

Instructional Recipe

How Did Political Cartoons Impact Information Americans Received During World War II?

Grade 9-12

Subject Area Social Studies

Cross-Curricular: Reading Analysis
Education Service Center Region 20



Online research and information resources available through a partnership between the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, the Texas Education Agency and Education Service Center, Region 20
<http://web.esc20.net/k12databases>

Step 1 – Ask

Objectives: Students will understand the reporting techniques and technology used by war correspondents in WWII. Propaganda and censorship will be discussed as a part of reporting news. And comparisons may be drawn between the methods used in the 1940s and those used today.

Introduction: The Nazi Propaganda Ministry, under Dr Joseph Goebbels, used propaganda to a degree not seen before, controlling all forms of mass communication (newspaper, radio, theater, motion pictures, etc.) to advance the Nazi Party, its activities, and its ideology. But what was the United States using to produce propaganda? Start by interpreting the words on this poster and think about what the visual symbols convey.



Picture from
http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers_of_persuasion/hes_watching_you/images_html/somebody_talked.html

Ask:

- ★ What is propaganda?
- ★ How is it used in a military conflict by the media?
- ★ What formats are used by the propaganda machine?
- ★ Who were famous political cartoonists during WW II?

Vocabulary:

- ★ Propaganda
- ★ Totalitarian
- ★ Nazism
- ★ Tokyo Rose
- ★ Axis Sally
- ★ Joseph Goebbels
- ★ Bill Mauldin & Milton Caniff

TEKS:113.24.A,B,G (24)
Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology. The student is expected to: (A) locate and use primary and secondary sources such as computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about the United States; (B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing

Cross-Curricular TEKS Reading/Analysis/Evaluation:110.42.12D. The student reads critically to evaluate texts. The student is expected to: (A) analyze characteristics of text, including its structure, word choices, and intended audience; (B) evaluates the credibility of information sources

Technology Application TEKS:
(10) Communication. The student formats digital information for appropriate and effective communication. The student is expected to (A) define the purpose of the product and identify the specified audience, (B) use terms related to typography appropriately including categories of type and type contrasts

Step 2 – Investigate

[Click here for internet links/URLs](#)

From EBSCO: Use search strategy (Nazism and World War II), (propaganda and Nazism)

- ★ [Willie & Joe: The WWII Years](#). Publishers Weekly, 5/26/2008, Vol. 255 Issue 21, p45-45, 1/5p; Reading Level (Lexile): **1270**; (AN 32475615)
- ★ [The Artist at War](#). By: STEVEN HELLER. New York Times Book Review, 07/27/2008, p10, 0p; (AN 33317812)
- ★ [The Man Who Drew Up Willie And Joe: Biography Of Mauldin Incorporates His Writings, Original Drawings](#) By: Siers, Kevin. Charlotte Observer, The (NC), 04/20/2008; (AN 2W62W6939251219)

From Britannica: (Use the keyword "[political cartoons](#)".)

- ★ [Comic strip](#). Encyclopædia Britannica. 2008. Encyclopædia Britannica Online School Edition

Additional Websites:

[World War II picture postcards](#); [Sheet Music Lyrics: Over There/George M. Cohan](#)

Books:

Snow, Nancy. *Information War: American Propaganda, Free Speech and Opinion Control Since 9/11*. New York: Stories Press, 2003.

Step 3 – Create

[Click here for internet links/URLs](#)

Think About and Compare: Local, national and international reports and newspapers serve to show students differences in reporting styles. Students can also see how timeliness, and human interest play roles in determining what information the public receives. (Listen to several podcasts of [iHistory](#) or [History on Air](#). Use a bubble map to identify the way the news was reported to sway the American public.

- ★ Ask students to choose a recent news topic on the six o'clock news; note the amount of coverage given to that topic.
- ★ Compare the depth of information from the television news story to the coverage given to the same topic in the newspaper by using articles from the [K-12 Databases](#).
- ★ Look at the political cartoons devoted to the subject. Listen to [NPR's podcast](#) on comedy and politics.

Record the findings and apply what has been learned about news writing, broadcasting, and the use of political cartoons by writing a short paragraph supporting the information gathered. Consider this idea: (People in the 1940s received most of their war news through the radio and newspaper. From what sources do we gather our news today?)

Write and Evaluate: Break the class into teams and have them evaluate their peers' writing using a list of criteria that has been developed as an entire class.

🔗 Technology Link -

Podcasts: [iHistory](#) or [History on Air](#); [How Does Comedy Influence Politics?](#) (Click EBSCO's [written transcript](#) of the podcast.)

Radio News Casts: [Edward R. Murrow](#); [Sevareid, Eric](#); [Thomas, Lowell \(Jackson\)](#); [Shirer, William L.](#)

Step 4 – Discuss

[Click here for internet links/URLs](#)

- ★ Ask students to brainstorm answers to the following question: During World War II, how did people in the United States develop ideas about what was happening in Europe?
- ★ Obtain a CD that includes the Glenn Miller Orchestra playing *Over There*. (This arrangement is included on *Glenn Miller and the Army Air Force Band: Rare Broadcast Performances From 1943–1944*, published by Delta Music, 1990) or purchase and download the song from an online music service (such as iTunes). Review the lyrics at [Sheet Music Lyrics: Over There/George M. Cohan](#) and print out copies for each student.
- ★ After the brainstorm, focus on the responses given and transition to a discussion about the way journalists used political cartoons and the role they played in winning the mindset of Americans in the 1940s. Ask the question, “Which class of people did the political cartoons target?”
- ★ In 1945, [Bill Mauldin's cartoons](#) on the [Second World War](#) won the [Pulitzer Prize](#). The citation read: “for distinguished service as a cartoonist, as exemplified by the series entitled “Up Front with Mauldin”. Mauldin, the youngest person to be awarded the prize, was now one of the best-known cartoonists in the [United States](#). His book, [Bill Mauldin's Army](#), was published in 1951.
- ★ Look at [Bill Mauldin's Pulitzer Prize winning artwork](#) and find other facts about this brilliant cartoonist.
- ★ Look at the listing for the [Pulitzer Prize](#) and the criteria for winning this award. If a political cartoon is worthy of the prize how important is the cartoon for informing readers?

Step 5 – Reflect

[Click here for internet links/URLs](#)

- ★ Allow students to present their projects to the rest of the class by choosing and analyzing one of Mauldin's political cartoons for the message it sends.
- ★ Create a digital political cartoon postcard using PowerPoint or use one of the new Web 2.0 tools [SlideShare](#) or [Zoho Show](#).
 - ✚ Choose a political cartoon from one of the library print resources or [K-12 Databases](#) to make a comparison.
 - ✚ Use the rubric to assess the digital cartoon postcard presentation.

Technology Link:

[SlideShare](#) or [Zoho Show](#) Teachers may create a mini-lesson slideshow to explain or enhance a concept, and student teams may create their presentations and post them online. Presentations are accessible from any computer, and users are able to post comments. Use the [slide show rubric](#).

You can also create your own rubric with your students at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.

Internet Links/URLs

Articles may be located by either the accession number (AN) or the persistent URL.

Step 2 – Investigate

- **Willie & Joe: The WWII Years**
<http://web.ebscohost.com/src/detail?vid=1&hid=5&sid=9fb4b675-1364-4446-9da2-55cb1d420e28%40sessionmgr11&bdata=JnNpdGU9c3JlLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#db=ulh&AN=32475615>
- **The Artist at War**
<http://web.ebscohost.com/src/detail?vid=1&hid=5&sid=df2e4864-cd7b-4862-ac02-e411ef688c32%40sessionmgr10&bdata=JnNpdGU9c3JlLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#db=nfh&AN=33317812>
- **The Man Who Drew Up Willie And Joe: Biography Of Mauldin Incorporates His Writings, Original Drawings**
<http://web.ebscohost.com/src/detail?vid=1&hid=2&sid=ea97d6fa-9f39-4709-ad3a-9f2f9066f084%40sessionmgr14&bdata=JnNpdGU9c3JlLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#db=nfh&AN=2W62W6939251219>
- **keyword “political cartoons”**
<http://school.eb.com/eb/search?txtAll=political+cartoons&txtExact=&txtAny=&txtWithout=&txtNear=&show=10&ct=oec-image&srchType=adv&x=0&y=0>
- **Comic strip**
<http://school.eb.com/eb/article-13707>
- **World War II picture postcards**
<http://www.teacheroz.com/WWIIpropaganda.htm>
- **Sheet Music Lyrics: Over There/George M. Cohan**
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/loc.natlib.ihas.100010515/lyrics.html>

Step 3 – Create

- **iHistory**
<http://ihistory.wordpress.com/category/podcasts/>
- **History on Air**
<http://www.historyonair.com/archive.htm>
- **K-12 Databases**
<http://web.esc20.net/k12databases/accessk12.html>
- **NPR’s podcast**
<http://www.npr.org/templates/player/mediaPlayer.html?action=1&t=1&islist=false&id=93381628&m=93381620>
- **How Does Comedy Influence Politics?**
<http://www.npr.org/templates/player/mediaPlayer.html?action=1&t=1&islist=false&id=93381628&m=93381620>
- **EBSCO’s [written transcript](#) of the podcast**

<http://web.ebscohost.com/src/detail?vid=1&hid=5&sid=02e0f246-4c0b-4030-8abf-3dd7108339e6%40sessionmgr11&bdata=JnNpdGU9c3JlLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#db=nfh&AN=6XN200808071501>

- **Edward R. Murrow**
<http://school.eb.com/all/comptons/article-9275990?query=radio%20news%20correspondents&ct=null>
- **Sevareid, Eric**
<http://school.eb.com/all/comptons/article-9313484?query=radio%20news%20correspondents&ct=null>
- **Thomas, Lowell (Jackson)**
<http://school.eb.com/all/eb/article-9072170?query=radio%20news%20correspondents&ct=null>
- **Shirer, William L.**
<http://school.eb.com/all/comptons/article-9336425?query=radio%20news%20correspondents&ct=null>

Step 4 – Discuss

- **Sheet Music Lyrics: Over There/George M. Cohan**
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/loc.natlib.ihas.100010515/lyrics.html>
- **Bill Mauldin's cartoons**
<http://web.ebscohost.com/src/detail?vid=1&hid=5&sid=7e96d4a7-f741-4a4a-b8b8-df563180f18e%40sessionmgr11&bdata=JnNpdGU9c3JlLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#db=nfh&AN=2W62W6939251219>
- **Second World War**
<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/2WW.htm>
- **Pulitzer Prize**
<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Jpulitzer.htm>
- **United States**
<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USA.htm>
- **Bill Mauldin's Army**
<http://www.amazon.com/Bill-Mauldins-Army-Greatest-Cartoons/dp/0891411593>
- **Bill Mauldin's Pulitzer Prize winning artwork**
http://humor.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ/Ya&sdn=humor&cdn=entertainment&tm=5&gps=142_242_1050_491&f=00&tt=14&bt=1&bts=0&zu=http%3A//ww2.pstripes.osd.mil/article.asp%3Fsection%3D104%26article%3D12650

Step 5 – Reflect

- **K-12 Databases**
<http://web.esc20.net/k12databases/accessk12.html>
- **SlideShare**

<http://www.slideshare.net/>

- **Zoho Show**
<http://show.zoho.com/login.do>
- <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.

Bill Mauldin's Willie & Joe World War II Political Cartoons



From: <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/ARTmauldin.htm>

The caption for this cartoon is "Just give me the aspirin. I already got a Purple Heart."

(Go to the [Spartacus website](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/ARTmauldin.htm) and view more of Mauldin's work.)

The Mauldin cartoons are among the most valuably informative accounts that history has to offer. The memoirs of such veterans as James Megellas and Bob Green pack a comparable immediacy, all the more valuable for their personalized insights into travail and achievement.

Bill Mauldin has much in common with a great patriotic-civilian cartoonist of the period. *Terry and the Pirates'* Milton Caniff (1907-1988) donated a separate series of comic strips expressly for military publications — dutiful compensation for an inability to enlist because of a 4F medical condition. Both Mauldin and Caniff spoke to and for the rank-and-file troops. The distinction is that Mauldin was not only observing but also experiencing the war with life-or-death immediacy. Stateside readers could relate readily to Mauldin's biting ironies, which in 1945 landed a Pulitzer Medal. Military readers found sharper meaning, for Mauldin took pains to capture details of the service. A hardened weariness became almost palpable in Mauldin's signature characters, steadfast GIs named Willie and Joe. As often as Mauldin's cartoons strike an embittered stance, contrasting officers' privileges with the dogfaces' hardships and perils, the pages are just

as often very funny. In an age without instant-image global Communications, Mauldin's steady output of perceptive, hard-pressed artistry provided as immediate an understanding as most Americans could find of the realities of World War II. Mauldin persisted into the postwar years as an author and illustrator and hopeful politician, then returned to newspaper cartooning in 1958 landing a second Pulitzer. He retired in 1991.

Information gathered from the online museum: The 45th Infantry Division (Bill Mauldin's Art) at <http://www.45thdivisionmuseum.com/Exhibits/Mauldin.html>

Student _____ Date _____ Period _____

Teacher's Name _____

Slide Show/Zoho Show/PowerPoint Rubric: Political Cartoons

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Background	Background does not detract from text or other graphics. Choice of background is consistent from card to card and is appropriate for the topic.	Background does not detract from text or other graphics. Choice of background is consistent from card to card.	Background does not detract from text or other graphics.	Background makes it difficult to see text or competes with other graphics on the page.
Use of Graphics	All graphics are attractive (size and colors) and support the theme/content of the presentation.	A few graphics are not attractive but all support the theme/content of the presentation.	All graphics are attractive but a few do not seem to support the theme/content of the presentation.	Several graphics are unattractive AND detract from the content of the presentation.
Text - Font Choice & Formatting	Font formats (e.g., color, bold, italic) have been carefully planned to enhance readability and content.	Font formats have been carefully planned to enhance readability.	Font formatting has been carefully planned to complement the content. It may be a little hard to read.	Font formatting makes it very difficult to read the material.
Spelling and Grammar	Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors.	Presentation has 1-2 misspellings, but no grammatical errors.	Presentation has 1-2 grammatical errors but no misspellings.	Presentation has more than 2 grammatical and/or spelling errors.
Cooperation	Group delegates tasks and shares responsibility effectively all of the time.	Group delegates tasks and shares responsibility effectively most of the time.	Group delegates tasks and shares responsibility effectively some of the time.	Group often is not effective in delegating tasks and/or sharing responsibility.