

# American Persuasion

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**Content Area: U.S. History**

**Grade Level Options: 11**

**Summary of Lesson:** In this lesson students will analyze the use of propaganda during America's conflicts dating back to the Spanish-American War. Students will then focus on propaganda posters of the World War II era and will determine the effectiveness of these posters along with examining the truth versus the propaganda that is displayed in each of these posters.

**Resources Needed:**

- [This is the Enemy Poster](#)
- [Is Your Trip Necessary? Poster](#)
- Access to Technology
- World War II Posters from the National Archives Powers of Persuasion Exhibit [https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers\\_of\\_persuasion/powers\\_of\\_persuasion\\_home.html](https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers_of_persuasion/powers_of_persuasion_home.html)

## Desired Results

What students will know, do, and understand

**Delaware Social Studies Benchmarks History Two 9-12b:** Students will examine and analyze primary and secondary sources in order to differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations. **Essential for Grade 11**

### Lesson Essential Question

- When analyzing propaganda, why is it important to distinguish between fact and interpretation?

Students should read the following document (have paper copies if no technology is available) <https://www.physics.smu.edu/pseudo/Propaganda/ipatypes.html>

## Learning Plan

### Strategy One: Gathering Information Graphic Organizers

Select one poster from the National Archives website to examine as a whole class. Lead the students through the National Archives Poster worksheet:

[http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/poster\\_analysis\\_worksheet.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/poster_analysis_worksheet.pdf)

### Strategy Two: Extending and Refining Jigsaw

In small groups, have students conduct an independent analysis of a poster -- [This Is the Enemy](#) or [Is Your Trip Necessary?](#) -- using the National Archives Poster worksheet. Students should then create their own Fact/Interpretation T-Chart. Students should use the propaganda techniques reading to ascertain which techniques are being used in the propaganda posters they are analyzing.

Jigsaw student groups and have students share their analyses with one another. Ask them to compare the two documents and respond to the following question:

- Which document uses propaganda techniques more effectively? Explain your answer with evidence from the document.

### Strategy Three: Application Historical Research

Have students in groups of 2-3 research the use of propaganda in other eras of American history. Ask them to select one visual piece of propaganda, explain its historical context and analyze its meaning using the [National Archives Poster worksheet](#) and a [Fact/Interpretation T-Chart](#).

#### Spanish-American War (Yellow Journalism)

<http://www.pbs.org/crucible/frames/journalism.html>

#### World War I

<http://infolab.stanford.edu/~mmorten/propaganda/wwi/Xus--45-1.html>

**Vietnam War** <https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/cnnqo-travel-vietnam-propaganda-poster-art/index.html>

**Social Media Use of Propaganda and “Fake News”** <https://time.com/5008076/nyc-terror-attack-isis-facebook-russia/>

Student groups use screencastify (or similar multi-media platform) to create a short video incorporating an explanation of the various propaganda techniques used in the presentation of the posters above. They should include the following in their presentation:

Date of Poster	
Purpose of Poster	
Techniques Used	
Intended Audience	
Specific Examples of Persuasive Techniques Used	
Effectiveness of Poster	
Is the Poster Factual?	

Poster Title \_\_\_\_\_

Additional questions for discussion:

- In what ways is propaganda from various time periods different?
- In what ways did propaganda remain unchanged?
- Do you believe that the use of propaganda is effective?

## Assessment Evidence

Evidence that will be collected to determine whether or not the desired results are achieved

### Check for Understanding

- Why is it important to distinguish between fact and interpretation when analyzing historical documents and propaganda? Use specific examples from 3 pieces of propaganda in your answer.