States or to the peace and security of the world', and 'to bring about the eventual establishment of a peaceful and responsible government which will respect the rights of other states and will support the objectives of the United States. The United States desires that this government should conform closely to the principles of a democratic self-government but that it is not the responsibility of the allied powers.' On the 6th of September 1945 president Harry Truman approved the 'post surrender policy' document, which was then released to the public on the 22nd of September. America's response to the bombing of Hiroshima shows that the bomb wasn't the cause of the occupation, it was merely just a key part to a bigger picture and the wider plan America already had in place.

The Japanese government responded to the event of the bombing of Hiroshima by surrendering to the allies, which led the end of WW2, because the Japanese were shocked with the threat the bomb had and were faced with no other option but surrender, and that there was no alternative due to the fact that Japan couldn't afford anymore civilian losses, and they were already on their knees as a nation. In 1944 the Japanese supreme war council was established to strengthen Japanese authority. During the end of the war in August 1945, the council consisted of "the big six" Prime Minister - Admiral Kantaro Suzuki, the Minister of Foreign Affairs - Shigenori Togo, the Minister of War - General Korechika Anami, the Minister of the Navy - Admiral Mitsumasa, the Chief of the Army general staff - General Yoshijiro Umezu and the Chief of the Navy General staff - Admiral Soemu Toyoda. On the 10th of August after the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima a meeting of the Supreme War council was called and the Japanese discussed the possibility of surrender. There was political impasse and strong division between individuals, there were different opinions whether Japan should keep fighting, and about the terms of surrender. The Japanese bushido code of honour was a key value to Japan which was basically to fight until death in honour of your family and the lord. This was a significant reason why some members of the Supreme council edged to continue fighting. The meeting went on for 2 days, before Emperor Hirohito summoned the meeting and broke the impasse, expressing his desire to end the war and surrender unconditionally. On the 14th of August after much deliberation and discussion the Japanese Government officially communicated its acceptance of the Potsdam declaration's terms of surrender. On the 15th of August Emperor Hirohito announces the unconditional surrender to the Japanese people via radio broadcast. "I cannot bear the thought of seeing my innocent people suffer any longer. Indeed, it is for this very reason that I have now ordered the acceptance of the provisions of the Joint Declaration of the Powers." - Emperor Hirohito, in a recorded statement broadcast to the Japanese people on August 15, 1945. This shows that Japan saw the threat of the bomb as inevitable "the enemy has begun to employ a new and most cruel bomb, the power of which to do damage is indeed incalculable" - quote from Emperor Hirohito on the 15th of August. However the bomb wasn't the only reason Japan agreed to the terms of surrender as they had already suffered so much and were on their hands as a nation. The Soviet Union declared war on Japan on the 8th of August, invading Japanese occupied Manchuria. Previous firebombing raids on other Japanese cities had destroyed industrial infrastructure and transport. Naval blockaid meant that supplies via the sea were minimal and Japan was isolated. Japan had lost other military battles and had lost key islands such as Iwo Jima and Tarawa. Japan's response to the bomb shows that they were already on their last legs and on their knees as a nation. They had already suffered so much and the potential threat of another bomb and the devastation it would cause was too high which left the Japanese with no other option but surrender.

The American government viewed the occupation of Japan as an opportunity to move forward, develop their global status and advance their world power. Japan viewed their surrender as the ending of their position of power, they would no longer be a dominant country and would become a minority nation. Their perspectives differ in the way that the American government's power and domination grew and they became an even greater global power in response to the bomb. Compared to the Japanese government who lost all positional power, they were reduced as a nation and would no longer be a global threat after the bomb was dropped and they were faced with no alternative other than surrender. This shows the impact the bombing had and how it influenced both the American and Japanese governments in different ways and it still effects us to this day.

## Excellence

**Subject:** History

**Standard:** 92027

**Total score:** 08

Q	Grade score	Marker commentary
One	E8	The candidate provided a comprehensive analysis of American and Japanese perspectives on the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, discussing their differences. There was consideration of the wider context of the bombings, including the geo-political circumstances relating to the bombings.