Grade Nine Social Studies
Unit 6: Canada at War
Interpreting/Analyzing Political Cartoons

State the Purpose
Have you ever seen a political cartoon? Have you ever heard of the word propaganda? If you have, then you probably know that cartoons, while they may seem simple, contain a lot of information and portray a certain point of view. Examining political cartoons allows you to get a sense of a writer’s point of view which may be a reflection of the society that they are a part of.

Learn the Skill
To interpret and analyze a political cartoon is to examine it closely to determine what the author is trying to say. In doing this, you may sometimes come across authorial and/or societal bias. To interpret and analyze the meaning of a political cartoon, go through the following steps:

- **Gain background knowledge about the topic which the cartoon is trying to address.**
  Political cartoons are commentaries on specific political or historic events. They contain information and knowledge about these events. Before you are able to interpret a political cartoon, you must have some background knowledge about the topic which the cartoon is commenting on.

- **Closely examine the visual images as well as the written text in the political cartoon.** Although cartoons are illustrated images which may have only a limited amount of text, it is important that you carefully examine and study the illustrated actions of the cartoon as well as the written text. A close examination of both the visual images and written text is needed for a proper interpretation and analysis of political cartoons.

- **Determine what the author is trying to say.** All political cartoons have a message which they are trying to convey. After reading a political cartoon, you have to ask yourself what it is the author is trying to say through their cartoon. Are they trying to entertain, to criticize a person or group, or to sell something? You have to ask yourself questions such as these and determine what it is the author is trying to do. It is also important to note that sometimes there may even be multiple messages within one political cartoon.

- **Determine if the author has a bias which is reflected in their political cartoon.** We all have biases and sometimes these can shine through in our work.
The same is true for political cartoonists who create political cartoons. When examining cartoons you have to ask yourself if the information you are receiving from the cartoon is biased in any way. Biases are presented in historic as well as in current-day political cartoons.

**Practice the Skill**
Examine the political cartoon on the previous page and answer the following questions:

1.) Define propaganda.
2.) Around what year do you think this political cartoon was published?
3.) In what country do you think this cartoon was published?
4.) Who are the characters selling the war bonds?
5.) Are you familiar with these characters? If so, what are they known for?
6.) What is the author’s purpose in this political cartoon? In other words, what is their message?
7.) Is there anything in the cartoon which could be seen as a reflection of the author having a bias towards something?

**Apply the Skill**
Using your newly gained knowledge of Canada’s role in WWII, your task it to create a Canadian WWII propaganda poster that helps supports the Canadian war effort. The completed poster should demonstrate your understanding of political cartoons as well as a beginning understanding of Canada’s role in WWII during this period in our history. Your completed propaganda war poster will be assessed through the use of the attached rubric. You are strongly encouraged to use originality, neatness, colourful design and proper English grammar, spelling and capitalization as you complete this artistic assignment.

Good luck and have fun!
# Making A Poster: Chapter 6: Canada at War

**Teacher Name:** Mr. Edwards

**Student Name:** ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graphics - Originality</strong></td>
<td>Several of the graphics used on the poster reflect an exceptional degree of student creativity in their creation and/or display.</td>
<td>One or two of the graphics used on the poster reflect student creativity in their creation and/or display.</td>
<td>The graphics are made by the student, but are based on the designs or ideas of others.</td>
<td>No graphics made by the student are included.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Graphics - Relevance</strong></td>
<td>All graphics are related to the topic and make it very easy to understand the author's message.</td>
<td>All graphics are related to the topic and most make it easier to understand the author's message.</td>
<td>Most graphics relate to the topic and make it easy to understand the author's message.</td>
<td>Limited amount of graphics relate to the topic or graphics do not make the author's message easy to understand.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attractiveness</strong></td>
<td>The poster is exceptionally attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness.</td>
<td>The poster is attractive in terms of design, layout and neatness.</td>
<td>The poster is acceptably attractive though it may be a bit messy.</td>
<td>The poster is distractingly messy or very poorly designed. It is not attractive.</td>
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<td><strong>Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>Capitalization, punctuation and grammar are correct throughout the poster.</td>
<td>There is 1 error in capitalization, punctuation or grammar</td>
<td>There are 2 errors in capitalization, punctuation or grammar</td>
<td>There are more than 2 errors in capitalization, punctuation or grammar.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Content - Accuracy</strong></td>
<td>4 references or more towards Canada's role in WWII are accurate and are displayed on the poster.</td>
<td>3 references towards Canada's role in WWII are accurate and are displayed on the poster.</td>
<td>2 references towards Canada's role in WWII are accurate and are displayed on the poster.</td>
<td>1 reference towards Canada's role in WWII is accurate and is displayed on the poster.</td>
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