

# HOW TO PLAY PROPAGANDA

## A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Created by Ellen Bredeweg - 2011

# WHY PLAY PROPAGANDA?

While playing PROPAGANDA, players learn to recognize techniques of persuasion that are often used by advertisers, politicians, editorial writers, and in normal human interaction. Players increase their ability to discern the truth from smokescreens; they learn to figure out the reality of situations rather than getting duped by the techniques. Players become critical thinkers.

Players on a team from a school spend time studying together and exchanging ideas and notes as part of their learning experience.

## SOME BASIC INFORMATION...

Elementary Division (grades 4-6) questions are composed with easier language than for Middle Division (grades 7-8). At the Junior and Senior Divisions (grades 9-12), players are exposed to visual propaganda as well as verbal examples.

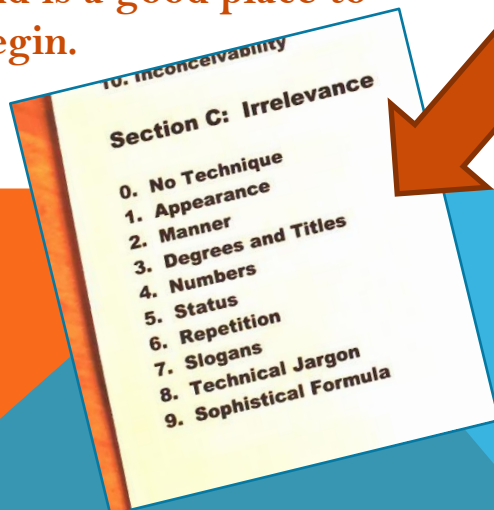
**PROPAGANDA** is a question and response game. A central reader reads the techniques aloud to all players simultaneously.

# WHAT'S PROPAGANDA ALL ABOUT?

There are **SIX** PROPAGANDA sections. Each section has its own list of techniques.

Only **ONE** section is played at a time.

Section C is composed of easily recognizable advertising gimmicks and is a good place to begin.



## AGLOA PROPAGANDA TECHNIQUES LIST

Definition of Techniques are based upon "PROPAGANDA – The Definitive Guide."

### Section A: Self Deception

0. No Technique
1. Prejudice
2. Academic Detachment
3. Drawing the Line
4. Not Drawing the Line
5. Conservatism, Moderatism, Radicalism
6. Rationalization
7. Wishful Thinking
8. Tabloid Thinking
9. Causal oversimplification
10. Inconceivability

### Section C: Irrelevance

0. No Technique
1. Appearance
2. Manner
3. Degrees and Titles
4. Numbers
5. Status
6. Repetition
7. Slogans
8. Technical Jargon
9. Sophistical Formula

### Section E: Form

0. No Technique
1. Concurrency
2. Post Hoc
3. Selected Instances
4. Hasty Generalization
5. Faulty Analogy
6. Composition
7. Division
8. Non Sequitur

### Section B: Language

0. No Technique
1. Emotional Terms
2. Metaphor or Simile
3. Emphasis
4. Quotation out of Context
5. Abstract Terms
6. Vagueness
7. Ambiguity
8. Shift of Meaning

### Section D: Exploitation

0. No Technique
1. Appeal to Pity
2. Appeal to Flattery
3. Appeal to Ridicule
4. Appeal to Prestige
5. Appeal to Prejudice
6. Bargain Appeal
7. Folksy Appeal
8. Join the Bandwagon
9. Appeal to Practical Consequences
10. Passing from Acceptable to Doubtful

### Section F: Maneuver

0. No Technique
1. Diversion
2. Disproving a Minor Point
3. Ad Hominem
4. Appeal to Ignorance
5. Leading Question
6. Complex Question
7. Inconsequent Argument
8. Attacking a Straw Man [Exagerrating]
9. Victory by Definition
10. Begging the Question [Circular Reasoning]

Based upon *The Propaganda Game*, by Robert W. Allen and Lorne Green

## SECTION C    TECHNIQUES OF IRRELEVANCE    How Gullible are You?

### 1. APPEARANCE

The way a person or thing looks becomes the basis of our acceptance or rejection.

Example: “Andy looked good. His suit was sharp, his shoes polished, and his hair nicely groomed. Martin was kind of sloppy and rumped. We should hire Andy for our technical work.”

### 2. MANNER

The way a person acts or behaves at a certain time becomes the basis of our acceptance or rejection of the person. Usually, the behavior has nothing to do with the issue at hand.

Example: “I don’t understand why Congressman Maxwell is so popular. There is something about the man that makes me think he’s not all there. He constantly pauses as he drives to deliver his messages. He’s like a puppet. I really don’t have much confidence in him.”

### 3. DEGREES AND TITLES

We buy or believe out of respect for degrees or titles attached to the names of those who persuade us even though the degree or title is not relevant to the product or idea being presented.

Example: “Of course I am the best person to hire as Soccer Director of your Youth Soccer Association. I was Captain of my college basketball team, a third-team basketball All-American, and a second round draft pick in the NBA.”

**PLAYERS MUST LEARN THE DEFINITIONS...**

**...THERE ARE 9 TECHNIQUES IN SECTION C**

## 4. NUMBERS

The speaker or ad wants us to buy or believe because of the large numbers associated with the product or proposition.

**Example: Advertisement with the GEICO Gecko: “Celebrating over 70 years of saving people money on car insurance, and a 97% customer satisfaction rate. Over three million drivers switched to GEICO last year.”**

## 5. STATUS

Persons or objects for which we have respect - or which possess some degree of fame or prestige - are used to convince us of something. It is the person's fame and prestige that is used, not the person's degree or title.

**Example: Advertisement: “Justin Timberlake drinks milk; so should you.”**

## 6. REPETITION

We buy or believe because we have heard or seen the idea or product name so many times. The speaker or advertiser "pounds" the message into our heads.

**Example: Advertisement: “Buy one suit and get two absolutely free. For a limited time only at Joseph A. Banks. You heard that right. Buy one suit and get two free. Today through Friday only at Joseph A. Banks. Get two suits free when you buy one.”**

**SECTION C CONTINUES . . .**

## 7. SLOGANS

A slogan is a short, catchy phrase or sentence meant to promote action in favor of the slogan maker. However true the slogan may be, if your action is merely a favorable response to the slogan, and not based on an honest evaluation of the product, then the technique is successful.

**Example: Advertisement: “Pepsi beats the others cold. Pepsi Pours it On.”**

## 8. TECHNICAL JARGON

"Jargon" refers to the terminology used in a specific field. In this technique, unfamiliar words whose meaning is too technical to be understood by the average reader or listener are used to impress us.

**Example: Advertisement: “Our new frizz-resistant hair gel has a patented new formula with ‘Elasticon.’ It works hard to strengthen hair and prevent frizzies. Welcome to the newest wave in hair management.”**

## 9. SOPHISTICAL FORMULA

An old or popular saying is used to close an argument so that the real issue is not settled.

**Example: Mother to son: “Now Jimmy, I know your father and I will be out of town this weekend, but I expect you to be on your best behavior. None of this ‘while the cat’s away, the mice will play’ nonsense!”**

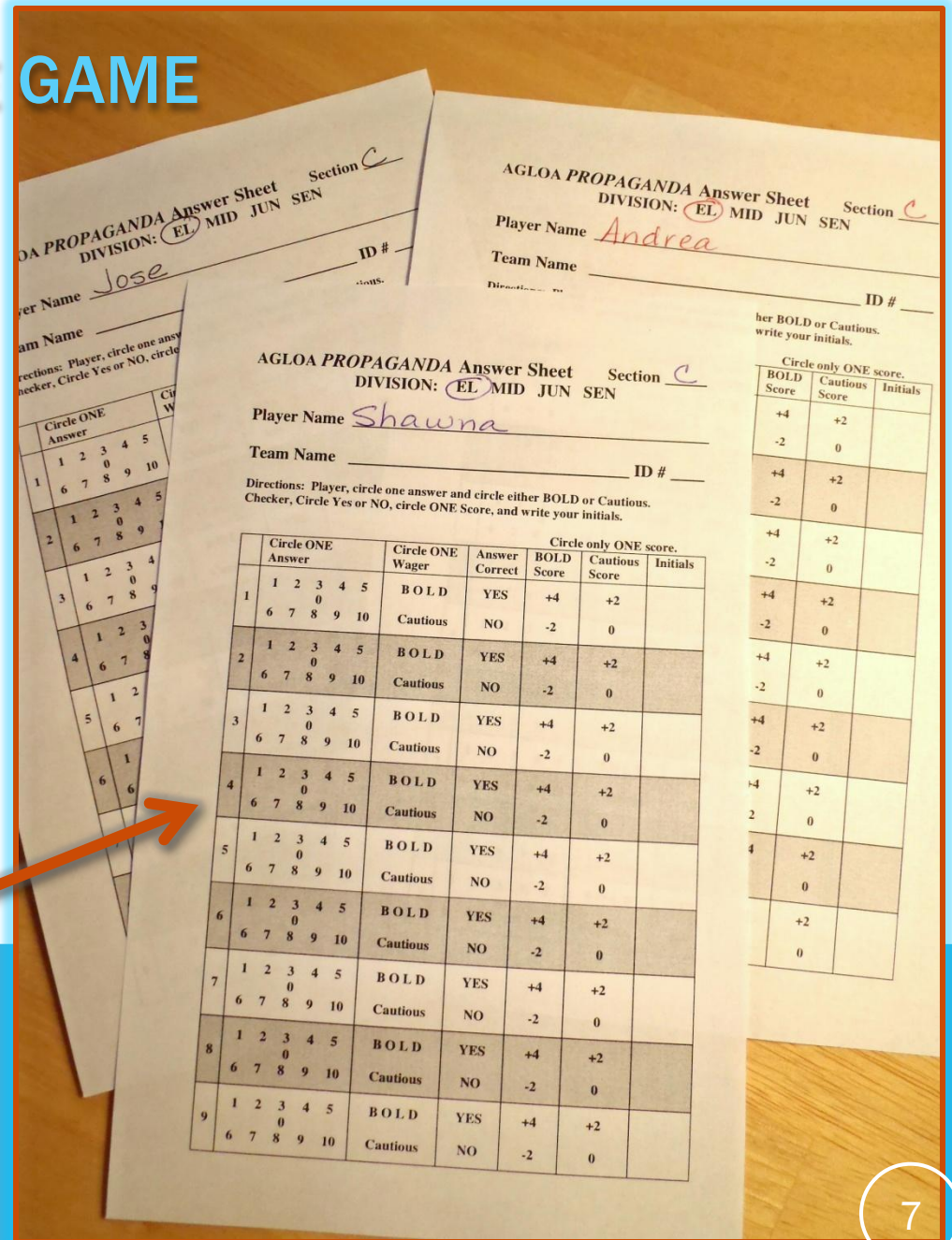


Watch out for ‘O’ or NO TECHNIQUE.

If the argument is logical or is identified as an opinion, then O (No Technique) is the correct answer.

# NOW...TO START THE GAME

- ✓ Students sit in groups of three or four for purposes of checking each other's answers and keeping score.
- ✓ In competitions, all three players will be from different schools. Many such groups are playing simultaneously in the same room.
- ✓ Each player has a **PROPAGANDA Techniques List**, and the Section letter of the game being played is announced.
- ✓ In this sample game, Jose, Andrea, and Shawna are playing Section C.
- ✓ Each player has an Answer Sheet which is filled out with the player's name and team name.  
(Note: for illustration purposes, only the players' first names are used here.)



# THE TABLE SCORE SHEET

- ✓ The table has a Score Sheet and one of the three players is designated as the Table Scorekeeper for this round.
- ✓ Each player writes his/her name and team name on the Table Score Sheet.

AGLOA PROPAGANDA Score Sheet Table \_\_\_\_\_

Section C DIVISION: EL MID JUN SEN

Player Name/ Team Name/ ID#		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total	Score
Shawna	+											
	-											

I agree with the final scores of all three players. Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Player Name/ Team Name/ ID#		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total	Score
Andrea	+											
	-											

I agree with the final scores of all three players. Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Player Name/ Team Name/ ID#		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total	Score
Jose	+											
	-											

I agree with the final scores of all three players. Initials \_\_\_\_\_

# EXAMPLE #1

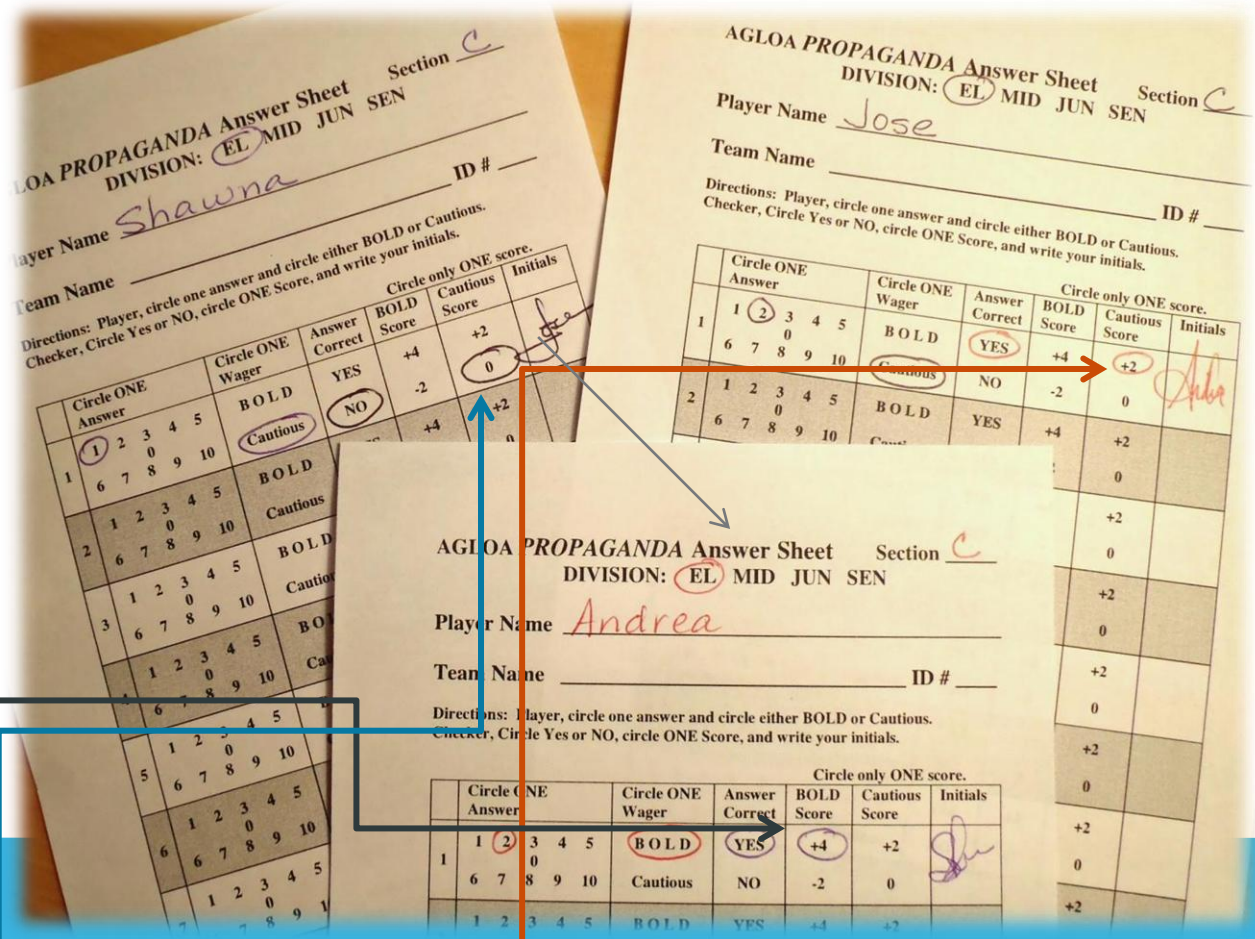
- The central reader reads the first PROPAGANDA example and repeats it again.

#1. Mitt Romney, the Governor of Massachusetts, really wowed me the other day on national TV. I felt like he really understood me. He spoke clearly and directly and was very inviting in his presentation. I can vote for him in the primary.

- After the second reading, players pick up their pencils. They have about 30 seconds to search the list of Techniques from Section C and decide upon their answers.
- Players keep their Answer Sheets covered so that their opponents do not see what they are answering.
- Each player circles the number of the technique he/she thinks is being used. The player then circles BOLD if confident of the answer, or CAUTIOUS if not quite sure of the answer. **If a player circles BOLD, a correct answer will score +4, but a wrong answer will score -2. If a player circles CAUTIOUS, a correct answer will score +2, but a wrong answer will score 0.**
- Players are instructed to put their pencils down and pass their Answer Sheets either to the player on their right or left as instructed by the central reader.
- The central reader announces the correct Technique, and each player writes the opponent's score on the Answer Sheet and initials it. Each player then tells the Table Scorekeeper to record the score on the Table Score Sheet.

# LET'S SEE WHAT THE SCORING LOOKS LIKE:

- The players rotate their Answer Sheets to the left.
- The central reader announces that the correct response is #2 – MANNER. Players may have noticed clues that referred to *spoke clearly and directly ... inviting in his presentation* to help them determine that this technique had to be “manner.”
- Note that Andrea is correct and answered BOLD so she scores +4.
- Jose is also correct, but answered CAUTIOUS so he scores only +2.
- Shawna is incorrect and answered CAUTIOUS so she scores 0.



- As each player checks his/her opponent's Answer Sheet, YES is circled if the answer is correct, or NO if it is incorrect. Then the correct scores are circled and initialed, and each Answer Sheet is handed back to the proper player.

# THE SCORES ARE RECORDED ON THE TABLE SCORE SHEET...

- As the table scorekeeper, Shawna is responsible to record each player's score on the Table Score Sheet.
- This is what the Table Score Sheet looks like after Example #1 is scored.

## ...AND THE NEXT EXAMPLE IS READ

The play proceeds through nine (9) examples to complete this round of Section C.

Section C DIVISION: EL MID JUN SEN

Player Name/ Team Name/ ID#		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total	Score
Shawna	+	0										
	-											

I agree with the final scores of all three players. Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Player Name/ Team Name/ ID#		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total	Score
Andrea	+	4										
	-											

I agree with the final scores of all three players. Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Player Name/ Team Name/ ID#		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total	Score
Jose	+	2										
	-											

I agree with the final scores of all three players. Initials \_\_\_\_\_

# AT THE END OF THE ROUND...

- Here's what the three players' Answer Sheets look like at the end of the round.
- Each score has been recorded on the Table Score Sheet as the round progressed.

AGLOA PROPAGANDA Answer Sheet Section C  
 DIVISION: (EL) MID JUN SEN

Player Name Shawna ID # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Team Name \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Player, circle one answer and circle either BOLD or Cautious.  
 Checker, Circle Yes or NO, circle ONE Score, and write your initials.

	Circle ONE Answer	Circle ONE Wager	Answer Correct	BOLD Score	Cautious Score	Initials
1	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
2	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
4	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
5	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
6	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
7	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
8	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh

AGLOA PROPAGANDA Answer Sheet Section C  
 DIVISION: (EL) MID JUN SEN

Player Name Andrea ID # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Team Name \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Player, circle one answer and circle either BOLD or Cautious.  
 Checker, Circle Yes or NO, circle ONE Score, and write your initials.

Circle only ONE score.

	Circle ONE Answer	Circle ONE Wager	Answer Correct	BOLD Score	Cautious Score	Initials
1	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
2	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
4	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
5	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
6	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
7	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
8	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh

AGLOA PROPAGANDA Answer Sheet Section C  
 DIVISION: (EL) MID JUN SEN

Player Name Jose ID # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Team Name \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Player, circle one answer and circle either BOLD or Cautious.  
 Checker, Circle Yes or NO, circle ONE Score, and write your initials.

Circle only ONE score.

	Circle ONE Answer	Circle ONE Wager	Answer Correct	BOLD Score	Cautious Score	Initials
1	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
2	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
4	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
5	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
6	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
7	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
8	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh
9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD Cautious	YES NO	+4 -2	+2 0	Sh

# THE RESULTS ARE IN...

- After all nine examples have been read, answered, and scored, all three players at the table cooperate in adding up the scores and totaling them at the bottom.
- For each player, all + scores are totaled, and then all - scores. The **SCORE** for that player is the difference between the + and - totals.
- Each player initials the Table Score Sheet to indicate that they agree that the scores of ALL THREE players are correct.
- See how Andrea's scores have been recorded on the Table Score Sheet.

**AGLOA PROPAGANDA Answer Sheet** Section C  
 DIVISION: EL MID JUN SEN  
 Player Name Andrea ID # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Team Name \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Player, circle one answer and circle either BOLD or Cautious.  
 Checker, Circle Yes or NO, circle ONE Score, and write your initials.

	Circle ONE Answer	Circle ONE Wager	Answer Correct	BOLD Score	Cautious Score	Initials
1	1 (2) 3 4 5 0 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD	YES	+4	+2	[Signature]
		Cautious	NO	-2	0	[Signature]
2	1 2 3 4 5 0 (6) 7 8 9 10	BOLD	YES	+4	+2	[Signature]
		Cautious	NO	-2	0	[Signature]
3	1 2 3 4 5 0 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD	YES	+4	+2	[Signature]
		Cautious	NO	-2	0	[Signature]
4	1 2 3 4 5 0 6 (7) 8 9 10	BOLD	YES	+4	+2	[Signature]
		Cautious	NO	-2	0	[Signature]
5	1 (2) 3 4 5 0 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD	YES	+4	+2	[Signature]
		Cautious	NO	-2	0	[Signature]
6	1 2 3 4 5 0 6 (7) 8 9 10	BOLD	YES	+4	+2	[Signature]
		Cautious	NO	-2	0	[Signature]
7	1 2 3 4 5 0 6 7 8 (9) 10	BOLD	YES	+4	+2	[Signature]
		Cautious	NO	-2	0	[Signature]
8	(1) 2 3 4 5 0 6 7 8 9 10	BOLD	YES	+4	+2	[Signature]
		Cautious	NO	-2	0	[Signature]
9	1 2 3 4 5 0 6 7 (8) 9 10	BOLD	YES	+4	+2	[Signature]
		Cautious	NO	-2	0	[Signature]

**AGLOA PROPAGANDA Score Sheet** Table \_\_\_\_\_  
 Section C DIVISION: EL MID JUN SEN

Player Name/ Team Name/ ID#	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total	Score
Shawna	+	0	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	+30	+30
	-									-0	
I agree with the final scores of all three players. Initials [Signature]											
Andrea	+	4	4	4				2	4	+20	+14
	-			2	2					-6	
I agree with the final scores of all three players. Initials [Signature]											
Jose	+	2	4	2	2	0	4	4	0	+8	+16
	-			2						-2	
I agree with the final scores of all three players. Initials [Signature]											

# NOW WHAT?

- The Table Scorekeeper then holds up the Score Sheet so that a coach/monitor can pick it up and take it to the Tournament scorers for recording.
- If these players are staying together for another round (in a different Section), they would choose a different player to serve as Table Scorekeeper for that second round.
- Answer Sheets are usually printed on both sides, so players would use the other side of the Answer Sheet for a second round of questions. At the end of the second round, both the Table Score Sheet and all players' Answer Sheets are picked up.

# WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT PROPAGANDA?

Coaches and players may learn and study PROPAGANDA Techniques in one of two ways:

1. Simple definitions and a limited supply of Techniques are available FREE on the [www.academicgames.org](http://www.academicgames.org) website. This will get players started.
2. Detailed definitions and over 800 Techniques that have been played in competitions over 30 years are available by ordering the **PROPAGANDA CD**. This will allow players and coaches to study a great number of examples of one technique, or to compose rounds of nine examples from a Section for practice playing.

# RESOURCES: THE AGLOA WEBSITE



Academic Games Leagues of America  
Promoting Excellence Through Academic Competition

- Propaganda

Home >> Online Learning

Online Learning

At [www.academicgames.org](http://www.academicgames.org) click on **Online Learning** at the left.

When you click on the **PROPAGANDA ONLINE** logo, you have a choice to *either*

1. Learn PROPAGANDA – and get definitions for various Techniques *or*
2. Play PROPAGANDA – and test your skill at either a *beginner* or *advanced* level as you read examples from various Sections.



# MORE ABOUT THE AGLOA WEBSITE...

## PROPAGANDA STUDY MATERIALS (FREE) –*pictured on the previous slide*

Suggested as an Introduction to PROPAGANDA to get players and coaches started.

Simple definitions and limited supply of Examples along with PROPAGANDA Tournament Rules for this year.

Go to [www.academicgames.org](http://www.academicgames.org).

- ✓ Click ONLINE LEARNING on the left.
- ✓ Click on PROPAGANDA.
- ✓ Click on Learn PROPAGANDA.

**PROPAGANDA is divided into six sections. Please click on the section you would like to learn. We suggest that you start with Section C or D.**

Read the definitions of the different techniques in a section. Click [Play Propaganda](#) to try some examples for that section.

Only one section is played at a time.

Section A: *You can Fool Yourself.*

Section B: *Language will Lure You.*

Section C: *How Gullible are You?*

Section D: *What's Your Weakness?*

Section E: *The Form will Fool You.*

Section F: *Maneuvers will Mess with You.*

PROPAGANDA Official Tournament Rules and Reader's Script (FREE) [www.academicgames.org](http://www.academicgames.org) Click the document you want to download in the list at the right on the Home Page.

# PROPAGANDA STUDY MATERIALS (COMPLETE)

For players and coaches to get a thorough understanding of PROPAGANDA Techniques, order the **PROPAGANDA CD** which contains

- ✓ Detailed Official Definitions of Techniques
- ✓ A Supply of over 800 Examples used in past Tournaments
- ✓ Sorting capability to sort the Techniques into all of one kind for in-depth study or re-sort them into rounds of nine per Section for simulated Tournament play.

At [www.academicgames.org](http://www.academicgames.org), go to **AGLOA STORE** to print the **ORDER FORM FOR ACADEMIC GAMES MATERIALS**  
Mail as directed on the form.

## ORDER FORM ACADEMIC GAMES MATERIALS

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. PROPAGANDA® CD (2008 Edition)  
\$40.00 Contains *Propaganda: the Definitive Guide*,  
Past Propaganda Questions in two forms (random  
and by technique), Guide to Visual Examples (Jr/Sr)

PROPAGANDA Game (The Original from 1966)

Original Definitions and many Technique Examples (Note: these are old from the 1960's)

NOT the Official Tournament Rules. Order from [www.wfnproof.com](http://www.wfnproof.com).

The PROPAGANDA Game is published by Wff'N Proof©