

## Posters – intended to have an impact

What is the purpose of a poster? Posters are not created by accident. They are made with a very specific purpose in mind: They are meant to inform and influence as many people as possible, through placement in public spaces, on streets and squares, on walls, kiosks, wooden scaffolds, windows and so on. Either they advertise something or try to win support for something, or they do the opposite: They try to agitate or provoke a reaction against something. They have to catch the eye of passers-by, so they have to be attractive and easy to understand. They have to make a quick impression. How? Through their large format and colour or their colourful design, their use of script and their “pithy” – in other words, simplified and thus catchy – message.

You probably have seen political posters in your school history books, including election and propaganda posters. Today, posters are used ever more frequently in public spaces to advertise consumer goods, cultural events and entertainment, and for other purposes. These especially give hints about contemporary attitudes, behaviour, values, trends, ideals and popular figures – everything that is allowed and possible, and everything that is not. That is why it is always important to consider posters closely and critically.

### First impressions:

- What draws your attention right away, and what’s “eye-catching” about it?

First impressions

### Exact description:

- Describe the image (its content, structure, viewpoint).
- What details can you identify?
- Is there something that stands out, such as size, colour composition, the layout of elements, objects, symbols?
- Is it a realistic, “natural” depiction or a stylized image or caricature?
- What is the relationship between image and text (amount of text and message, size and type of letters used)?
- How is a relationship built between the elements of the poster (for example, through the colour scheme and lighting, the arrangement of images through collage or photomontage)?
- When and where was the poster made?
- Are the client and “producer” named?

Description



### **Concluding appraisal:**

- What effect was the poster supposed to have when it was created and “made public” (for example, to inform about specific facts, to pose a challenge, to explain something, to criticize a position)?
- What overall impression does the poster make on you? How can you explain the effect it has?

**Concluding  
appraisal**