

Process Paper

When I first read the topic, I immediately knew I wanted to do something related to language, as it has always fascinated me how people over a large region are able to communicate through a code-like series of sounds. I also knew that I wanted to focus my topic more so on a miscommunication, as opposed to efficient communication, because language is and will never be perfect, so long as there are multiple ways of translating it. I started looking up general topics, such as “miscommunications in history” and “language barriers worldwide”, but when I came across the topic of a miscommunication surrounding the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I was instantly hooked. I was intrigued by the idea that this cause of mass devastation could have been prevented by more efficient communication, and it fit perfectly with the theme at hand. The theme is to describe communication and the understanding that is formed as a result of it. My topic does this by proving its inverse to be true; if miscommunication hinders understanding, then efficient communication must facilitate it.

I relied heavily on the search engine Google Scholar to conduct my research. I came across several books, articles, and papers written about my topic. I was also able to use the bibliographies of these same resources, to locate primary sources such as letters, declarations, photographs, and recordings.

To create my project, I used the building platform, NHD Web Central, and was able to format, as well as customize the appearance of my project. Web Central also allowed me to organize my research in a fashion that was easy to follow and easy to understand.

My historical argument is that miscommunication between nations can quickly escalate into dangerous situations. Particularly in wartime, it is important to not only correctly translate and understand the information being sent, but to also acknowledge the cultural ties that are associated with language. The Japanese language has the cultural tendency to use ambiguous words that dance around a question. American English however, has a cultural tendency to be direct and to the point. The differences between these two languages made it very easy for miscommunication to take place between the nations in 1945. Neither side took into consideration how the sender would articulate their beliefs, or how the receiver would interpret the message based on their linguistic preferences.

The miscommunication surrounding the word *mokusatsu* led to atomic bombs being dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Thousands of people were immediately killed as a result of these bombs, equal numbers were exposed to and affected by radiation from the bombs, and the cities were, for all intensive purposes, leveled. Not only was Japan impacted in the immediate, but war as we knew it was permanently altered. The unveiling of these bombs brought the world into an atomic age of nuclear weapons, and made politicians and world leaders reconsider their attempts at war with one another.