Reporting and Recording: Historical Investigation—*Hiroshima*, by John Hersey

Lemon Bay High School
AP Language and Composition
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Goals and Pre-Rating of Skills and Concepts

• Learn the basic principles and writing format of a report.
• Understand the concept of bias (unintended or deliberate) as related to reporting information.
• Understand that texts can have multiple interpretations of the same event.
• Analyze primary documents for purpose, format, structure, rhetorical devices and strategies, and effectiveness.
• Learn about the events surrounding the Pacific campaign of WWII, specifically the dropping of a nuclear bomb on Hiroshima.
Lesson 1: Culture and Mindset

• Please take out a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Please write your name, the date, and title at the top of the paper.

“Lesson 1: Understanding Culture and Mindset”

• On the next page you will answer a prompt asking you about your feelings as a citizen in times of war. Please answer to the best of your ability and use specific examples.

• Following the writing activity, we will share responses and take notes.
Writing Prompt: Mindset in Times of War

“The United States is about to be invaded. The attacking country has a powerful military and advanced weaponry, and though our country probably will prevail, the areas chosen for invasion will suffer major casualties and severe damage. Moreover, the attacking country has chosen Miami, Tampa, and Orlando as the invasion points and intend to conquer Florida first. There are two days until the invasion. What is your initial reaction, and how will you respond and act?”

• Five minutes of writing.
• Time for sharing, notes, and discussion. (5 min.)
Activity: Japanese Culture and Geography

1. All students will be given blank name tags. They should choose a Japanese name (overhead). They have 1 minute to introduce themselves to their classmates.

2. Handout “Writing and Pronunciation” and “Useful Daily Expressions”. Practice p.11, some of II and III, and all daily expressions.

3. Handout Map of Japan. Find Hiroshima, Tokyo, Kyoto, and Nagasaki. Show where I have been (Pics?).

4. Congratulations! You are all officially Japanese!
Simulation (Attack) and Response

• Now imagine that the Enola Gay has flown over your city and dropped a nuclear weapon (albeit small compared to today’s standards).

• Students are given scripts to read.

• Each student takes turns reading script. (10 students volunteer).

• On the next slide, your teacher will ask you some questions about your feelings and attitude towards (nuclear) warfare. Please answer questions using complete thoughts and sentences. You will have about two minutes to answer each question. Be specific as possible.
1. As a Japanese citizen, what is your initial reaction to the devastation that occurred because of the nuclear bomb blast? (initial response)

2. Are you (would you be) upset with the fact that citizens were targeted in a full-scale military invasion? Is this fair?

3. In times of war, should it be a crime when non-military personnel are targeted or killed? What should be done to prevent it? What should be done to those who perpetrate it?

4. Pretend you are a survivor of this blast. What will you initially do? What action will take in the future?

5. Lastly, as a Japanese citizen, how do you feel about your own government? How do you feel about the Americans who dropped the bomb?
Background: John Hersey

• Born: June 17, 1914, Tianjin, China
• Died: March 24, 1993, Key West, FL
• American writer and journalist.
• During the winter of 1945-46, Hersey was in Japan reporting for The New Yorker. After meeting the survivors, he persuaded the magazine to let him write an article on the bombing.
• His 31,000 word article has been judged the finest piece of American journalism of the 20th century.
• If you have time, read this short article written on 70th anniversary of the publication of “Hiroshima” in The New Yorker.
  • https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/john-hersey-the-writer-who-let-hiroshima-speak-for-itself
Conclusion of Lesson

• Please make sure all of your answers are complete and each section is clearly marked.

• Please show your work to your instructor for credit.

• You will get a copy of the novel *Hiroshima*, by John Hersey. You will also get a reading guide for chapter 1. This will help you become familiar with some of the characters and the circumstances that surrounded the dropping of the bomb. Please read and complete this assignment as soon as possible.
Lesson 2: Analysis of Texts

• Please take out a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Please write your name, the date, and title at the top of the paper.

“Lesson 2: Analysis of Texts”

• On the next page you will answer a prompt asking about your knowledge of the atomic or nuclear bomb. Please answer to the best of your ability and use specific examples.
• Following the writing activity, we will share responses and take notes.
Writing Prompt: Nuclear Weapons

“Please tell me what you know about nuclear or atomic weaponry. Who was the first to develop and use them? Who else (what other countries) have them? How has the use of nuclear technology changed the United States in recent history? The world? Lastly, is the planet safe from atomic warfare?”

• Five minutes of writing.
• Time for sharing, notes, and discussion. (5 min.)
Size Comparison of Nuclear/Atomic Weapons
Text #1: Statement by The President of the United States (primary document)

- Handout copy of the Truman text.
- Students should begin ACTIVELY reading the text.
  - Circle words you do not understand.
  - Underline of highlight important passages or statements.
  - Take notes and write in the margins. (questions, responses, feelings, etc.)
  - Read for main idea and author’s purpose.
  - How does the author achieve that purpose (rhetorical strategies)?
- One student read the text out loud.
Text #2: “Electric Funeral” by Black Sabbath (artistic interpretation)

• We will watch a video of “Electric Funeral” by Black Sabbath. As you watch, please follow along and actively read the text.

• Circle words you do not understand.
• Underline of highlight important passages or statements.
• Take notes and write in the margins. (questions, responses, feelings, etc.)
• Read for main idea and author’s purpose.
• How do the authors achieve their purpose (rhetorical strategies)?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nF71fabjPVE
Activity: Pair, Talk, Write (initial response)

1. Students will form pairs for a textual analysis exercise.

2. Each student will get 30 seconds to talk to their partner about the Black Sabbath video/text and/or the Truman text. The speaker speaks and the partner listens. Switch roles and 30 seconds.

3. One minute of discussion time between partners (open).

4. Two minute written response to the Truman text or Sabbath video.
Activity: Analyze the Text

1. Each pair will take one section of the Truman text, re-read it, and then answer the following questions using complete sentences (write your answers on your own paper):
   • What is the main idea of this section?
   • What is the author’s purpose? (one direct quote, properly cited)
   • How do they achieve that purpose? (one direct quote, properly cited)
   • Lastly, think about the concept of bias (intended or unintended) as it relates to the text as a whole.

2. Each pair will take one section of the Black Sabbath text, re-read it, and then answer the following questions using complete sentences (write your answers on your own paper):
   • What is the main idea of this section?
   • What is the author’s purpose? (one direct quote, properly cited)
   • How do they achieve that purpose? (one direct quote properly cited)
   • Lastly, compare and contrast the artistic interpretation of an event and a primary document providing information about the same event.
Class Discussion and Sharing of Information

• At this point groups will share answers with the rest of the class.
• Each group must share at least one time.
• Please make sure you share: Main idea, author’s purpose and direct quote, how author achieves that purpose and direct quote, and any general comments or opinion you feel are relevant.
• You will be given credit for participating in the class discussion as well as your written work.

• Conclusion: At the end of our discussion, please staple together the texts and your written work. Then please turn in to the box in the back of the class.
Lesson 3: Controversy Over Nuclear Weapons

- Please take out a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Please write your name, the date, and title at the top of the paper.

“Lesson 3: Controversy Over Nuclear Weapons”

- You will need the following handouts/materials:
  - Controversy Over Nuclear Weapons
  - Letter from the Mayor of Hiroshima
  - Separate sheet of paper with name, date, and title. We will use for the Written Conversation portion of this lesson.
Writing Prompt: Recording Historical Events

“Are human beings ethically responsible for accurately recording historical events? Are there multiple versions of the same event? Is it acceptable to record an alternate history? Is it possible to have alternative facts? Please explain and provide reasoning for your answer(s).”

• Five minutes of writing.
• Time for sharing, notes, and discussion. (5 min.)
Handout: The Controversy Over Nuclear Weapons

Directions:
1. Please read the entire handout on the controversy over nuclear weapons. (individual)
2. Go back and fill in your answers. Please answer using complete sentences and complete thoughts. (individual)
3. With a partner, you will have 2-3 minutes to discuss your responses. As you discuss with your partner, add more to and/or revise your responses. (pair)
4. Whole class will have 2-3 minutes to discuss responses. As we discuss as a class, add more to and/or revise your responses. (class)
Text Analysis: Letter from Mayor of Hiroshima

• Copy of Akiba text on desk.
• Students should begin ACTIVELY reading the text.
  • Circle words you do not understand.
  • Underline of highlight important passages or statements.
  • Take notes and write in the margins. (questions, responses, feelings, etc.)
  • Read for main idea and author’s purpose.
  • How does the author achieve that purpose (rhetorical strategies)?
• Write a complete summary of the text (5-7 sentences).
• Identify one section of text or one idea presented that you would like to discuss further. Circle that section of the text or write down the key idea on a your separate sheet of paper.
• One student reads the text out loud.
Activity: Written Conversation

1. Please make sure you have your separate sheet of paper ready. Write “Written Conversation” as a sub-heading.

2. Make sure you have a partner. This activity can only be completed in pairs. Also, it is important to note that this activity must be conducted in complete silence.

3. Part I: Begin drafting a short letter to your partner. You must start with “Dear ___________,” The topic/purpose of your letter should be inquisitive and relate to the question/idea/concept you identified from the Akiba text. After reading your letter, your partner should be able to formulate some kind of response. (4-5 min.)
Written Conversation: Part II and III

4. **Part II:** You will exchange letters with your partner. Your partner will read your letter completely and vice versa. Remember—this activity is to be completed in complete silence. No discussion at all.

5. You will then respond to your partner’s letter. In responding, you should begin with “Dear ____________,”. Make sure you respond to their inquiry. From there you can continue the same thread and/or bring up a new topic. (4-5 min.)

6. **Part III:** You will exchange letters again. Similar to Part II, you will read the letter completely. Still, remain silent.

7. You will then respond to your partner’s comments. Once again, begin with “Dear ____________,”. Make sure you address their comments/response. Again, from there you can continue the same thread and/or bring up a new topic. (3-4 min.)
Final Comments: Written Conversation

8. **Part IV:** You will exchange letters again. Again, you will read the letter completely. Please remain silent.

9. This will be your final response to your partner’s comments. Once again, begin with “Dear ______________,”. Make sure you address their comments/response. This will be your final concluding remarks. Make sure you address the topic and: concede, agree to disagree, agree, etc. Also, thank them for their time and effort (2-3 min.)

10. Trade again. At this point your partner should have their original paper and you yours. Read their final comments.

11. Draw a line under your written conversation and prepare for post rating (on the next slide).
Post-Rate and Conclusion of the Lesson Series

Please post-rate yourself on a scale of 1-4 for the following skills and concepts:

• Learn the basic principles and writing format of a report.
• Understand the concept of bias (unintended or deliberate) as related to reporting information.
• Understand that texts can have multiple interpretations of the same event.
• Analyze primary documents for purpose, format, structure, rhetorical devices and strategies, and effectiveness.

• The final task in this lesson is to staple all of your work together and turn it in to the box in the back of the room. Make sure you have the “Controversy” handout, the actively read Akiba text, the written conversation, and your post rating.