Detect propaganda
identifying various propaganda techniques
used by an individual or group

Learning outcomes
- differentiate between propaganda and reasoned argument
- understand various techniques that are used to deliver propaganda
- understand the effects of propaganda

When to use the strategy
- analyze information distributed by political parties
- analyze the justification for political decisions
- analyze news releases and publications
- determine the role of propaganda in the rise to power or leadership role of an individual (e.g., fictional character, historical figure)
- identifying the greatest propagandist

How to use the strategy

Prior knowledge
- the difference between propaganda and reasoned argument
- knowledge of the individual or group using the techniques
- techniques of propaganda

Ideas to emphasize
- Powerful leaders do not necessarily possess the best leadership qualities, but may use manipulative means to enhance their position.
- Propaganda techniques can be used in a variety of situations.
- Propaganda techniques serve specific purposes (e.g., win support, gain trust, incite fear).

Instructional suggestions
- Present students with a scenario in which they want to get their own way (e.g., persuading parents to extend a curfew, convincing a teacher to delay an examination). Invite students to work in groups and brainstorm techniques they would use to convince their parents or teacher. Share ideas with the class. Point out that their suggestions are strategies used to gain power.
- Distinguish between reasoned arguments and propaganda and ask students to provide an example of each. Categorize students’ previous suggestions, from reasoned argument to propaganda.
- Brainstorm situations when propaganda techniques might be used.
- Introduce the propaganda techniques listed on the activity sheet. Invite students to work in groups to identify situations when each technique might be useful.
- Confirm students’ understanding of each propaganda technique by providing examples and asking students identify the technique.
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Purpose

This strategy helps me understand propaganda techniques and to differentiate between propaganda and a reasoned argument.

Instructions

• Before you begin, make sure you understand the meaning of each propaganda technique.
• Select an individual or group that may have used propaganda to gain support (e.g., advertising agency, politician, historical figure, fictional character).
• Carefully read the information about the individual / group. Pay particular attention to the statements used to convince the audience to believe or do something. Underline these statements.
• Refer to the list of techniques on the activity sheet. Put a check mark beside the techniques you think the individual used.
• Read each underlined statement again and decide which technique they illustrate.
• Record a quote, reference or example for each technique you identified.
• If necessary, consult other sources of information about or by the same individual to find other uses of propaganda techniques.

Criteria

Identification of techniques: correctly identifies numerous techniques.
Supporting examples: examples clearly illustrate the technique.

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## Detecting propaganda

Identify propaganda techniques used by the individual or group and provide two examples of each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Propaganda techniques</th>
<th>First example</th>
<th>Second example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selectivity:</strong> selecting only facts that suit the propagandists’ purpose</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Repetition:</strong> if a statement is repeated often enough, it will be remembered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lies and half-truths:</strong> telling a lie to gain audience support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhetorical questions:</strong> questions that do not require an answer because the answer is obvious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Targeting the enemy:</strong> unifying a group by identifying a real or imagined enemy</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Assertion:** making bold statements rather than reasoned arguments to defend a position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bandwagon:</strong> convincing others to do or believe something by saying everyone else does</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comparison:</strong> amplifying values, qualities and/or actions by comparing themselves to someone else</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Embarrassment:** making opponents look foolish or undesirable by presenting embarrassing stories about them</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Humour:</strong> use humour to get on the good side of audience or become friendly to win trust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Criteria
- **Identification of techniques:** correctly identifies numerous techniques.
- **Supporting examples:** examples clearly illustrate the technique.
Assessing the techniques

### Identification of techniques

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Competent</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Not Yet Able</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correctly identifies all of the techniques used.</td>
<td>Correctly identifies some of the techniques used.</td>
<td>Correctly identifies half of the techniques used.</td>
<td>Correctly identifies very few of the techniques used.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evidence:**

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### Supporting examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Competent</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Not Yet Able</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illustrates each technique with two examples, quotes or references, and evidence is convincing.</td>
<td>Illustrates most of the techniques with two examples, quotes or references, and most evidence is convincing.</td>
<td>Illustrates some techniques with two examples, quotes or references, and evidence is somewhat convincing.</td>
<td>Illustrates very few techniques with convincing examples, quotes or references.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evidence:**

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