



Use of Atomic Bombs in World War II Close Evaluation of Arguments Activity

This is the simple sequence of instructional steps for the Close Evaluation of Arguments Activity. This Close Evaluation of Arguments Activity will take 2 - 3 class periods.

1. Pair students up. You can use the pairings that you were made for the Table Debates (for expedience or because these teams work especially well together), or you can re-pair students to have students working with different partners.
2. Distribute the Flow Sheet Model (Through Counter-Arguments), one copy of each sheet for each student (so two sheets per student). Review with the full class the arguments and counter-arguments on this Flow Sheet Model.
3. Tell the students to pick sides (Team A, arguing that use of atomic bombs against Japan was justified, or Team B, arguing that the use of atomic bombs against Japan was not justified). Give students about 15-20 minutes to complete their evaluation arguments. Note that each student will want to respond to (“rebut”) the counter-arguments made against their side’s arguments. They will also want to be prepared to compare their arguments to the other side’s arguments. Team A – since it gives their Closing Statement second – can add arguments to respond to the Team B evaluation arguments on the Team B flow sheet **after** the Team B speaks.
4. After students have been given time to complete their evaluation arguments, begin the sequence of having students deliver their Closing Statements, at their tables, against their partner. These Closing Statements will be delivered simultaneously, as in the Table Debates format. Give Team B 3 minutes to give their Closing Statement. Then give Team A 3 minutes to give their Closing Statement.
5. After these Closing Statements, consider either (a) sharing out, asking pairs to share with the class the best evaluation arguments in their debate, or (b) showcasing the most advanced pair of Closing Statements in

front of the full class, ending with an analysis of this pairs particular strengths. Collect the completed Flow Sheets from each student, too.

6. Next day, have students continue to work in their pairs. Distribute copies of the Full Flow Sheet Model (two sheets) to each student, and distribute one copy of the Argument Evaluation Questions per pair.
7. Circulate, monitor, and support while students in pairs discuss and evaluate argumentation. Be sure that one of the students in each pair has been tasked with writing out the responses to the questions, noting where the students in the pair do not come to an agreement in their response.
8. After the students have had about 30 minutes to discuss and write out their responses to the questions on argument evaluation, pair the pairs of students (into groups of four) and have these pairs read their responses to each other to certain questions that you select and announce. After they read their responses to each other, they should discuss their differences (where they exist), suggesting that they argue through these differences, possibly ending with one or both sides revising their written responses.
9. If there is time (of if you want to take the additional time), conduct a sharing-out discussion with the full class, highlighting the sites of differences between the matched-up two pairs and how those differences were resolved.
10. Collect and assess the written responses to the Argument Evaluation Questions.