
OVERVIEW:
Using student-chosen examples, students will compare and contrast past and modern—day editorial cartoons

GOAL:
The goal is for students to achieve understanding of the worth and purpose of political cartoons as editorial tools through analysis of past and present-day cartoons

OBJECTIVES:
• Students will be able to identify, define, and analyze elements of political cartoons.

• After examining their chosen cartoons, students will be able to determine the purpose and intended audience of political cartoons.

• Students will analyze the characteristics of editorial cartoons in general, and of past and modern-day cartoons.

• Students may also read and refer to written editorials regarding similar issues, and compare them in terms of interest and effectiveness.

• Through comparison of two cartoons, students will draw conclusions regarding which is more effective as political/social commentary.

• Students will create an editorial cartoon (either with paper-and-pencil or with online or computer drawing tools. They may choose a current issue or an issue from the past and create their cartoons accordingly. Cartoons will be accompanied by an individual cartoon analysis such as that used to analyze the “real” cartoons.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:
How has editorial cartooning changed since American publications began publishing them? What qualities make editorial cartoons most effective?

TIME REQUIRED/DURATION OF ACTIVITY:
3 to 4 class periods (42 minutes each). Final cartoon assignment will be due one week hence.

SUBJECT: Journalism (ELA); Social Studies
RECOMMENDED GRADE RANGE:

Grades 9-12

PA COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

CC.1.2.11-12.A: Determine and analyze the relationship between two or more central ideas of a text, including the development and interaction of the central ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

CC.1.2.11-12.B: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences and conclusions based on and related to an author’s implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs.

CC.1.2.11-12.D: Evaluate how an author’s point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

CC.1.2.11-12.E: Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

CC.1.2.11-12.G: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g. visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

MATERIALS:

- Computers, internet (for searching, researching cartoons, editorials, and/or creating student cartoons).
- Handout: examples of cartoons
- Handout: Cartoon Analysis Worksheet

RESOURCES:

http://myloc.gov/Exhibitions/hopeforamerica/politicalhumor/Pages/default.aspx


http://myloc.gov/Exhibitions/herblock/Pages/default.aspx
DESCRIPTION OF PRECEDURE:

- Guiding question, goals, and standards alignment will be shared with students between the initial discussion and the introduction of the first cartoons to be viewed and analyzed.

- Begin by asking students about their level of familiarity with editorial/political cartoons (which ones, if any, they have seen or are familiar with; what about such cartoons has stood out or caught their attention).

- Use Cartoon Analysis Worksheet to analyze introductory cartoons and ones students have found and chosen for themselves.

- Have students write a brief summary of their worksheet responses.

- The second class period will be spent in the library, researching cartoons and editorials.

- Primary sources (the cartoons themselves and prose editorials) will be used for comparison and analysis of effectiveness.

ASSESSMENT:

- Students’ responses to questions, responses on Cartoon Analysis Worksheet.

- Have students write a brief summary of their worksheet responses.

- Writing task: Write an essay explaining why you believe cartooning is (or is not) an effective vehicle for political or social commentary.

- Create a cartoon of your own regarding an issue or event of your choice. Accompany it with a completed cartoon analysis and summary.

- Have students copy and distribute their cartoons to the class; complete an analysis worksheet for one of them.