World War I Propaganda:
Targeting all Americans to Join the War Effort

Gayla Hammer
Lander Middle School
Lander, Wyoming
Grade Level:
6 – 8

Objectives:
At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to

- Understand that World War I propaganda was directed toward different audiences, encouraged United States support of the war, and enlisted United States citizens to pay for the war.
- Write an argument concerning the use of propaganda during wars and include evidence to support claim.
- Create a propaganda poster for the War on Terrorism.

Guiding Question:
How did the United States government use propaganda during World War I to gain the Americans support for the war?

Connections to Common Core:
CCSS.ELA–Literacy.RH.6–8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
CCSS.ELA–Literacy.RH.6–8.9 Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.
CCSS.ELA–Literacy.WHST.6–8.1a Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

Connections to C3 Framework:
D2.His.4.6–8. Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
D2.His.5.6–8. Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.
D2.His.13.6–8. Evaluate the relevancy and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.
D3.2.6–8. Evaluate the credibility of a source by determining its relevance and intended use.
D4.2.6–8. Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequence, examples, and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations.
D4.3.6–8. Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral
technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

**Documents Used:**

**Primary Sources:**

**Propaganda Posters from the National Archives**

“If You Want to Fight! Join the Marines”
http://research.archives.gov/description/512491

“Potatoes in Iowa become 'the newest fighting corps' on the domestic front”
http://research.archives.gov/description/283501

“Food will win the war”
http://research.archives.gov/description/512506

“Eat more corn, oats, and rye products…”
http://research.archives.gov/description/512500

“Little Americans. Do Your Bit. Eat Oatmeal”
http://research.archives.gov/description/512566

“You Buy a Liberty Bond”
http://research.archives.gov/description/512670

“Uncle Sam Says, Garden”
http://research.archives.gov/description/5711623

“Team Work Wins!”
http://research.archives.gov/description/512448

**Secondary Sources:**

*World War I: Germans Attack U.S. Navy Boats* (2:31)
http://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/videos#world-war-i-germans-attack-us-navy-boats

*General Pershing Rallies Support for World War I* (0:32)
Lesson Description:

Overview: This lesson is designed to help students analyze American propaganda during World War I. Propaganda targeted a variety of audiences, and by completing the various lessons, students will have a better understanding of how posters were used to gain support for the war. The United States wanted children, women, and men to participate in the war effort at home and abroad.

Time: 4–5, 60 minute class periods will be needed to complete all activities
   • Activity #1: 20–30 minutes
   • Activity #2: 60 minutes
   • Activity #3: 30–45 minutes
   • Activity #4: 60–90 minutes
   • Assessment: 60–90 minutes

Materials:
   • World War I posters from the National Archives
   • Video clip: World War I: Germans Attack U.S. Navy Boats
   • Speech excerpt: General Pershing Rallies Support for World War I
   • Propaganda Think Sheet
   • Basic propaganda techniques video clip, such as http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pw8mQFCfGxE
   • FBI website lists ideas: http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/investigate/terrorism/help-prevent-terrorist-attacks

Lesson Preparation:
   • Activity #1: Copy one Propaganda Think Sheet per student and locate propaganda techniques video.
   • Activity #2: Print a set of propaganda posters for each group of students.
   • Activity #3: Locate the HISTORY Channel’s World War I: Germans Attack U.S. Navy Boats and General Pershing Rallies Support for World War I video clips. Students will need paper and pencil for note taking.
   • Activity #4: Students will need paper and pencil along with their notes and propaganda posters.
   • Assessment: Gather materials for making propaganda posters or computers for students that may need technology to create a poster instead of paper. FBI website: http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/investigate/terrorism/help-prevent-terrorist-attacks.
Activity 1 Procedure:

- Give each student a copy of the Propaganda Think Sheet
- Ask students to brainstorm the meaning of propaganda and write the definition on their Propaganda Think Sheet.
- Watch a short (3:04 minute) video to introduce propaganda techniques. One example is available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pw8mQFCfGxE, or use another desired source to introduce this concept.
- Stop video after each type of propaganda technique is shown and have the students make connections to current propaganda techniques and examples. Students can identify examples of where propaganda is present in their life: billboards, TV, radio, magazines, missionaries, taxi cabs, buses, Internet, pamphlets, etc.
- Ask students to rewrite a new definition for propaganda based upon the new information.

Activity 2 Procedure:

- Hand out sets of World War I propaganda posters to groups of students
- Using the Propaganda Think Sheet, ask students to independently analyze the posters by writing what catches his or her attention in the poster and the artist’s message.
- Students can work in small groups to determine the most important ideas depicted in the posters, the target audience, and five “talking points” to use during the group discussion.
- Students meet with their group to share what they think the artist’s purpose, targeted audience and meaning for each poster by using specific evidence from the posters.
- The teacher will meet with each group to guide the thinking of the students with higher level thinking skills: analyzing, evaluating, or creating ways to increase the students’ understanding of the messages on the posters.
- The teacher can then engage in a group discussion. Discuss the:
  - Discuss the effectiveness of propaganda techniques to encourage support of World War I
  - Identify the targeted audiences
  - Consider the reason the government targeted certain groups of people.
  - Discuss the techniques used in the posters and purpose.
  - Discuss if the posters would inspire the students to enlist in the war.
Activity 3 Procedure:
- Listen to *General Pershing Rallies Support for World War I* speech excerpt.
- In groups, students should discuss if the use of the World War I posters, video, or speech was a more effective method to encourage support of the war. Provide reason and evidence for their choice.
- Groups should share their ideas as a whole class.

Activity 4 Procedure:
- Based on the information students learned from analyzing the World War I propaganda posters, watching the HISTORY Channel videos, and listening to Pershing's speech students can write an essay deciding if the American government should use printed propaganda to gain support for a war, or if videos or speeches are more effective.
- Require students to include evidence from the primary sources in their essay.

Assessment Materials:
- Students will create a propaganda poster to promote ways the American public can protect the country from the War on Terrorism. Use the FBI website to generate ideas: [http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/investigate/terrorism/help-prevent-terrorist-attacks](http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/investigate/terrorism/help-prevent-terrorist-attacks)

Methods for Extension:
- Students can write and record public service radio and TV commercials.
- Students can interview people that lived through World War II, the Korean War, or conflicts in Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Iraq, or Afghanistan to identify how support for wars has changed over the years. Students will research techniques the American government has used from World War II to present day to encourage support of each war or conflict.

Adaptations:
- **English Language Learners:** Pre-teach the vocabulary associated with the lesson.
- **Special Needs Students:** Pre-teach the vocabulary, consider group students are assigned, find posters that have clear messages, so students can be successful with the lesson, or require only 4 out of the 8 posters to be analyzed. Let students use the computer to create a poster, if that would help the students be more successful.
Bibliography

**Primary Sources**


**Secondary Sources**

http://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/videos#world-war-i-germans-attack-us-navy-boats.
World War I Propaganda Think Sheet

What is propaganda?

After watching a short video clip redefine propaganda:

Where have you seen or experienced propaganda?

Directions: Analyze each poster to identify whose attention the artist was attempting to gain and the meaning of the poster.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poster</th>
<th>What catches your attention in the poster?</th>
<th>What is the artist's message?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Poster" /></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Poster" /></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Poster</td>
<td>What catches your attention in the poster?</td>
<td>What is the artist’s message?</td>
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<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Poster" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Poster" /></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster</td>
<td>What catches your attention in the poster</td>
<td>What is the artist’s message?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Poster" /></td>
<td>[Text from image]</td>
<td>[Artist’s message]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Poster" /></td>
<td>[Text from image]</td>
<td>[Artist’s message]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Poster" /></td>
<td>[Text from image]</td>
<td>[Artist’s message]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Synthesis:

What were the most important ideas that are represented in the posters?

Whose attention are the artists of the posters trying to catch?

Talking Points: Before you meet with your team to discuss the World War I propaganda posters, write down 5 ideas that you want to share with your group.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.