

1) Message

Draw arrows to the visual elements that communicate the message. Think about how line, color, graphics, depictions of people, words, and symbols are used.

Visual cues:

Color:

The words are bright red which makes them eye-catching. They stand out from the rest of the poster.

Words:

The words are underlined and exclamation points reinforce the message. The Nazis are fighting to protect the future of "our children."

Graphic/Symbols:

The baby carriages represent a new generation, and hope for the future.

People:

Many innocent and happy children of differing ages are depicted. Most have happy expressions. All represent the ideal "Aryan" type.

What is the message?

We are fighting this war in order to protect our children's future. Germany must protect itself from foreign aggression.



This is why we fight—for bread for our children. March 11, 1940. USHMM Collection

3) Audience

Who is the target audience? What about this message would be appealing to this group? What reactions might different audiences have had? Could people access and express alternative viewpoints?

The target audience is German parents concerned about providing their children with a safe and stable future. Others may have been skeptical, remembering the toll of WWI. However, under the Nazi regime there were no opportunities to speak out against such a message. Listening to foreign broadcasts was a crime punishable by death.

4) Creator

Who is the propagandist? The Nazi Party
What do they hope the audience will:

Think: The war is being fought as an effort to protect German families who are victims of Allied aggression; Germany is the "good guy."

Feel: Worry about what will happen to their children if they do not support the war; Germany must defend itself.

Do: Support the war effort.

2) Context

What are the hopes, fears, and grievances present in society at this time? Think about the political, social, and economic climate.

Political

In September 1939 Germany invaded Poland, beginning WWII. The Nazis needed justification for why Germany was fighting another war and sought to build public support.

Social

Families hoped to secure stable futures for their children after years of economic and political turmoil. "Aryan" families were encouraged to have multiple children to ensure the future of the nation.

Economic

Rearmament and the reclaiming of territories created new jobs, stimulating the German economy. People feared a second economic crisis if Germany were to lose the war.

Given that context, why might this message have had power?

The Nazis masked their territorial aggression by presented Germany as the victim. It emphasizes a higher morality over the enemy.

5) Consequences

What effects did this message have on society? This poster concealed the Nazis' aggressive foreign policy and war behind an emotional assertion that the German regime justly stands to protect and defend the survival of the nation's future. Such appeals made support for the war more palatable for audiences.