

**Box 8. Silence of Propaganda**



**List of contents:**

1. 6 Posters, postcard size:
  - 'Britons' with an image of Lord Kitchener
  - *Women of Britain Say Go*
  - *Destroy the Brute*
  - *Remember Belgium*
  - *Think I'll get myself a Recruit*
  - *Anibyniaeth Sydd Yn Galw Am Ei Dewraf Dyn* [sic] 'Independence Calls for our Bravest Men'
2. A black book with entries from a school diary, about taking the school to the cinema to see the film *Britain Prepares*. (*Archifau Morgannwg / Glamorgan Archives*)
3. Zappar Code with stills from the film.

**Key Information:**

- Propaganda was used to make people think in a certain way about the war. False stories were told about the brutality of the Germans to stir emotions, making people angry and frightened.
- At the start of the war Britain's army consisted of volunteers. Propaganda posters were used to manipulate people's consciences. The posters gave a direct message that it was a man's duty to volunteer, that it would make them feel proud if they did and also gave the impression they would appeal to women. If they did not join, they would feel guilty and ashamed.
- Posters were a main tool in the WW1 propaganda. They were compositionally well thought out, with key trigger words used in the slogans, and images to trigger emotions of guilt or pride. They presented war in a positive light making army life look exciting and targeted not only the men but also tried to manipulate women's perceptions of men if they refused to join the army. Children were used to shame their fathers with slogans such as "Daddy what did you do in the Great War?"
- *Britain Prepares* was Britain's first war propaganda film. Filmed in 1915 by Charles Urban, it promoting 'Britain's strength and determination'. It used positive military images to reinforce how strong Britain was. Britain was not the only country to use propaganda as a tool.
- Media – newspaper and radio: Prior to 1915, there was a ban on journalists reporting from the front line. There was a propaganda agency in place headed by Charles Masterman. People wanted to know what was going on but there was concern that spies could read the information in the newspapers. A law was passed to stop the papers printing anything that could help the enemy or make people feel unsure or unhappy about the war. Articles and stories were deliberately written to portray Britain at war as successful.
- Songs, performed in music halls, encouraged people to sign up.

**Zappar Code:** Download the Zappar app on a smart phone or iPad. Hover over the code below to see stills from *Britain Prepares* film



### 8. Silence of Propaganda: questions



1. What do you think is in this box?
2. Where do you think this box is from?
3. Carefully take the postcard/posters out of the box and line them up.

4. Look carefully at the compositions – the images used, and the key words included in the slogans.
  - What message are they conveying?
  - How do they make you feel?
  - Are the messages a true portrayal of what was happening? If not, what do you think would be?
  - Do you think it is right to manipulate people? Can you think of current examples where people are manipulated?



5. Use the Zappar code to access stills from the film, *Britain Prepares*. How do you think it felt to see this film as a whole school?
6. What message is being conveyed? How does it make you feel?
7. Do you think it is right to use propaganda to manipulate people?

### Suggested box combinations

- Box 3 Silence of Shot at Dawn
- Box 4 Silence of Conscientious Objectors
- Box 5 Silence of Censorship
- Box 17 Silence of Ethnicity

### Suggested activities

- **Researchers:** Select a battle from WW1, such as the Somme. Look at how it was reported at the time and more recent articles on it. How are they different? How does it make you feel?
- **Critical Eye:** Select images from WW1 posters or recent posters, look at the words used, who are they aiming it at? What is the message? Is it the truth? Present and discuss with class.
- **Designers:**  
Either:  
You are tasked with targeting more people to join the war effort. You must design an advertisement campaign, and a key poster with a slogan to make people feel guilty and join the military. In addition to a poster, create a short story board and film to do the same thing. Use music to support the film to strengthen your argument.

#### Or:

You are tasked with creating a truth campaign telling people how it really is, design a key poster, with a slogan to target the demographic that would go to war. Also create a story board for a short promotional film, include music – consider people such as, for example: Bob Dylan's political songs or Green Day's 'When September Comes'.

### Caring for the box after use

- Please place contents carefully back in the box
- If there is a problem with the Zappar code, please let H4A know