

Title: September 11 and U.S. Propaganda

Grade Level:

Grades 8-9

Authors:

Shawn Beattie, Howard Suamico School District

Meghan Thomas, Unified School District of DePere

Abbie Ward, Plymouth School District

Ronald Wood, Cedar-Grove School District

Abstract:

In our media saturated society, we are continually bombarded by many different types of information from many different sources. Often it is difficult to sift through the images and audio to reach clear understandings of the world around us. This may be especially true in times of conflict and disaster. Moreover, in these stressful times, the media acts not only to inform but to persuade. Thus as good citizens, we need to be able to analyze the media and its images and audio so as to defend ourselves from political propaganda.

Our goal is to have students able to recognize and analyze propaganda. We will be using the events of 9/11, the War on Terror, and the United States' move towards war against Iraq as the basis of analysis. We do not intend to influence students into becoming pro-war or anti-war. Our objective is to make them aware of how they are being influenced by the audio and visuals they are receiving from the world of mass media.

State Standards:

B.8.1. Interpret the past using a variety of sources, such as biographies, diaries, journals, artifacts, eyewitness interviews, and other primary source materials, and evaluate the credibility of sources.

B.8.3. Describe the relationships between and among significant events, such as the causes and consequences of wars in the United States and world history.

B.8.4. Explain how and why events may be interpreted differently depending upon the perspectives of participants, witnesses, reporters, and historians.

Essential Historical Question:

How can propaganda be used to influence public opinion?

Perspectives on the Question:

9-11 victim

List and explain three reactions a person from this perspective might feel.

American citizen

List and explain three reactions a person from this perspective might feel.

Arab-American citizen

List and explain three reactions a person from this perspective might feel.

Citizens from other countries

(France, Iraq, England, etc..)

List and explain three reactions a person from this perspective might feel.

Learning Targets:

Knowledge

Students develop an understanding of propaganda, why it is used, and its role in history is.

Students develop an understanding of the five major religions, especially the Muslim religion, and be introduced to the beliefs of people living in the Middle East.

Students will know about the roles of influential people and the timeline of events from 9-11 to Operation: Iraqi Freedom.

Skills and Processes

Students will be able to recognize propaganda.

Students will know how to use primary sources.

Students will be able to explain different points of view of the same event.

Students will apply knowledge to create their own propaganda.

Reasoning and Creative Thinking

Students will analyze media.

Students will examine the types of propaganda.

Dispositions and Attitudes

Students will realize that society is influenced by propaganda.

Students will understand that they are living history.

Students will increase their interest in events of the Middle East.

Instruction:Preliminary Activities:

(Activating prior knowledge, identifying critical concepts, understanding the structure of sources)

Class discussion will focus on students' recollections of the events surrounding 9/11.

Following class discussions, the teacher will present the class with a variety of different media images depicting the atrocities of 9/11, and the teacher will ask the students what kind of emotions and reactions come from viewing the media.

The teacher will foster a discussion on how these same images can provoke different reactions/emotions in different people (i.e. American 9/11 victim, American citizen, Arab American, foreigners).

New Learning Activities:

(Content of new information, strategies for understanding, creation and development of product or performance)

The teacher will lead a discussion on the power of images, and then the teacher will discuss the differing types of propaganda.

The teacher will show students examples of propaganda from 9/11 and the lead-up to Operation Iraqi Freedom and discuss the purposes and impacts on citizens in the United States.

The teacher will then have pairs of students explore 9/11 propaganda via internet sites. Students will need to find two examples of propaganda: one that encourages military action and one that discourages it. They should then summarize and explain their chosen propaganda to the class.

Post-Learning Activities:

(Personal connections, synthesis of new information into schema, re-thinking of past assumptions, Questions & Responses)

Once students understand propaganda, they will be required to create their own form of propaganda. The teacher will have students decide their opinion of the war in Iraq and create any form of propaganda.

Resources:Internet:

911 in America: Images and Video from Sept. 11th, 2004

<http://www.libertynews.org/wtc/>

After September 11th: Images from Ground Zero

<http://www.911exhibit.state.gov/>

Funny Saddam Hussein Pictures

<http://politicalhumor.about.com/library/images/blsaddampictures.htm>

The Matzats

<http://www.thematzats.com/propaganda/prop/sld008.htm>

Propaganda Resources on the Web

<http://www.classroomtools.com/proppage.htm>

September 11th Cartoons

http://www.cartoonstock.com/newscartoons/directory/s/september_11th.asp

September 11th Remembered in Cartoons.

<http://cagle.slate.msn.com/news/9-11Remembered/main.asp>

Stories of Sept. 11th

<http://911digitalarchive.org/stories/>

TIME Magazine Online Edition

<http://www.time.com/time/photoessays/911/>

Videos:

CBS Home Video, *What We Saw* (2002).

CNN Home Video, *America Remembers* (2002).

Entertainment Progra Home Video, *Religions of the World: Our World Faiths* (2002).