

Somebody's Watching Me

Logical Fallacies and Propaganda in 1984

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade
Subject	English/Language Arts

Essential Question

How do authors/speakers use logical fallacies to persuade? How are logical fallacies used in everyday life?

Summary

Is Big Brother watching you? Are you being persuaded or confused by double speak? In this lesson, students will analyze propaganda and logical fallacies used in the novel 1984 and reflected in the world around them. Students will participate in a card sort and choosing magnetic statements about logical fallacies and propaganda. Then students will read two excerpts from presidential speeches and analyze them for logical fallacies. Students will create a bento box with examples of logical fallacies and propaganda from 1984 and the world around them. They will finish by reflecting on a prompt about where they see logical fallacies and propaganda around them.

Snapshot

Engage

Students do a Card Sort, sorting quotes from *1984* and categorizing them by logical fallacy.

Explore

Students engage with provocative quotes about propaganda. They choose a statement that draws or repels them, discuss with peers, and share insights with the class.

Explain

Students read two excerpts from presidential speeches and Why-Light forms of logical fallacies in them.

Extend

Students create a Bento Box with examples from 1984 and also from real life.

Evaluate

Students complete an Exit Ticket answering a prompt over logical fallacies.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 12)

12.3.R.5: Evaluate how authors writing on the same issue reached different conclusions because of differences in assumptions, evidence, reasoning, and viewpoints, including examining rhetorical appeals, bias, and use of logical fallacies.

Attachments

- Card Sort—Somebody's Watching Me.docx
- Card Sort—Somebody's Watching Me.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Somebody's Watching Me.pptx
- Presidential Speech Excerpts—Somebody's Watching Me.docx
- Presidential Speech Excerpts—Somebody's Watching Me.pdf

Materials

- Lesson slides (attached)
- Presidential Speech Excerpts handout (attached; one per student)
- Card Sort handout (attached; one per group of 2–3)
- Pens/pencils
- Devices with internet connectivity
- Envelopes/sandwich bags

10 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note: Preparation

Print out the **Card Sort** handout and cut out the cards ahead of time. If you wish, laminate the cards for repeated use.

Introduce the lesson by displaying **slides 1–3**. Discuss with students the essential questions and lesson objectives.

Move to **slide 4** to explain the Card Sort. Put students in groups of 2–3 and have them sort the attached cards. These might be new to students, so remind them it's okay if they don't know the "correct" answers so far. Ask students to share out and discuss as a whole group what everyone came up with.

Display **slides 5–7** to show students the correct answers. Talk through them as a whole class to see how accurate they were.

15 minutes

Explore

Teacher's Note: Preparation

Use poster paper and markers to create four posters, each with a magnetic statement, and hang them up around the classroom, leaving enough room for small groups of students to congregate around each poster to read and discuss the statement.

Display **slide 8,** introduce the Magnetic Statements strategy to students, and inform them they will be choosing one of the statements posted around the room to stand beside, whichever one “attracts” or “repels” them most. Before releasing the students to choose a statement, read the statements on **slides 9–13** to them.

As you read each statement on the slide, point out where that statement is posted around the room. Slowly read each statement aloud and clarify any statements that might be confusing to students.

After reading them all, ask students to stand by their chosen poster. Once they are at their chosen poster, they should discuss with the group why they chose it and have a volunteer share-out.

Lead the groups in a discussion about the quotes on propaganda.

Depending on the length of the class discussion, this activity should take approximately 15 minutes.

10 minutes

Explain

Display **slide 14** and distribute the attached **Presidential Speech Excerpts** to the whole class. Ask students to read and analyze the speech, then look for logical fallacies with a partner. Students can use the handouts, or websites or card sorts, to help them identify types of logical fallacies throughout the speeches. Ask students to use the Why-Lighting strategy to highlight a portion of the speech and then write a note nearby to explain why they highlighted it (i.e., what fallacy it is and why).

15 minutes

Extend

Display **slide 15**. Explain to students that they will be using *1984* and real-life examples to create a Bento Box.

Instruct your students to create one image made up of 5–7 different image components, similar to the composition of Japanese bento box-style meals served in a compartmentalized box. Each image should represent some form of propaganda or logical fallacy. Students need to cite at least 3 from 1984 and at least 2 real-world examples.

5 minutes

Evaluate

As a brief evaluation of the lesson, students will complete an Exit Ticket over the lesson. Students will respond in a few sentences to the question on **slide 16**, “Which logical fallacies or propaganda techniques have you used or had used on you in your day-to-day life?”

Resources

K20 Center. (n.d.). Card sort. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/147

K20 Center. (n.d.). Magnetic statements. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/166

K20 Center. (n.d.). Why-lighting. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/128

K20 Center. (n.d.). Bento box. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/1128

K20 Center. (n.d.). Bell ringers and exit tickets. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/125

Nixon, Richard M. (1972). "Address to the Nation on the Situation in Southeast Asia." National Archives. Miller Center, University of Virginia. https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/may-8-1972-address-nation-situation-southeast-asia

Truman, Harry S. (1945). "First Speech to Congress." National Archives. Miller Center, University of Virginia. https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/april-16-1945-first-speech-congress

Orwell, G. (1949). *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. (2021 ed.) Penguin Classics.