“The Crisis, No. 1”

- Occurred during the Revolutionary War
- Winter season
- Colonists are disheartened by the war
- Troops/colonists needed inspiration
- First of sixteen pamphlets called “The Crisis”
About the Author

Thomas Paine

- 1737-1809
- Born in England
- Also wrote a pamphlet called “Common Sense”
- Considered the most persuasive writer of the American Revolution
Who is Paine?

- Thomas Paine, often called the "Godfather of America" was an eighteenth century writer who used propaganda and persuasion techniques to motivate Americans in the fight for freedom from Britain.
What Makes “The Crisis No. 1” so famous?

- During the winter of 1776, American soldiers fighting in the Revolutionary War under the command of George Washington had little food, insufficient shelter, and many were deserting.
- Many had only signed up for six-months, and their term was rapidly coming to a close.
Washington read to the troops

- The reading of “The Crisis” to these troops had a profound effect upon their morale which lead to a victory at the Battle of Trenton, Dec. 26, 1776.
- George Washington’s famous crossing of the Delaware River and victory ultimately became a turning point in the war; more people enlisted.
Persuasive Techniques

Paine used several propaganda and persuasion techniques including:

- over generalization
- either/or fallacy
- bandwagon appeal
- Parallelism
- Analogy
- Repetition
- Anecdote
- and loaded language
- Rhetorical question
Propaganda vs. Persuasion

- **Propaganda**: information, ideas, or rumors deliberately spread widely to help or harm a person, group, movement, institution, nation.

- **Persuasion**: the process by which a person’s attitudes or behavior are influenced by communications from other people.
Paine uses propaganda and persuasion methods to induce a desire for freedom in the reader in “The Crisis”.

Persuasion or Propaganda?
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One type of propaganda used was overgeneralization.

His use of broad generalities was demonstrated when he concluded, "Not a man lives on the continent, but fully believes that a separation must sometime or other finally take place..."
Persuasion or Propaganda?

- A second type of propaganda used is either/or fallacy.

- Paine had the sentiment that a man either fought for freedom or would always be known as a coward when he stated, "The heart that feels not now is dead; the blood of his children will curse his cowardice who shrinks back at a time when a little might have saved the whole, and made them happy."
The third and final use of propaganda in Paine’s “The Crisis” is the bandwagon appeal.

To truly be an admired American, Tom thought that one had to support and fight for freedom for all. This was exemplified when he said, "The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country, but he that stands it now deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."
A type of persuasion used is the analogy.

Thomas Paine concluded that the King of England was an impious criminal when he declared, "I cannot see on what grounds the King of Britain can look up to heaven for help against us: a common murderer, a highwayman, or a housebreaker has as good a pretense as he..."
Persuasion or Propaganda?

And another analogy: "Neither have I so much of the infidel in me as to suppose that He has relinquished the government of the world, and given us up to the care of devils."
Another instance of persuasion Paine utilizes is **loaded language**.

Emotional excitement is certainly provoked when he declares, "Britain, with an army to enforce her tyranny, had declared that she has a right not only to tax, but "to bind us in all cases whatsoever"; and if being bound in that manner is not **slavery**, then is there not such a thing as **slavery** upon earth."
Persuasion or Propaganda?

- The final example of persuasion contained in “The Crisis” is the anecdote.
- Paine tells the story of a common man who wants to see freedom in his lifetime. "A noted one, who kept a tavern at Amboy, was standing at his door, with as pretty a child in his hand, about eight or nine years old, as I ever saw, and after speaking his mind as freely as he thought was prudent, finished with this unfatherly expression, "Well! give me peace in my day."