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The
Economist

EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION

RUSSIA AND UKRAINE PROPAGANDA



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1 - HOUR LESSON



If you like this resource, find more at bit.ly/TopicalTalk
Topical Talk provides free, weekly resources that build students' critical-thinking, speaking and listening skills through inspiring discussions about the news.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

Objective

To understand how the Russian and Ukrainian governments are using propaganda to influence people

Inclusivity

So that every student can enjoy this session, activities have been created to be inclusive. In this resource students are given the opportunity to discuss new concepts within familiar contexts and teachers are provided with "understanding check" questions.

If you have any inclusion suggestions email them to: foundationteam@economist.com

Before the lesson you will need to:

- Print the *TEACHER Instructions*
- Print the *Sheets* and make three copies of each
- Print and copy the *Posters*, with an equal number of each, enough for one between two

THIS LESSON DEVELOPS

Skill



STEP 5

I listen critically and compare how people from different perspectives use propaganda

Knowledge



STEP 5

I know more than one perspective on the war in Ukraine

Sustainable Development Goal



SDG 16

Peace, justice and strong institutions

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

ACTIVITY ONE

Ask students to imagine that their school has planned to throw a fantastic party for them. Give students one minute to discuss what the party might be like. Explain that the headteacher has decided to cancel it. Split the class into two groups: A and B. Give each group their corresponding *Sheets* and space so they don't see/hear what is happening in the other group. Groups should read their *Sheet* and discuss the questions. Bring both groups together and hold a vote about whether the party should remain cancelled. Choose students from each group to share their reasons.

Explain: propaganda is information that is given to people to try to influence their opinion. Ask a volunteer from each group to share the propaganda they saw about the party. How powerful was it? **Ask:** who might use propaganda? When? What if people only see propaganda from one perspective?

Understanding check: What is propaganda?

ACTIVITY TWO

Explain: Russia has invaded Ukraine and the countries are currently at war. Both countries' governments have shared propaganda about this in the media – for example on television or social media platforms, or in newspapers. **Ask:** why is propaganda important in wartime? For example, how might governments want people to feel? What might they want people to do?

Understanding check: what is happening between Russia and Ukraine?

For this activity, students should work in mixed-ability pairs. Give each pair one of the *Posters* and explain that they show examples of the type of propaganda being shared in Russia or Ukraine. Students should discuss the questions together then swap *Posters* so they have a new country and repeat the activity.

Afterwards, pairs should join with another pair to make a group of four with both *Posters*. **Ask:** what is similar about how the examples of propaganda on the *Posters* make people feel? What is different? When is propaganda a good thing? When is it a bad thing?

Understanding check: how are Ukraine and Russia reporting differently about the war?

ACTIVITY THREE

On the board write, "Yes and..." and "Yes but...". Clarify the difference between "and" and "but". Ask the first question below. Give students time to think before asking a volunteer to share their answer. Other students should create a chain of responses using the sentence starters on the board. Repeat for the remaining questions.

1. The media is used to share news and propaganda. How could people spot the difference?
2. The Russian government controls the media that Russian people can see. Is it getting harder or easier for governments to control what people see?
3. Sometimes propaganda from different sides gives contradictory information. How can people check the information they are seeing?



SPEEDY SKILLS REVIEW

Why is it important to hear from a range of sources when learning about a news story?



SHEET A

Look at one piece of information.

Answer the thinking questions.

Repeat for the rest.



THINKING QUESTIONS

- How does this make you feel? Why?
- Should the party remain cancelled? Why / why not?

School buildings are not a safe place for parties. Keep your friends away from danger.
KEEP IT CANCELLED.



Your teachers always support you.
But who supports your teacher?

Put them first for a change.
Cancel the party to give them more free time.

"We don't need a party.
We just need you!"



My daddy is a teacher.
He always works late. He never has time for me.

Please don't make him stay for a party.



SHEET B

Look at one piece of information.

Answer the thinking questions.

Repeat for the rest.

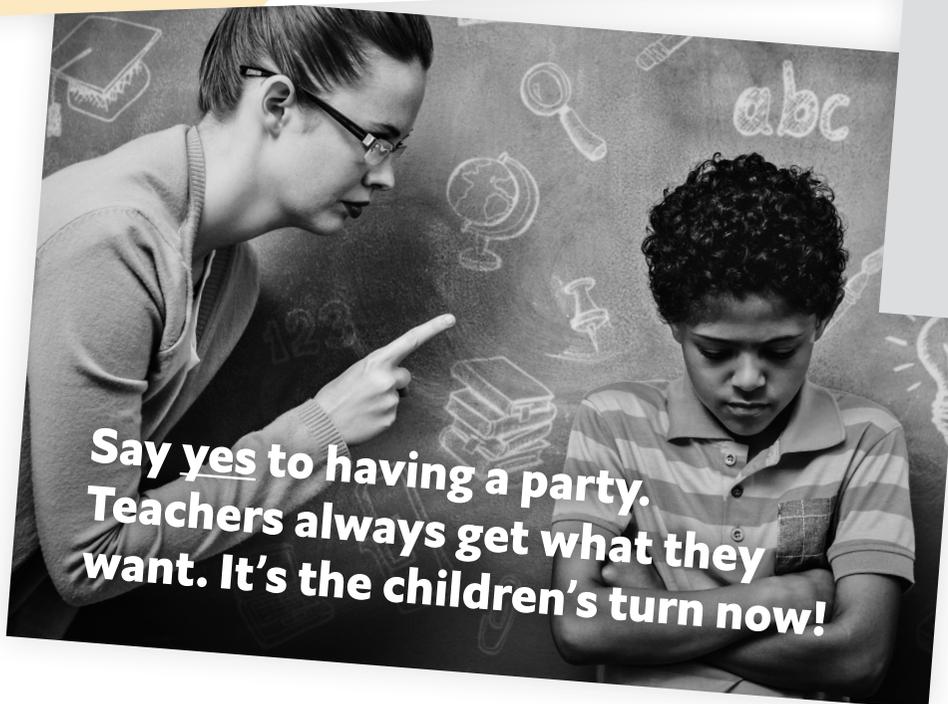


THINKING QUESTIONS

- How does this make you feel? Why?
- Should the party remain cancelled? Why / why not?

Your poor teachers are stressed – they deserve some fun! Have the party together.

IT'LL BE GOOD FOR EVERYONE!



Say yes to having a party. Teachers always get what they want. It's the children's turn now!

DID YOU KNOW?

Socialising and having fun is good for your brain. That means better grades at school! **Don't delay, party today!**



POSTER

Propaganda like this is being shared in Ukraine. It shows the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky.

It is based on true information.



THINKING QUESTIONS

- Are you surprised by this example of propaganda? Why/why not?
- How might people in Ukraine feel when they read this? What might they do?
- Is it better if people in Ukraine see this or don't see this? Why?



UKRAINE



Our brave president continues fighting against Russian invaders!

"The people of Ukraine and the government of Ukraine want peace... but if we come under attack, if we face an attempt to take away our country, our freedom, our lives and the lives of our children, we will defend ourselves!"

– Mr Zelensky

Photographer RM/Shutterstock

POSTER

Propaganda like this is being shared in Russia by its president, Vladimir Putin.

It is based on lies and misunderstandings.



THINKING QUESTIONS

- How might people in Russia feel when they read this? What might they do?
- Why might the Russian government spread false information about why they invaded Ukraine?
- Is it better if people in Russia see this or don't see this? Why?



Russian soldiers started a special operation in Ukraine to protect Russia. The Russian government entered Ukraine to free people from the bad Ukrainian government. It will only attack to protect Russia.