



## Using Primary Sources

### World War II Navy Submarine Recruiting Posters

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#### **ESSENTIAL QUESTION:**

How can a government influence the feelings of its citizens?

#### **GUIDING QUESTIONS:**

Why would a government want/need to influence the feelings of its citizens?

What are some methods/avenues used to influence a group of people?

What is propaganda?

What forms can propaganda take?

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

After analyzing the posters, students will be able to recognize propaganda as a way for governments to influence its citizens. They will evaluate the role of propaganda in World War II and the importance of propaganda to a government body. Students will then be able to compare and contrast the reality portrayed in the posters to the reality of military service in World War II.

#### **LESSON OVERVIEW:**

During this lesson students will analyze a selection of Navy recruiting posters recognizing their function, possible bias, desired response, etc. They will apply what they have learned about the posters to the knowledge they have of World War II and will determine the importance of propaganda to a government and its people. After the completion of this lesson, students will take a field trip to the Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum to learn about the context surrounding the recruiting posters. They will then apply what they have learned in an analytical essay.

#### **NCSS THEMATIC STANDARDS:**

II. Time, Continuity, and Change

IV. Individual Development and Identity

V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

VI. Power, Authority, and Governance

IX. Global Connections and Interdependence

X. Civic Ideas and Practices

#### **ARKANSAS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS:**

*Grades 9-12 Social Studies (Revised 2000):* PPE.1.3; PPE.1.8; PPE.2.6; PAG 1.4; SSPS.1.1; SSPS.1.2; SSPS.1.3; SSPS.1.4; SSPS.2.2; SSPS 2.4; SSPS.2.6

**TIME FRAME:**

1 class period prior to field trip to Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum

**MATERIALS:**

Copies of the Navy recruiting posters.

Copies of the Poster Analysis worksheet created by the National Archives and Records Administration.

**TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

During any time of conflict (war, military action, upheaval, etc.) one “weapon” is commonly used to unite the population. Governments and private institutions use words, pictures, films and other avenues to convince the general public of a certain point of view. During WWII, this type of strategy was common; the color propaganda posters became a way to unite the American Homefront. For many, these political posters made it easier to make sacrifices because they were supporting their country. For others, the posters convinced them to join the American military.

**OPENING:**

Begin the class by asking the students to brainstorm some examples of things they encounter on a daily basis that try to convince them to take a certain viewpoint. Write these examples on the board. Some possible examples include advertisements, radio/television commercials, billboards, political speeches, etc. Have the students discuss what different devices the examples use to convey their viewpoints.

Then ask the students the following question, “What is propaganda?” Most likely, the students will name wartime posters and other similar examples. Discuss with the students how the same techniques of persuasion that are used in the examples they encounter daily, have often been utilized by governments to influence the general population.

**ACTIVITIES:**

Divide the class into 4 or 8 groups of no more than 5 people per group. Give each group a copy of one of the Navy Recruiting Posters and a copy of the poster analysis worksheet. Instruct the groups to complete the worksheet for their group’s poster. Each group should choose one person to write the answers and another to present the answers to the class. Allow the groups 10-15 minutes to complete the worksheet.

After the students have finished their worksheet, one person from each group should be elected to present their answers to the class. Discuss these answers as a class. In addition to the questions covered by the worksheet, have the students consider the following discussion questions:

- How might an American viewer have responded to this poster? Would the response have been different from a British, German, or Japanese viewer?
- Does the poster provoke any particular emotions in you? Are these similar or different from the emotions that might have been felt by a viewer at the time it was made? Why/Why not and what does this tell you about today’s culture?

**CONCLUSION:**

To finish the class, have each student write a short paragraph discussing the question, “How can a government influence the feelings of its citizens?”

### **MUSEUM ACTIVITY:**

Take the students on a field trip to the Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum. A tour of the submarine, *USS Razorback*, will give the students a hands-on opportunity to consider the importance of the propaganda to the larger military action of WWII and to learn about the reality of submarine service as compared to the image portrayed in the posters they analyzed. If desired, students can complete the exhibit scavenger hunt worksheet available from AIMM.

### **ASSESSMENT:**

This assessment can be completed at the Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum in the education building, at the school upon return, or as homework. Have the student consider the reality of submarine service that they learned about while at the AIMM and write a one page essay comparing and contrasting the representation made by the posters and the reality of WWII submarine service. Students should use what they have learned to include a paragraph discussing the role of propaganda in a time of conflict (war, upheaval, military actions, etc).

*Optional assessment to be used if not taking the field trip to AIMM:* Assign the students a portfolio of propaganda examples as homework. Allow the students at least 3-4 days for completion as they will need to research in the library or on the internet. Each student will use times of conflict (i.e. war, military action, upheaval) in which they will search for examples of propaganda. The particular times of conflict can be assigned by the teacher or picked by the students (the entire class could do the same time period if they wish), but World War II should not be an option. Each student will need to identify 5-7 examples of propaganda to add to their portfolio. Each example should be accompanied by a paragraph explaining the propaganda, what effect it might have had on the viewer it was intended for, what effect it might have had on a viewer from the other side of the conflict, and what it tells us about United States society at the time it was produced. If needed, students can complete the worksheet for each example instead of a free-form paragraph. As a conclusion for the portfolio, have the students write 500-750 words relating the blatant propaganda of periods such as World War II to the more subtle propaganda they might see in recent years or today.

### **REFERENCES AND SOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

#### Internet Sites

Propaganda Critic (informative sight of the kinds of propaganda and the devices used),

<http://www.propagandacritic.com>.

NARA Powers of Persuasion Online Exhibit,

[http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers\\_of\\_persuasion/powers\\_of\\_persuasion\\_home.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers_of_persuasion/powers_of_persuasion_home.html).

Truman Presidential Library, Mobilizing for War: Poster Art of WWII,

<http://www.trumanlibrary.org/museum/posters/index.html>.

#### Books

Doob, Leonard. *Propaganda: Its Psychology and Technique*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935.

Hummel, William and Huntress, Keith. *The Analysis of Propaganda*. New York: William Sloane Associates, 1949.

Lee, Alfred McClung. *How to Understand Propaganda*. New York: Rinehart and Company, 1952.

Pratkanis, Anthony and Aronson, Elliot. *Age of Propaganda: The Everyday Use and Abuse of Persuasion*. New York: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1991.

Thum, Gladys and Thum, Marcella. *The Persuaders: Propaganda in War and Peace*. New York: Atheneum, 1972.

# Poster Analysis Worksheet

1. Describe the poster.

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2. What are the main colors used in the poster?

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3. What symbols (if any) are used in the poster?

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4. Are the messages in the posters primarily visual, verbal, or both?

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5. Who do you think is the intended audience for the poster?

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6. What does the government hope the audience will do?

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7. Does the poster have any possible bias? Explain.

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8. What does this poster tell you about life in the United States when it was made (list at least 2 things)?

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9. Does this poster appeal to the viewer's reason or emotion? How does it make you feel?

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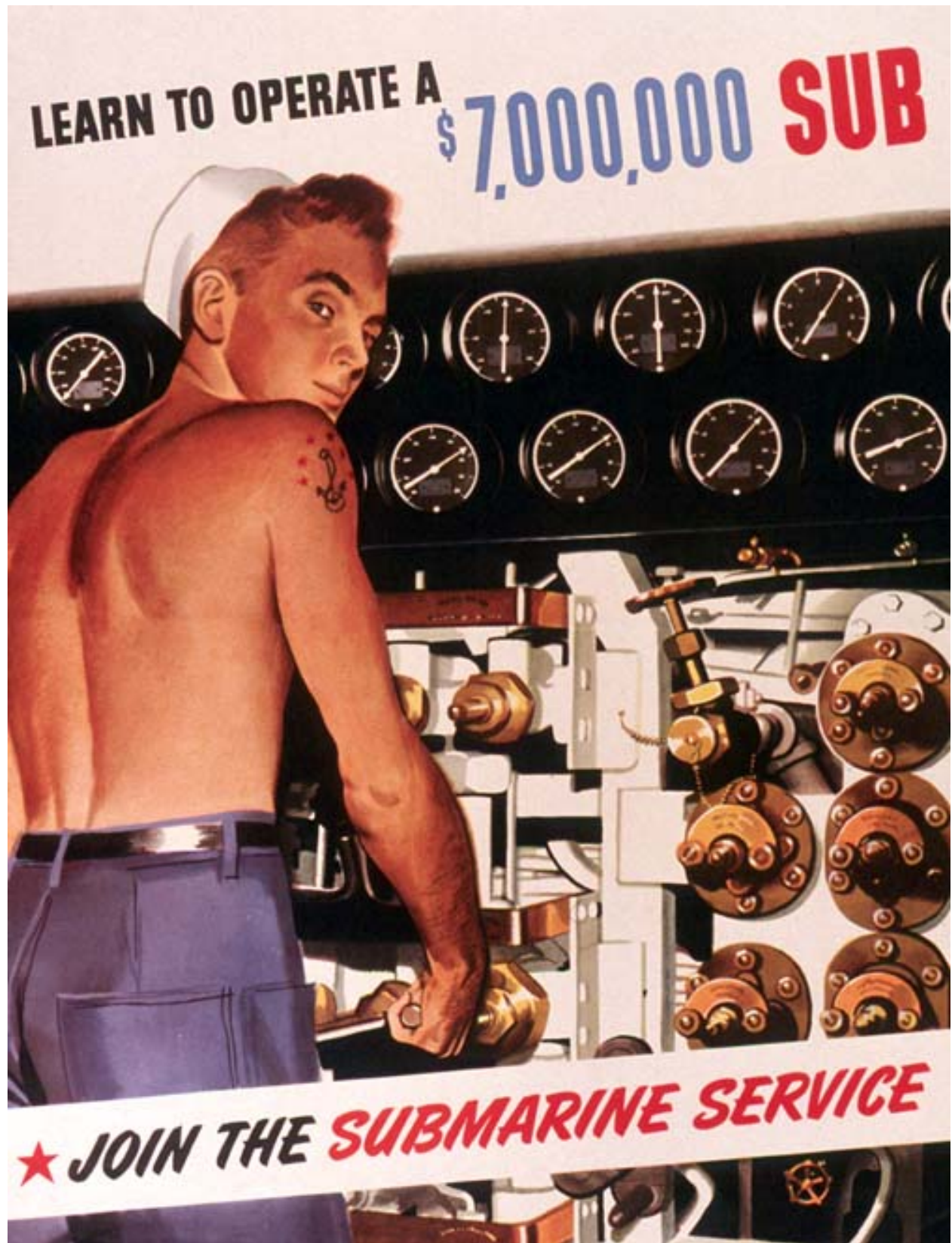
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**Designed and developed by the  
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POSTER #1



POSTER #2

**HIT 'EM WHERE IT HURTS!**



**33% OF JAPAN'S TONNAGE HAS BEEN SUNK. Of this  
77% WAS SUNK BY SUBMARINES!**

**JOIN THE  
Submarine Service**

POSTER #3



POSTER #4



Using Primary Sources: World War II Navy Submarine Recruiting Posters  
Grading Rubric

One-Page Essay

Criteria	D	C	B	A
<b>Comparison/ Contrast Ability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ability to make an effective comparison or contrast is not evident.</li> <li>The vocabulary simply highlights the inability to make a logical comparison or contrast.</li> <li>Hardly any comparisons or contrasts are made, and those included lack variation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A partial attempt is made to create comparisons or contrasts.</li> <li>The vocabulary is sparse, giving the effort to make an analysis only marginally successful.</li> <li>The attempt does include some minor examples but lacks diversity and variety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ability to make comparisons or contrasts is apparent and strongly followed throughout.</li> <li>A careful choice of words is used in making the analysis.</li> <li>The comparisons or contrasts present themselves on a continuous basis, and the variety and diversity are obvious and apparent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ability to generate comparisons or contrasts is fully realized on all levels.</li> <li>The vocabulary is striking as it achieves the objective of making the analysis.</li> <li>Many comparisons or contrasts are skillfully executed, and the diverse settings emphasize a masterful use of classification.</li> </ul>
<b>Grammar/ Syntax</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an absence of acceptable grammar use, and there are fragments or run-on sentences.</li> <li>There is insufficient paragraphing, and the work is haphazardly organized.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a limited awareness and use of acceptable grammar; some correct sentence structure is used.</li> <li>There is a fair attempt at making paragraphs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an adequate use of acceptable grammar.</li> <li>Proper sentence structure and paragraphing are used and executed nicely.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar, syntax, and usage are noteworthy; both simple and complex sentences are used.</li> <li>Excellent paragraph skills are used throughout.</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a complete absence of any supporting evidence, which renders the work superfluous.</li> <li>The material is lacking in scholarship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A moderate amount of evidence is provided to support the work/performance.</li> <li>Some of the material is worthy, and it does indicate a minimal effort at scholarship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A substantial amount of evidence is provided to support the work.</li> <li>Much of it is first-rate, adding substance and a great deal of scholarship to the effort.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A superabundant amount of evidence is provided to support the work/performance.</li> <li>All is excellent, first-rate, prime material at the highest level of scholarship.</li> </ul>

*Optional Assessment: Propaganda Portfolio*

Criteria	D	C	B	A
<b>Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The topic is not examined and properly studied.</li> <li>The complex whole is not divided into separate, logical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A fair attempt to study and examine the topic is made.</li> <li>The complex whole is partially divided into separate parts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The topic is examined and studied.</li> <li>The complex whole is divided into separate parts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The topic is thoroughly examined and studied.</li> <li>The complex whole is divided and subdivided into</li> </ul>

	<p>parts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discoveries of its singular qualities, causes, effects, and motives that determine its true nature have not been addressed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some discoveries of its singular qualities, causes, effects, and motives that determine its true nature are made.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discoveries of its singular qualities, causes, effects, and motives that determine its true nature are evident.</li> </ul>	<p>separate parts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discoveries of its singular qualities, causes, effects, and motives that determine its true nature are revealed in depth.</li> </ul>
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorrect, little, or no information is relevant to the topic.</li> <li>There is unclear or insufficient focus.</li> <li>A poor attempt at including any research is evident.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only a brief and marginal amount of information is relevant to the topic.</li> <li>Some idea of the direction of the content or the story has been presented.</li> <li>A marginal amount of research is evident in portions of the work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A sufficient amount of content is covered.</li> <li>The focus is a good one, and the reader/viewer has a clear concept of the direction.</li> <li>An adequate amount of research is evident throughout.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is expansive coverage of information that provides various resources and views.</li> <li>A strong, clear focus is easily understood.</li> <li>An extensive amount of research is documented and displayed throughout.</li> </ul>
Grammar/ Syntax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an absence of acceptable grammar use, and there are fragments or run-on sentences.</li> <li>There is insufficient paragraphing, and the work is haphazardly organized.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a limited awareness and use of acceptable grammar; some correct sentence structure is used.</li> <li>There is a fair attempt at making paragraphs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an adequate use of acceptable grammar.</li> <li>Proper sentence structure and paragraphing are used and executed nicely.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar, syntax, and usage are noteworthy; both simple and complex sentences are used.</li> <li>Excellent paragraph skills are used throughout.</li> </ul>
Neatness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The work is not neat.</li> <li>It is lacking in cleanliness and is untidy and disorderly.</li> <li>The appearance is unpleasant and discourages further examination.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An effort to be neat is minimally evident.</li> <li>A small degree of energy is expended on cleanliness, bringing a bit of order and a minute degree of tidiness.</li> <li>The appearance is marginally pleasing and upon a close examination shows a lack of orderliness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the most part, there is neat work throughout.</li> <li>The major portion exhibits cleanliness and a focus on being tidy and orderly.</li> <li>A pleasing appearance is evident in all facets of the work, and it encourages further examination.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is neat work to the point of perfection.</li> <li>There is total absorption in presenting material that is clean, tidy, and methodical in arrangement.</li> <li>An excellent appearance throughout encourages continuous examination that brings pleasure to the viewer.</li> </ul>