

World War II Home Front Ad Campaigns

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Summary:

This lesson is designed for a 7th grade history curriculum. It is to be taught over a course of eight class blocks, approximately 90 minutes each (some lessons will take only a small portion of the block. It is assumed that other lessons from the WWII era will be taught during the remainder of the period). The objective of the lesson is that students will create two forms of advertising, focused on a Home Front objective from World War II. You will need to coordinate with an art teacher at your school for this project. I've found that students from both classes found this lesson very rewarding. For the history students it presents a piece of work reflective of the hard work necessary to sway others into action for the Home Front campaign. For the art students, it gives them an opportunity to use their learned skills in a real world setting in which their efforts will also help win the war.

The classes will be broken down as follows:

Lesson 1

Introduction of WWII Home Front advertising campaigns

- "Explore the room" starter
- Excerpt from the film, "The War" by Ken Burns
 - Disc 2 "When Things Get Tough"
 - Play chapter 3: "War Town". This 13-minute segment highlights how the war effort transformed American people and towns, pulling the nation out of the Great Depression.
- Students receive project assignment papers

Lesson 2

Today's lesson will focus on students selecting a theme for their advertising campaigns

- Computer lab time for access to the internet

Lesson 3

Students will submit their rough drafts of both their print & radio ads

- The remainder of the class will be on a subject from WWII selected by the teacher

Lesson 4

Rough drafts of the print & radio ads will be returned by the teacher w/critique

- The remainder of the class will be on a subject from WWII selected by the teacher

Lesson 5

The final product of the print & radio ads will be turned in to the teacher.

- The remainder of the class will be on a subject from WWII selected by the teacher

Lesson 6

Students will consult with other students in an art class.

- The history students will go over their print ad planning form.
- They will submit their rough draft drawing to the artist
- They will discuss with the artist what they envision their print ad looking like

Lesson 7

Utilizing the school computer lab, students will record the voice portion of their radio ad

- Students will edit the voice portion as necessary
- If time permits they will work on adding in the background music for their ad

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Lesson 8

Utilizing the computer lab, students will add the background music to their radio ad

- Students will save the work & submit it digitally to the teacher
- This can be done by saving it to a server location, or burning it onto a disc

The work in this lesson is focused on creative writing. Students are being asked to take on the role of a governmental advertising executive during World War II. In assuming this role, the student will create two advertisements, one print ad and one radio ad. However, just as an ad executive would do, they will not be the artists for the print ad—they will “hire” artists from your school art class. While for this lesson I do have the students do the voice work for their radio ads, if you’d like to be more creative, perhaps “hire” students from your chorus class to do the voice work for your students. The end result is that your students should be able to articulate why it was necessary that Americans civilians be reminded in numerous ways that they too were responsible for fighting the war. Files associated with this lesson can be found on the Polk County TAH website.

Lesson 1

Introduction of WWII Home Front advertising campaigns

The goal of this lesson is to give students an overview of the home front effort and how governmental advertisers reminded Americans—even children—that they had to do their part to help win the war.

Start the class with an exercise that I call “Explore the Room”. Prepare your room by printing out at least 25 (the more, the better) of the pieces of WWII Home Front clipart that have been linked to this lesson plan. Place these items on the walls of your classroom. After students are settled into the classroom, pass out the worksheet “ Exploring the Home Front Campaign” to your students. Have the students read together the quote from Katharine Phillips:

“Roosevelt carried a real message of confidence with his voice. He gave us all the confidence that we could do anything he asked us to do... He was the powerful, driving force... we were all behind him.”

Have the students walk the room, exploring the images from the Home Front campaign. As they do this, they should be answering the thematic question on the worksheet:

“How do these images reflect Mrs. Phillips’ opinion, that Americans were united behind their President, and would do anything to win the war?”

Allow students about 10 minutes to explore the room, then, have them return to their seats and process this information in small groups. Afterwards, discuss with the class their opinions on how America promoted a unified Home Front in order to win the war.

Next, play a 13 minute excerpt from Ken Burs’ film “The War”. Play Disc 2 “When Things Get Tough” - Chapter 3 “War Town”. This chapter highlights how the war effort unified and transformed American people and their towns, helping to pull the nation out of the Great Depression.

Finally, pass out the WWII Home Front Advertising Campaign project assignment sheets. Go over the sheets **in detail** with your students, explaining examples of what is expected for the completion of the project, and the dates that they are due.

Lesson 2

Selecting a theme for their advertising campaigns

Take your students to your school computer lab. There, have the students explore the Duke University collection of Home Front print ads. Students can explore the following areas of concentration, and select one as the theme for both their print, and radio advertisements:

- Anti-inflation
- Awards for company production or service
- Conservation
- V-Mail
- War Bonds

Note: students should not be allowed to use the theme of post-war advertisement (shown on the Duke website), as it is not reflective of the wartime effort. The Duke website is located at: <http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/adaccess/wwad-history.html>

Lesson 3

Students will submit their rough drafts of both their print & radio ads

Teachers, collect the rough drafts submitted by your students. Review the rough drafts during your planning time, and make comments and suggestions on them.—returning them to your students the following class. The remainder of this class will be on a subject from WWII selected by you.

Lesson 4

Rough drafts of the print & radio ads will be returned by the teacher w/critique

Return the students' rough drafts to them. Allow some time for them to reflect on your comments, if you wish to allow for class time to work on the final draft, today would be a good day. If you plan for students to do the work at home, then the remainder of the class will be on a subject from WWII selected by you.

Lesson 5

The final product of the print & radio ads will be turned in to the teacher.

Rather than combine this with Lesson 6, take the time to review the final drafts submitted by your students. Make sure the changes you recommended were implemented. Pay particular attention to discussing how the student will mathematically measure whether or not the advertising campaign was a success. Where did the student suggest placing these ads? Did they want to run them in a magazine? A newspaper? A billboard? A stand-alone ad displayed in a store; if so, what type of store? Essentially, if their advertising campaigns were a success, what percent of change would be visible? For instance, if their campaign were on War Bonds, would there be a 15% increase in War Bond sales for the targeted demographic? The remainder of the class will be on a subject from WWII selected by you.

Lesson 6

Students will consult with other students in an art class.

The history students will go to the art classroom. The art teacher will be responsible for assigning pairs to work together. As noted in the assignment packet, the history students will be graded on their final draft of the print advertisement planning form, and their oral communication to the art student. The art students will be graded by the art teacher for their completion of the project based on the instructions from the history student. During this meeting of students the following things must take place:

- Cover their print ad planning form.
- They will submit their rough draft drawing to the artist
- They will discuss with the artist what they envision their print ad looking like
- They will thoroughly explain the actions & emotions they want portrayed.
- Art students should “negotiate” with the history students, giving them suggestions for the project – from their perspective--that will help to enhance the piece.

Both the history & the art teacher should rotate around the room, listening to the conversations to make sure that the students are accurately communicating how the project should be completed.

Lesson 7

Students record the voice portion of their radio advertisement

At the computer lab, play students the examples of radio ads 1 & 2 as created by other students. Using software, such as Apple's "Garage Band", demonstrate how to record voices, then have your students record their voices reading the text of their audio commercial. Before recording, have them read the passage several times to get the pacing down. After recording their voice tracks, have them edit it as necessary. If time permits they will work on adding in the background music for their advertisement.

Lesson 8

Completing the radio advertisements

Utilizing the computer lab, students will add the background music to their radio ads. I've provided a file folder with numerous midi format files of patriotic & period music. I suggest loading them onto a server, where students can select from the pieces to select a background music of their choice. Again using "Garage Band" or a similar piece of software, have the students import the background music. They should then edit the volume of the music so it does not drown out their voice track. After cropping the music clip for time, and fading it out, export the project to an .mp3/.mp4 audio player such as iTunes. The files should be saved to the server, or burnt to a CD.

After editing the files, complete the class by going to the art class to retrieve the final pieces of print art.

This project is a wonderful one for school "parent nights" where the focus of the class, and the product of the students can be displayed.

Explore The Room Worksheet

“Roosevelt carried a real message of confidence with his voice. He gave us all the confidence that we could do anything he asked us to do... He was the powerful, driving force... we were all behind him.” – Katharine Phillips of Mobile, Alabama

Explore the artwork that I’ve posted around the room. Closely examine each piece. What is the message that is being sent by the artist? What type of person is this artwork meant for? What is the artist wanting the viewer to do, or not do? What emotions does the artist try to get you to use?

Your notes on these images: _____

“How do these images reflect Mrs. Phillips’ opinion, that Americans were united behind their President, and would do anything to win the war?”

Florida Sunshine State Standards Applicable To This Lesson

SS.A.1.3.1. understands how patterns, chronology, sequencing (including cause and effect), and the identification of historical periods are influenced by frames of reference.

SS.A.1.3.2. knows the relative value of primary and secondary sources and uses this information to draw conclusions from historical sources such as data in charts, tables, graphs.

SS.A.1.3.3. knows how to impose temporal structure on historical narratives.

SS.A.5.3.2. understands ways that significant individuals and events influenced economic, social, and political systems in the United States after 1880.

SS.C.2.3.1. understands the history of the rights, liberties, and obligations of citizenship in the United States.

SS.C.2.3.6. understands the importance of participation in community service, civic improvement, and political activities.

SS.D.1.3.1. knows the options and resources that are available for consumer protection.

SS.D.1.3.3. understands the variety of factors necessary to consider when making wise consumer decisions.

World War II Home Front Project Rubric

Category	23 – 25 points	17 – 22 points	11 – 16 points	0 – 10 points
Executive Summary	The Executive Summary accurately reflects how this two-part advertising campaign is designed to succeed. It clearly explains the target market, the focus of the message, how the message will be advertised, and how success of the plan will be measured.	The Executive Summary does an adequate job of reflecting how this two-part advertising campaign is designed to succeed. It mentions the target market and the focus of the message. Explanations of how the message will be advertised, and how success of the plan will be measured are adequate but not exemplary.	The Executive Summary somewhat reflects how this two-part advertising campaign is designed to succeed. It is unclear in identifying the target market, the focus of the message, how the message will be advertised, and how success of the plan will be measured.	The Executive Summary was completely unclear as to how the campaign would succeed; or was not completed at all.
Print Advertisement Planning	The topic selected was appropriate. It clearly explains the target market, the focus of the message, how the message will be advertised, and how success of the plan will be measured. The rough drawing for the artist was exemplary.	The topic selected was appropriate. It mentions the target market and the focus of the message. Explanations of how the message will be advertised, and how success of the plan will be measured are adequate but not exemplary. The rough drawing for the artist was adequate.	The topic selected was acceptable. However, it is unclear in identifying the target market, the focus of the message, how the message will be advertised, and how success of the plan will be measured. The rough draft drawing for the artist was fair.	The topic selected was not acceptable. The student made little or no effort to identify the target market, focus of the message, how the message would be advertised, and/or how this plan would be measured. There was a poor or no rough draft drawing for the artist.
Radio Commercial Planning	The topic selected was appropriate. It clearly explains the target market, the focus of the message, how the message will be advertised, and how success of the plan will be measured. The text for the commercial was exemplary, as was the music chosen for background.	The topic selected was appropriate. It mentions the target market and the focus of the message. Explanations of how the message will be advertised, and how success of the plan will be measured are adequate but not exemplary. The text for the commercial was adequate, as was the music chosen for background.	The topic selected was acceptable. However, it is unclear in identifying the target market, the focus of the message, how the message will be advertised, and how success of the plan will be measured. The text for the commercial was fair. The music chosen for background was adequate.	The topic selected was not acceptable. The student made little or no effort to identify the target market, focus of the message, how the message would be advertised, and/or how this plan would be measured. The text for the commercial was poor. The music chosen for background was inadequate.
Class Participation	The student was exemplary in their participation at each level of this assignment. The student worked exceptionally well with the artist, and the final product was outstanding.	The student was adequate in their participation at each level of this assignment. The student worked well with the artist, and the final product was acceptable.	The student was fair in their participation at each level of this assignment. The student worked with the artist but did not communicate well and/or was unprepared. The final product was mediocre.	The student was poor in their participation at several levels of this assignment. The student did not work well with the artist. The final product was poor; or not submitted.

References

WWII era audio clips retrieved from:

<http://authentichistory.com/>

Duke University digital collection of WWII Home Front advertisements retrieved from:

<http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/adaccess/wwad-history.html>

WWII era clipart retrieved from:

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/wwii-posters/>

<http://www.teacheroz.com/WWIIpropaganda.htm>

WWII era & patriotic midi files retrieved from the following sites:

<http://www.6thcorpsmusic.us/>

Ken Burns' "The War" can be purchased via amazon.com or other internet sources. Disc 2

"When Things Get Tough" can be rented from Netflix by following this link:

http://www.netflix.com/Movie/The_War_A_Ken_Burns_Film/70077923?lnkctr=srchrd-sr&strkid=647833245_0_0

Sample commercials & posters created by students at Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred (2008).