

The Art of Persuasion

Mr. Burke/English

Overview

The purpose of this mini-unit is to improve our understanding of how ideas and images are used to persuade people to believe, feel, or act in certain ways. We face such propaganda every minute of the day in the form of advertisements. During war and other periods of crisis, such tools of persuasion become especially important as the accompanying poster art shows.

Analysis of Originals

Before you begin to create your own project, do the following, using the attached page of sample World War Two propaganda posters from Germany and America. Pay attention to how the artist uses the following: color, typestyle, images, fonts, language to persuade people.

- ❑ "Read" through the different posters to familiarize yourself with them.
- ❑ Make a list of the elements used in these posters (i.e., answer the question, "What are these posters (and their arguments) made of?")
- ❑ Explain how the posters work to persuade people, drawing examples from at least two posters to support your assertion.
- ❑ Choose two posters---one German, one American---and analyze them in depth, explaining *what* they are trying to accomplish, *how* they are trying to accomplish it, and the extent to which you think it would be successful.
- ❑ Choose two posters---they can be the same two---and write a paragraph in which you compare and contrast them, specifically referring to the ways in which they are similar and different, which one is more effective (and why). Support all thinking with examples from the posters.

Possible Products

You are free to produce any of the following as a means of persuading people of your point:

- ❑ Poster
- ❑ Post card
- ❑ Web site
- ❑ Song
- ❑ Commercial

Requirements A completed project will have the following parts:

- ❑ Your analysis as outlined above under "Analysis of Originals"
- ❑ Your product (poster, song, etc.)
- ❑ Slogan (should be included in your product)
- ❑ Written explanation that includes the following:
 - ❑ The objective (i.e., what you are trying to accomplish through your product)
 - ❑ Basis of the argument (e.g., we are trying to link national pride with fighting in the war)
 - ❑ Analysis of overall effectiveness of your effort that evaluates:
 - ❑ Words
 - ❑ Images
 - ❑ Ideas
- ❑ Presentation of your product to the class next Friday

Guidelines

While we are studying a novel about war, I would like you to use this assignment to think about how to persuade people to think a certain way about an idea or issue that is important to you. Thus you may do your project on something unrelated to war if you prefer. Use the attached examples or visit www.adcouncil.org to get ideas.