

HIS 100 Theme 2: Sample Secondary Source Analysis Worksheet

<p>Full APA citation:</p>	<p>Morton, L. (1957). The decision to use the atomic bomb. <i>Foreign Affairs</i>, 35(2), 334–353.</p>
<p>Identify author and describe potential biases .</p>	<p>Louis Morton was a military historian at Dartmouth College. For a decade he served as a member of the U.S. Army’s Office of the Chief of Military History. In those positions he wrote numerous books on the Pacific theater of WWII. His position in the Army’s historical unit could bias him in favor of the military, but that does not seem to be the case in this article.</p>
<p>Identify thesis and arguments.</p>	<p>Many policymakers issued statements soon after the detonation of the atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A decade later, Louis Morton revisited these statements in light of recently released documents.</p> <p>Morton found that there were many justifications for detonating the atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. An invasion of the Japanese home islands would have inflicted heavy casualties on both sides. The Americans wanted to end the war before the Soviet Union entered the Pacific theater. The military government of Japan seemed resistant to any thought of surrender. The Manhattan Project had cost billions of dollars, and many policymakers did not want to see that money wasted.</p> <p>The Japanese decision to surrender was based on many factors, only one of which was the use of the atomic bombs. American air and naval power had already reduced much of Japan to ruin. The Soviet Union’s entry into the war ended Japan’s hope for mediation. The Japanese emperor ordered his government to surrender, over the protests of some advisers. Morton argued that some combination of all of these led to the Japanese surrender.</p>
<p>What primary sources did the source rely on?</p>	<p>Congressional hearings; books, memoirs, and articles published by participants; military documents such as bombing surveys; memoranda and letters written by members of the military and the Truman administration; recent history books and articles on the bomb and the end of the war.</p>
<p>Is the source reliable and convincing? Why or why not?</p>	<p>The source is reliable. The author does not seem to favor any reason over another and is careful to say that it was probably some combination. He seems healthily suspicious of any justifications provided by decision makers.</p>
<p>How does the source relate to your project topic? How does it add to what you already know about the topic?</p>	<p>The decision to use the atomic bomb is central to any study of the end of WWII. The decision to use the bomb was the result of many factors, and the Japanese decision to surrender was the result of many factors.</p>