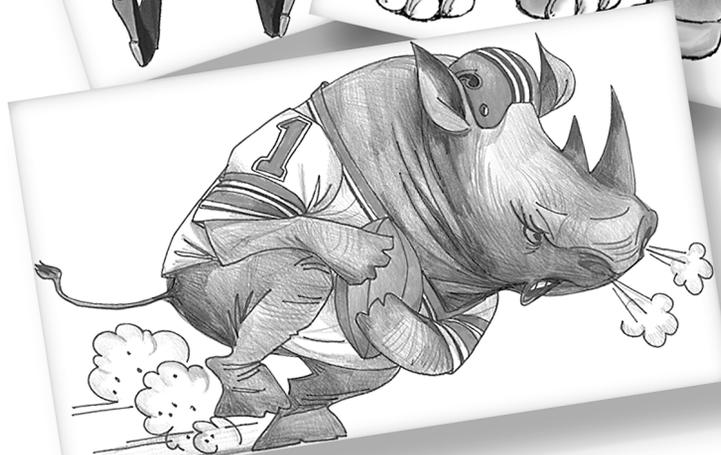
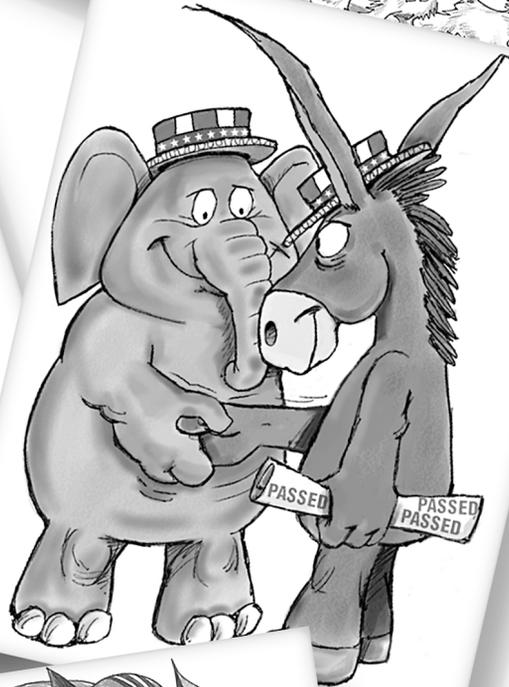


# Editorial Cartoons

## CURRICULUM Visual Literacy



# Editorial Cartoons

The section of the guide devoted to editorial cartooning is organized around goals from the English/ Language Arts section of the NC Standard Course of Study. The concluding pages of this section on editorial cartooning explains how a study of editorial cartoons aligns with the skills outlined for Social Studies, K-12 and goals from the visual arts section of Arts Education.

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## 1 Icebreaker (expressive)

Provide a collection of editorial cartoons through print and online sources and have students pick a cartoon that captures their attention. Ask them to move around the room and share the cartoon and their reason for choosing it with others. In small groups or as a whole class, ask students to discuss what they learned. Ask if they'd pick one of the other cartoons, after talking with classmates. Poll the class to determine if two, three or more cartoons turned out to be chosen more than others and discuss why that happened.

## 2 Icebreaker (expressive and critical)

To create interest in a study of cartoons and assess students' awareness of cartoons and the editorial page in a newspaper, collect a classroom set of editorial pages or enough for small groups of students to have their own editorial page. Cut out the cartoons in each of the editorial pages before giving them to students. Ask them what is missing from the page. Once someone identifies what is missing, discuss what editorial cartoons add to the editorial page and to the newspaper. Ask: When you read newspapers, do you turn to the editorial page? Do you examine editorial cartoons? Do they appeal to you? Why and how? Do you have a favorite historical cartoon and a more recent cartoon that you found provocative or memorable? Do you have a favorite cartoonist?

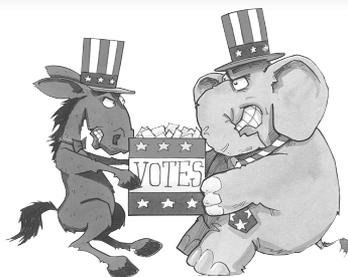
Follow up by having them choose a cartoon for the editorial page you gave them. Ask them to come up with criteria for choosing their cartoons. Factors might be timeliness (Is it current?), proximity (How much does it affect the community served by the newspaper?) and effectiveness (Does it make its point? Does it deal with a serious subject? Is it well drawn?). They can choose from those you cut out or look for cartoons in other sources. The resource list at the end of this section on Editorial Cartooning provides numerous Web sites that feature cartoons.

## 3 Before reading or BACKGROUND, (informational)

Have students look at the front page index for "Editorial" or "Opinion." Using the page number they find, ask them to locate the editorial page. Repeat this activity over several days, and ask if they find that the editorial page runs in the same place as an "anchored feature." Explain that the most common location for editorial pages is inside the back page of section A.

4 After students locate the editorial page, have them look for the flag or heading "Editorial" or "Opinion" at the top of the page. Then, to help them become familiar with the cartoons and other visual elements on the opinion page(s), ask a series of questions: How many cartoons do you find on the page? If the page features more than one cartoon, which is the most prominent cartoon on the page? Does the cartoon at the top of the editorial page come from a local cartoonist or a syndicate? Does the page opposite the editorial page (often called "Op-ed") run cartoons? Who are the cartoonists, and what are their syndicates/ distributors? Does a gag comic or comic strip appear on either the editorial or opposite editorial page? To individual or groups of students, provide the handout **EDITORIAL CARTOONS: THEIR PLACE in your NEWSPAPER.**

5 Have students examine newspapers over a week and determine how many cartoons run each day. Ask if the newspaper provides a collection of cartoons on any given day. Extend the activity by having students display the week's cartoons on a bulletin board, organized in order by the day of the week they run. Or have students work individually or in groups to scrapbook a week's cartoons. They should identify the cartoonist and the syndicate or distributor. Ask if the newspaper offers more cartoons on a given day and label the cartoons as local, state, national or world.



# 3 Editorial Cartoons

6

## (informational, critical, language usage or word study)

To make the point that context is important, have students discuss the role of the editorial page. Make sure they understand that newspapers set aside editorial pages to offer their opinions on news of the day. They invite readers to submit letters and sometimes run columns written by readers and local experts. Newspapers also run columns; columns may be written by someone who works for the newspaper or by someone who distributes his/her work through a syndicate. The opinions in columns belong to the person whose photo and name accompany the column. So, as statements of opinion, cartoons belong on the editorial page. Have students label the parts of their editorial page. Refer to the labeled EDITORIAL PAGE and GLOSSARY of TERMS in the APPENDIX of this guide. Also, look for Web sites provided in the resource list at the end of the section on editorial cartooning. The Washington Post and Artsedge sites define and illustrate terms that apply to editorial cartoons.

7

## During reading (informational, argumentative, literary, critical)

On given topics, have students compare opinions expressed in editorials with those expressed in cartoons. Based on what they read, ask students if they think the newspaper chooses cartoons that agree with their position on a topic or if the newspaper chooses cartoons based on other reasons, such as the effectiveness of the cartoon. Conduct or have students conduct a short telephone interview with the newspaper's editorial page editor to find out where the newspaper gets its cartoons and why it chooses the ones it does. Also ask the editor: What purposes do editorial cartoons serve?

Consider these purposes of editorial cartoons:

- Educate the public
- "Say the right thing" (Herblock, former cartoonist, Washington Post)
- Stimulate thinking
- Influence readers
- Entertain readers
- "Tickle or torment" (David Horsey, Seattle Times)
- Pay tribute

Choose cartoons that demonstrate the purposes. Based on what you learn from interviewing a newspaper editor and an examination of cartoons, do you see purposes other than the ones listed above?

8

## (informational, argumentative)

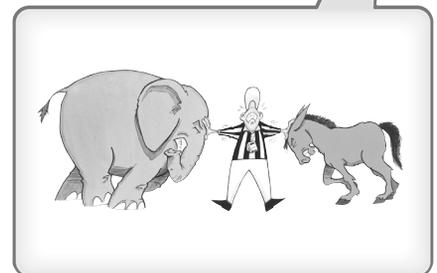
Explain to students that cartoonists must be well informed to create thoughtful cartoons. The cartoonists read newspapers and other sources for news to glean information for building their arguments. They base their cartoons on what they learn and how they view the events. Have students read newspapers and predict the cartoons for the next or coming days. Ask: If they were the cartoonist for their local newspaper, what would their cartoons deal with? Students should relate/ match stories in the newspaper with cartoons that follow.

9

## (informational, argumentative)

To further explain how cartoons depend on the news and commentary around it in the newspaper and other news sources, have students place a cartoon in the middle of a circle and draw lines that extend from the cartoon. On those lines, ask them to paste straight news, features, columns, letters to the editor or editorials about the people, topic or problem that is the subject of the cartoon. Identify the section and page number where they pull each of the articles. They should highlight background knowledge that helps them understand and form opinions about the people or issue.

Follow up by having them identify news about the cartoon from other sources. See how many different sources of information students can find and write those on chart and refer back to those sources of information. Extend this by having students apply criteria from educational sites, such as LEARN NC, on how to judge the reliability of Web sites and other sources of information. One source might be [www.factcheck.org](http://www.factcheck.org).



**10** **(informational, argumentative, critical)**  
Encourage students to collect the work of a particular cartoonist and look for generalizations or specific political or moral points of view. After getting to know the work of a particular cartoonist, have students predict how he/she will respond to an event. They should follow the work of the cartoonist to determine if they made correct predictions.

Consider having them save the cartoons in a journal and explain what the cartoonist is saying in each cartoon and how that relates to the cartoonist's political philosophy and his/her thinking about the purpose of cartoons.

**11** **(informational)**  
Give students all the same cartoon and a set of questions to answer. Or give a group of students one cartoon and have them work together to answer a set of questions. Choose among several student handouts provided at the end of this section on editorial cartooning:

**INTERPRETING CARTOONS**

**CARTOON ANALYSIS**

**EDITORIAL CARTOON ANALYSIS**

**LEARNING with CARTOONS**

**12** Group students in fours or fives. Glue cartoons to the front of manila envelopes. Write one question on the front. Have the first student answer the question on a piece of paper and put the answer in the envelope and add a question to the front and pass it to another student who repeats the process.

To expand this activity, in the envelope, include stories and commentary related to the cartoon and base your questions on the writing. Support students in their first efforts by highlighting paragraphs where the information can be found.

**13** **(informational)**  
Direct students to find actual photos in the newspaper of people depicted in editorial cartoons. Ask questions: Did you have any difficulty recognizing the people in the cartoons? What enabled you to recognize the person in the cartoon? What feature did the artist exaggerate? Why do you think the cartoonist chose that feature to exaggerate? Did different cartoonists exaggerate the same or different features? Provide the student activity sheet, **CARTOONS and FUNNY FACES**.

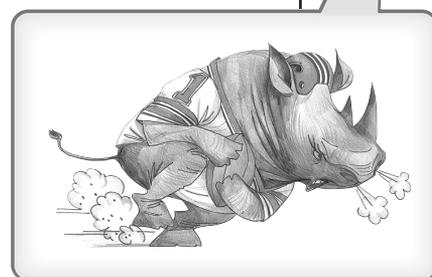
**14** Have students follow one person. They can save all of the caricatures they find in cartoons and create a display of those caricatures. They should identify the cartoonist below each caricature and explain what the caricature tells about his/her approach or style. Offer the set of questions in the guide titled **ANALYZING CHARACTERS**.

Or have students take a more comprehensive approach. Ask them to save cartoons, stories, photos, editorials and columns about a person, display what they find and write a profile based on what they collect.

**15** Organize students into groups and hand out the same cartoons to each group one at a time. Play the Game "Who Am I?" asking students to name the individuals shown in the cartoons. To make this harder, they can match the person's position or action that prompted the cartoon. Ask what caused that person to be featured in a cartoon.

**16** Create matching games, such as concentration, that require students to match photos, stories and commentary with editorial cartoons about people or topics or have students match cartoons and topics. Once they match cartoons with topics, they should compare viewpoints on that topic.

**17** Create matching games, such as bingo, that require students to identify symbols common in political cartoons. Have them create scrapbooks of cartoons that show the different symbols. Use the handout titled **SYMBOLS in CARTOONS**.



# 57 Editorial Cartoons

18



## (informational and critical)

Choose or have students choose a cartoon that examines a problem. Have them analyze the cartoon, using the following set of questions:

1. How does the cartoonist define the problem?
2. What does he/she say are the causes of the problem?
3. What does he/she say are the effects of the problem?
4. What are the stated solutions?
5. What are the obstacles?

Conduct research and identify others who may view the situation differently. Answer the questions given the other point of view and draw a cartoon that represents another position. If helpful to you, provide the study guide title **ANALYZING PROBLEMS**.

After discussing issues, have students draw cartoons on a particular topic or draw a rebuttal cartoon to a political cartoon they study in class. Encourage students to conduct research, if they need to know more about the subject.

To assess their understanding of a cartoon, remove any words from the cartoons and have students write the captions. Have them compare and assess their captions. Expand this activity by selecting one cartoon each week, having students write captions and assigning a group of students the task of choosing the best caption(s) for that week's cartoon. They should explain their criteria.

Cut cartoons in half and have students try to draw the other half. Ask students to evaluate their ability to draw in the style of the cartoonist.

Cartoons serve as works of art and contribute to public debate over events and issues. Use the questions to evaluate an editorial cartoon and compare cartoons with opposing or different views on the same topic.

- **DEBATE:** 1. What is the factual basis for the cartoon? Can you verify the facts? 2. Is the issue important? Who does it affect and how? 3. Does the cartoonist attack a public official's or figure's or an institution's actions or policies? Does the cartoonist make fun of or exaggerate personal appearance or characteristics to emphasize or clarify the criticism? Does the personal attack relate to the topic? 4. Does the cartoon stimulate thinking or does it simply amuse the reader? Explain. 5. Does the cartoonist show insight into the issue? Does he/she suggest a course of action?

- **ART:** 6. Is it well drawn? Does the art contribute to the message?

- 7. Does the cartoonist take a unique approach or does he/she use familiar ideas and symbols?

- **CONCLUSION:** 8. Do you agree or disagree with the message in the cartoon that you found effective? Did the cartoon persuade you?

Provide the student sheet **QUALITY in CARTOONS**.

23

## (informational, argumentative, critical)

Have students search for opposing cartoons on the same topic. Ask: How are the cartoons similar? How do they differ? Is one stronger than the other? Why do you think so? What are your criteria? A checklist for judging the cartoon might include questions such as: Is it edgy? Does the humor simply make you laugh or does the humor drive home the opinion? Do the drawings serve the purpose of the cartoon?

Expand the activity by having students look for written commentary that supports the different viewpoints, in preparation for their writing or drawing their own opinions on the subject. Have them write an essential question, read to discover reasons for supporting two sides and then draw the cartoon. Provide the organizer titled **YES or NO** for students to write their essential question and the reasons for answering yes or no to that question.

24

Based on their reading about a controversial subject, have them identify all parties with a vested interest in the subject and assign students to speak for those different parties. Have them form editorial boards of three or four, discuss ways to present the viewpoint of the party they represent and decide who will write their editorial or column and who will draw their editorial cartoon.

25

## (informational)

Post photos of elected officials on the walls and collect political cartoons and display those below the photos. Refer to the photos and cartoons in discussions about government.

26

Over a period of time, have students categorize the cartoons as Local, State, National and World and chart the results. Ask them to explain the results. If newspapers run more cartoons on national news, why do you think that is so? Does the newspaper have a source of cartoons for local news? State news? Does the newspaper run a specific category because it is more interesting, less or more controversial?



**27** Have students identify cartoons that deal with the Bill of Rights or the Constitution. They should organize and display what they find. For example, a cartoon about protestors would be identified under the First Amendment.

**28** To reinforce your teaching about the branches of government, have students classify the cartoons as dealing with the Executive, Legislative and Judicial (state and national) and determine which branch of government get the most and least attention.

**29** Have students collect cartoons that deal with the president of the United States. Ask if they can classify the cartoons according to the roles of the president: chief of state, chief executive, chief diplomat, chief legislator, party leader, voice of the people, protector of the peace, manager of prosperity, world leader and commander in chief.

**30** Identify cartoons in today's newspapers about questions related to civic education such as the balance of power and ways citizens can effectively take part in civic life.

**31** During an election year, have students collect cartoons about different candidates, study the depictions and identify issues raised through the cartoons.

**32** Have students collect cartoons during the school year that reflect the significant people and events of that year. At the end of year, they should look back, choose the 10 most significant cartoons and explain those choices.

**33** If the area of classroom study focuses on other countries, have students identify cartoons about people, places and events that affect the international community. Extend that work by having students consider political cartoons about those issues produced by cartoonists who live and work outside the United States. The Web site for the World Press review provides links to cartoons produced outside the U.S. See RESOURCES at the end of this unit for the Web site.

### **(informational)**

**34** Using Internet sources and other publications, have students look at history through the cartoons from those eras. For example, show them "Join or Die," the first cartoon drawn by Ben Franklin and discuss its meaning and significance. One or more of the Web sites on the RESOURCE list at the end of this unit show and explain the Franklin cartoon.

### **After reading (informational)**

**35** Encourage students to find out more about the editorial cartoonists. To find out how and why they became cartoonists, ask them to read biographies provided on Web sites such as site created by the American Society of Editorial Cartoonists <http://editorialcartoonists.com/>.

The class may be able to interview in person, by phone or in writing one of the editorial cartoonists, particularly if the local or regional newspaper employs a cartoonist, The class should come up with questions, and you or one student should contact the cartoonist for responses. Students may also be interested in asking about the use of art techniques and ways that cartoonists use technology to create or enhance his design.

### **(informational, critical)**

**36** After discussing a particular cartoon, help students to come up with questions for a survey to determine how different people respond to it. Try to choose a cartoon on a topic on which those interviewed are likely to be informed. Use questions such as: What is the subject of the cartoon? What is the situation it depicts? Do you agree or disagree with the viewpoint? Students should be prepared to hear viewpoints different from their own. For their survey, have students include people of different ages, political backgrounds, gender, race, religions. Ask if they hear common generalizations and chart their results.

### **37 (informational, argumentative)**

Have students create and submit an editorial cartoon for publication in the school newspaper.

**38** Create a classroom, grade level or school wide "Create a Political Cartoon" contest. Before the contest, require students to spend time reading newspapers and other sources to become informed on current events. To support this effort, develop weekly quizzes dealing with current events. Ask students to submit questions for the quizzes. Consider having students work with your school's art teacher to practice and improve the quality of their art.

# RESOURCES, etc.

Stigers, Oline. Exploring the World of Editorial Cartoons. Handout. Gazette: Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 1998.  
Other resources:

## More Cartoon Analysis

Use other guides to better understand the methods and meaning of political cartoons:  
[www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon.html](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon.html)  
[www.towson.edu/heartfield/lessons/prop/cartoonanlyD.html](http://www.towson.edu/heartfield/lessons/prop/cartoonanlyD.html)

## Lesson Plans

[http://www.washpost.com/nielessonplans.nsf/0/1788F2FE6230778685256CDE0055B779/\\$File/6-EditorialCartoonD.pdf](http://www.washpost.com/nielessonplans.nsf/0/1788F2FE6230778685256CDE0055B779/$File/6-EditorialCartoonD.pdf)  
The above site provides a unit prepared by and for teachers based on the work of Herblock, the cartoonist who worked 55 years for The Washington Post. He says the purpose of a cartoon is simply to "say the right thing." Page 3 offers a definition of terms associated with editorial cartoons. Page 9 outlines the steps in developing an editorial cartoon, and page 10 explains the mechanics of drawing a political cartoon by hand. Tom Toles, current editorial cartoonist for The Washington Post also talks about his job and explains how he developed a cartoon, based on a popular children's book.

Herblock expressed his own views through his cartoons. At some newspapers, the cartoonist hired by that newspaper supports the newspaper's point of view as determined by owners, publishers and the editor in charge of the editorial page. Consider Herblock's views on the independence of cartoonists and other aspects of cartooning: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/herblock/cartoon.html>

## Learn more cartoon vocabulary

[http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2100/2100\\_politcartoons\\_vocab.pdf](http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2100/2100_politcartoons_vocab.pdf)

## Evaluate student-drawn cartoons, using this rubric.

[http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2100/2100\\_politcartoons\\_rubric.pdf](http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2100/2100_politcartoons_rubric.pdf)

## More Cartoons

To view cartoons drawn by full-time professional political cartoonists who work for North Carolina newspapers, visit the following sites:

- Kevin Siers, *The Charlotte Observer* [www.charlotte.com/mld/charlotte/news/editorial/cartoons/](http://www.charlotte.com/mld/charlotte/news/editorial/cartoons/)
- Duane Powell, *The News & Observer* [www.newsobserver.com/opinion/powell/](http://www.newsobserver.com/opinion/powell/)

The Capitol Press distributes cartoons by Ross Gosse to its 30 or so North Carolina member papers. Other newspapers hire freelance cartoonists to produce cartoons on local or state issues.

## Other, varied cartoons

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/> The American Society of Editorial Cartoonists provides a way to locate cartoons by topic and by cartoonist. Scroll down the left side of the page to view all of the choices. Also, use links from that page to follow continuing controversies over the publication of political cartoons.

[www.cagle.com](http://www.cagle.com) Daryl Cagle's "Professional Cartoonists Index" includes a variety of current cartoons and a teacher's guide:  
<http://www.cagle.com/teacher/>

<http://www.newseum.org/> Scroll across the horizontal bar, you'll find the WW II cartoons of Arthur Szyk titled *Drawing on War*. You will also find a series of compiled works belonging to Pulitzer Prize winning cartoonists:

- David Horsey, Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 1999
- Joel Pett, Lexington Herald-Leader, 2000
- Ann Telnaes, Tribune Media Services, 2001

<http://www.worldpress.org/cartoons.cfm> The World Press offers "news and view from around the world," so the cartoons come from international newspapers. For stories about the recent controversies surrounding cartoons, search "cartoons" at the front page:  
[www.worldpress.org/edu.htm](http://www.worldpress.org/edu.htm)

[http://www.boondocksnet.com/gallery/pc\\_intro.html](http://www.boondocksnet.com/gallery/pc_intro.html)  
A site devoted to history, biography and collections of cartoons and cartoonists.

<http://dewey.chs.chico.k12.ca.us/edpolcart.html>  
This site features political and editorial cartoons in U.S. history and focuses on Thomas Nast and Herblock.

<http://www.politicalcartoon.co.uk/html/history.html>  
This site provides articles that offer historical perspective and world views on editorial cartooning.

## Early, famous cartoonists

<http://www.earlyamerica.com/earlyamerica/firsts/cartoon/snake.html>  
Ben Franklin is credited with producing the first political cartoon on May 9, 1754 in the Pennsylvania Gazette; it dealt with the lack of unity among British colonies. This Web site provides a clear version of the cartoon.

<http://nastandgreeley.harpweek.com/default.asp> Thomas Nast used this set of cartoons to campaign against candidate Horace Greeley.

<http://orpheus.ucsd.edu/speccoll/dspolitic/> Dr. Seuss produced political cartoons during WWII. Some controversy surrounding his cartoons resulted from his depictions of the Japanese during the war.

## Controversy and concern

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/blackinkmonday.cfm> On what was dubbed Black Monday, political cartoons around the country created cartoons to protest the firing of cartoonists by the Tribune company.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jyllands-Posten\\_Muhammad\\_cartoons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jyllands-Posten_Muhammad_cartoons) Twelve editorial cartoons most of which depicted the Islamic prophet Muhammad were published in the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten on September 30, 2005. Protests spread to other countries. Debate continues over the question of whether the publishing represents free speech or blasphemy.

The section of the guide devoted to editorial cartooning is organized around goals from English/ Language Arts but support for the use of editorial cartoons can be found throughout the NC Standard Course of Study. Other subjects apply depending on the content of the editorial cartoon, but any use of cartoons involves social studies and arts education.

## Social Studies

The following social studies skills apply to activities outlined in the curriculum. Editorial cartoons typically deal with political science and economics, but cartoons may also apply to the other disciplines in the social studies. An activity might require students to identify cartoons that relate to the different disciplines: political science, economics, history, geography, anthropology, sociology and psychology.

SKILL ONE: READING AND VOCABULARY BUILDING;

- 1.01 Read for literal meaning.
- 1.02 Summarize to select main ideas.
- 1.03 Draw inferences.
- 1.05 Recognize bias and propaganda.
- 1.07 Distinguish fact and fiction.
- 1.08 Use context clues and appropriate sources such as glossaries, texts, and dictionaries to gain meaning.

SKILL TWO: USING RESEARCH TO GATHER, SYNTHESIZE, AND REPORT;

- 2.02 Explore print and non-print materials.
- 2.06 Create written, oral, musical, visual, and theatrical presentations of social studies information.

SKILL THREE: ANALYZING, INTERPRETING, CREATING, AND USING RESOURCES;

- 3.03 Detect bias.
- 3.04 Interpret social and political messages of cartoons.
- 3.05 Interpret history through artifacts, arts, and media.

SKILL FOUR: APPLYING DECISION MAKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING TECHNIQUES; AND

- 4.02 Examine, understand, and evaluate conflicting viewpoints.
- 4.03 Recognize and analyze values upon which judgments are made.
- 4.04 Apply conflict resolutions.
- 4.05 Predict possible outcomes.
- 4.06 Draw conclusions.
- 4.08 Develop hypotheses.

Web sites identified as resources in this guide point to historical cartoons and current cartoons produced by newspapers and other publications outside the United States. Using the Web sites, students will be able to examine differing viewpoints on past and current issues and the circumstances that shape those opinions.

Editorial cartoons provide direct correlations with any study of the Bill of Rights and U.S. Constitution and any discussion of free speech and press. Activities on editorial cartoons align with the following two goals from the 10th grade social studies course on Civics and Economics:

The learner will explain how the political and legal systems provide a means to balance competing interests and resolve conflicts.

5.06 Analyze roles of individual citizens, political parties, the media, and other interest groups in public policy decisions, dispute resolution, and government action.

The learner will develop, defend, and evaluate positions on issues regarding the personal responsibilities of citizens in the American constitutional democracy.

10.02 Develop, defend, and evaluate positions on issues regarding diversity in American life.

## Arts Education

The visual arts section of Arts Education also supports the use of editorial cartoons in classrooms. In its introduction, the visual arts section calls for teachers to apply reading, writing and verbal skills to the arts and integrate learning from other subject areas. Cartoons require an understanding of current events which requires reading and other verbal skills and, if students study historical cartoons, they learn about issues in other times and places. When they study cartoons produced in media outside the United States, they gain insights to other cultures and viewpoints that emerge from those cultures.

Also, evaluating and/or creating cartoons require the knowledge and use of art techniques and writing is essential to both the interpretation and creation of cartoons. Mentioned in the resource list, the "Inside Journalism" lesson plan provided on the Washington Post site explains different techniques employed by editorial cartoonists. If students follow up their study of cartoons by questioning an editorial cartoonist, they should ask how political cartoonists use technology to create or enhance their cartoons.

To better understand editorial cartooning as a vocation, they can visit Web sites, such as the site provided by the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists, that include biographical information about cartoonists. They can follow up with interviews conducted in person, by phone and through written correspondence.

COMPETENCY GOAL 4: The learner will choose and evaluate a range of subject matter and ideas to communicate intended meaning in artworks. (National Standard 3)

Objectives

4.01 Recognize and discuss art as a means of communication and persuasion.

COMPETENCY GOAL 5: The learner will understand the visual arts in relation to history and cultures. (National Standard 4)

5.01 Demonstrate an understanding that the visual arts have a history, purpose and function in all cultures.

COMPETENCY GOAL 6: The learner will reflect upon and assess the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others. (National Standard 5)

6.01 Describe various purposes for creating works of visual art.

COMPETENCY GOAL 7: The learner will perceive connections between visual arts and other disciplines. (National Standard 6)

7.01 Identify connections, similarities and differences between the visual arts and other disciplines.

7.03 Identify characteristics of visual arts within a particular historical period or style with ideas, issues or themes in other disciplines.

COMPETENCY GOAL 8: The learner will develop an awareness of art as an avocation and profession.

8.02 Develop and discuss an awareness of art as a profession.



# Editorial Cartoons

Use your front page index or your knowledge of the newspaper to locate the editorial or opinion page(s).

## THEIR place in your newspaper

1. Does your newspaper run one or more editorial cartoons on the editorial page? If more than one, which is more prominent?
2. Does your newspaper run editorial cartoons on the page opposite the editorial page, often called the "other opinion" or "op-ed" page?
3. Examine cartoons over several days. Who draws the cartoons? Does any cartoonist work for the newspaper? Do the cartoonists work for syndicates or is their work distributed through other means?

Cartoonists	Sources of Cartoon (local, syndicate or other distributors)

4. Does your newspaper run single frame or gag comics or a comic strip on the editorial or opposite editorial page? Do they make the opinion pages more appealing? If so, how?



### THINK more!

Label other parts of the editorial and opposite editorial pages. Identify editorials on the left side of the editorial page, usually not signed, and local and syndicated columns, signed and accompanied by photos of columnists. Also label letters to the editor.

# Editorial Cartoons

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## INTERPRETING cartoons



Collect political cartoons that deal with an election or other important event. Match the cartoons with stories in the newspaper about the same subject. Using what you find, answer the following questions:

1. What did the cartoonist think about the subject or issue?
2. Does the cartoonist use symbols? If so, what do they mean?
3. What recent news prompted the cartoon?
4. Do you agree with the cartoonist? Why or why not?
5. Can you find information in the newspaper to support your own point of view? The cartoonist's point of view?

### THINK more!

Create a poster displaying the cartoons and related articles. Place the cartoon in the center and the stories on the outside. Highlight facts that support the cartoonist's point of view.

Draw your own cartoon, display news stories about your subject and highlight facts that support the position you take in your cartoon.

# Editorial Cartoons

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## Cartoon **ANALYSIS**

Answer detailed questions about cartoons that you find in the newspaper.

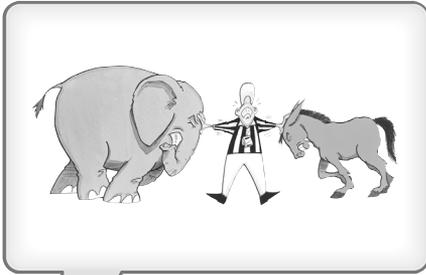
1. What facts are given or implied?
2. What do the figures or people represent?
3. How is a caricature or exaggeration used?
4. What, if any, stereotypes are used?
5. What symbols are used?
6. What is the cartoonist's point of view?
7. Which cartoon is closest to your point of view?

### **THINK**more!

To learn more, find and read news stories, editorials, columns and letters to the editor about the subject of the cartoons.

Does anything you learn change your thinking about the cartoons?

# Editorial Cartoon ANALYSIS



Choose and analyze an editorial cartoon from the newspaper.

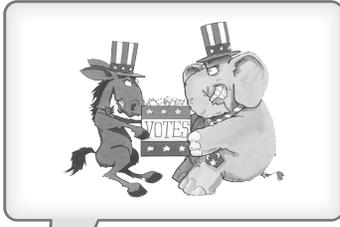
1. What situation or event serves as the basis of the cartoon?
2. Who or what is caricatured?
3. Are symbols used? What are they?
4. How does the cartoonist use light and dark contrasts for effect?
5. What's the point of the cartoon?
6. Is the cartoonist's point clear?
7. Does it suggest action?
8. Does it reflect a new problem?
9. Are there any historical or literary references?
10. If the problem is old, what are its roots, in history?
11. Does the cartoonist show what he or she thinks should be done about the problem?
12. What do you think can be done about the problem?
13. How effective is the cartoon, in your opinion?

**THINK**more!

Who is most affected by this situation or problem? Are you affected? Is someone you know affected? Is your community affected? Explain.

# Editorial Cartoons

# LEARNING with Editorial Cartoons



Editorial cartoons express opinions. You may or may not agree, but learning how others view a problem increases your knowledge and understanding and often motivates you to read and learn more about issues that affect your community, state, nation and world.

Think about these questions when evaluating a cartoon:

1. What (literally) do you see in the cartoon?  
What facts does the cartoon present?
2. If this is a current cartoon, what event happened recently to make the artist think of drawing this particular cartoon?
3. What previous events, if any, are referred to in the cartoon?
4. What background information does the artist expect you to know already?
5. In your own words, explain what the cartoonist is trying to say.  
What political view does he/she express?
6. Does the problem or issue presented in the cartoon have long-range importance? Why or why not?
7. Does the cartoonist use humor or caricature?  
If so, what was the cartoonist making fun of or exaggerating?
8. Does the cartoon include symbols? What do they represent?
9. Does shading in the background have anything to do with the cartoon's message?
10. How effective do you think the cartoonist is in conveying his or her message? Explain.
11. Do you agree with the cartoonist? Why or why not?

**THINK** more!

Did you understand enough about the issue or problem to analyze the cartoon? Did you conduct research to obtain additional background information? Did you become interested in the issue or problem as a result of your research and/or analysis of the cartoon?

# Editorial Cartoons

Online Stigers, former NIE manager, The Gazette, Cedar Rapids. Copyright 2006, NC Press Foundation. All Rights reserved.

# Editorial Cartoons



## cartoons and funny **FACES**

Look for political cartoons about a subject that interests you on the editorial and opposite editorial pages of your newspaper. Compare caricatures drawn by the cartoonists with actual photographs of the public officials, candidates or others you find in the newspaper.

What do the cartoonists do to make the individuals look funny? Which features do they exaggerate?

Based on photos that you select, draw a caricature of one of the candidates or explain how a caricature might be done.

### **THINK**more!

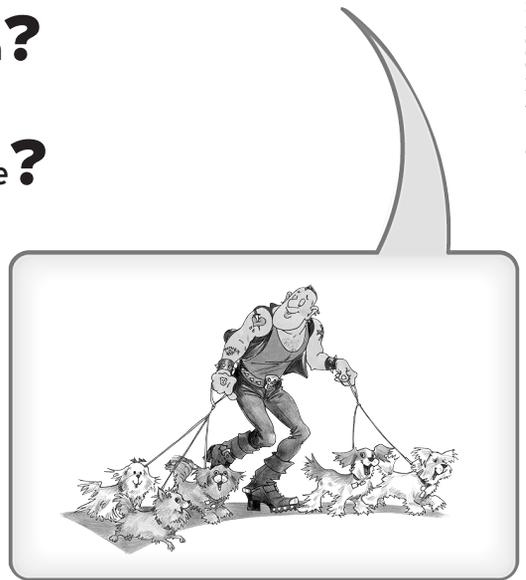
Work with classmates to come up with ideas for caricatures and cartoons based on the photos you find in newspapers.

# Editorial Cartoons

## analyzing **CHARACTERS**

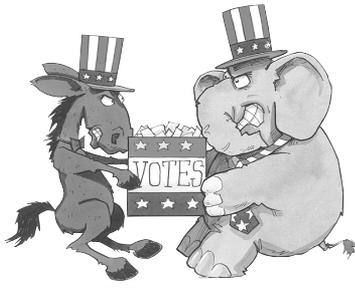
Select an editorial cartoon that focuses on an individual or a group of people.

1. Who is pictured in today's cartoon?
2. What are they doing?
3. What has the cartoonist done to make the character look funny?
4. What is the cartoonist saying about the character(s)?
5. What message do you think the cartoonist is trying to convey?
6. Why do you think the cartoonist chose this subject?
7. Who is likely to agree or disagree with the cartoonist's position?
8. What is your response to the cartoon?
9. How does this issue relate to your life?



**THINK**more!

If you need to know more about the subject, where can you find more information?



## SYMBOLS in cartoons

Find cartoons that employ symbols.

Describe the symbol(s) and what each represents.

Are the symbols effective?

Create a scrapbook or display of symbols used in cartoons.  
Look for the following and add to this list:

1. Democrats - donkey
2. Republicans - elephant
3. United States - eagle, Uncle Sam or Statue of Liberty
4. President or office of president - presidential seal or White House
5. Washington, D.C. - Capitol building, national monuments
6. World - globe
7. Peace - dove
8. People who support war - hawks
9. Hunger - someone old or young who has exposed ribs or who is thin
10. Time - Father Time or young child

### THINK more!

If possible, discuss the use of symbols with an editorial cartoonist. If your newspaper employs a cartoonist, come up with a set of questions and have someone in the class conduct a telephone interview or invite the cartoonist to speak to the class. Or, write to a cartoonist whose work you admire and ask the questions you have about the use of symbols (and other techniques) in cartoons.

# Editorial Cartoons

## analyzing **PROBLEMS**

Choose a cartoon that deals with a problem and answer the following set of questions:

1. How does the cartoonist define the problem?
2. What does he/she say are the causes of the problem?
3. What does he/she say are the effects of the problem?
4. What are the stated solutions?
5. What are the obstacles?
6. How may the obstacles be overcome?

### **THINK**more!

Locate news reports, columns and editorial about the problem. Read for information that supports the cartoonist's view of the problem, its causes and effects. Identify solutions that you think the cartoonist is likely to support.

# Editorial Cartoons

Copyright 2006, NC Press Foundation. All Rights reserved. Mike Peterson, "Judging Quality of Editorial Cartoon," Email communication, May 23, 2007

Think of editorial cartoons as both art and debate. As works of art, cartoons must be well-drawn and present unique approaches. To contribute to the debate on public policy, cartoons must deal with subjects

## QUALITY in cartoons

of importance and do so with integrity. Integrity requires that cartoonists read the news and base their work on facts. A cartoon might be effective in making its point, but, if it distorts what really happened, then it cannot be highly-rated. Cartoonists who aim simply for the laugh and produce easy gags risk misrepresenting the facts. Cartoons most often attack public officials or figures for their decisions. To clarify and/or emphasize their criticism, cartoonists also make use of personal attacks, poking fun at the public figure's appearance, manner of speaking and other mannerisms.

Staple a cartoon of your choice to this sheet. Using the questions to guide your thinking, evaluate the cartoon.

### DEBATE

1. What is the factual basis for the cartoon? Can you verify the facts?
2. Is the issue important? Who does it affect and how?
3. Does the cartoonist attack a public official's or figure's or an institution's actions or policies? Does the cartoonist make fun of or exaggerate personal appearance or characteristics to emphasize or clarify the criticism? Does the personal attack relate to the topic?
4. Does the cartoon stimulate thinking or does it simply amuse the reader? Explain.
5. Does the cartoonist show insight into the issue? Does he/she suggest a course of action?

### ART

6. Is it well drawn? Does the art contribute to the message?
7. Does the cartoonist take a unique approach or does he/she use familiar ideas and symbols?

Search for opposing cartoons on the same topic. Do the cartoonists agree on the facts? If not, conduct research to determine which is more accurate. Using the above questions, determine which cartoon is more effective. Do you agree or disagree with the message in the cartoon that you found more effective? Did the cartoon persuade you?

**THINK**more!

