



 **NAPOLEON**.life

JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID'S “CORONATION” PAINTING: FAKE NEWS?

An Educator's Guide to the Interactive Tour at
www.napoleon.life

Napoleon.life

Educator's Guide

“History is a set of lies agreed upon.” — Napoleon Bonaparte

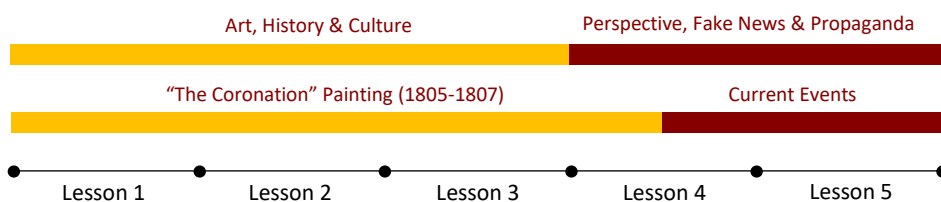
Why should students explore art to better understand history? Art provides a vast visual history of our planet and the people on it, while artists provide visual interpretations of time and place. The interactive tour and educator's guide at Napoleon.life are designed to help educators facilitate a multidisciplinary exploration of Napoleon Bonaparte, the young general who conquered much of Europe before crowning himself emperor of France in 1804. Through an exploration of art, students can learn about the people and events that shaped history while better understanding both present and future.

About Napoleon.life

Napoleon.life is an interactive tour that tells the hidden story of *The Coronation* painting by artist Jacques-Louis David. At first glance, this life-sized painting seems to be a straight-forward portrayal of a historic event. Upon closer examination, however, we find that several lies were told in order to portray the new emperor in a flattering light. Through the tour at Napoleon.life and the lessons that follow, students will learn to separate fact from fiction. They will understand that Napoleon Bonaparte was a spin master who meticulously controlled his image. They will discover that fake news isn't *just* a 21st-century problem, and they'll gain tools to help them think critically about the messages that surround them – because *seeing isn't always believing*.

Using this Guide

This product gives educators the opportunity to blend online instruction with traditional classroom-based learning. The guide contains five sixty-minute lessons that can be modified based on class time or needs. Each lesson consists of a one-page plan. The sidebar provides important content and ideas for assessment and modification. As shown in the graphic below, Lessons 1-3 focus on art, history and culture as reflected in David's *Coronation* painting. The first three lessons can be taught with or without Lessons 4-5, which bring the painting's themes of perspective and propaganda to life in modern times.



Website

<https://www.napoleon.life>



Learning Objectives

During this lesson, students will:

- Learn about Napoleon Bonaparte and those who influenced him
- Separate fact from fiction in David's *Coronation* painting
- See how perspective shapes the narratives of art and life
- Define propaganda and fake news
- Leverage critical thinking skills to identify current examples of propaganda



Classroom Materials

- Chart paper
- Computers
- Headphones
- Internet Access
- Labels
- Laptops
- Markers
- Post-its
- Projector

Lesson One: Introducing David’s “Coronation”

In this lesson, students will understand that there is more to David’s *Coronation* painting than meets the eye.

Essential Question

When it comes to art, is seeing really believing?

Warm-Up (10 mins): See, Think, Wonder

- Handout the following [worksheet](#), or place it in the class cloud.
- After reviewing the painting, students should answer each question:
 - What do you see? What do you think is going on? What does it make you wonder?
- Ask students to save their responses. You will revisit this activity in a future lesson.

Introduction (10 mins): Spot the Liar

- In [this worksheet](#), there are three paintings. Two paintings are realistic portrayals of historical events, while one is filled with lies.
- Ask students to select “the liar” and write the reason for their selection in the space provided.
- If students have internet access, they may [take this poll](#) instead.

Main Activity (40 mins): Discover David’s “Coronation”

- Use the welcome screen of Napoleon.life to reveal the liar from the worksheet or poll above.
- Introduce the interactive tour. Emphasize that the painting contains several mistruths students must uncover as they move through the tour.
- The content of Napoleon.life is organized into 11 categories or “pins.”
- Divide the class into groups of 3-5 students.
- Assign each group one set of pins to review. The pins are grouped by role:
 - **Group 1 – Overview:** Pins A-B
 - **Group 2 – Directors:** Pins 1-2
 - **Group 3 – Influencers:** Pins 3-4
 - **Group 4 – Siblings:** Pins 5-6
 - **Group 5 – Supporting Cast:** Pins 7-9
- Hand out this [worksheet](#). For each pin, ask students to complete the corresponding rows by capturing 2-3 key points, one fact and one fiction.
- Group members should be prepared to share their findings with classmates in the next lesson.



To conserve class time, students may complete the See-Think-Wonder worksheet prior to this lesson.



Defining Terms

While propaganda and fake news are subjects of a later lesson, it will be helpful to define terms here. *Propaganda* is a form of *fake news* that includes exaggerated or false claims used to persuade an audience towards one action or cause.



For classrooms low on time or access to technology, the main activity can be completed partially or entirely at home.



Subject Modification

If you teach a narrowly-focused subject, you may wish to review a subset of the content found on Napoleon.life:

- Visual Arts: Pins A, 1, 2, 7, 8
- Civics: Pins 1, 2, 7, 9
- French: Pins B, 1, 2, 4, 7
- Sociology: Pins 2, 3, 4, 5, 6



Lesson Two: Unmasking David’s “Coronation”

In this lesson, students will uncover fact vs. fiction in David’s *Coronation* painting through an in-depth exploration of the work of art.

Essential Question:

How can you distinguish between fact and fiction?

Warm-Up (10 mins):

- In the first minutes of class, students should gather with their original group to finish reviewing their pins and exchange notes with teammates.
- Hand out labels with the word “Expert” at top. Ask each student to write their group and pin numbers, and place the badge on their shirt.

Main Activity (45 mins): Jigsaw “Expert” Share

- Ask students to form new groups. The new group should include at least one “expert” from each of the original content groupings.
- Assign groups yourself or walk the room to ensure the newly formed groups have a mixture of experts from each content area.
- Ask students to share their discoveries one pin at a time, spending 4-5 minutes discussing each.
- To ensure the activity keeps moving, set a timer, or interrupt to tell students when to move to the next pin.
- As experts speak, students should complete their [*Tell Me About this Pin worksheet*](#) from lesson one.
 - By the end of this activity, students are expected to have a completed organizer of all content found in Napoleon.life.
- Circulate the room to observe, join in and keep the conversation focused and flowing.

Wrap-Up (5 mins): See-Think-Wonder Revisited

- Distribute clean copies of the [*See-Think-Wonder worksheet*](#) from lesson one.
- For homework, ask students to update their responses by answering: What does “The Coronation” painting *now* make you see, think and wonder?
- To see how the students’ thinking has evolved, please complete the sidebar activity as well.



To conserve class time, students may complete both wrap-up worksheets for homework.



Wrap-Up Activity

Once the wrap-up is complete, ask students to use [*this worksheet*](#) to answer the following questions:

- How did the information uncovered in the tour compare to your initial assumptions about the painting? What has changed?
- Did you question the honesty of David’s painting before you explored it? Why or why not?
- What might *The Coronation’s* lies suggest about the truthfulness of other works of art?



Lesson Three: Lessons from “The Coronation”

In this lesson, students will draw deeper understandings from *The Coronation* painting and begin to situate the painting’s themes within a broader context.

Essential Question

What lessons are contained within *The Coronation* painting?

Warm-Up (10 mins)

- Open the class by asking students to share their responses from the previous lesson’s wrap-up.
 - Now that they’ve reviewed the content on Napoleon.life, how did their initial assumptions about the painting change?
- Re-emphasize the importance of exploration for understanding and use this point to segue into the next activity.

Main Activity (40 mins): Gallery Walk

- Choose several questions from the list on the right.
- Write one question per chart paper.
- Hang questions around the room to create different stations.
- Form groups of 3-5 students. Pass out post-it notes and markers.
- Start each group at a different base station.
- At each station, ask students to write either: (1) a response to the question, (2) an example that demonstrates the question, or (3) a related question on their post-it. Place note on the chart paper.
- After 3-5 minutes, depending on the number of base stations and time available, ask groups to switch to the next station.
- Repeat until all groups have visited each station.
- During the activity, monitor the stations to encourage focused and broad participation.

Wrap-Up (10 mins): Class Discussion

- Once all stations have been visited, ask the class to walk the gallery and view the full dialogue.
- Join the gallery walk to read key takeaways, make observations, ask follow-up questions or encourage alternative points of view.
- If time remains, place insightful student comments from the gallery walk on the board.
- Ask questions to encourage a lively class discussion or debate.



For high-tech classrooms, consider using a wiki or Google Doc instead of chart paper for each workstation. Students can then post feedback to questions during class time or at home. At the end of the activity, students will have digital access to the full gallery Q&A.



Discussion Questions

- What can art teach us about life?
- Is historical art an accurate reflection of history?
- In *The Coronation* painting, why did Napoleon lie?
- Was David a willing accomplice to the emperor’s lies? Why or why not?
- Do artists have a responsibility to the truth? Why or why not?
- How is propaganda different today than it was during Napoleon’s time?
- When it comes to historical or current events, why is it important to seek the truth?
- How can propaganda or fake news be dangerous?
- Why do people believe fake news?
- How can you prevent the spread of fake news?



Lesson Four: Perspective and Point of View

“Everything we hear is an opinion, not a fact. Everything we see is a perspective, not the truth.” — Marcus Aurelius

In this lesson, students will understand that stories told through art are – like life – shaped by personal experiences, biases and agendas.

Essential Question

How does the storyteller influence the story?

Main Activity (40 mins): Whose Story is This?

- In David’s painting, the tale of the coronation was told from the viewpoint of Napoleon Bonaparte.
- Imagine the same story told from the perspective of the pope, Napoleon’s mother, Empress Josephine, the politician Talleyrand, brother Joseph, the artist David, or Julius Caesar himself.
- Divide students into groups of 3-5. Give each group one of the “characters” highlighted in Napoleon.life.
- As a group, brainstorm how the coronation tale might be told from the other character’s point of view. Help students understand diverse perspectives by asking them to consider the following:
 - What was this person’s relationship to Napoleon?
 - How would he/she have been impacted by Napoleon’s rule?
 - What was important to that person on coronation day?
 - What were his or her joys, hopes and fears at that time?
- For inspiration, share [this timeline](#), which imagines the coronation story from the empress’ point of view.

Wrap-Up (10 mins): Class Discussion

- Ask students:
 - Did your perspective of the coronation change after imagining the event through someone else’s eyes?
 - What realizations do you have about the painting or the event that you didn't have before?

Homework (10 mins): Assessment Activity

- As a take-home assessment activity, ask students to write an essay, create a storyboard, draw a cartoon or recreate David’s painting from their character’s perspective.
 - Students may use digital resources such as [Sutori](#), [Adobe Spark](#) or other visual storytellers to assist.



During the main activity, students should have computers available to refer to Napoleon.life or conduct independent research about the characters they’ve been assigned.



Extension Activity

In this optional extension activity, choose a current topic for students to debate. Consider a provocative issue such as gun control or healthcare.

Ask students to brainstorm the topic from one character’s point of view.

In the instance of gun control, characters could include: student activists, parents, survivors of gun violence, members of the NRA, gun owners & politicians from both sides of the issue.

Students should prepare an argument for a classroom debate where they will act on behalf of their character.

Ask students to build and save their argument using the online [Persuasion Map tool by NCTE’s Read Write Think](#).



Lesson Five: Propaganda & Fake News

The interactive tour at Napoleon.life asks the question “Is David’s Coronation painting fake news?” In this lesson, students will learn about propaganda and fake news, while uncovering the critical thinking tools necessary to resist both.

Essential Question

Is yesterday’s propaganda today’s fake news?

Warm-Up Activity (15 mins): Spot the Fake News Game

- Ask students to read [this article](#) from *The Globe and Mail* discussing fake news and how to detect it. They should then take the quiz that follows within.

Main Activity (30 mins): Defining Terms

- Using the internet and [this worksheet](#), ask students to research: (1) fake news and (2) propaganda.
 - How are they similar?
 - How are they different?
 - What are the techniques of propaganda?
 - How can you detect fake news?
- Once students have completed their research, discuss their findings as a class.
- Establish common definitions for both terms and write them on the board for the class to refer to.
- Print or post, then discuss the following infographics with students:
 - [USC Upstate Library Propaganda Techniques](#): Frequently used forms of propaganda
 - [NewseumED Junk News Poster](#): Six ways to evaluate news and information
 - [NewseumED Share-Worthy Poster](#): Tips to spot and stop spreading fake news

Wrap-Up (10 mins): Class Discussion

- Discuss the essential question with the class: *Is yesterday’s propaganda today’s fake news? Why or why not?*

Homework (5 mins): Assessment Activity

- For a take-home project and assessment activity, ask students to create a collage containing current examples of propaganda.
- To assess students’ knowledge of the content within Napoleon.life, ask students to compare modern examples of propaganda with examples found in *The Coronation* painting. Please see the sidebar for more details.



To conserve class time, students may complete the warm-up activity for homework either prior to or following Lesson 5.



Extension Activity

[Factitious](#) is a game that tests students’ ability to spot fake news.

For additional activities, games, lessons, readings and videos on fake news and propaganda, please refer to the Extensions on the following page.



Assessment Activity

Create a digital or print collage using images of current propaganda within art, film, TV, ads, news, blogs or social media. In addition to your collage, create a separate document to (1) explain why each example you chose is a form of propaganda (refer to [this website](#) for reference), and (2) compare your example of propaganda to examples found in David’s *Coronation* painting. Please cite your rationale using content found on Napoleon.life.



Worksheets

- [Spot the Liar](#)
- [See-Think-Wonder](#)
- [Tell me About this Pin](#)
- [See-Think-Wonder Revisited](#)
- [Propaganda and Fake News](#)

Extensions

If class time allows, consider using the following lessons, links and activities to supplement Lesson 5.

Lessons

- [PBS NewsHour: Student Reporting Labs: “Misinformation Overload”](#)
- [PBS NewsHour: How to Teach your Students About Fake News](#)
- [Fake News through History](#)
- [Analyzing Contemporary Propaganda](#)

Links and Worksheets

- [NewseumED’s Share-Worthy Poster](#)
- [NewseumED’s Junk News Poster](#)
- [Read Write Think Persuasion Map Tool](#)
- [Propaganda Techniques](#)

Activities

- [Globe & Mail: Spot the Fake News Quiz](#)
- [Factitious Fake News Game](#)
- [“Bad News” Game](#)

Reading

- [Napoleon’s Chamber Pot: Propaganda and Fake News](#)
- [Fake News? That’s a Very Old Story](#)
- [10 Examples of Fake News from History](#)

Videos

- [“The Consecration of the Emperor Napoleon and the Coronation of Empress Josephine”](#)
- [PBS News: Did fake news influence the outcome of Election 2016?](#)
- [PBS NewsHour: Fake news websites lead to real life dangers such as ‘Pizzagate’](#)



Worksheets for this instruction are available in PDF format to print and distribute or share on your class cloud. The worksheets listed are also linked within the related lesson above.



The links to the left provide excellent third-party lessons, worksheets, games, readings and videos to extend classroom instruction on propaganda and fakes news.



Standards

This lesson plan may be used to address the academic standards listed below.

The Common Core English Language Arts & Literacy in History / Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6**
Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.2**
Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6**
Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7**
Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8**
Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9**
Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

National Standards for History

- **NSH Historical Analysis and Interpretation 3.A** - Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas.
- **NSH Historical Analysis and Interpretation 3.B** - Consider multiple perspectives.
- **NSH Historical Analysis and Interpretation 3.D** - Draw comparisons across eras and regions in order to define enduring issues.
- **NSH Historical Analysis and Interpretation 3.G** - Challenge arguments of historical inevitability.
- **NSH Historical Analysis and Interpretation 3.H** - Hold interpretations of history as tentative.
- **NSH Historical Analysis and Interpretation 3.J** - Hypothesize the influence of the past.



This learning product supports several [Common Core State Standards](#) that promote critical thinking and complex analyses of media and text pertaining to Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects within the English Language Arts Standards.



This learning product supports several learning requirements of the [National Standards for History](#) as outlined by UCLA's Public History Initiative and the National Center for History in the Schools.

