



CREATING A BROADSIDE



Objective

Students will examine and discuss examples of broadsides and then create their own.

Standards

Visual Arts 1.2.b (grades 3 – 5)

Reading standards 1.E.3.a (grades 3 – 5)

Social studies 5.A.2.a (grade 3)

Social studies 5.B.2.a (grade 4)

Grade level

3 - 5

Length of lesson

60 minutes

Materials from trunk

Broadsides:

- A broadside from Baltimore, 1812, talking about a mob riot
- Defense of Fort McHenry
- War of 1812, War Proclamation by President Madison
- Ballad of Edwin & Mary – a love story about two people split apart by the War of 1812
- Commerce in Flames! A pictorial broadside publicizing French ships attacking American ships
- Broadside advertising a slave sale in 1812
- Impressment Broadside, March 27, 1813
- Savage and Inhuman Warfare

Materials from classroom

Art making supplies:

- parchment paper (see recipe for parchment paper in trunk)
- black pens
- pencils for sketching
- if possible, access to computers and programs for design



CREATING A BROADSIDE

Overview

After examining several examples of historical broadsides, students discuss how these primary sources were made and used, generate a list of key design components and then create their own. Comparisons will also be made with modern media.

Teacher Background

The term “**broadside**” originally meant firing all the guns on one side of a ship to blast your enemy. Printed broadsides were a popular form of publication in the 19th century. Used to relay all kinds of information – news, governmental, advertising – these posters were printed on one side, created for temporary use and widely distributed. Whether they advertised events, meetings, performances or shared news events or expressions of political belief, the design of broadsides typically included both images and writing, either prose or poetry. Broadsides were read privately but also aloud as a way of sharing information to a large group of people. Examples in this lesson include both broadsides related directly to the War of 1812 and broadsides that communicate the general societal climate of the time.

Procedure

1. Explain to students that they will be examining primary sources called broadsides. Tell them when these sources were created and pass out examples of broadsides to small groups of students.
2. Ask students to examine the broadsides closely and answer the following questions, grounding their hypotheses in either contextual knowledge or evidence from their examination of the broadsides. Who might have created this broadside and for what purpose? What event or opinion is being shared? Who might be the intended audience? You might consider using the “primary resource worksheet” as an additional tool for analysis (see Related Resources section). Students prepare to share their answers with evidence from their examination.
3. As a class, share answers and discuss broadsides more generally. What was their purpose? How were they used? What can they tell us about life during this time? What are the design elements of a broadside? (i.e. they are meant to be read and then discarded, sometimes they are meant to be read aloud, they sometimes include an image (a symbol or representation) along with text (prose, poetry or lyrical form), they use different kinds and sizes of fonts.)
4. Tell students they will be creating their own broadside. Students may choose an event or work with events or issues they have been exploring in class. Consider asking students to choose one event from the “Making a Timeline” lesson. They may draw freehand, use computers, make collages from magazine photos or photos from the computer or use other techniques. Regardless of their choice of media, students need to consider audience, message and design.
5. After students make their broadsides, share them as a class. Ask students to share both their work and their process. Why and how did they choose the event/issue to explore? What was the rationale for design choices? Did students choose similar or different events? Are broadsides similar or very different?



CREATING A BROADSIDE

6. What is a modern day equivalent of a broadside (the NY Times? The National Enquirer? A blog posting, Facebook event or TV?)

Extensions

- Include student broadsides in a classroom exhibit (see Creating an Exhibit lesson)
- Create a modern-day version of a broadside that features a current event (news, school event, etc). How will students transfer the key design elements of a broadside into a modern context?
- Have a student from each group deliver their broadside, reading it aloud to the class, as if standing in the public square in Baltimore or Annapolis.

Modifications

- Instead of letting students choose their own events or issues to explore in the broadside, ask them all to represent the same event (or direct them to explore a set of three choices). Then, compare student work. What choices did students make? Are broadsides similar or different? Why and how?

Related Resources

Worksheet for analyzing a primary document



CREATING A BROADSIDE

Worksheet for analyzing a Primary Document

Take a close look at your broadside and provide the following information below:

1. When do you think this document was created? _____
2. Who do you think created the document? _____
3. For what audience? _____
4. Why do you think this document was created? Provide evidence and explanation:

5. List three things the author said that you think are important:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
6. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
7. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document

Worksheet adapted from:

West, Jean
1998 "Primary Sources Worksheet," in *Archaeology of Early Colonial Life: Teaching with Primary Resources, Vol. 13*. Peterborough, New Hampshire: Cobblestone Publishing Company.