



Comm Skills Virtual Learning

Public Speaking

Defining Propaganda

May 19, 2020



Lesson: May 19, 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

In your own words, define propaganda.

Locate or draw an example.

Lesson/Activity

Let's review the [definitions of propaganda](#) that we looked at yesterday.

Which definitions did you like best?

Notice that the definitions come from different time periods and cultures. Why might the definitions of propaganda change over time and between cultures?

Activity: Create a custom definition of propaganda using elements from the definitions to express your personal understanding of the concept as it is relevant to the 21st century.

Lesson/Activity

Propaganda is defined in different ways but it has always been an important part of contemporary society and it continues to have relevance today.

Although propaganda takes many forms, it can be recognized by its use of techniques that activate strong emotions, simplify ideas, respond to audience needs and attack opponents.

Propaganda can be distinguished from other forms and genres of communication by some distinctive properties.

Lesson/Activity

Propaganda generally appeals to audiences when it:

- a. Evokes strong emotion
- b. Appeals to audience needs
- c. Simplifies information and ideas
- d. Attacks opponents

Practice

Select an example of contemporary propaganda from the [Mind Over Media](#) gallery and identify which techniques are used.

Identify how your chosen example of propaganda may use one or more of the four techniques of propaganda.

Which of these four techniques is potentially most powerful? Which is most dangerous? Why? Construct a paragraph in which you use evidence and reasoning to explain your ideas.

Practice

Propaganda evokes strong emotions, appeals to audience needs, simplifies information and ideas, and attacks opponents. These four techniques can bypass the critical thinking that is necessary to analyze these powerful forms of persuasion. That's why recognizing propaganda techniques can be an important first step in developing critical thinking about media messages.

Additional Resources

[Glossary of Media Literacy Terms](#)

[What is Propaganda?](#)