



# Sadako Sasaki and the Atomic Bomb: A Case Study

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## Central Question

How were Japanese civilians affected by the Atomic bomb after WWII?

## Teaching Strategy

Case Study

## Content Rationale

Many people know that large numbers of Japanese civilians died instantly when the U.S. used the atomic bomb in WWII. What most people do not realize is that well after the war, people faced severe health problems because of its use. This lesson alerts students about long-term (negative) impacts; they will learn that families, even as far as 10 years after the bomb was dropped, were affected by its use. In an age of nuclear proliferation, perhaps all people should be acutely aware that using atomic weapons have LONG TERM impact on people and the environment.

## Link to National and State Standards:

- NCSS Curriculum Standard IXc: describe and analyze the effects of changing technologies on the global community.
- WI Model Academic Standard B.12.17: Identify historical and current instances when national and global interests have seemed to be opposed and analyze issues involved.

## Lesson Objectives

- Students will evaluate whether the United States realized, during their contemplation of dropping the bomb, the long-lasting effects the atomic bomb would have on Japan.
- Students will hypothesize if they were Harry Truman, and were able to see the long-lasting effects of the bomb, would they drop it?
- Students will develop a policy the United States should adopt to help alleviate the suffering of civilian victims of the atomic bomb.

## Technology/Materials Needed

- Case studies for each student
- Question sheet for each student

## Introduction

1. Post this quote on the board.

“This is our cry, this is our prayer: peace in the world.”

Have students think/pair/share for one minute as to who they think wrote it and what they think it means. Then explain that a young Japanese girl dying of the “a-bomb” disease wrote this. Further, explain not only were people affected immediately by America’s use of the bomb, but also 10-15 years after the fact people were still dying due to exposure from the bomb.

## Development

2. Introduce the case study activity “case study”, Handout 1.1, of Sadako Sasaki, a Japanese girl who died of the “a-bomb disease.” Explain that this case was developed from the book Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes. The case addresses the struggles Sadako faced and her death.
3. From Handout 1.1 read the problem and introduction to the class. Then divide into groups of 4, and have them read the case study, Handout 1.1. Then conduct an overview debriefing of the facts of the case so everyone has the same information.
4. In groups, have individuals study the case debriefing questions and make notes of what they want to say about each question. When individuals are finished, have group members discuss the questions and develop a group answer to the case questions.
5. Post the case discussion questions on the board or show a PowerPoint slide of said questions and begin a whole class discussion of the case per questions.

1. What is the purpose of Sadako attempting to make 1000 paper cranes? What do the paper cranes represent to her?
2. What is Sadako Sasaki going through in the story? How did this happen?
  - a. What does Kenji tell you about the long-lasting negative effects the atomic bomb had on Japanese civilians?
  - b. Sadako’s case is similar, yet what does her case tell you about what impact the atomic bomb had on Hiroshima?
3. Discuss whether you think the United States realized the long-lasting effects the atomic bomb would have on Japan.
4. Pretending you are Harry S. Truman in 1945 and you could go 15 years into the future and see the negative, long-lasting effects the bomb had on civilians, would you still drop the bomb? Why or why not? Alternatively, would you come up with another strategy to end the war?
5. What lessons can countries learn from Sadako regarding the use of atomic weapons?

## Culminating Activity

6. Students will, individually, answer the question on the half sheet provided Individually; sketch out a bulleted policy of what the United States government should do for civilians still suffering from the aftermath of the atomic bomb.

