

## **Women in World War II**

### **Melissa Robertson—Daniel Jenkins Academy**

**Summary:** In this lesson, students will gain an understanding of the roles women took on during World War II through war propaganda posters. Students will work in groups of 2 to 4 to analyze the war propaganda posters using the poster analysis worksheet. The students will use the information gained in the posters to create their own war propaganda poster for the cause they feel is most important for women to join during the war.

#### **Objectives:**

SS.A.1.3.2 – Knows the value of primary and secondary sources.

SS.A.2.3.2 – Knows major historical events.

SS.A.4.3.3 – Understands the impact of significant people and ideas.

**US History Time Period:** World War II 1938-1945

**Grade Level:** 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History

This lesson is set for an 8<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History class. It may be modified for use in a higher grade level.

#### **Materials Needed:**

Poster Analysis Worksheet—one for each group

Sufficient copies of the war propaganda posters so each group has a complete set

Transparencies of each war propaganda poster

Sample war poster transparency for modeling

Sample poster analysis worksheet transparency for modeling

Construction paper for group posters

Markers, coloring pencils, or crayons

**Lesson Time:** 135 minutes total.

Time Break Down: 10 minutes to introduce the lesson and move students into groups; 15 minutes to model the sample war propaganda poster and poster analysis worksheet; 20 minutes for individual groups to analyze the poster; 35 minutes for groups to present characteristics of their war propaganda poster; 10 minutes to review the different roles women took during World War II; 25 minutes for groups to create their own war propaganda poster featuring women in the war effort. Remaining 20 minutes to present each groups poster and recap the importance of the jobs women performed during World War II.

**Lesson Procedures:** Separate students into groups of at least 2 and no more than 4.

Assign and distribute a World War II war propaganda poster and poster analysis worksheet for every group and remind them to await instruction prior to completing the worksheet.

Next, model the poster analysis worksheet for the class so each student is clear on how to do the activity. I have provided a sample war propaganda poster and analysis sheet for you to use or use one of your choice. Advise students they have 20 minutes to complete their worksheet as a group and you will be available to help with questions or concerns. Students need to be aware that their presentation will be to answer the 4 questions of Level 3 located on the analysis worksheet.

Once the time frame of 20 minutes is up select a group to present using any method you choose. That group needs to select a representative to come up front and place a copy of their political cartoon on the overhead for all students to see. Next, they will use their group's worksheet to go over the theme of the cartoon. They should present to the class their group's answers to the analysis worksheet.

The next 25 minutes should be spent with the groups creating their own original version of a WWII propaganda poster identifying and recruiting women for different roles. Once their time is up each group will present their new poster and explain why they chose that particular role for their poster.

**Activities:** Below are the war propaganda posters and the poster analysis worksheets. Make sure to have enough copies and transparencies as described above in materials needed. The sample war propaganda poster that I have provided may be changed to any poster you choose just remember to complete a sample poster analysis worksheet to use with it rather than the sample provided.

**Assessment:** I designed this lesson plan to be used in conjuncture with the textbook lesson. This is a great reinforcement activity of your overall lesson on World War II. For assessment of the overall unit I would create a rubric that contains teacher specific criteria for each group's presentation of the original WWII propaganda poster, visual elements, presentation and significance of their new poster.

### **Resources:**

#### **Postern Analysis Worksheet:**

United States. National Archives and Records Administration, Education Staff. Poster Analysis Worksheet. Washington D.C.: National Archives, 2008.

#### **World War II Propaganda Posters:**

- "I gave a man! : Will you give at least 10% of your pay in war bonds?" Advertisement. World War II Posters-Northwestern University Library. 23 Mar. 2009  
<<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/wwii-posters/img/ww1647-63>>.
- "I've found the job where I fit best!" Advertisement. World War II Posters-Northwestern University Library. 23 Mar. 2009 <<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/wwii-posters/img/ww1646-40>>.
- "A lifetime education free for high school graduates who qualify : U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps." Advertisement. World War II Posters-Northwestern University Library. 23 Mar. 2009  
<<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/wwii-posters/img/ww1645-84>>.
- "Longing Won't Bring Him Back Sooner..." Advertisement. The National Archives-Powers of Persuasion/Poster Art From World War II. 23 Mar. 2009  
<[http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers\\_of\\_persuasion/its\\_a\\_womans\\_war\\_too/images\\_html/longing.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers_of_persuasion/its_a_womans_war_too/images_html/longing.html)>.
- "The more women at work, the sooner we win!" Advertisement. World War II Posters-Northwestern University Library. 23 Mar. 2009  
<<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/wwii-posters/img/ww1646-48>>.
- "Pitch in and help! : join the Women's Land Army of the U.S. Crop Corps." Advertisement. World War II Posters-Northwestern University Library. 23 Mar. 2009  
<<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/wwii-posters/img/ww0870-02>>.
- "We Can Do It!" Advertisement. The National Archives-Powers of Persuasion/Poster Art From World War II. 23 Mar. 2009  
<[http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers\\_of\\_persuasion/its\\_a\\_womans\\_war\\_too/images\\_html/we\\_can\\_do\\_it.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers_of_persuasion/its_a_womans_war_too/images_html/we_can_do_it.html)>.
- "We'll have lots to eat this winter, won't we mother?" Advertisement. World War II Posters-Northwestern University Library. 23 Mar. 2009  
<<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/wwii-posters/img/ww1646-33>>.

Sample Poster:



**We'll have lots to eat this winter, won't we mother?**

By: Alfred Parker, 1943

*Distributed by Division of Public Inquiries, Office of War Information*



## **We Can Do It!**

By: J. Howard Miller

*Produced by Westinghouse  
for the War Production  
Co-ordinating Committee*





**Longing Won't Bring Him Back Sooner . . .  
Get a War Job!**

By: Lawrence Wilbur, 1944

*Printed by the  
Government Printing Office for the War*



**A lifetime education free for high school graduates who qualify: U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps**

By: Alexander Ross, 1945

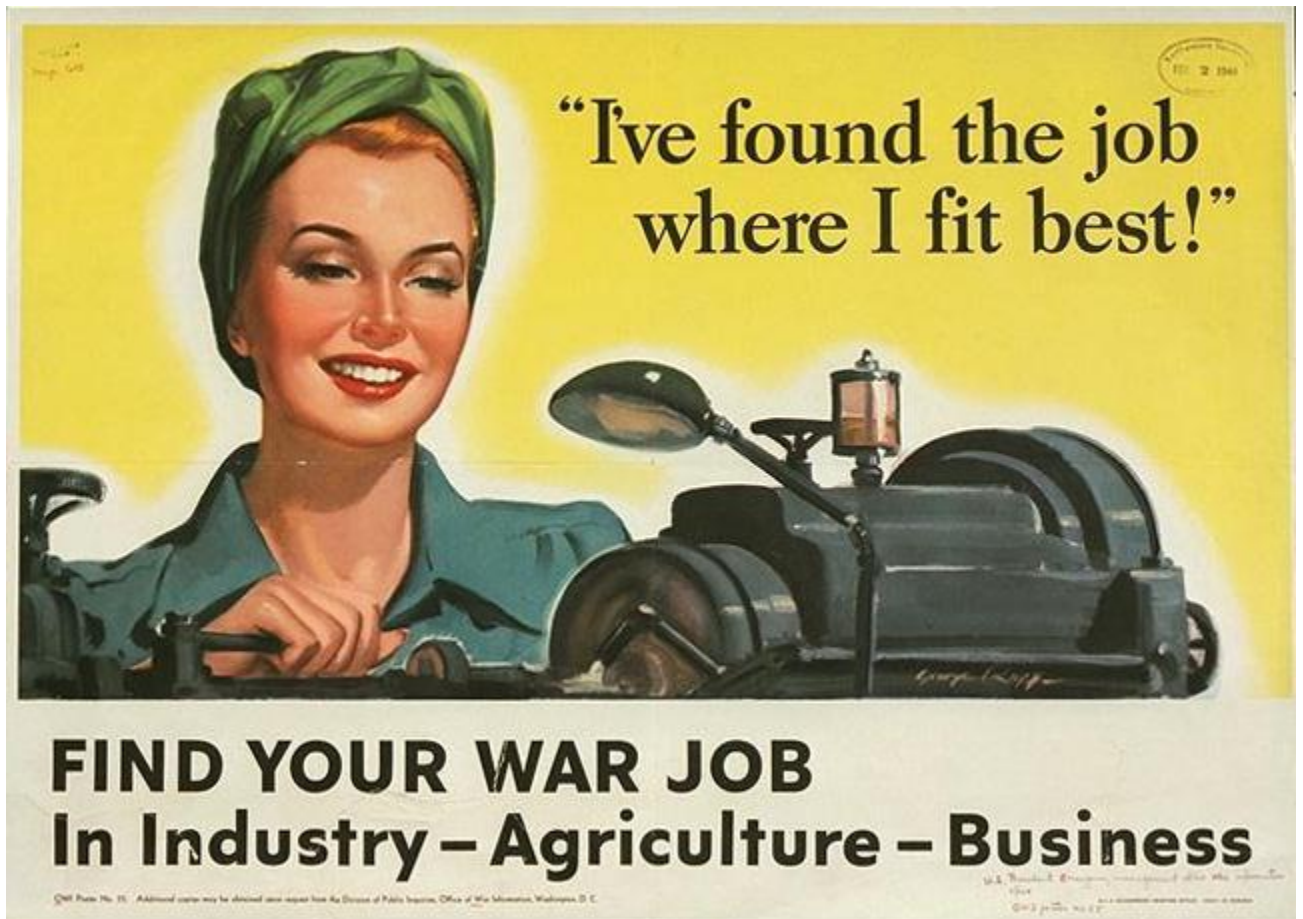
*Published by the United States Government Printing Office for the War*



**I gave a man! : Will you give at least 10% of your pay in war bonds?**

Artist Unknown, 1942

*Printed by the United States Government Printing Office for the US Dept of Treasury*



**"I've found the job where I fit best!"**

By: George Roepp, 1943

*Distributed by the Division of Public Inquiries, Office of War Information*



**Pitch in and help! : Join the Women's Land Army of the U.S. Crop Corps**

By: Hubert Morley, 1944

*Published by the United States Government Printing Office*



**The more women at work, the sooner we win!**

Artist Unknown, 1943

*Distributed by the Division of Public Inquiries, Office of War Information*

## Sample Poster Analysis Worksheet

1.	What are the main colors used in the poster? __Bright colors like orange, red, blue and green_____
2.	What symbols (if any) are used in the poster? __Mother and daughter, full can pantry, process of canning
3.	If a symbol is used, is it a. clear (easy to interpret)? _yes_____ b. memorable? ____yes_____ c. dramatic? ____yes_____
4.	Are the messages in the poster primarily visual, verbal, or both? ____they are both_____
5.	Who do you think is the intended audience for the poster? ____Women and members of the family such as children_____
6.	What does the Government hope the audience will do? __They want individuals that see this propaganda to can foods to aid in war rations as well as promote growing and saving your own food_____
7.	What Government purpose(s) is served by the poster? ____Lessening the need for rations or supplementing with rations so food can be saved and sent to soldiers without leaving families hungry._____
8.	The most effective posters use symbols that are unusual, simple, and direct. Is this an effective poster? __This poster makes canning look so easy that young children can do it._____

**Designed and developed by the  
 Education Staff, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC  
 20408.**

## Poster Analysis Worksheet

1.	What are the main colors used in the poster? _____ _____
2.	What symbols (if any) are used in the poster? _____ _____
3.	If a symbol is used, is it d. clear (easy to interpret)? _____ e. memorable? _____ f. dramatic? _____
4.	Are the messages in the poster primarily visual, verbal, or both? _____ _____
5.	Who do you think is the intended audience for the poster? _____ _____
6.	What does the Government hope the audience will do? _____ _____
7.	What Government purpose(s) is served by the poster? _____ _____
8.	The most effective posters use symbols that are unusual, simple, and direct. Is this an effective poster? _____ _____

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