



## JUDGING PROPAGANDA

(45 minutes)

### OBJECTIVE

Students learn to identify various forms of propaganda.

### MATERIALS

*Judging Propaganda* handout; writing and drawing materials

### GET READY

- ✓ Make a copy of the *Judging Propaganda* handout for each student in your class.
- ✓ Share with your students that advertisers, candidates, and the media at large often use propaganda techniques to influence opinions — these approaches can be found in television, the radio, and in magazines and newspapers. Provide examples to your class.
- ✓ Share with your students information from the “Political Propaganda” section of the Appendix.

### INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ After sharing with your students some background information on what propaganda is, give an example of each type of propaganda technique listed on the activity handout.
- ✓ Once you think students have a handle on the various techniques, have them complete the handout either individually or in small groups.
- ✓ Go over the handout as a class:
  - ✓ Answers: 1-b, 2-e, 3-a, 4-d, 5-j, 6-h, 7-c, 8-f, 9-g, 10-i.
- ✓ Now share some more examples you have made up. Have the students guess which techniques you are using. Make sure they are comfortable with the different terms.

- ✓ Have your students come up with their own examples now. They may choose a technique and apply it to a product, a candidate, or an issue.
- ✓ Your students should now write out their propaganda message in the form of an advertisement. Have them support their advertisement with a picture.
- ✓ Have your students present their advertisements and ask the class to guess which technique they are using.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Can you think of examples of propaganda you have heard? What makes these examples propaganda? What techniques are being used?*
- ★ *What is the purpose of propaganda?*
- ★ *Can you be truthful and write propaganda? How or how not?*
- ★ *Is all propaganda bad? What would make some propaganda bad?*
- ★ *Do you think propaganda is effective? How do you think propaganda affects people as they live their lives?*

### MORE!

Have students bring in various pieces of propaganda from the media. They should identify and share the propaganda technique being used.



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Listed below are names of propaganda techniques, followed by specific examples. Match the name of the technique to the example by placing the letter in the box.

- a. EMOTIONAL APPEAL
- b. GLITTERING GENERALITIES
- c. TESTIMONIALS
- d. BANDWAGON
- e. PLAIN FOLKS
- f. SCIENTIFIC APPROACH
- g. SNOB APPEAL
- h. CARD STACKING
- i. TRANSFER
- j. NAME-CALLING

- 1. These are vague, nice-sounding descriptions of things: "Have a lawn that makes you proud." "Get the biggest and best for your money." "...stronger, brighter."
- 2. This appeals to your sense of home and family: "Lemonade, just like grandma used to make." "The hearth-baked goodness of whole grain bread." "It's as American as apple pie."
- 3. This is a direct line to your fear, anger, pity, or sense of humor: "Don't be bullied into paying more taxes than you need to." "If you know the feeling of a dead battery on a lonely road, then buy..."
- 4. Since many people want to do what everyone else is doing, you are urged to hop aboard and join the crowd: "Be like all the others in your neighborhood and roller skate under the stars..." "Join the younger generation, vote for..."
- 5. One blames problems on a particular group, person, or idea: "I don't want those big-mouthed kids in the library." "Our downfall began under the other party." "Your money problems are caused by that party."
- 6. One only presents one side and hides the other. One only presents what is favorable or what is unfavorable, whatever serves the cause.
- 7. These refer to people who are either unnamed, unknown, or famous who have something positive to say about the product, issue or candidate. Everyone is made to sound like an expert: "Most experienced mothers depend upon..." "These movie stars are voting for..."
- 8. Tests, statistics, survey, and pseudo-scientific jargon are used to be convincing: "Four out of five dentists use..." "Research shows that..." "The polls show our candidate ahead."
- 9. These give the impression that people of elegance, wealth, good taste, and intelligence will buy the product or vote for the issue or candidate: "When only the very best will do, buy..." "People of status will vote for..."
- 10. One groups things for a stronger effect. The following combinations of traits do not necessarily go together: "young and joyous," "thick and juicy," "old and wise."