

Overview

Students will evaluate the pros and cons of cyberweapons from various points of view to understand why they may be appealing but also carry risks.

Length

Two class periods

Materials

- [What are Cyberspace and Cybersecurity? \(World101\)](#)
- [The Growing Threat of Cyberattacks \(World101\)](#)
- [The Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons \(World101\)](#)
- Handout (attached)

Instructional Plan

1. Have students watch the “What are Cyberspace and Cybersecurity?” and “The Growing Threat of Cyberattacks” videos. Discuss briefly what a cyberweapon is and what characteristics differentiate it from other weapons. Introduce the idea that different parties will have different opinions on cyberattacks, depending on who they are.
2. Have students, working alone or in groups, fill out the attached handout, enumerating the pros and cons of developing and using cyberweapons from the listed points of view.
3. Ask students, working in small groups, to consider the entire graphic organizer and come up with a suggested principle or principles for the development and use of cyberweapons that might form the basis of an international agreement.

Cyberweapons: Pros and Cons

Pros and Cons of Cyberweapons

From the point of view of...	Pros	Cons
A wealthy, powerful country		
A technologically advanced but militarily weak country		
A country with powerful enemies		
An internet-based business		
An internet user		

Cyberweapons: Pros and Cons

Most international agreements and treaties are quite complex and detailed, but they are often based on a simple set of principles. For example, the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is based on three principles:

- Nonproliferation
- Peaceful use of nuclear technology
- Disarmament

See the NPT lesson for more details.

Considering all the points of view on cyberweapons, what principles would you propose for an international agreement on cyberweapons? Write up to five, and for each, write a sentence or two explaining why you think the principle is valuable and how it addresses the concerns of one or more interested parties.