

Truman on Trial:

Additional information and guidance for Citizenship teachers



About this insert

This insert provides extra information for teachers to maximise the Citizenship impact of the Truman on Trial lessons. NB: there are lots of online resources and supplementary lesson ideas (with Citizenship curriculum links), to accompany and complement all the suggestions below, at <https://cnduk.org/education/truman-cit>

Citizenship content in this teaching pack

Truman on Trial is highly relevant to Citizenship education at both KS3 and GCSE level, with most of the six lessons helping develop both students' Citizenship knowledge *and* skills. Of particular pertinence are:

Lesson 3 **Exploring media reporting**

A dedicated Citizenship lesson which examines historic and contemporary media bias, and the impact this has on democracy, with activities (including students creating their own 1945 or present day news report) designed to enhance critical thinking and oracy skills.

Lesson 2, the titular **Truman on Trial**

Gets students to stage a mock criminal trial of President Truman for the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in which they gain an understanding of how a criminal court functions, and the historical context of war crime trials, whilst nurturing key Citizenship skills such as interrogating evidence, evaluating different viewpoints, and debating.

Several extension activities, particularly around
Law and Justice

These include an alternative mock trial of a world leader behind a hypothetical present-day nuclear attack, and reflecting – via learning about the International Criminal Court – on what a 'just' conviction would look like (page 54).

Enrichment activities for taking
informed action

Such as researching MPs' stance on nuclear weapons, and contacting them to support or challenge this (depending on students' views), or contacting the US and Japanese embassies for statements on the bombings (see pages 54 and 76).

Citizenship activities
embedded in other lessons

For example Lesson 3 ('Just War'), which looks at human rights issues, parliamentary consent *vis-à-vis* nuclear weapons, the rules of war, and parliamentary consent to waging war.

As the A-Level Citizenship has sadly been discontinued since this edition of Truman on Trial was published in Autumn 2017, please ignore the reference to the A-Level on page 2 of the pack.

Further suggestions and guidance to maximise the Citizenship impact of these lessons

This 2018 edition of Truman on Trial provides lots of opportunities for Citizenship classes to compare and contrast the nuclear weapons context of the 1940s with the global situation today. Below are some examples that teachers could use to complement and expand on the above-mentioned activities:

- The recent increase in tensions between the USA and Russia, including their respective withdrawal from the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. – *Key question: Is nuclear arms control in crisis?*
- Shifting relations between the USA and North Korea from mid-2017 to the present, plus the UK's stance and involvement in both cases. – *Key question: Is it possible to persuade other countries to 'denuclearise'?*

- The stances of Theresa May, Jeremy Corbyn, Donald Trump, and Kim Jong-un (among others) on using their country's nuclear weapons, and limits on their individual power to do so. – *Key question: Would leaders actually use their nuclear weapons, and if so what is the procedure for doing so?*
- How the International Criminal Court (and other recourse for war crimes allegations) emerged, how they operate, how they differ from UK criminal trials, and how far culpability extends for war crimes. – *Key question: How can war criminals be brought to justice?*
- The United Nations' Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, supported by civil society groups in the UK and elsewhere (a 'Media Reporting' extension activity could include exploring how news coverage of this has helped form public opinion one way or the other). – *Key question: How much influence can civil society have in facilitating global nuclear disarmament?*

In addition, here are some suggested activities for enhancing and consolidating Citizenship knowledge that students gain from the Truman on Trial lessons (and for more resources and tips, go to:

<https://cnduk.org/education/truman-cit>)

- *Before* the mock trial lesson (this could be set as homework): Small-group or individual research on how criminal courts operate in the UK, and how this compares to the International Criminal Court, along with examples of real war crimes trials and their results. Findings can then be shared with the rest of the class.
- Instructions for staging the mock trial are at pages 53-4 of the pack, and there is further guidance on the resources webpages. Worksheets for a contemporary scenario could be modelled on the trial of Truman; students could even be tasked with creating these themselves!
- *After* Lesson 3 ('Media Reporting'): You could run a follow-up lesson to explore contemporary media bias in the UK in more detail. Alternatively, or additionally, there is scope for some great activities examining both different biases, and 'fake news', and how to identify them and fact-check (some of this could be set as a homework task: see the resources webpages for more information).
- Citizenship teachers could devise lesson or homework activities based on any of the contemporary issues listed above or on the 'supplementary lesson resources' webpages.

For lots of resource ideas and further information (with Citizenship curriculum links) to accompany *all* the suggestions above, please go to <https://cnduk.org/education/truman-cit> If you would like further advice on how to implement any of the teaching suggestions from this insert or the accompanying resource web pages, just email peaceeducation@cnduk.org

Safeguarding

There are numerous effective strategies for teachers to create and maintain a safe and open classroom for discussing controversial issues, including the topics explored in Truman on Trial. These include:

- **Knowing your students** well enough to foresee which topics may be particularly sensitive
- **Agreeing on 'ground rules'** together, and revisiting them frequently
- Making sure students know **how to convey** any discomfort to you and their peers.

For further reading, resources and support on ensuring safe and open controversial issues lessons, see:

- The guide from the Association for Citizenship Teachers (ACT) on Prevent and controversial issues teaching: www.bit.ly/ACT-Prevent-teacher-guidance
- Advice and resources from the Department for Education and Home Office 'to protect children from extremism and radicalisation': www.educateagainsthate.com
- Prevent guidance from the NEU (NUT Section), including 'steps you can take towards discussing difficult, complex or controversial issues openly and safely': www.bit.ly/NEU-NUT-controversial-issues
- Accessible information on hate crime, from the Crown Prosecution Service: www.cps.gov.uk/hate-crime