

*What were the Little Boy and the Fat Man?*

### **Informative Speech**

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What is the worst experience one can have in life? Is it the experience of starvation? Is it the experience of losing a loved one? Or is it the experience of suffering from incurable sickness? Imagine you are a regular citizen who has already suffered due to the endless war and worldwide economic depression over the past decade. One day, after an unexpected explosion, you suddenly lose all your loved ones. The familiar environments are gone as well. Your beloved hometown has laid in ruins.

That was a description from a Japanese survivor of World War II, and I believe that everyone has heard stories about the two dreadful, devastating atomic bombs -- the Little Boy and the Fat Man. But I think very few of you understand the actual impact of the two bombs.

So what is the story about the bombing? Around May 1945, WWII was already about to end, since most countries on the Axis side had already surrendered, and the Allied powers had defeated Germany in Europe. As the summer of 1945 approached, the United States, trying to reduce casualties as much as possible, offered a peace treaty to Japan. Japan, despite knowing that they had little chance of winning, still vowed to fight to the bitter end on the Pacific side, which resulted in the United States' decision of dropping an atomic bomb.

The first atomic bomb, Little Boy, was dropped on August 6th on Hiroshima-- a city with almost 350,000 inhabitants. However, it didn't seem to stop the Japanese army's invasion on the Pacific ocean. So three days later, the second bomb, named the Fat Man, was dropped as well. According to the Japanese government's data, the two explosions "instantly and completely

devastated sixty three percent of Hiroshima and sixty seven percent of Nagasaki. Over a hundred and twenty thousand citizens were killed immediately" (Atomic Bomb). When it comes to the end of the year, the number of deaths from severe injury or radiation effects have come to about two hundred thousand people. Five years later, a report from Japan's medication system stated that the deaths and diseases caused by the radiation effect had impacted more than seven hundred thousand people, which is about the same population today in Washington, D.C. Furthermore, on the tenth-year mark, "survivors began suffering from thyroid, breast, lung, and other cancers at higher rates." "Pregnant women... experienced higher rates of miscarriage and deaths among their infants; their children were more likely to have intellectual disabilities, impaired growth, and increased risk of developing cancer" (Hiroshima and Nagasaki Bombings).

If the numbers weren't appealing enough, let's try to picture the scene in our minds. John Hersey, a respected American writer, had portrayed the moment after the explosion in his book, and the story was recorded from a soldier who participated in Hiroshima's rescue. He mentioned there were: "hundreds and hundreds of people who were fleeing, and every one of them seemed to be hurt in some way. The eyebrows of some were burned off and skin hung from their faces and hands. Some were vomiting as they walked. Many were naked or in shreds of clothing. [Others], although injured themselves, supported relatives who were worse off" (16). The soldier described this scene as the "most unforgettable, terrifying memory of his entire life" (17).

There is no right or wrong for dropping atomic bombs, nor should we try to find an answer to this question. No one knows what would happen if the United States kept having war with Japan on the Pacific side, so the only thing we can do is to learn from history, understand the impact such weapons would bring, and avoid similar disasters from happening again.

## Bibliography

“Atomic Bomb.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 27 Aug. 2020.  
Accessed 6 Sept. 2020

This source provides information about the scientific method behind the atomic bomb, from the making of it to the effect of its explosion, and it talks about the inventors of the atomic bomb. It also provides a brief historical background around WWII.

“Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.” *History.com*, A&E Television Networks, 18 Nov. 2009.  
Accessed 6 Sept. 2020

This source talks deeply about the history of WWII, especially the part when the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on Japan. It will help me on my speech by providing historical evidence that would integrate my speech. Also, it provides introductory information to the Manhattan project, which is the scientific experiment that the U.S. had on developing the atomic bomb.

Hersey, John, and Juan Gabriel Vasquez. *Hiroshima*. Debolsillo, 2017.

This source deeply dives into the history of the atomic bomb and the story about the bombing. It also provides death estimation which I took account of. Most importantly, it portrays the scene of the moment immediately after the bombing, which I selected to put in my speech as a quote.

“Hiroshima and Nagasaki Bombings.” *ICAN*, 2018. Accessed 5 Sept. 2020

This source talks about the long-term effect of the atomic bomb other than the deaths at the moment the atomic bomb was dropped. It also explains the method behind the effect. For example, instead of simply telling me the radiation would affect women that were pregnant to bear unhealthy babies, it explains how the radiation was spread and how it would affect people's DNA.