



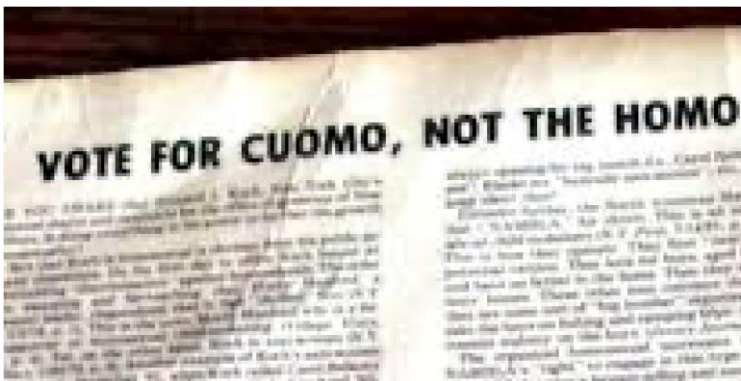
NEWTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

Perseverance, Respect,
Integrity, Diversity, Excellence

Bill Psoras, Principal

Teacher(s): Georgiou	Subject: Readings in Social Studies	Unit: Smear Campaign	Date: 10/10/25
GET STUDENTS READY TO LEARN			
Unit Essential Question:	• How do smear campaigns affect voters' views of a candidate? • Why might powerful groups or political machines choose to run smear campaigns instead of focusing on policies? • What challenges do insurgent candidates face when they are targeted by smear campaigns?		
Performance Objective:	SWBAT analyze the concept of a smear campaign and evaluate strategies used by media or other candidates in smear campaigning. ENL Strategies: • Sentence Starters • Guided questions • Word bank • Glossary • Differentiated and translated material for students who need it • Small group instruction • Giving students opportunity to practice reading their response to peers before reading to the class		

Anticipatory Set: (Do Now)	Observe the following images: • What do you see? • If you were running for president, How would you reaction if someone was spreading this information about you? • Based on these two images, write your own definition of <u>smear campaign</u> 
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Purposeful Grouping: Differentiation (CLOD):	Students are grouped homogeneously based primarily on their grade level and native language. Students in the same grades complete the same independent assignments while students who speak similar languages may have been placed with transitioning level ELLs in order to provide support. Transitioning level students were provided with sentence starters, as well as a translated packet that was in their home language for better comprehension. One-on-one support was provided to these students for a small portion of the activity mainly to check progress.

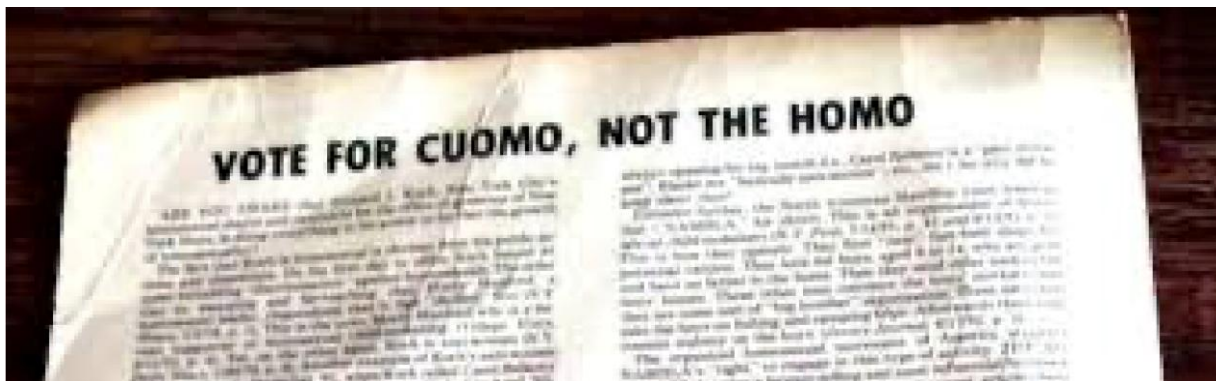
Planned Discussion: (HOT Question)	● How do smear campaigns affect voters' views of a candidate? 1. Student 1: answers the question. Says: <u>What do you think _____?(name)</u> 2. Student 2: <u>I agree with _____</u>. Says their answer. <u>What about you _____?(name)</u> 3. Student 3: I want to add _____. Says their answer. <u>Do you agree _____?(name)</u> 4. Student 4: I want to build on what _____ said. Says his answer.
DIRECT INSTRUCTION AND CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING	
Mini Lesson & co-constructing notes	<u>Overview of the three candidates</u> <u>Provide definition and explanation of a smear campaign</u> “A smear campaign is when false or exaggerated information is spread to make someone look bad, usually in politics. The goal is to hurt that person’s reputation so people will stop trusting or supporting them. It often uses rumors, edited photos, or quotes taken out of context. Smear campaigns are unfair because they focus on personal attacks instead of facts or real issues.”
Monitor Learners and Adjust Teaching:	Monitoring Learning ● Check students' answers to the stimulus based regents questions to
SBMC Question  	see if I need to spend time going over. ● Review answers to document questions using checklist to determine which students need more assistance ● Determine if I need to Reteach, Abandon for now, Move on, Practice
ACTIVE PARTICIPATION	

Activity: Guided Practice: (WE DO—Highly Structured & Guided) OR Collaborative Practice: ex: CRQ, SEQ, Three Reads Protocol Independent Practice: (DPS & Rubric): ex: CRQ/SEQ— cause & effect, turning point or similarity/difference, enduring issues or civics literacy  	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Source</th> <th>Summarize what you observe</th> <th>Do you think this source represents a smear campaign? Why or why not?</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Source	Summarize what you observe	Do you think this source represents a smear campaign? Why or why not?	1			2			3		
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1															
2															
3															
Possible Misconceptions:	• Misunderstanding what a smear campaign is														
BRING IT TO A CLOSE															
Closure: Summarize PO  	Assessment / Check for Understanding: Provide a definition for a smear campaign in your own words, what is its role in politics, and do they think it is necessary in the current mayoral election. • Group presentations of findings • Written reflection or analysis														

Image 1: An picture to convince voters not to vote for Obama because he is Muslim



Image 2:1977 Newspaper article convincing people not to vote for Ed Koch for governor of NY and to instead vote for Mario Cuomo



- What do you see?
- If you were running for president, how would you react if someone was spreading this information about you?
- Based on these two images, write your own definition of smear campaign

Source	Summarize the source	Do you think it represents a Smear Campaign? Why or why not?
1		
2		
3		

- How do smear campaigns change what voters think about a candidate?
- Why would powerful groups or politicians spread lies or rumors instead of talking about real issues?

Source 2

Zohran Mamdani is a New York State Assembly member who represents the Astoria neighborhood in Queens. He is known for supporting progressive ideas such as affordable housing, better public transportation, and immigrant rights. As a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, Mamdani often speaks out against powerful political groups and focuses on helping working-class and low-income communities. His views on social and economic issues sometimes create debate among other politicians and voters.

In 2024, an image of Mamdani began to circulate that showed his beard and facial features made darker than usual. The photo appeared next to statements claiming he “rejects Israel” and “rejects Jewish rights.” The picture was connected to a political group that supported former governor Andrew Cuomo. Many people criticized the altered image and said it was disrespectful and misleading. Others said it was simply part of political advertising. The event led to public discussion about how candidates are represented in politics and how visuals can affect voters’ opinions.



**Zohran Mamdani
accuses pro-Cuomo
super PAC of racism for
altering his image**

Source 3

Ms. Commisso said Mr. Cuomo grabbed her buttocks; reached under her blouse and fondled her breast; held her in close, intimate hugs; and asked her about her relationship with her husband, including whether she had ever “fooled around” or had sex with anyone else. She recalled his saying something to the effect of “if you were single, the things I would do to you,” and said he once complimented her on showing “some leg.”

During their hugs, she said she would try to lean away from his pelvic area, because she

“didn’t want anything to do with whatever he was trying to do at that moment.”

What he said then

Mr. Cuomo said that while he frequently hugged Ms. Commisso, and that sometimes those hugs were tight, they were often initiated by Ms. Commisso, who was “flirtatious” and a “tight hugger.” He went along because he did not “want to make anyone feel awkward,” he said. “You know, I’m more in the reciprocal business,” he told investigators. He said he had never asked Ms.

Commisso if she had cheated on her husband, denied that he had expressed pleasure that she was showing “some leg” and said he had never groped her.