



# The Atomic Bomb

**W**orld War II was about to start in Europe in 1939. Scientist Albert Einstein wrote a letter to U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt. In his letter, Einstein warned the President that German scientists were getting close to successfully splitting the uranium atom. A chain reaction of splitting uranium atoms could make a huge explosion. Einstein told Roosevelt that Nazi Germany might be able to build an atomic bomb. He recommended “watchfulness and, if necessary, quick action.”



In a secret project called the Manhattan Project, scientists in the United States began nuclear research. A lab was built at Los Alamos, New Mexico. Scientists hurried to be the first to create a bomb that would make a nuclear explosion. On July 16, 1945, a test atomic bomb was exploded successfully in New Mexico. Scientists watched from bunkers as a bright light flashed. A mushroom cloud shot 40,000 feet into the air. The tower holding the bomb was completely vaporized.

President Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945, and Harry S Truman took over as President of the United States. When he became President, Truman learned about the Manhattan Project. The Secretary of War gave Truman a report that said, “Within four months, we shall ... have completed the most terrible weapon ever known in human history.” A month later, Germany surrendered, and the war in Europe was over. But, World War II still raged in the Pacific, where the Allies were fighting the Japanese.

Allied troops had fought their way through the Pacific to Japan. On June 22, 1945, fighting between Japanese and American troops ended in Okinawa. Okinawa is an island about 350 miles from Japan. Over 100,000 Japanese troops were killed, and the Americans also lost thousands of soldiers. The next Allied move would be an invasion of Japan. Some said that invading Japan might cost the lives of a million American soldiers. Truman had to decide whether to use the atomic bomb against Japan. Thousands of innocent people would be killed, but it would end the war. Truman decided to use the bomb.

On August 6, 1945, Americans dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. As many as 75,000 people died instantly, and another 100,000 were injured. The Japanese refused to surrender. Three days later, a second bomb was dropped on the city of Nagasaki, Japan. On September 2, 1945, Japan surrendered. With this Allied victory over Japan, World War II ended.



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## Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer, and write the letter in the box.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ wrote a letter to President Roosevelt warning him about the Nazis' ability to build an atomic bomb.

- A. Adolf Hitler
- B. Harry Truman
- C. Albert Einstein
- D. Winston Churchill

2. The Manhattan Project was a secret \_\_\_\_\_ project.

- A. German
- B. Japanese
- C. Jewish
- D. American

3. After the war ended in Europe, the Allies fought the \_\_\_\_\_ in the Pacific.

- A. Germans
- B. Italians
- C. Chinese
- D. Japanese

4. The first atomic bomb was dropped on \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. Hiroshima, Japan
- B. Tokyo, Japan
- C. Nagasaki, Japan
- D. Berlin, Germany

5. After the \_\_\_\_\_ bomb was dropped on Japan, the Japanese government surrendered.

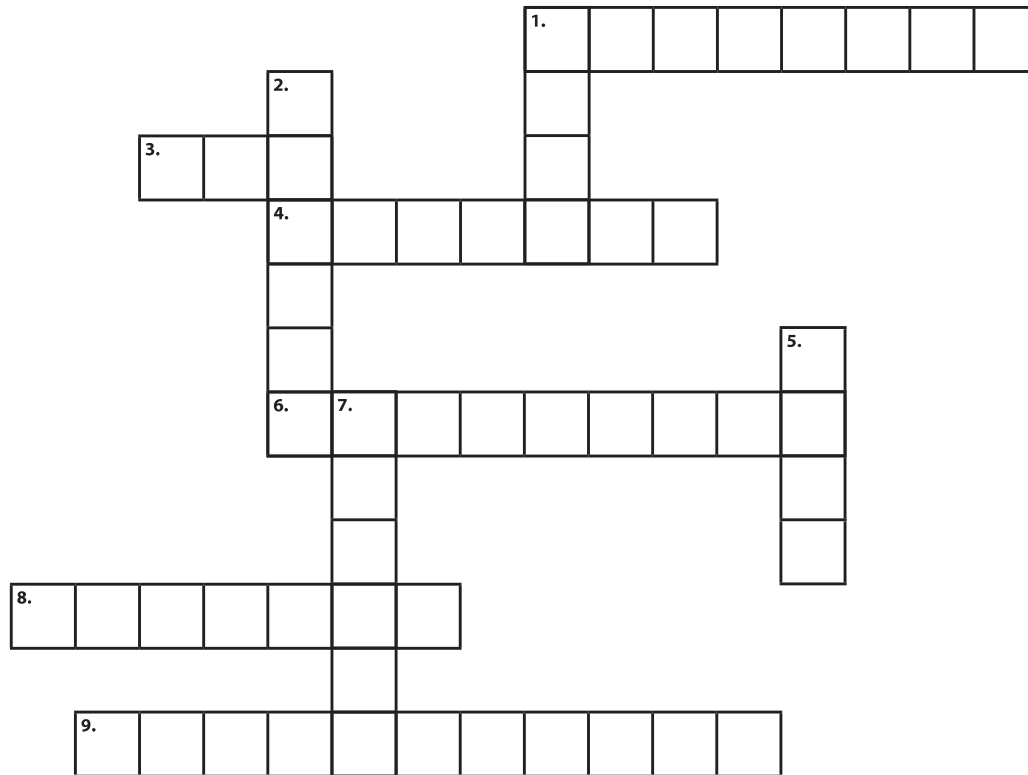
- A. first
- B. second
- C. third
- D. fourth



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## Crossword Puzzle

Write the best answer in each blank, and complete the crossword puzzle.



### ACROSS

- The second atomic bomb was dropped on \_\_\_\_\_, Japan.
- Thousands of innocent people would be killed, but dropping the bomb would end the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Einstein warned Roosevelt that German scientists had successfully split the \_\_\_\_\_ atom.
- The United States built a lab in \_\_\_\_\_ where scientists did nuclear research.
- Some said that invading Japan might cost the lives of a/an \_\_\_\_\_ American soldiers.
- World War II ended when Japan \_\_\_\_\_ to the Allies.

### DOWN

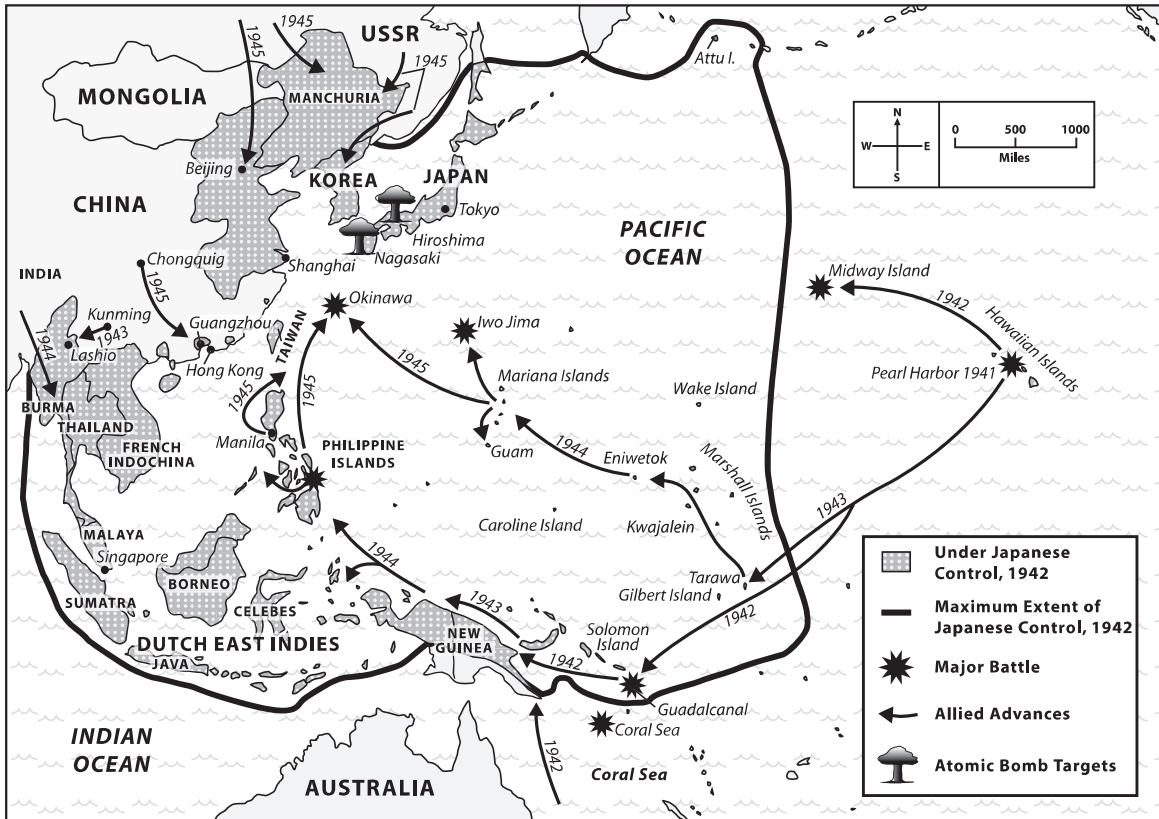
- Einstein said that \_\_\_\_\_ Germany might be able to build an atomic bomb.
- President \_\_\_\_\_ took over after Roosevelt died.
- In the successful testing of the atomic \_\_\_\_\_, the tower holding the bomb was completely vaporized.
- When Germany surrendered, the war in \_\_\_\_\_ was over.



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## Map – World War II in the Pacific

Use the map to answer the following questions. Write the answers in complete sentences.



1. Name three places on the map that were not under Japanese control.

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2. Name the sites of three major battles.

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3. Name two places the Allies had advanced to by 1945.

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## Extension Activities

*Choose one of the following activities to complete. Write the answer in complete sentences.*

- 1.** Who was Albert Einstein, and why did he move to the United States? Look in your textbook, on the Internet, or at the library to find out.
- 2.** Which countries have nuclear weapons today? Look in your textbook, on the Internet, or at the library to find out.
- 3.** Do you think President Truman made the right decision about dropping the atomic bomb? Explain your answer.

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# Quiz: The Atomic Bomb

## True/False

Decide if each statement is true or false, and write "true" or "false" in the blank.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The Manhattan Project was a secret American project to build an atomic bomb.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. After the first bomb was dropped on Japan, the Japanese government surrendered.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. World War II ended when the Allies surrendered to Japan.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The Nazis built a lab in New Mexico where scientists did nuclear research.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Dropping the atomic bomb ended World War I.

## Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer, and write the letter in the box.

6. Some said that invading Japan might cost the lives of a \_\_\_\_\_ American soldiers.

A. hundred  
B. thousand  
C. million  
D. billion

7. When \_\_\_\_\_ surrendered, the war in Europe was over.

A. Italy  
B. Japan  
C. the United States  
D. Germany

## Short Answer

Answer the following question in complete sentences.

8. What decision did President Truman have to make?

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