



**Comm Skills Virtual Learning**

**Public Speaking**

**Evaluating Propaganda**

**May 21, 2020**



Lesson: May 21, 2020

## Objective/Learning Target:

**Students will recognize that propaganda activates strong emotions, simplifies ideas, appeals to audience needs, and values, and targets opponents.**

# Bell Ringer/Let's Get Started

Name places that propaganda is found.

# Lesson/Activity

Propaganda can be found in many different forms and genres of communication and expression.

People may easily recognize propaganda in advertising. However, we may be less likely to notice propaganda in the news, education, or entertainment media.

Let's review the six locations where propagande can be found:

Advertising, education, entertainment, journalism and public relations, government and politics, activism and advocacy

# Lesson/Activity

Advertising: There is a difference between advertising and propaganda. Advertising supports sales and marketing goals. Advertisers want to generate increased consumption of their commercial products and services by using a variety of forms of mass media and digital media to persuade readers, viewers, users or listeners. The public is generally aware of advertising and recognizes its purpose. Many forms of mass media that can be accessed for free—including broadcast television, radio, and search engines—depend on selling advertising space to businesses that want to sell products and services to audiences. But advertising can be propaganda when it activates strong emotions, attacks opponents, or simplifies information to shape people's attitudes and behaviors.

# Lesson/Activity

Education: From kindergarten to college, some forms of education are explicitly designed to lead people to accept a particular worldview. Education can be a form of indoctrination when certain doctrines, ideas, information, values and beliefs are not permitted to be questioned. Propaganda enters the classroom in many ways. Many businesses and technology companies provide curriculum materials to educators. These are explicitly designed to promote a particular point of view.

For example, biotechnology firms provide videos, lesson plans, and other materials for science teachers. In Illinois, a state law mandates that schools promote a positive image for coal mining.

# Lesson/Activity

Entertainment: Some stories are just entertainment, but many stories are also a form of propaganda. Stories offer ideas and information about good and evil, right and wrong, thus embedding values and ideology. In many American movies and video games, violence is depicted as justified and morally courageous, which is a value message that is generally not questioned in society. Another way that propaganda is embedded in entertainment is through native advertising or sponsored content, where a company's world view is presented as a form of entertainment.

# Lesson/Activity

Journalism & Public Relations: Public relations is the term used for communication professionals who seek to shape perceptions and influence public opinion on behalf of a business client. PR people feed journalists information based on the agenda and goals of their clients. They may aim to get information and positive opinions about a business into the news by carefully crafting events, video news releases, blogging, newsletters, policy documents, and social media posts. In general, people are not aware of how public relations efforts have shaped the content of newspaper articles, blog posts, or other online information.



# Lesson & Activity

Government and Politics: Throughout the 20th century, the United States has generated war propaganda by defining battles as conflicts between good and evil. Politicians use propaganda to get elected. They talk to reporters about topics and issues that get printed.

Propaganda can also be used to help improve public health or address social issues. You may be familiar with public service announcements (PSAs) that aim to alter your behavior. By reshaping perceptions of social norms, public service campaigns can have a beneficial impact on changing attitudes and behaviors.

# Lesson/Activity

Activism and Advocacy: People who are trying to improve society or create social change use propaganda to influence public opinion. Activists try to promote social, political, economic, or environmental change through using communication activities and public events that attract attention and influence people's knowledge, attitudes, and opinions.

# Practice

Brainstorm at least one contemporary example for each of the six locations and describe it.

Search the [Mind Over Media](#) website to find example for all six locations.

You may also search for examples online and then Upload them to the website.

Reflect in a well-composed paragraph:

Which has a greater impact on society: propaganda in entertainment, propaganda in education, or propaganda in news? Explain your answer using evidence and reasoning,

# Additional Resources

[Entertainment or Propaganda?](#)

[Propaganda at the Movies](#)

[Public Relations and Propaganda Techniques](#)