

LESSON PLAN: NAZI PROPAGANDA

Grade 6

SS6H3 Explain conflict and change in Europe.

b. Explain the rise of Nazism including pre-existing prejudices, the use of propaganda, and events which resulted in the Holocaust.

NAZI PROPAGANDA: EXPLORING STATE OF DECEPTION: THE POWER OF NAZI PROPAGANDA

OVERVIEW: This lesson will explore how propaganda helped the Nazis to advance their political, racial, and ultimately genocidal goals. We will see how propaganda was a critical tool for the Nazis and how their messages, means of communication, and the context in which the messages were spread were essential to the effectiveness of their propaganda.

This lesson is an opportunity for students to discuss and reflect on how propaganda affected society during the Holocaust and how it continues to impact people today. Students will be asked to connect these reflections to their own roles and responsibilities in a democratic society. This lesson explores the online exhibition State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda and also offers a variety of extensions exploring artifacts, images and testimony.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How did propaganda help the Nazis advance their political, racial, and ultimately genocidal goals?

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

At the end of this lesson, students understand:

- The definitions of propaganda, fact, opinion, and belief
- Common techniques of propaganda
- Factors that influence the success of propaganda (audience receptivity, choice of message and means of communication, the context in which it is spread)
- That propaganda was an essential tool used by the Nazi Party to win votes in a democratic Germany, to win support for their vision of a "National Community," and to create a climate of indifference (or even support) as Jews experienced persecution, segregation, deportation, and eventually genocide

Source: USHMM Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Nazi Propaganda

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/nazi-propaganda>

Nazi propaganda played an integral role in advancing the persecution and ultimately the destruction of Europe's Jews. It incited hatred and fostered a climate of indifference to their fate.

WORKSHEET: Exploring State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda Online Exhibition

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<https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Worksheet-State-of-Deception.pdf>

Explore State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda online exhibition. The exhibition covers the role of propaganda in four distinct contexts and periods:

- Selling Nazism in a Democracy (1918-1933)
- The Weapons of Dictatorship: Terror and Propaganda (1933-1939)
- Domestic Propaganda in Wartime (1939-1945)
- Purging Germany of Nazi Propaganda (1945-1948)

ASK THE STUDENTS

What is propaganda? How would you define it?

Where do you see propaganda in our own culture or society?

What are the differences between belief, opinion, and fact?

- A fact is verifiable. We can determine whether it is true by researching the evidence.
- An opinion is a judgment based on facts, an honest attempt to draw a reasonable conclusion from factual evidence.
- Unlike an opinion, a belief is a conviction based on cultural or personal faith, morality, or values.

Provide the Museum's definition of propaganda: Propaganda is biased information designed to shape public opinion and behavior. Its power depends on the following:

- message
- technique
- means of communication
- environment
- audience receptivity

The last two points are essential for propaganda to be successful. What people are experiencing during a particular time makes them more receptive to a specific message.

Propaganda only works when the audience is already receptive to the message.

Propaganda uses one or more common techniques:

- Uses truths, half-truths, or lies
- Omits information selectively
- Simplifies complex issues or ideas
- Plays on emotions
- Advertises a cause
- Attacks opponents
- Targets desired audiences

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EXPLORING THE ONLINE EXHIBITION IN GROUPS

Students will now explore the online exhibition, *State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda*, in four groups. Each group is responsible for research focused on propaganda's role in one of the four time periods.

- Selling Nazism in a Democracy (1918-1933)
- The Weapons of Dictatorship: Terror and Propaganda (1933-1939)
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Students use their graphic organizers to research answers to the key questions using information and examples of propaganda from the exhibition. Instruct students to read their entire assigned section, examining images and reading text, before responding to questions on their graphic organizer.

<https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Worksheet-State-of-Deception.pdf>

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LESSON: Exploring Nazi Propaganda

NAME: _____

WORKSHEET: Exploring [State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda Online Exhibition](#)

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the [exhibition title page](#) and introduction. In your assigned group, research the key questions below from your assigned exhibition section.

Online Exhibition Section	Years Represented

1. What form of government was in power? What was happening in Germany at the time (politically, socially, economically)? Was there free speech or opportunities to express dissenting viewpoints?

2. What was the range of messages spread through Nazi propaganda? What types of communication were used?

3. How did the context, or what was going on in Germany at the time, influence propaganda messages and the ways in which they resonated with German citizens?

4. What do you think were some possible results of propaganda used during this period?

5. Write a 3-5 sentence summary of the section you learned about.

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After reading, groups will discuss the propaganda in their section and answer the key questions. They should prepare a summary of their section to share with the rest of the class.

Students should share examples of propaganda from their exhibition section to illustrate what they learned about the Nazis' messages, vehicles of communication, and the context in which messages were spread.

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State of Deception Online Exhibition

NAME: _____

WORKSHEET: Propaganda Poster Analysis

INSTRUCTIONS: Select one of the poster options below from the State of Deception Online Exhibition. Analyze the poster and answer the question below.

Poster Options
Propaganda Directed at Workers
Propaganda Directed at Women
Anti-Jewish Propaganda
Propaganda Directed at University Students
Propaganda Directed at Farmers
Themes for Nazi Wartime Propaganda
"Behind Enemy Powers: The Jew"

Poster selected: _____

Year it was created: _____

Notes: _____

<p>1. MESSAGE: Think about how line, color, graphics, depictions of people, words, and symbols are used in your selected poster. What are the visual clues you see? What is the message of the poster?</p>	<p>2. CONTEXT: What are people's hopes, fears, and grievances during this time? Think about the political, social, and economic climate. Given that climate, why might this message have had power?</p>

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DISCUSSION

What examples of propaganda made the strongest impression on you and why?

What did you notice about the Nazis' messages and how they changed over time? How did people's ability to access and express opposing points of view change over time?

How did the impact of technology change the way information was spread?

How and why were youth targeted by Nazi propaganda? Why might youth have been more vulnerable to Nazi messages?

CONCLUSION

How did propaganda help the Nazis advance their political, racial, and ultimately genocidal goals?

POSTER ANALYSIS

<file:///C:/Users/Sally/Desktop/DOR/USHMM-Propaganda-Poster-Analysis.pdf>

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State of Deception Online Exhibition
WORKSHEET: Propaganda Poster Analysis

NAME: _____

<p>3. AUDIENCE: Who is the target audience? What about this message would be appealing to this group? What reactions might different audiences have had? Could people access and express alternate viewpoints?</p>	<p>4. CREATOR: Who is the propagandist? What do they hope the audience will... Think? Feel? Do?</p>

<p>5. CONSEQUENCES: What effects could this message have on society? How might this propaganda have helped the Nazis advance their political, racial, and ultimately genocidal goals?</p>

