**Spartacus Educational Classroom Activity**

[Heinrich Himmler and the SS: A Study in Propaganda](http://spartacus-educational.com/ExamRHU3.htm)  (Questions & Answers)

<http://spartacus-educational.com/E_ANS_RHU3.htm>

Q1: According to Richard Evans (source C) what did Himmler do in 1935?

A1: Evans has pointed out that from 1935 [Heinrich Himmler](http://spartacus-educational.com/GERhimmler.htm) "required proof of pure Aryan ancestry, as he termed it, going back to 1800 for the rank and file, 1750 for officers" in the SS.

Q2: Why was David Low considered a "war monger"? Do you think the people who produced sources H and J considered him to be a "war monger"?

A2: [David Low](http://spartacus-educational.com/Jlow.htm) was considered a "war monger" because he opposed "peace" negotiations with [Nazi Germany](http://spartacus-educational.com/GERnazigermany.htm) ([appeasement](http://spartacus-educational.com/2WWappeasement.htm)). [Margot Asquith](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Margot_Asquith%2C_Countess_of_Oxford_and_Asquith) (source H), was a supporter of appeasement and thought that Low's attacks on [Neville Chamberlain](http://spartacus-educational.com/PRchamberlain.htm) was helping "war mongers" such as [Winston Churchill](http://spartacus-educational.com/PRchurchill.htm). Boris Efimov (source J), was a Soviet cartoonist, who like Low, hated fascism and considered that his "magnificent work" was supporting "democracy" against "Hitlerism".

Q3: Read source E. Why did Low believe the "British never had taken propaganda seriously"?

A3: Low believed "that the British never had taken propaganda seriously, because they believed in themselves so much as to regard the rightness of their causes to be self-evident".

Q4: Look carefully at Low's cartoons, G, I and L. Do you consider these cartoons as being examples of "propaganda"?

A4: The Oxford University dictionary defines propaganda as "information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view." Low would have admitted that his cartoons reflected a subjective (biased) view of political events. However, he would reject the idea that they were "misleading".

Source G takes a critical look at the role that [Heinrich Himmler](http://spartacus-educational.com/GERhimmler.htm) played in the invasion of Belgium in June, 1940. The book Himmler is carrying contains a list of possible leaders of resistance that the Nazis intend to kill.

Source I is a comment on the way [Reinhard Heydrich](http://spartacus-educational.com/GERheydrich.htm), Himmler's assistant, had dealt with the resistance that they faced in [Czechoslovakia](http://spartacus-educational.com/2WWczech.htm).

Source L illustrates the way the SS treated people living in occupied territory.

Q5. Study sources A, B, D, F, K and M. Compare the value of official photographs, posters, stamps and cartoons as propaganda.

A5: Source B is an official photograph of [Heinrich Himmler](http://spartacus-educational.com/GERhimmler.htm). In cases like this every effort would be made to suggest that the government minister looks strong, distinguished and authoritative. These photographs would appear in newspapers and magazines.

The Nazi government used posters very effectively. As [Anthony Rhodes](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/anthony-rhodes-6163117.html), the author of [Propaganda: The Art of Persuasion: World War II](http://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref%3Dnb_sb_noss?url=search-alias=stripbooks&field-keywords=Propaganda%3A+The+Art+of+Persuasion%3A+World+War+II), pointed out: "Goebbels' propagandists knew that visual impressions are extremely strong, that people may forget a newspaper article, but not a picture - if they see it often and its message is obvious. In this respect the poster had certain advantages over the other forms of propaganda. A pamphlet or a newspaper could be thrown away, unread; the radio turned off; political meetings not attended; likewise the cinema. But everyone at some time or other walked in the streets. The poster could not be avoided. It was one thing to hear about Hitler's strength of character, sincerity, honesty, simplicity, etc.; it was quite another to see these qualities glaring down from a huge head-and-shoulders portrait, ten times life-size."

Hitler's government also took care over the issuing of postage stamps. Source F was issued to commemorate the 12th anniversary of the [Beer Hall Putsch](http://spartacus-educational.com/GERbeer.htm). Although it ended in failure and [Adolf Hitler](http://spartacus-educational.com/GERhitler.htm)and other leaders were imprisoned, the Nazis were proud that they had tried to overthrow the government by force in November 1929. The Nazi government used postage stamps in this way because the intended message is communicated to a larger audience than other methods of propaganda.

Although cartoons such as source M have a smaller audience than stamps and posters, they are very effective at communicating a political message. You can see that [Kukryniksy](http://spartacus-educational.com/ARTkukrynisky.htm), who produced this Soviet cartoon, can create very different emotions in the viewer than those looking at official photographs. The way that the artist has drawn [Heinrich Himmler](http://spartacus-educational.com/GERhimmler.htm) provides a powerful message about both his personality and his actions.