

# Lesson Title: Symbols and Messages in Our Community

Author: The National Museum of Military Vehicles



## Mission:

This Lesson Plan has been developed by the National Museum of Military Vehicles (NMMV) to facilitate scholastic visits to our institution. This Lesson Plan provides instructors with the framework to develop a detailed lesson plan for a field trip to the NMMV, by providing references to Wyoming State educational standards. This Lesson Plan is intended to serve as a starting point, recognizing that every School District has different standards and formats for their Lesson Plans.

## Description:

During World War II, propaganda was used to convey a variety of messages to the American Homefront including a scarcity of goods and materials, recruit military and civilian workers, vilify the enemy, preserve morale and promote Patriotism. In this lesson, students will compare and contrast a variety of different examples of American and foreign propaganda. Students will also explore the morality of messaging and discuss a government's obligation to the truth and the consequences of negative propaganda.

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## Grade Level: K-2

**Theme:** Understanding how images and symbols communicate messages in history and today

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## Wyoming Social Studies Standards Alignment (K-2)

### Grade Standard Description

K	SS2.1.1	Identify symbols and practices that represent the United States (e.g., flag, Pledge of Allegiance).
1	SS2.1.2	Recognize how people create rules to promote order and safety.
2	SS2.4.2	Identify ways people communicate and share ideas through symbols, traditions, and celebrations.
K-2	SS2.5.1	Use visual tools (e.g., maps, charts, posters) to understand information.

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## Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Recognize and describe symbols used in posters and signs.
  - Identify feelings or actions encouraged by visual messages.
  - Create a simple poster that communicates a positive message to their community.
  - Understand how people work together during important times in history.
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## Vocabulary

- **Symbol** - A picture or object that stands for something else.
- **Message** - What someone wants to say or share.
- **Community** - A group of people who live and work together.
- **Teamwork** - Working together to help each other.

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## Materials

- Printed examples of WWII posters (age-appropriate selections)  
<https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers-of-persuasion>
- Poster paper, crayons, markers
- “Gallery Walk” worksheet with simplified prompts:
  - What do you see?
  - What do you think this poster is saying?
  - How does it make you feel?

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## Procedure

### 1. Warm-Up Discussion

Show students familiar symbols (e.g., American flag, recycling sign, school mascot).

Ask:

- What do these symbols mean?
- Where have you seen them before?

### 2. Visual Exploration

Share 3–4 simplified WWII posters. Guide students to notice:

- Colors and shapes
- People or animals
- Words or slogans

### 3. Group Activity: Gallery Walk

In small groups, students rotate through poster stations and complete a worksheet with teacher support.

### 4. Class Discussion

- What messages did we find?
- Why do you think people made these posters?
- How do we share messages today?

### 5. Creative Extension: Make Your Own Poster

Students create a poster that shares a helpful message for their school or town (e.g., “Be Kind,” “Help Each Other,” “Keep Our Town Clean”).

### 6. Gallery Presentation

Students present their posters to the class and explain their message.

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## Assessment

- Observation during group work and discussion
- Completed Gallery Walk worksheet
- Student-created poster with verbal explanation

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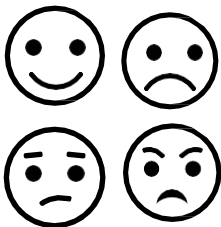
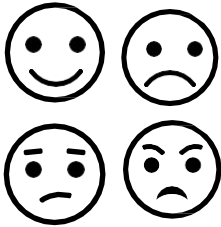
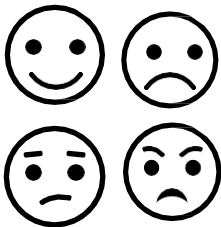
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## Handout 1: Gallery Walk Worksheet

**Title:** What Do You See? What Do You Feel?

**Instructions:** Look at each poster. Circle what you see, then write what you think the poster is saying and how it makes you feel.

Poster #	What do you see? (Circle or draw)	What do you think this poster is saying?	How does it make you feel?
1			
2			
3			

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## Handout 2: Create Your Own Poster

**Title:** Share a Message with Your Community!


**Instructions:** Think of a kind or helpful message you want to share. Draw a picture and write your message below.

 My message is:


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 My drawing:

A large, empty rectangular area intended for a student to draw a picture related to their message.

 Ideas: “Be Kind,” “Help Each Other,” “Say Thank You,” “Keep Our Town Clean”

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## Handout 3: Poster Presentation Prompts

**Title:** My Message Matters!

**Instructions:** Use these sentence starters to help you share your poster with the class.

- . “My poster shows  
\_\_\_\_\_.”
- . “I made this because I want people to  
\_\_\_\_\_.”
- . “This message is important because  
\_\_\_\_\_.”

Tip: Practice with a partner before presenting to the group!

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NMMV Reflection: Incorporated within a Tour of WWII Gallery for Students

1. What was your favorite propaganda poster in the museum?
2. What story does the poster tell you about the past?
3. What groups of people would this propaganda poster be most strongly connected to and why?
4. What new information does this give you about soldiers' lives, especially during WWII?
5. What significant event from WWII plays a role in the present?

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## Extension Ideas

- Connect with Veterans Day or local community helpers
- Invite a museum educator or veteran to share how teamwork helped during WWII
- Create a classroom “Wall of Messages” to celebrate student contributions