

★

**GREAT WAR, FLAWED PEACE,  
AND THE LASTING LEGACY  
OF WORLD WAR I**

★



THE UNITED STATES  
WORLD WAR ONE  
CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

PRITZKER  
MILITARY  
FOUNDATION

NHD  
NATIONAL  
HISTORY DAY

# MOBILIZING THE MASSES: PROPAGANDA ON THE HOME FRONT DURING WORLD WAR I



**GUIDING QUESTION:** How did the Allied and the Central Powers use propaganda to depict their enemies to mobilize their populations to fight in the war? What are the possible long-term consequences of wartime propaganda?

## AUTHOR

Bradley Liebrecht  
West Valley Junior High School  
Yakima, Washington

## WHY?

I have a wall of famous iconic American posters in my classroom and the famous Uncle Sam, “I Want You” recruitment poster from World War I inspired me to write this lesson. I use political cartoons in my classroom all the time and this lesson allowed me to expand my academic horizons (and give students a better answer when they ask about the poster).

## OVERVIEW

The purpose of this lesson is to help students understand the purpose of propaganda and how governments successfully used propaganda during World War I. This lesson will also ask students to compare how the belligerent nations (and the United States in particular) depicted their enemies and mobilized their respective populations to fight the war.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Identify the different messages embedded in World War I propaganda;
- > Compare and contrast different propaganda images from different nations; and
- > Evaluate (using inferences from the historical sources) the long-term consequences of wartime propaganda.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Poster, *The Balkan Parrot*, 1917  
British Library / National Library of Serbia  
<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/balkanparrot>

Poster, *The Enemy of Humankind [Vrag roda chelovecheskogo]*, 1915  
British Library (HS.74/273(28))  
<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/arch-enemy>

Poster, Giovanni Capranesi, *Sottoscrivete al prestito*, 1917  
Texas War Records Poster Collection, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin (85.160.42)  
<https://hrc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15878coll26/id/497>

Poster, H. Falter, *Pour le suprême effort. Emprunt National Société Générale*, 1918  
Texas War Records Poster Collection, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin (85.130.548)  
<https://hrc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15878coll26/id/427/rec/85>

Poster, Frederick Strothmann, *Beat back the hun with liberty bonds*, 1918  
Library of Congress (94505100)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/94505100/>

Poster, James Montgomery Flagg, *Wake up America! Civilization calls every man, woman and child!*, 1917  
Library of Congress (91726511)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/91726511/>

Poster, John Warner Norton. *Keep these off the U.S.A. - Buy more Liberty Bonds*, c. 1918  
Library of Congress (2002722447)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002722447/>

Poster, Julius Ussy Engelhard, *Bolschewismus bringt Krieg, Arbeitslosigkeit und Hungersnot*, 1918  
Library of Congress (2004665871)  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2004665871/>

Poster, Lucian Bernhard, *Tretet ein in den Grenzschutz Ost! Schütz die Heimat gegen Bolschewismus! / Bernhard*, 1919  
Library of Congress (2004665847)  
<https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3g11520/>

Poster, Norman Lindsay, ? [*The Question Mark*], 1918  
Imperial War Museum (Art.IWM PST 3242)  
<https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/16786>

Poster, Norman Lindsay, *Will you fight now or wait for this*, 1918  
Australian War Memorial (ARTV00079)  
<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/ARTV00079/?image=1>

Poster, Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, *Britain needs you at once*, 1915  
Library of Congress (2003675387)  
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2003675387/>

## SECONDARY SOURCES

Christopher B. Daly, "How Woodrow Wilson's Propaganda Machine Changed American Journalism," April 28, 2017  
*Smithsonian Magazine*  
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/how-woodrow-wilsons-propaganda-machine-changed-american-journalism-180963082/>

Primary Source Analysis Tool  
Library of Congress  
<https://loc.gov/teachers/primary-source-analysis-tool/>

## MATERIALS

- > Propaganda Packet
- > Primary Source Analysis Tool
- > Writing Assessment and Rubric
- > Projector

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Print one copy of (or make accessible electronically) the Propaganda Packet for each group of four to five students.
- > Print one copy of the Primary Source Analysis Tool and the Writing Assessment and Rubric for each student.
- > Set up classroom technology to project propaganda images.
- > Test all online resources before class.
- > Divide students into groups of four or five students each.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE: ANALYZING PROPAGANDA (15 MINUTES)

- > Project the poster, *Wake up America!* by James Flagg in the front of the room.
- > Ask students to examine the image in their groups and have a group recorder (teacher or student selected) write down the group's observations and questions.
- > Allow each group to briefly share their questions and observations.
- > Possible questions to prompt sharing could include:
  - » *Who is the woman in the picture?*
  - » *What is the danger presented in the poster?*
  - » *What do you think James Flagg (the artist) is wanting Americans to do?*
- > Push students to consider the purpose of the poster and the messages embedded in the image.

### ACTIVITY TWO: ANALYZING PROPAGANDA FROM VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES (60 MINUTES)

- > Distribute one Propaganda Packet to each group.
- > Distribute one Primary Source Analysis Tool to each student.
- > Select one propaganda piece to use as a whole-group sample and model how students should use the Primary Source Analysis Tool.
  - » **Teacher Tip:** Let students know that they may or may not be able to read or translate the words on some of the posters. Two additional posters from the United States are included in the packet. These can be used to differentiate instruction or could be removed at teacher discretion.
- > Instruct students to select one piece of propaganda in their small groups for discussion.
- > Project the following questions on the board for students to consider during their small group discussion:
  - » *How do the various Allied and Central Power nations depict their enemies?*
  - » *What do the propaganda pieces have in common?*
  - » *How are the propaganda pieces different?*
  - » *Who is represented in the propaganda from each country?*
- > Ask each student to select one piece of propaganda and complete the Primary Source Analysis Tool independently.
- > Allow students to share their pieces with their small groups.
- > Give each student a copy of the *Smithsonian Magazine* article, "How Woodrow Wilson's Propaganda Machine Changed American Journalism."

- > Project the following questions on the board for students to consider as they read:
  - » *How did the government shape (or even create) news during the war?*
  - » *Did the actions of the Committee on Public Information (CPI) during the war present a danger to the free press? Why or why not?*
- > Engage the whole group in a group discussion of the questions or allow a few minutes for students to talk with their groups.

### **ASSESSMENT**

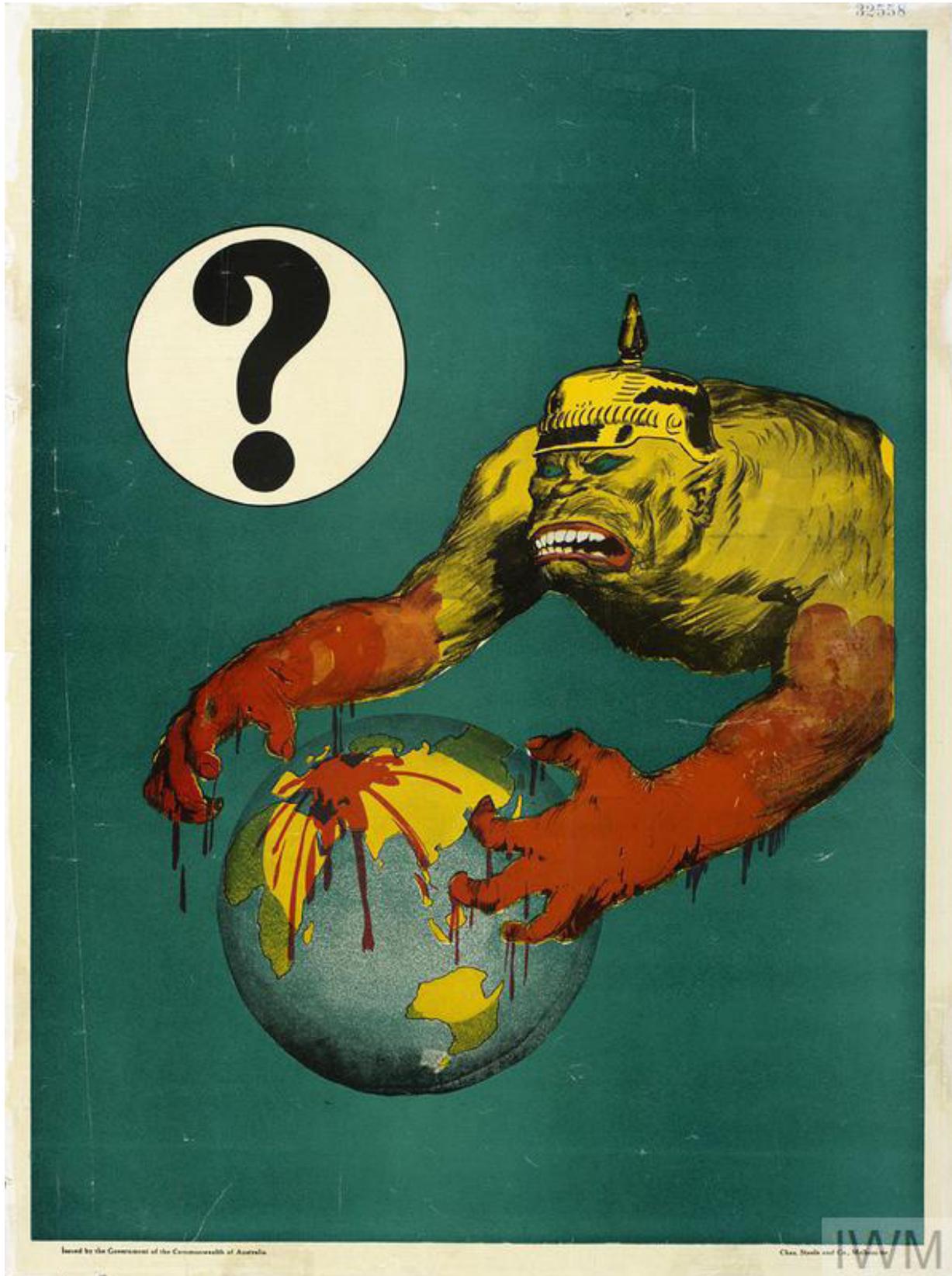
- > Distribute the Writing Assessment and Rubric to the class and review the prompt: *How did the Allied and the Central Powers use propaganda to depict their enemies during World War I? What might be some of the short and long-term impacts of those propaganda efforts? Support your answer with evidence from the primary and secondary sources.*
- > The Writing Assessment Rubric can be used to score the assessment.
- > Give students time with computers and other individual supports as needed.

### **METHODS FOR EXTENSION**

- > Students with more interest in propaganda could research propaganda from World War II using the Library of Congress.
- > Students could research the Committee on Public Information (CPI) and the role the agency played during World War I.

# PROPAGANDA PACKET: AUSTRALIA

POSTER, NORMAN LINDSAY, ? [THE QUESTION MARK], 1918  
IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM (ART.IWM PST 3242)



**PROPAGANDA PACKET: AUSTRALIA**

POSTER, NORMAN LINDSAY, *WILL YOU FIGHT NOW OR WAIT FOR THIS*, 1918  
AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL (ARTV00079)



ISSUED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

W. E. SMITH LTD, SYDNEY

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

ARTV00079

**PROPAGANDA PACKET: FRANCE**

POSTER, H. FALTER, *POUR LE SUPRÊME EFFORT. EMPRUNT NATIONAL SOCIÉTÉ GÉNÉRALE*, 1918  
TEXAS WAR RECORDS POSTER COLLECTION, HARRY RANSOM CENTER, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT  
AUSTIN (85.130.548)



**PROPAGANDA PACKET: GERMANY**

POSTER, LUCIAN BERNHARD, *TRETET EIN IN DEN GRENZSCHUTZ OST! SCHÜTZ DIE HEIMAT GEGEN BOLSCHEWISMUS!* / BERNHARD, 1919

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (2004665847)



**PROPAGANDA PACKET: GERMANY**

POSTER, JULIUS USSY ENGELHARD, *BOLSCHEWISMUS BRINGT KRIEG, ARBEITSLOSIGKEIT UND HUNGERSNOT*, 1918  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (2004665871)



**PROPAGANDA PACKET: GREAT BRITAIN**

POSTER, PARLIAMENTARY RECRUITING COMMITTEE, *BRITAIN NEEDS YOU AT ONCE*, 1915  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (2003675387)



**PROPAGANDA PACKET: ITALY**

POSTER, GIOVANNI CAPRANESI, *SOTTOSCRIVETE AL PRESTITO*, 1917

TEXAS WAR RECORDS POSTER COLLECTION, HARRY RANSOM CENTER, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN (85.160.42)



# PROPAGANDA PACKET: RUSSIA

POSTER, *THE ENEMY OF HUMAN KIND [VRAG RODA CHELOVECHESKOGO]*, 1915  
BRITISH LIBRARY (HS.74/273(28))





**PROPAGANDA PACKET: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

POSTER, JOHN WARNER NORTON. *KEEP THESE OFF THE U.S.A. - BUY MORE LIBERTY BONDS*, C. 1918  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (2002722447)



**PROPAGANDA PACKET: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

POSTER, FREDERICK STROTHMANN, *BEAT BACK THE HUN WITH LIBERTY BONDS*, 1918  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (94505100)



**PROPAGANDA PACKET: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

POSTER, JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG, *WAKE UP AMERICA! CIVILIZATION CALLS EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD!*, 1917  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (91726511)



# PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS TOOL



## OBSERVE

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## REFLECT

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## QUESTION

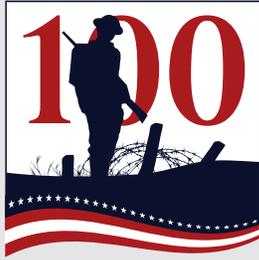
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION

## WRITING ASSESSMENT AND RUBRIC

**Prompt:** How did the Allied and the Central Powers use propaganda to depict their enemies during World War I? What might be some of the short and long-term impacts of those propaganda efforts? Support your answer with evidence from the primary and secondary sources.

	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Emerging
Argument	Clearly stated argument using important words from the prompt and is written in a provable sentence. Shows sophisticated thought and organizational strategy.	Stated argument using important words from the prompt and is written in a provable sentence.	Stated argument includes words from the prompt, but it is not provable with the available evidence.	Argument is unclear or not present. Argument is not provable with the available evidence.
Organization	Response has a clear and logical structure. Response is clear from beginning to end and makes effective use of transitions to connect ideas and evidence.	Response has a logical structure. Response is clear from beginning to end and is generally focused and makes use of transitions to connect ideas and evidence.	Response is unclear and/or demonstrates an attempt at organization. Response lacks transitions and ineffective introduction and conclusion.	Response is unclear and/or shows little evidence of organization.
Evidence	Evidence includes strong quotes or explicit references from more than three sources that relate directly back to the argument. Sources are clearly cited in the response.	Evidence includes strong quotes or explicit references from three sources that relate directly back to the argument. Sources are clearly cited in the response.	Evidence is general in nature. It relates to the argument but response does not contain a specific reference or quote. Some citations may be missing.	Evidence does not relate to the thesis. Sources are not cited in the response.
Commentary	Explains how evidence clearly proves the argument while adding their own analysis and interpretation of the text.	Explains how evidence proves the argument while adding some analysis or interpretation of the text.	Attempts to explain how the evidence proves the argument but may rely on restating evidence rather than interpretation.	Does not explain how evidence relates back the text. Restates evidence only.
Conclusion	Clearly and uniquely restates argument in own words using keywords or phrases.	Restates argument in own words using keywords or phrases.	Uses exact argument as a conclusion.	No conclusion present.



# THE UNITED STATES WORLD WAR ONE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION



[ww1cc.org](http://ww1cc.org)

FOUNDING SPONSOR  
PRITZKER  
MILITARY  
MUSEUM & LIBRARY

THE STARR FOUNDATION