

THE PEACE RIBBON PROJECT

LESSON PLAN FOR FAMILIES

HISTORY

This year, 2020, marks the 75th anniversary of the devastating atomic bombings of two Japanese cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. During World War II, the Allied Powers were at war with the Axis Powers. Japan of the Axis Powers, refused to surrender. As a result, the United States of the Allied Powers, decided to drop an atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, killing hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians. Three days later, a more powerful bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, killing even more people and destroying the city. Countless lives were lost. Homes, schools, businesses, trees, plants, and animals were all lost. The most frightening part of atomic bombs is the fact that their deadly effects last for years and even decades, hurting the environment and even more people in the future.

Many survivors and witnesses still clearly remember this nightmare. One survivor, Tatsuichiro Akizuki, recalled, "Three kinds of color—black, yellow, and scarlet—loomed ominously over the people, who ran about like so many ants seeking to escape... It seemed like the end of the world." To this day, the bombs cause a lot of pain and hurt as we remember the innocent lives and beautiful cities that were destroyed.

IMPORTANCE OF THE RIBBON

In 1975, Justine Merritt, an activist and former high school teacher from Colorado, visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in Japan. She began a spiritual mission and in 1982, created the idea of The Ribbon. The Ribbon symbolizes that all life is precious and nuclear war is unacceptable and unthinkable. The Ribbon calls for the care and protection of the Earth.

On August 4, 1985, Merritt's vision became a reality as each individual panel was connected to form a 18 mile long strip that wrapped around the Pentagon! This is a reminder of all things that people love and care about and could be lost due to nuclear warfare. Merritt's idea spread throughout the United States, Europe, Asia, and Africa! Each year, we remember all the lives that were lost due to the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as everything we hold close to our hearts, like family, friends, animals, and the environment.



Hiroshima after the atomic bomb



Justine Merritt and friends



Marching with Ribbon

THE PEACE RIBBON PROJECT

CONTINUED

REFLECTION

Before we begin creating, circle up with your family and reflect on what the Ribbon means.

- What are some things you love and care about and would be sad to lose due to war and violence?
- How do you think the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki felt?
- What do you want to show and let the world know about through your Ribbon?
- What can you do to make sure a tragedy like Hiroshima and Nagasaki never happens again?

The Ribbon represents more than ending nuclear warfare. It is ultimately about love. The Ribbon still matters to this day. The meaning of the Ribbon is not separate from human induced climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and systematic racism. All of these issues affect everyone, although some more than others. War and violence also affect people unequally. We must do our part to remind ourselves and others that every life is precious.

INDIVIDUAL IMPACT

Making these ribbon panels is a way for people to think about nuclear war and all of the damage that it has caused in the past so that it does not happen again. The bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 killed many, many people, plants, and animals. It destroyed both nature and cities. Nuclear warfare results in widespread loss of life and all that people hold dear. The world is a fragile place and we as humans must try our best to do good and not to cause harm to what is around us.

There have been protests across the United States about the unnecessary use of violence by police officers. This is part of a culture of violence that is seen throughout society. Although physical violence and fighting is not the same as nuclear war, it also causes pain and destruction. The idea of nuclear war is part of this greater violent culture that can be seen in many parts of our society. We must remember the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and remember all of the devastation so that history does not repeat itself.



CREATE

Cut a panel from any fabric or material measuring 36 inches wide by 18 inches high. You then decorate it with words and pictures showing “what I cannot bear to think of as lost forever in nuclear war!” What are things you love that you would miss the most if they were taken away forever? You can use any type of decoration that you want – drawing, painting, tie dying, or even do something entirely different like writing a song or poem, sculpting something in clay, origami, or designing a poster board. Use your imagination! You may add ties to each corner so that multiple panels can be joined together to form a “Ribbon.”

You can join people across the country and world by displaying your ribbon between August 1st and 9th, 2020 on social media and other locations including in windows or outside of your home or church. If you choose to post your ribbon panel on social media, use #theribbon2020 and tag “Ribbon Washington DC” on Facebook. We hope that panels will be tied together to create a physical “Ribbon” at events in New York, Minneapolis, Washington DC, and elsewhere. There will also be virtual events happening during that week, so look for updates on those at www.hiroshimanagasaki75.org.

THE PEACE RIBBON PROJECT

LESSON PLAN FOR ADULTS

HISTORY

This year, 2020, marks the 75th anniversary of the devastating atomic bombings of two Japanese cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. On August 9, 1945, the first atomic bomb was dropped by the United States onto Hiroshima after Japan's refusal to surrender during World War II. Three days later, an even more powerful atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. It is estimated that 90% of Hiroshima was destroyed and 80,000 civilians, along with soldiers, were killed. An additional 40,000 lives were lost in Nagasaki. However, the most frightening aspect of atomic bombs is the fact that they are indiscriminate in their destruction and have devastating effects for generations due to radiation exposure. The U.S. estimates that 237,000 people were killed directly or indirectly by the Hiroshima bomb.

One survivor, Tatsuichiro Akizuki, recalled, "Three kinds of color—black, yellow, and scarlet—loomed ominously over the people, who ran about like so many ants seeking to escape... It seemed like the end of the world." To this day, the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki remain controversial.

IMPORTANCE OF THE RIBBON

In 1975, Justine Merritt, an activist and former high school teacher from Colorado, visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in Japan. She embarked on a spiritual mission and in 1982, conceived the idea of The Ribbon. The Ribbon symbolizes that all life is precious and nuclear war is unacceptable and unthinkable. The Ribbon calls for the care and protection of the Earth.



Hiroshima after the atomic bomb

On August 4, 1985, Merritt's vision became a reality as each individual panel was connected to form a 18 mile long strip that wrapped around the Pentagon. This served as a reminder of all things that people hold dear and could be lost due to nuclear warfare. Merritt's idea spread not only throughout the United States, but to Europe, Asia, and Africa, connecting everyone through the significance of life. Each year, we commemorate all the lives that were lost due to the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as everything we hold close to our hearts, like family, friends, animals, and the environment.



Justine Merritt and friends



Marching with Ribbon

THE PEACE RIBBON PROJECT

CONTINUED

REFLECTION

Before we begin creating, reflect on what you want the Ribbon to mean to you. Consider these questions:

- What are some things you love and care about and would be sad to lose due to war and violence?
- What are the lasting impacts of nuclear warfare on Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the world?
- What do you want to let the world know about through your Ribbon?
- What can you do to spread the message of the Ribbon?

The Ribbon represents more than ending nuclear warfare. It is ultimately about love and that every life is precious. The Ribbon still matters to this day. The meaning of the Ribbon is not separate from human induced climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and systematic racism. All of these issues affect everyone but disproportionately, as does war and violence. Inherently, violence is discriminatory and while the Ribbon's origins are in nuclear warfare, its message is still very much important during the current social climate and unrest as we fight against systematic oppression and racism. We must remind ourselves and others that every life is precious.

INDIVIDUAL IMPACT

Crafting the ribbon panels is an opportunity to reflect on and memorialize the loss of life in 1945 in order to prevent such a devastating event from occurring ever again. As the world witnessed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, nuclear warfare causes vast devastation to all of creation and does not discriminate in its destruction. Animals, plants, people, nature, and cities. Nuclear warfare inevitably results in the loss of life and all that people hold dear. The direct and indirect impacts are widespread and still haunt the world.

Our country is currently reckoning with police brutality and the culture of violence that is reflected throughout society. Although the issue of police brutality is not the same as nuclear war, it has resulted in far too much death and pain and is a form of systemic violence that is destructive in nature. Even the idea of nuclear war is part of this greater violent culture that permeates all aspects of our society. We must remember the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and keep the horror in mind so that history does not repeat itself.



CREATE

Your ribbon panel can be made from any sturdy fabric and should measure 36 inches wide by 18 inches high. You may decorate it however you wish with words and images expressing "what I cannot bear to think of as lost forever in nuclear war!" Some ideas include sewing, painting, embroidering, weaving, knitting, and tie dying, but your message and participation are of primary importance, so other materials and forms of expression including poetry, songwriting, clay modeling, carving, origami, and mobiles are welcomed. Use your imagination! You may add ties to each corner so that the panels can be joined together to form a "Ribbon." Remember, "some will be works of art, all will be works of the heart."

You can join people across the country and world by displaying your ribbon between August 1st and 9th, 2020 via social media and other locations including porch railings, balconies or in your home, car, office, or church windows. If you choose to post your ribbon panel on social media, use #theribbon2020 and tag "Ribbon Washington DC" on Facebook. We hope that panels will be tied together to create a physical "Ribbon" at events in New York, Minneapolis, Washington DC, and elsewhere. There will also be virtual events happening during that week, so look for updates on those at www.hiroshimanagasaki75.org.