

**CLASSROOM TOOL:
COMMON PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUES**

Common Persuasive Techniques	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unpack your techniques and fallacies cards, and review them with a partner. 2. Do a web search to find the texts below online. 3. Choose a text to analyze. 4. Read closely, and reread critically, alert to possible persuasive techniques and logical fallacies. Jot down the ones you notice, and then compare with your partner, talking about how these were used in the text. 	
<i>The Simpsons</i> : “The Bear Patrol and Lisa’s Tiger-Repelling Rock”	<i>Sesame Street</i> : “A Banana in Ernie’s Ear”
Direct TV Commercial: “Don’t Attend Your Own Funeral” (2014)	The O’Reilly Factor: The Bill O’Reilly and Geraldo Rivero Bust Up (2007)
Campaign Ad: Dale Peterson (running for Alabama Agriculture Commissioner, 2010)	Café Scene from <i>Inception</i> (2010)

Common Persuasive Techniques Used in Propaganda

Name-Calling: associating a person with a negative symbol or idea. The effect is to taint their reputation or instill fear or dislike.
Example: *terrorist* or *dictator*

Glittering Generality: using appealing but vague words to create a positive overall reaction
Example: *patriot* or *hero* or *saint*

Transfer: putting an image, quote, or phrase from a trusted group, individual, or history, next to another person or idea so that these become associated.
Example: *all-American*

Testimonial: using a famous name to persuade you, even if that person isn't expert in this field
Example: *athletes on cereal boxes*

Plain Folks: deliberately using "folksy" language, dress, slang, or other details to appeal to "regular folks"
Example: *Jennifer Lopez is from the Bronx, or Bill Gates dropped out of college.*

Card Stacking: presenting lots of evidence that supports one side while deliberately ignoring evidence or sources that support the other side
Example: *Chocolate milk drinkers are healthier because they get more calcium than non-milk drinkers.*

Band Wagon: suggesting that most people already agree with this position, making it feel like it's inevitable to support it or not worth it to fight it
Example: *Car companies agree that it would be impossible to cut carbon emissions, so we need to find other solutions.*

Hidden Fear: suggesting that someone or something will protect you, often against a hidden danger
Example: *Did you realize your microwave is emitting dangerous radiation?* or *Without the CIA's black budget, America would be overrun with terrorists.*

Common Persuasive Techniques Used in Propaganda

Snob Appeal: suggesting that if you associate with this product or person, you'll be more elite—you'll fit into groups you'd like to be a part of
Example: *The new iPhone will make you the most popular kid in school* or *Everyone will be at your house when you serve . . .*

Slippery Slope: suggesting that one decision will inevitably lead to a series of awful consequences
Example: *If we ban assault rifles, then no one will be able to hunt anymore, and people could starve.*

Straw Man: making one side or one person seem so extreme that no one would choose it
Example: *Gun law advocates want to take away your hunting rifles.*

Begging the Question: suggesting that a claim is simply true.
Example: *Gay marriage is just plain wrong* or *You have to have an iPhone because it's the best phone on the market.*

Either/Or: making it seem like there is no middle ground or alternative possible
Example: *You are either with me or against me.*

Ad Hominem: attacking a person personally as a way to undermine their argument
Example: *No one trusts his politics because he's a loud-mouth.*

Affirming the Consequent: suggesting that if A is true, then B is true, that means that if B is true, then A must be true.
Premise: *Ducks are birds. Ducks can swim. Chickens are birds.* So, false conclusion: *Chickens can swim.*

Moral Equivalency: suggesting that two acts or events are equally good or bad, when one may be much more weighty than another.
Example: *It was a holocaust.*