

Messages Under Review

Analyze how political messages shape opinions.

SS.7.CG.2.9 "Analyze media and political communications and identify examples of bias, symbolism, and propaganda."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline words or phrases that show bias or propaganda. Circle each object or image described that may have symbolic meaning, and write a 1 beside one piece of missing information a voter should check.

Reading Political Messages Carefully

- ① Political messages appear in speeches, ads, posts, and flyers. Before deciding whether to believe one, separate facts from opinions and notice what information is missing. Bias is a slant that favors one view. Symbolism uses an object, color, or image to suggest an idea. Propaganda tries to shape opinions by using emotional language, repetition, or strong claims. These tools are not always false, but citizens should check claims with reliable sources and compare more than one viewpoint.
- ② During a city council race, Candidate Lee sends a flyer that says, "Only Lee will save our parks." Behind Lee is a large green tree, and the flyer calls the opponent "careless." The flyer gives no park budget, voting record, or plan. A voter notices that "only" leaves out the possibility that other people may help parks. The voter can compare each candidate's proposals and seek independent information about park funding before deciding which claim is supported.
- ③ A week later, a social media post supporting a school-board candidate reads, "Families who care choose Rivera." The post repeats the phrase "Rivera listens" three times. It also shows a ringing school bell and a row of students raising their hands. The post does not link to a speech, survey, or record of Rivera's actions. Repeating a phrase can make it memorable, but it does not prove the claim. The bell and students may suggest learning and attention to schools.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Which word in Lee’s flyer shows bias against the opponent? Explain why it is biased.

2 What idea might the green tree on Lee’s flyer symbolize?

3 What propaganda technique does Rivera’s post use? Quote evidence from the post.

4 Name one type of missing information from either message. Explain how it could help a voter check a claim.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 50-70 word fictional campaign post about a school or town issue. Include one symbol and one example of bias or propaganda. Then write two sentences that name the symbol and technique and tell what evidence a reader should check.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline words or phrases that show bias or propaganda. Circle each object or image described that may have symbolic meaning, and write a 1 beside one piece of missing information a voter should check. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which word in Lee's flyer shows bias against the opponent? Explain why it is biased.	"Careless" shows bias because it is a negative opinion about the opponent and gives no evidence.
2	What idea might the green tree on Lee's flyer symbolize?	It may symbolize care for nature or parks.
3	What propaganda technique does Rivera's post use? Quote evidence from the post.	It uses repetition. The phrase "Rivera listens" appears three times.
4	Name one type of missing information from either message. Explain how it could help a voter check a claim.	Answers may name Lee's missing park budget, voting record, or plan, or Rivera's missing speech, survey, or action record. The information could provide evidence to check the message's claim.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Post: Our town needs safer sidewalks near the middle school. Vote for Jordan, the only candidate who truly protects families. A bright stop sign appears beside Jordan's name, showing that Jordan will keep children safe. Jordan has listened to every parent, while the other candidate ignores danger. Jordan will end sidewalk worries for good. **Analysis:** The stop sign is symbolism, and the words "only," "every," and "for good" are propaganda claims. Readers should check candidate plans and a debate recording.

Accept reasonable identifications of bias, symbolism, and propaganda when students support them with details from the passage. For the open task, check that the post includes both required techniques and that the evidence named could help verify a claim.