

Teaching with the Propaganda of World War II
by Danice Toyias, MCHCE
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Propaganda comes in many forms: cartoons, caricatures, posters, print media, video, music, etc. Propaganda seeks to influence. For our study of WWII, propaganda's purpose is to unify and maintain American focus on the objective of winning the war in both theaters.

Propaganda influences its targeted audience by causing an emotional reaction through (to name a few): Deification, Mythological Origins, Demonization, Dehumanization, Guilt, Fear, Nationalism, and a Shared Historical Memory.

Propaganda operates by taking “cultural myths and symbols and reworks them in the service of nationally conceived aims.”

For this activity, you will be examining 5 pictures. Use the steps below to lead you through the analysis process.

- 1) **Source:** Title, Author, Date Published or Created, Sponsorship (Government or Corporate), Location of Publication.
- 2) **Contextualize:** Place the piece within the context of the period. What was happening at the time of its publication? What was making headlines? What was the national conversation about?
- 3) **Interrogate:** Ask questions of the piece. Try to uncover the author's intent, argument, and influence. Examine the colors, symbols, stereotypes, feeling, tone, mood, language, and subject matter.
- 4) **Corroborate:** Look to outside sources—primary and secondary to help you answer the above. Sometimes there will be holes and you will need assistance. Seek out multiple sources to find out their conclusions and interpretations. Do you agree or disagree with them and why? (If you have internet, you can work on this step. Otherwise list possible sources you could consult to do more research.)
- 5) **Conclude:** What is your interpretation and understanding of the piece?

Ways to gather information from visual sources:

- 1) 4 part (Break image into four parts and examine each section separately.)
- 2) Compare/Contrast
- 3) Concept Map or Graphic Organizer
- 4) Lists
- 5) “Interview” sharing in pairs.

For this summer institute, we are looking at World War II and its legacy. As you experience this over the next few days, please keep in mind these enduring ideas and think of how you can use the materials and strategies presented in your classrooms: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Racism, the role of government in times of national and international crisis, citizenship and what it means to be a citizen, the changing meanings of conservative and liberal, the size of government, perceptions of government's responsibilities towards its citizens, and the government's role in commerce and individual wealth. You may or may not find it surprising that many of these ideas are a direct result of the transformation America went through during World War II!