

6. Propaganda

Activities

I. Test Your Knowledge ...

True or False?

1. Propaganda is used today.
2. Propaganda was first used in World War II.
3. A cereal commercial is propaganda.
4. Propaganda always expresses a negative message.
5. George Bush and John Kerry used propaganda in their election campaigns.
6. Propaganda is/was used to promote the Iraq war.
7. Propaganda is always in the form of cartoons.
8. The word propaganda was originally used in 1622 to refer to a congregation of cardinals in the Catholic Church. This group was instructed to counter the Protestant teachings.
9. Many groups of people have been, and still are, the target of negative propaganda.
10. Governments and political parties frequently use propaganda.
11. Propaganda can be found in school textbooks.
12. Propaganda often encourages people to be afraid.

Bonus:

Which of these definitions best describes propaganda? (Could be more than one — circle all that apply.)

1. information that is spread for the purpose of promoting some cause.
2. information spread by government or powerful group to sway public opinion.
3. well-researched news that shows both sides of a conflict or issue
4. misleading information that supports a political cause or the interests of those in power
5. outright lies that are used to deceive people
6. advertising — information aimed at selling a particular product

Answers:

1. T
2. F
3. F (But could be up for discussion— depending who sponsored the ad, what else is the ad trying to sell ...)
4. F
5. T

Bonus: correct selections are 1, 2 and 4

6. T
7. F
8. T
9. T
10. T
11. T
12. T

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II. Euphemisms

Euphemisms are frequently used in propaganda.

Euphemisms are used to make something sound not as bad as it is. A euphemism is a mild or vague substitute for a blunt, explicit expression. While some euphemisms are socially acceptable, others can hide or blur reality.

Can you match the euphemism to its "plain speak" word or phrase?

Euphemism	"Plain Speak"
Golden Years	Deaths and Injuries
Pre-Owned Automobile	Death
Estate Jewelry	Suspect
Fatal Injury	Bush's environmental plan to cut down trees
Healthy Forests	Genocide
Final Solution	Second-hand Jewelry
Ethnic Cleansing	Used Car
Person of Interest	Sending Jews to concentration camps
Casualties	Imprisonment without due process of law
Resettlement of the Jews (during the Holocaust)	Old Age
Protective Custody	Decision to murder every Jew in Europe

Euphemisms: Discussion Questions:

- Why would we use euphemisms instead of the more common or "plain speak" words?
- What is the effect on the reader or listener when a euphemism is used? What might happen if the basic meanings were used instead of euphemisms?
- Why do you think "Patriot Act" was a good name for the act that was passed after 9/11?
- How many euphemisms can you think of for "dead and buried?" (There are at least 213 ... To see the list check out phrontistery.50megs.com/longpig/dead.html.)

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Suggested Resources on German Propaganda

- 1) "The Goebbels Diaries 1939 – 1941," Translated and edited by Fred Taylor, Putnam, New York, 1983.
- 2) "Propaganda of the German Cinema 1933 – 1945," David Welch, I. B. Tauris, New York, 2001.
- 3) "Propaganda, The Art of Persuasion: World War II," Anthony Rhodes, The Wellfleet press, New Jersey, 1987.
- 4) "Julius Streicher, The man who persuaded a nation to hate Jews,{ Randall L. Bytwerk, Dorset Press, New York, 1983.

And more ...

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Books

- "Hitler's Airwaves: The Inside Story of Nazi Radio Broadcasting and Propaganda Swing" by Horst J.P. Bergmeier and Rainer E. Lotz (High School and up)
- "Propaganda and the German Cinema, 1933 – 1945," David Welch, I.B. Tauris, London, New York, 2001.
- "Germany, Propaganda and Total War, 1914 – 1918," David Welch, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, 2000.
- "Behind Enemy Lines — WWII Allied/Axis Propaganda," Edward Boehm, The Wellfleet Press, Secaucus, NJ, 1989.
- "Propaganda — The Art of Persuasion: World War II, an Allied and Axis Visual Record, 1933 – 1945," Anthony Rhodes, the Wellfleet press, Secaucus, NJ, 1987.

Films

- "Triumph of the Will" (Middle School and up)
- "Heil Hitler: Confessions of a Hitler Youth" (Middle School and up)

Teacher Guides

- **Cartoon Analysis worksheet:**
archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/analysis_worksheets/cartoon.html
- "How Was It Humanly Possible: A Study of Perpetrators and Bystanders During the Holocaust" Written by Irena Steinfeldt, Yad Vashem. Includes a chapter "Prelude to Murder: School in Nazi Germany." (Middle School and up)

Web Sites

- **On Nazi Propaganda:**
calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/ushmm.org/outreach/propag.htm
- **On Joseph Goebbels:**
calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/goebmain.htm
- **On Joseph Goebbels Propaganda Principles:**
psywarrior.com/Goebbels.html
- **On Julius Streicher:**
www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/GERstreicher.htm
jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/Streicher.html