



COLD WAR PROPAGANDA

Students will learn a brief history of the key events and persons involved in the U.S. Cold War. The students will also learn terms and techniques of propaganda as it was employed in the period of the Cold War in America. They will also learn how to implement those techniques in evaluating all propaganda.

LESSON PLAN

Introduction

The Cold War was a period in U.S History that began following World War II. It was marked by intense political rivalry between the U.S. and then Soviet Union. The two countries teetered on the brink of military action with one another for over four decades. However, the fear of nuclear annihilation prevented either from engaging militarily. Instead, the typical form of aggression from each country was various forms of propaganda that incited intense fear from each country's population as the threat of nuclear war warfare was constant.

Lesson Objective

In this lesson, students will have a basic understanding of the events of the Cold War. Students will also learn about the different types of propaganda and its uses. They will then work in teams to review and analyze propaganda that exists throughout the Museum's galleries by using the Museum's "Virtual Tour."

Problem

- Do students have a basic understanding of the history of the Cold War and America's role in this event?
- How can student recognize and analyze types and uses of propaganda as it is used in a military and political context?

Learning Objectives

The students will

- Learn about the history, types and purposes of propaganda, not only from the Cold War, but from other military offensives in which the Air Force was involved.
- Learn the name and function of various components of propaganda.
- Work cooperatively in teams to review propaganda within the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force using the technology components of the Museum's "Virtual Tour".

Grade Level: 9-12

[Ohio Learning Standards for Social Studies \(2018\)](#)

American History

The Cold War (1945-1991)

[22.](#) Use of atomic weapons

[23.](#) Containment

[25.](#) Politics

[26.](#) End to Cold War

Modern World History

The Cold War (1945-1991)

[22.](#) Break-up of Soviet Union

[23.](#) Regional and ethnic conflicts

[Ohio Learning Standards for English Language Arts \(2017\)](#)

History/Social Studies

[RH.9-10.1:](#) Textual evidence

[RH.9-10.2.b:](#) Provide an accurate and objective summary

[RH.9-10.3:](#) Analyze series of events

[RH.11-12.1:](#) Cite specific textual evidence

[RH.11-12.2.a:](#) Determine ideas of primary and secondary source

[RH.11-12.2.b:](#) Provide an accurate and objective summary

[RH.11-12.3:](#) Evaluate various explanations

Materials Required

- A writing instrument
- Analysis Chart
- Propaganda Analysis Worksheet
- Computer/internet access for both teacher and students

Preparation for activity:

- The teacher should provide students with a solid background in the history of events that lead to and contributed to the continuation of the Cold War throughout the 20th century.

Procedures:

- The students will work in teams of 2-4 students
- Explain to the students that each team will be conducting online research:
 - Analysis chart
 - Propaganda Worksheet
 - Computer/internet access
- Problem:
 - Explore the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force through the “Virtual Tour”.
 - What types of propaganda do you see represented in the Museum Galleries using the “Virtual Tour”?
 - Who is the creator and who is the intended audience?
 - Speculate on whether you believe the propaganda was successful?
- Students will tour the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force Museum by using the “Virtual Tour”. Beginning in the Cold War Gallery, students will review types of propaganda they find. They must assign the types of propaganda they believe is represented and complete the attached analysis chart. Student will present their findings to the class.

Alternate suggestion:

- Students can work in groups to design their own propaganda poster. They can expand their focus to include more topic areas on which they wish to discuss.

* Please note that copies may be made for educational purposes, but copyright data must be included.

Extension:

- Using the key names, ideas and definitions from the Cold War period post a “Sticky note” on the backs of each student. Do not reveal this information to the students assigned. Each student should get a “sticky” on his or her back. They will then move throughout the class asking indirect questions about who or what they may be. They cannot ask questions such as, “Am I Fidel Castro”? They can ask “Am I a man or a woman”? “Am I a person or an idea or thing”? This concept will reinforce the concepts throughout within the pre-knowledge portion of the lesson plan.
- Rather than using the “Virtual Tour” as a means to complete this lesson plan, teachers can cover introductory history and terms and complete the activity at the National Museum of the USAF.

Resources:

<https://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/Visit/Virtual-Tour/>

<https://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/Visit/Museum-Exhibits/Cold-War-Gallery/>

<https://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/Visit/Museum-Exhibits/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/195923/cold-war-in-space-top-secret-reconnaissance-satellites-revealed/>

<https://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/propaganda-techniques-literature-online>

<https://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/argument-persuasion-propaganda-analyzing>

Analysis Chart

What person or organization is the source of the propaganda?

What audience do you think the ad is trying to reach?

What position have the people who placed this propaganda taken?

What kind of opinion or action are they hoping to get from readers?

ARGUMENT, PERSUASION OR PROPAGANDA?

	ARGUMENT	PERSUASION	PROPAGANDA
GOAL	Seeks to discover the “truth”	Seeks to promote an opinion that is rooted in truth	Seeks to advance a political position while providing false or altered information
GENERAL TECHNIQUE	Seeks to convince the audience of the speakers “truth”	Seeks to persuade the audience using emotion or personal relevance to the subject	Seeks to enforce or change audience opinion using emotional and values messages
METHODS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argues both sides of the issue • Supports perspective with evidence • Examines the consequences of accepting or denying the argument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May provide both sides of the issue • Includes emotional appeal with facts • May examine the consequences of accepting or denying the opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides only one side of the issue • Biases and assumptions are used to alter the evidence presented • Ignores the negative consequences of the opinion

PROPAGANDA ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1.) Describe the format of the propaganda:

____ Poster ____ Speech
____ Advertisement ____ Movie
____ PSA ____ Magazine

2.) What propaganda technique(s) are used?

____ Name Calling ____ Glittering Generalities
____ Euphemisms ____ Transfer
____ Testimonial ____ Plain-folk
 ____ Fear

3.) Who or what is the intended audience?

4.) What visual images, if any, appear in the propaganda? What do the images symbolize? What emotions do they seek to arouse?

5.) What key words are used? What emotions or reactions do those words seek to arouse?

6.) What is or was the purpose of this propaganda? What emotion was it trying to elicit?

7.) How effective did you find this propaganda and why?
