

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT—2009-2012

Motivating the Population: Propaganda during World War I
From Peter Joseph

Grade: 11th

Length of Class: 48 minutes

Inquiry (Essential Questions):

- How did the federal government maintain public support for the war effort during World War I?
- How were symbols and images used to motivate the population?
- What were the people asked to do out of a spirit of patriotism?

Objectives (Content & Skills):

- Students will:
 - Analyze primary source images
 - Explain the use of symbolic imagery and language
 - Assess the effectiveness of each source in galvanizing public support
 - Create modern propaganda documents

Materials (Included below):

- Image analysis worksheet
- Selected World War I propaganda posters from the Library of Congress World War I poster collection.

Activities:

Set up stations around the room where each poster is printed out in full color (if possible) or project each poster via an LCD projector. For each image used, students should complete an image analysis worksheet. They will identify and explain the symbols used in the poster, summarize any text (in their own words) and grade the image on how effective it is at encouraging action.

After viewing each image, the class should reassemble for a discussion. Create a master list of symbols used in all the images, and discuss why these might have been chosen. Have the students identify common themes and images, and develop an explanation of why these are often used.

Finally, either in the remaining time or as homework, have students select one image and “modernize it” to apply to the current U.S. War on Terror. Using the same symbols and similar message, students should create a poster to increase public support for current conflicts.

Connecticut Grade Level Expectations:

- Standard 1.1
 - 3. Trace the changing role of U.S. participation and influence in world affairs.
 - 7. Analyze the influence of nationalism on American society
 - 11. Analyze how the arts reflect the history of the United States
- Standard 1.2
 - 14. Describe how major events in U.S. history have affected Connecticut citizens
- Standard 1.3
 - 18. Provide examples of conflict and cooperation in world affairs
- Standard 2.1
 - 1. Find relevant and accurate information from a variety of sources to answer a history/social studies question
- Standard 2.2
 - 3. Cite evidence from a source to determine an author's purpose and intended audience
- Standard 3.1
 - 1. Use evidence to develop an interpretation of a historical event
- Standard 3.2
 - 5. Develop criteria for judging the actions or policies of an individual or group in the past

Image Analysis Worksheet: World War I Posters

1. What symbols or images are used in the poster?
2. What messages or words are used in the poster?
3. What does the government want the audience to do?
4. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being best), how effective do you think this poster is? Why do you feel that way?
5. What would make this image more effective?

Image 1



(<http://lweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3g00000/3g09000/3g09600/3g09660r.jpg>)

Image 2



<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3g00000/3g09000/3g09600/3g09685r.jpg>

Image 3



<http://lweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3g00000/3g09000/3g09000/3g09018r.jpg>

Image 4



(<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3g00000/3g08000/3g08300/3g08373r.jpg>)

Image 5



<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3b50000/3b52000/3b52600/3b52630r.jpg>

Image 6



(<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3g00000/3g08000/3g08800/3g08893r.jpg>)

Image 7



<http://lweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3g00000/3g03000/3g03100/3g03186r.jpg>