



**STATE OF
DECEPTION**
**THE POWER OF
NAZI PROPAGANDA**

Redefining How We Teach Propaganda



LESSON 3

UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
MUSEUM ushmm.org

LESSON 3: Exploring *State of Deception's* Online Exhibition

LESSON OVERVIEW

When analyzing instances of propaganda, it is important to understand the cultural context surrounding each piece. Propaganda doesn't just work at any time, in any place, and with any audience: it is designed for a specific purpose. There were reasons why Nazi propaganda was effective and its ideas attractive and palatable when displayed. Students will consider why propaganda appeared at a specific time and in a specific place.

LESSON RATIONALE

This lesson challenges students to think critically about the themes and techniques explored in the online exhibition for *State of Deception*. Students will come away with an understanding of the impact of propaganda not only during the period of the Holocaust, but also its impact on our society today.

TIME

One hour

MATERIALS

- 3.1 Multimedia Examples (available at <https://sites.google.com/site/propagandalessonstudy/>)
- 3.2 Station Worksheets (Standard and Honors)
- 3.3 Propaganda Theme Printables

OTHER MATERIALS

- Six large, poster-sized post-it notes, white butcher paper, or poster board (optional)
- Tape
- Six laptops (if possible—only one station absolutely needs a laptop) with Internet access (could also use a computer lab)
- External speakers (three sets for high-tech version of lesson; one set for low-tech version of the lesson)
- Computer and projector (if possible, to project the media from each station to the entire class during final discussion)

Methodological Considerations for Teaching about Propaganda:

1. As with any Holocaust topic, adhere to the Museum's Guidelines for Teaching the Holocaust (available at <http://www.ushmm.org/educators/teaching-about-the-holocaust/general-teaching-guidelines>).
2. Make sure you define the term "propaganda."
3. Provide some historical context for the instances of propaganda that you discuss.
4. Use media literacy questions and processes to have students critically analyze and deconstruct instances of propaganda.
5. Avoid having students create their own examples of propaganda.

Technological considerations for using the *State of Deception* online exhibit in your classroom or computer lab:

In order for you to experience the *State of Deception* website fully, you must have the most recent version of Adobe Flash player downloaded on your computer. If not, you will only see the text version of the website. To check and see if you have the most current Flash player, follow these steps:

1. Go to <http://www.ushmm.org/propaganda>
2. Click on the timeline link at the top of the page.
3. If the webpage says "Text Version" and gives you a message that you need the latest version of Adobe, click on the link provided to download the Adobe player.
4. Follow the instructions for downloading Adobe.

PROCEDURE

Before Class:

1. Print out **3.3 Propaganda Theme Printables** for five of the six stations in the lesson. (All themes have propaganda pieces except "Deceiving the Public.") For full effect, they need to be printed in color. If possible, laminate the propaganda pieces so that they can be reused for different classes. For each theme, there are four pieces of propaganda (for the standard version, there are only two pieces of propaganda each); tape them down to large poster-sized post-it notes, butcher paper, or poster board. You can also just put the propaganda pieces on desks, taping them down, or put them in a large manila envelope in the middle of each group of desks/table.

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2. Arrange technology for the lesson, checking it the day before for latest version of Flash and for availability. When using laptops, make sure the batteries are charged enough to last the entire class. You may also want to have a backup laptop or two available in case of any technical problems. Since iPads aren't compatible with Adobe Flash without downloading and paying for apps, and the *State of Deception* website needs the Flash to play the video, it would be difficult to use iPads for this activity.

3. If in a classroom: Arrange your desks into six groups and put a different theme poster at each table. Arrange the themes in order of the packet for easy flow of groups.

If in a computer lab: Tape the posters to the wall in different areas of the room above the computer you intend for each group to use and put a box with highlighters at each station. Then, follow the setup for computers as described above.

If in a media center, auditorium, or hallway: You can use wall space to hang the posters up and have students stand at each station to view and discuss the propaganda. You can also do this in a classroom if you have enough wall space. Use a desk at each station for a laptop if doing the high tech-version of the lesson. Follow the setup for computers as described above.

- **If doing the high-tech version of the lesson,** put a laptop at each group cued up to the link from the lesson website at: <http://sites.google.com/site/propagandalessonstudy>. Click on "State of Deception Lesson Technology Tips and Site Bookmarks" to go to the page where students can click on the hyperlink(s) for each theme. Add external speakers to the laptops at the following theme groups: "Deceiving the Public," "Writing the News," and "Defining the Enemy."
- **If doing the low-tech version of the lesson,** put a laptop at only "Deceiving the Public," add external speakers, and cue the computer to the link above. Have a plan for keeping the laptops "awake" during the activity in case it is needed. Ask students to move the mouse every few minutes, or monitor it yourself to be ready to type in a password if the computer times out. You can also opt to show all the videos to a large group from your own computer and a projector. This way, you can discuss them as a class and answer the questions together.

4. If you have access to a computer and projector, have a file of all the propaganda pieces ready to show at the end of the lesson.

5. Photocopy the 3.2 Station Worksheets. It would be best if they could all be copied in a packet, using the front and back of each page. There are student packets for a standard, low-level class (3.2 Standard) as well as an honors (3.2 Honors), advanced-level class. If you don't have the technology or time to set up videos for each station, remember that you can project the videos to the entire class instead of having students view the videos in their small groups.

6. Plan how you will group students as they come in. You may want to write the names of themes on index cards, one for every student in the class, evenly distributing the groups. Then, you can either randomly assign students to groups as they come in by handing them an index card with a theme name on it, or write student names and themes on each one so you know who will be in each group.

During Class:

1. Students come in and sit in six prearranged groups.

2. Explain to students that they will be rotating through all of the themes to explore the different pieces of propaganda. If possible, project/display the "Lesson Study" website with the link page to demonstrate where to find the links for the technology portion of the groups. Then, display the online stopwatch, having it count down the time on the screen (or use a kitchen timer). Encourage students to work together as a group, and stress the discussion component and value of thinking out loud with the group. You may even want to appoint a student in each group to read the captions of each piece of propaganda. Also point out to students that advanced vocabulary, terms, and events have been added to the bottom of each theme's page to help further explain the context of each piece. Have students turn to the coordinating theme worksheet for the table they are currently sitting at and begin answering questions. Circulate to each group as they begin to make sure they have all of their questions answered.

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- 3. Students will rotate through all six stations, starting with their pre-assigned group.** Using the handouts provided for the stations, they will analyze pieces of propaganda and access the online *State of Deception* exhibit when possible, if technology is provided. (If technology is not available, you can do some of the technology items as a whole group if you have a computer with access to the Internet that you can project for the class to see. Just tell the students not to answer those questions yet.) Have them rotate in a clockwise fashion, staying with their group to analyze the propaganda at each station together.
- 4. Each rotation is eight minutes long, though you may want to give nine minutes the first time to give everyone time to adjust.** It is recommended that you project an online stopwatch (just Google it and click on the hyperlink to make it full-screen) to count down for each rotation to keep everyone moving and time-conscious. Keep the volume up on your computer since a bell will go off when the time is reached and everyone will know to rotate. Even a kitchen timer would be helpful if you don't have the capability to project for the class. You can adjust the time in each group according to each class's ability level and the time you have available to devote to this lesson, as well as how each class responds to the activity. You may find that you don't need all eight minutes or that you need to add one or two minutes to each session.
- 5. Walk around and monitor students; join in their discussions; answer questions.** Keep track of technology and remind students to keep computers "awake" if you are using a laptop at every station. Different stations often have different levels of tasks and so sometimes groups don't get to the technology piece every time. Remind them that this is okay, but that they need to try to make sure that they get all of the propaganda pieces analyzed first before doing the online exhibit activities, if you are doing the high-tech version of the lesson.
- 6. When students have rotated through all stations, have them return to their original station.**
- 7. Have them discuss as a group or with the class what they have now learned about propaganda and which piece of propaganda impacted them most and why.** If time permits, ask for a few examples from the class and scroll through the document of the propaganda pieces you can project to show the rest of the class the piece in question as you discuss it. Discussions about current-day connections to propaganda, inclusion and exclusion, and free press could also take place at this time. Further discussion of these issues will be explored in lessons 4, 5, and 6.