Political Ad Tips:

Political ads can communicate, persuade, and even entertain. A 30-second ad can be an effective tool for convincing voters to support a candidate. Ads can target general or specific audiences, and they can be effective or ineffective in different ways and for different reasons. They use emotion, persuasion, factual claims, and cinematic style to influence voters. Critical analysis of political advertising entails evaluating ads on all of these levels.

* Four Types of Ads
* Playing on Emotions (emotion)
* The Use of Language in Political Ads (persuasion)
* Evaluating Information (factual claims)
* Developing Critical Analysis (cinematic style)

**What should your ad answer?**

* Who would their audience be? Would it be a general audience, or would they want to target a specific group?
* What would they want viewers to think about the candidate?
* What arguments would they want to make? How would they support those arguments?
* How would they want viewers to feel about the candidate?
* How would they want viewers to think and feel about the candidate’s opponent?

Questions for discussion:

* Does this ad target a general audience or a specific audience? How do you know?
* Do you think these ads were effective? Why or why not?
* "Yes We Can" was a web ad that targeted young voters. Why was this audience important in the 2008 election?
* What are some other audiences political campaigns might want to target? Think about age, race, social class, gender, and region.

Look at each political ad below and see if you can answer the questions for discussion…

1. Ronald Reagan vs. Walter Mondale (Emotion) 1984 Election:
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_B2gZCB85c>
2. Richard Nixon vs. Hubert Humphrey (Persuasion) 1968 Election:
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HBON-ZIyUE>
3. Bill Clinton vs. George H. W. Bush (Truth) 1992 Election:
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoBFL6iwid4>
4. George W. Bush vs. John Kerry (Style) 2004 Election:
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgHM8Mb23o0>