

Exemplary Lesson Annotation Guide

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History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.

—Maya Angelou

This annotated lesson plan is designed to support educators in understanding why this is an exemplary model for teaching about propaganda during the Holocaust. It serves as both a teaching resource and a professional learning tool, highlighting key instructional strategies, historical content and pedagogical choices that align with Oregon's Social Science Standards.

Lesson Overview

This lesson, **"Critically Analyzing Propaganda During the Holocaust,"** is designed to help students explore the power and influence of propaganda in shaping public opinion, both historically and in contemporary contexts. Developed using materials from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's (USHMM) exhibition, "State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda," the lesson fosters critical inquiry and analytical thinking by prompting students to examine how the Nazis used propaganda as a tool of persuasion to reinforce existing prejudice and racism and advance their genocidal goals.

Objectives of the Annotation Guide

This resource is designed to

- ⦿ Demonstrate effective lesson design that fosters critical thinking, historical inquiry and media literacy.
- ⦿ Model best practices for teaching sensitive historical topics, ensuring lessons are inclusive, culturally responsive and relevant to students' lives.
- ⦿ Support teacher reflection on how lessons connect to standards and promote student engagement, voice and action-oriented learning.

How the Annotation Guide is Organized

The annotations are embedded directly within the lesson plan, mirroring its structure. Each section of the lesson—Essential Question, Educational Outcomes, Teacher Preparation, Parts One, Two and Three of the Lesson, Conclusion, Assessment, Extensions and Additional Details—includes callouts that

- ⦿ Highlight exemplary practices (e.g., clear learning objectives, critical inquiry prompts, student-centered activities).
- ⦿ Explain why specific strategies are effective, linking them to the curricular framework.

How to Use This Resource

Educators can engage with the annotated lesson in multiple ways:

Big Picture Review

Read through the entire lesson with annotations to see how it flows cohesively, from introduction to assessment.

Targeted Focus

Zoom in on specific sections (e.g., Teacher Preparation or Modifications) to explore practical strategies that can be adapted to other lessons.

Professional Learning

Use the annotations as discussion starters in professional learning communities (PLCs) to analyze effective practices and reflect on how they align with your teaching goals and student needs.

Overall Evaluation of the Lesson

This lesson exemplifies high-quality teaching and learning on standards related to the Holocaust. It aligns well with the criteria of the curricular analysis framework, fostering critical thinking, historical inquiry and connections between past and present. Below is an evaluation of the lesson’s strengths and opportunities for refinement.

Strengths		
Clear and Rigorous Educational Objectives The lesson objectives focus on essential historical concepts, such as the role and impact of propaganda during the Holocaust, while equipping students with transferable skills like media literacy.	The integration of nuanced themes (e.g., audience receptivity, context, enduring consequences of propaganda) ensures a comprehensive exploration of the topic.	Engaging and Thought-provoking Essential Question The essential question prompts students to interrogate both historical and contemporary implications of propaganda, fostering deep engagement and critical analysis.
Purposeful Teacher Preparation Detailed preparation steps provide teachers with curated resources, timelines and activities that enhance both their own understanding and their ability to deliver effective instruction.	Thoughtful Sequence of Activities Each lesson part builds on the last, guiding students from foundational understanding to analysis and synthesis. The use of primary sources and propaganda examples invites hands-on historical inquiry.	Reflection and Connection to Modern Contexts The conclusion and extension activities explicitly connect historical propaganda to modern media literacy, helping students draw meaningful parallels between the past and present.
Flexibility and Accessibility Suggested modifications for learner variability, including translations, multimedia formats and scaffolded activities, ensure that the lesson is inclusive and adaptable for diverse classrooms.	Integration of Primary Sources and Visual Literacy The use of authentic propaganda examples, coupled with structured analysis, supports students in critically examining historical artifacts and connecting them to larger societal patterns.	

Opportunities for Refinement

Enhanced Focus on Local and Global Intersections

While the lesson addresses propaganda on a global scale, additional emphasis on local histories or students' community contexts could strengthen personal relevance.

Scaffolding for Critical Reflection

The reflection questions are excellent but could be expanded to include prompts that guide students in articulating actionable steps for resisting harmful propaganda in their own lives.

Student Voice and Collaboration

Incorporating opportunities for students to co-create parts of the lesson, such as designing their own analysis criteria or exploring propaganda in their communities, could further empower their learning.

Assessment Refinement

While the essential question is revisited, the lesson could benefit from more detailed models to guide students in articulating their insights during assessment tasks.

Increased Use of Comparative Analysis

Including examples of propaganda from different historical and cultural contexts (beyond Nazi Germany) could broaden students' understanding of its universal mechanisms and implications.

Clearly Articulating Standards Alignment

Explicitly connecting the lesson objectives to the standards could strengthen the coherence and instructional clarity of the lesson.

Essential Question

This represents an exemplary essential question because it

- ⦿ Prioritizes historical accuracy and depth by focusing on the mechanisms and impacts of propaganda during the Holocaust.
- ⦿ Fosters critical inquiry and analytical thinking by prompting students to examine how the Nazis used propaganda as a tool of persuasion to reinforce existing prejudice and racism and advance their genocidal goals.
- ⦿ Bridges local and global contexts by connecting the Nazi propaganda machine to broader societal and historical forces.
- ⦿ Supports student empowerment and relevance by equipping students with media literacy tools applicable to contemporary issues.

Educational Outcomes

These represent exemplary educational objectives because they

- ⦿ Integrate historical analysis by focusing on a critical element of the Holocaust (propaganda) in its multifaceted historical context.
- ⦿ Emphasize critical inquiry and action about how power, messaging and societal dynamics influence behavior and outcomes.
- ⦿ Establish connections between past and present by equipping students with media literacy skills to analyze modern propaganda, creating relevance and agency.
- ⦿ Support inclusive and equitable learning by encouraging students to challenge dominant narratives and recognize systemic inequities perpetuated through propaganda.

Teacher Preparation

This teacher preparation is exemplary because it combines

- ⦿ Historical thinking through the use of well-researched resources.
- ⦿ Scaffolded planning to ensure instruction is coherent and contextualized.
- ⦿ Primary source analysis to engage students in critical thinking.
- ⦿ Active learning strategies to foster collaboration and inclusivity.
- ⦿ Interactive and visual tools to enhance accessibility and support diverse learning styles.

Modifications

These modifications make the resource exemplary by fostering flexibility, inclusivity and accessibility while promoting critical thinking and deeper engagement with the material. By addressing learner variability, offering multilingual resources and integrating diverse content formats, the resource ensures that all students can meaningfully connect with and understand the lesson's content. These adjustments also encourage educators to tailor their approach to meet the needs of their unique classroom communities, enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of the resource.

Specifically,

- ⦿ The lesson's flexibility allows teachers to adapt strategies and technologies to their classroom context.
- ⦿ Providing slides in advance and accepting written responses accommodates diverse learning needs.
- ⦿ Articles and resources, such as the Holocaust Encyclopedia series, are available in multiple languages to support multilingual learners.
- ⦿ Students can engage with content through online exhibitions, printed materials or poster sets, ensuring multiple avenues for understanding.
- ⦿ Additional definitional work for terms supports vocabulary development and comprehension of complex ideas.
- ⦿ Complementary resources, like the State of Deception poster set, enrich the lesson by providing deeper engagement with historical materials.

PART ONE:

Examining the Role of Propaganda During the Holocaust

There are many components of Part One that contribute to it being an exemplary resource:

Cultural and Historical Context

Introduces students to the historical context of propaganda's role in the Holocaust, helping them understand the interplay of media, political power and societal influence.

Critical Thinking and Analysis

Encourages students to critically analyze how propaganda shaped public opinion and supported systemic oppression during the Holocaust, fostering a deep understanding of historical cause and effect.

Connection to Critical Inquiry and Action

Promotes media literacy by examining how propaganda can manipulate societal beliefs, enabling students to draw connections between past and present uses of media to influence power dynamics.

Multiple Perspectives

Provides opportunities for students to explore how different groups were targeted or influenced by Nazi propaganda, encouraging analysis of systemic inequities and underrepresented voices.

Accessible and Flexible Design

Offers instructional options to accommodate different learning contexts and schedules, ensuring the material is accessible to diverse classrooms.

Engagement with Primary Sources

Integrates a documentary that uses historical footage and firsthand accounts, helping students connect with authentic narratives and deepen their understanding of the Holocaust.

Student Reflection and Voice

Includes reflective prompts asking students what they learned and found surprising, encouraging personal connections to the material and fostering meaningful engagement.

Connection Between Past and Present

Highlights the mechanisms of propaganda, helping students draw parallels to contemporary media practices and their influence on public perception.

PART TWO:

Introducing Propaganda and Its Features

There are many components of Part Two that contribute to it being an exemplary resource:

Building Foundational Knowledge

Introduces students to a clear and concise definition of propaganda through the USHMM's definition ("biased information spread to shape public opinion and behavior"), providing a strong conceptual foundation for analyzing its role during the Holocaust.

Critical Thinking and Analysis

Engages students in evaluating specific features of propaganda outlined in the presentation, such as its use of emotions, selective omission and targeting of audiences, prompting deeper analysis of how these features shaped Nazi strategies.

Cultural and Historical Context

Connects the concept of propaganda directly to its use in the Holocaust by referencing specific examples and factors that influenced its success or failure, such as societal predispositions to anti-Semitic messages.

Media Literacy Development

Encourages students to dissect how Nazi propaganda operated through messages, techniques and communication mediums, providing them with tools to critically analyze historical and contemporary propaganda.

Engagement with Power Dynamics

Demonstrates how propaganda amplified systemic oppression during the Holocaust by targeting desired audiences and playing on existing prejudices, helping students understand its role in reinforcing power structures.

Relevance to Students' Lives

Links the Nazi's use of propaganda to modern examples provided by students, bridging historical analysis with present-day media and making the lesson content meaningful and relevant.

Accessible Presentation

Ensures that the content is visually and contextually accessible for diverse learners by including slides that detail audience receptivity and techniques.

Student-centered Inquiry

Begins with open-ended questions like "What is propaganda?" and "What are examples of messages you would consider to be propaganda?" to engage students' prior knowledge and create connections to the lesson content.

Ethical Awareness

Highlights the ethical implications of propaganda by examining how it manipulates emotions, simplifies complex issues, and selectively omits information, fostering discussions about its role in historical atrocities like the Holocaust.

PART THREE:

Analyzing Examples of Nazi Propaganda

There are many components of Part Three that contribute to it being an exemplary resource:

Focus on Primary Sources

Engages students with examples of Nazi propaganda, promoting critical analysis of authentic materials. This aligns with the framework's emphasis on using primary sources to foster a deep understanding of historical events and their implications.

Contextual Analysis

Using the timeline helps students situate propaganda within specific historical moments, enabling them to see how political, social and economic conditions influenced its creation and reception. This meets the criteria of connecting historical events to their broader contexts.

Critical Examination of Power

By analyzing the intentions of the propagandists, students investigate the mechanisms of power and manipulation, addressing sociopolitical dynamics central to learning about the Holocaust and other genocides.

Audience and Impact

Questions about audience receptivity and the societal consequences of propaganda encourage students to explore how messages reinforced systemic oppression and fueled violence. This aligns with the framework's focus on understanding the causes and consequences of systemic inequities.

Comparative Analysis

Comparing propaganda in different contexts (e.g., democracy, dictatorship, war) helps students identify shifts in messaging and tactics, offering insight into how propaganda adapts to varying conditions. This promotes a nuanced understanding of historical continuity and change.

Media Literacy

Examining the color, symbolism and design introduces students to visual rhetoric, fostering media literacy. This skill empowers students to critically evaluate contemporary media, fulfilling the framework's aim of connecting past and present.

Collaborative Learning

Group work encourages diverse perspectives and peer learning, supporting inclusive participation. The activity scaffolds meaningful dialogue, ensuring all students engage with complex historical narratives.

Reflection and Empathy

Questions about the reactions and experiences of different audience groups foster empathy and a deeper understanding of the human impact of propaganda. This supports the goal of exploring the personal and societal consequences of historical actions.

Historical and Contemporary Connections

Discussions about when and why propaganda becomes problematic encourage students to draw parallels between historical examples and current events. This reflects the framework's emphasis on using history to analyze and address present-day challenges.

Iterative Questioning

The guided questions—focused on communication, context, audience and impact—encourage iterative inquiry, helping students develop a robust understanding of the dynamics of propaganda. This approach mirrors the framework's emphasis on critical thinking, inquiry and action.

Conclusion

There are many components of the conclusion that contribute to it being an exemplary resource:

Revisiting the Essential Question

The conclusion returns to the core question, "How and why did the Nazis' propaganda messages work, and what were the consequences?" This reinforces the lesson's primary focus while encouraging students to synthesize their understanding of Nazi propaganda's mechanisms and effects.

Historical and Contemporary Connections

By stating that propaganda did not end with the Nazis and continues today, the conclusion establishes a direct link between past and present. This approach deepens students' understanding of propaganda as a persistent force, emphasizing its relevance in analyzing current events.

Assessment

There are many components of the assessment that contribute to it being an exemplary resource:

Focused Reflection on Core Inquiry

The assessment revisits the essential question, prompting students to articulate their understanding of Nazi propaganda's effectiveness and its consequences. This ensures alignment with the lesson's learning objectives and encourages students to consolidate their knowledge.

Analytical Depth

By asking "How and why did the Nazis' propaganda messages work?" the assessment emphasizes not only the mechanisms (e.g., message construction, audience manipulation) but also the broader sociopolitical and historical context that enabled propaganda to thrive.

Cause-and-effect Thinking

Exploring "What were the consequences of Nazi propaganda?" pushes students to analyze the impact of propaganda on society, including its role in promoting dehumanization, fostering complicity and enabling systemic violence.

Engaging Reflection Prompts

Questions like "When is propaganda most dangerous?" and "What makes you vulnerable to propaganda?" compel students to apply their historical knowledge to their personal lives and modern media environments, fostering critical thinking and self-awareness.

Empowering Students

The question "How can you guard against harmful propaganda?" positions students as active participants in resisting manipulative messaging. This supports the broader goals of critical inquiry and action by promoting informed, responsible citizenship.

Critical Thinking and Synthesis

Students are tasked with integrating knowledge from various parts of the lesson, such as their analysis of propaganda examples, discussions on historical context, and reflections on audience reception. This encourages higher-order thinking and a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Flexibility in Expression

Whether conducted as a written assignment or discussion, the assessment allows students to express their insights in ways that match their strengths, supporting differentiation and inclusivity in evaluation.

Extension

There are many components of the extension that contribute to it being an exemplary resource:

Relevance to Current Contexts

The extension effectively connects historical propaganda to contemporary examples, encouraging students to see the enduring impact of propaganda in the modern world. This aligns with the framework's emphasis on connecting past and present.

Skill-building in Media Literacy

By directing students to the Media Education Lab's Mind over Media site, the extension provides a practical platform for analyzing modern propaganda. This fosters critical thinking and media literacy skills, empowering students to deconstruct messages and recognize bias or manipulation in current media.

Engagement with Diverse Examples

Mind over Media includes a wide range of propaganda examples from different cultures, mediums and contexts, allowing students to explore diverse perspectives and narratives. This supports inclusivity and broadens students' understanding of propaganda's global reach.

Real-world Application

Practicing media literacy skills encourages students to apply their learning beyond the classroom, making them more informed consumers of information in their daily lives. This fulfills the framework's focus on fostering action and relevance in educational resources.

Alignment with Inquiry-based Learning

The extension encourages inquiry by challenging students to critically evaluate contemporary media and draw connections to the historical propaganda studied in the lesson.

Additional Details

There are many components of the additional resources that contribute to it being an exemplary resource:

Depth and Breadth of Study

The Nazi Propaganda bibliography provides students and educators with access to scholarly resources that deepen their understanding of propaganda's role during the Holocaust. This aligns with the framework's emphasis on fostering rigorous, evidence-based historical inquiry.

Engaging Visual Materials

The State of Deception poster set offers visual representations of propaganda, making complex ideas more accessible and engaging. It allows students to analyze historical propaganda artifacts in detail, aligning with the focus on examining primary sources and visual literacy.

Accessible Scholarly Content

The Holocaust Encyclopedia articles on propaganda provide concise, accessible and reliable information. These articles can help clarify complex topics for diverse learners, fulfilling the framework's emphasis on inclusivity and accessibility.

Opportunities for Independent Exploration

These resources encourage students to pursue independent learning, offering avenues for further exploration and personal connection to the subject. This supports the framework's goal of fostering inquiry-based and student-centered learning.

Alignment with Historical Analysis

The resources collectively enhance students' ability to analyze the causes, methods and consequences of propaganda, providing the tools to connect historical events to broader global and societal patterns. This aligns with the framework's focus on developing analytical and critical thinking skills.