



## Learning with Lincoln Institute

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Eastern Illinois University and  
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
TEACHING WITH  
**PRIMARY  
SOURCES**



## Political Cartoons: What Influence Do They Have?

by Marie Foiles

Students will explore and analyze primary source political cartoons pertaining to Abraham Lincoln and George W. Bush. They will compare similarities and differences between the presidents. Students will also explore how the public has been influenced by political cartoons. As a culminating event students will be given a choice of three activities.



### Overview

<b>Subject:</b>	U.S. History
<b>Time Required:</b>	Five 50 minute class periods
<b>Grade Range:</b>	9 - 12
<b>Understanding Goal:</b>	Primary source political cartoons provide students an opportunity to explore how political cartoons were used in the past to influence public opinions and are still being used to influence public opinion today.
<b>Investigative or Essential Question:</b>	How can primary sources help us define the role political cartoons play in forming public opinion of political leaders both in the past and present?



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### Materials

#### Purpose of

#### Library of Congress Items:

Primary source cartoons are an excellent resource in facilitating student exploration and analysis of the role political cartoons play in shaping public opinion. Also the cartoon analysis activity at LOC is a step by step guide that prepares students to give an in depth analysis of a variety of cartoons.

**Library of Congress Items:** Bibliographical Information attached.



#### Additional Materials:

-  Cartoonist Persuasive Techniques Sheet (attached)
-  Cartoon Analysis Sheet (attached)
-  Political Cartoon Rubric (attached)
-  It's No Laughing Matter  
[http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/political\\_cartoon/](http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/political_cartoon/)
-  PowerPoint Example (attached)
-  Presentation Rubric (attached)
-  Bring Em On (MSNBC),  
<http://cagle.msnbc.com/news/Bring-Em-On/2.asp>

#### Required Vocabulary:

Analyze, stereotyping, exaggeration, media, caricature, analogy, symbolism, irony, bias, political cartoon, primary source



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**Prior Content Knowledge:** In addition to knowledge of how to analyze primary sources being used, the students will need background knowledge of Abraham Lincoln and George W. Bush (For example, dates of presidency, their personal and presidential life, their contribution to the United States, etc.). Students will also need to know how to use the Library of Congress (LOC) website.

**Technology Skills:** Students must be able to access the internet. Students will need to know how to use a word processing program such as Microsoft Word. Students will also need to know how to create a slide presentation using power point

## Standards

**Illinois Learning Standards:** 16, 16A2c

For information on specific Illinois Learning Standards go to [www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/](http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/)

## Actions

### Description of Teacher Actions:

#### Build Prior Knowledge (Anticipatory Set)

Start with brainstorming activity (Lincoln then Bush) making sure students have background knowledge before this lesson. What do we know about Lincoln? Answers should include: President during the Civil War, Emancipation Proclamation, Gettysburg Address, ETC. Keep this for later when you are doing a comparison of the two presidents.

#### Zoom In Activity of Cartoon, "Nigger In The Woodpile" (PowerPoint file)

- Discuss what was happening at the time this cartoon was made.
- Discuss appropriateness of language ("nigger").
- Discuss how language has changed over the years: negro, coloreds, blacks, African Americans.



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### Model Learning

1. On LCD projector, display "It's No Laughing Matter", an online lesson from LOC on analyzing political cartoons.
2. As a whole class, complete the learning activity and fill out the cartoon analysis worksheet.
3. Give each student a copy of the cartoon in the Zoom In activity.
  - As an out of class assignment, have students fill out analysis worksheet.

Next-

1. Go over cartoon analysis to check for understanding of the process.
2. Discuss the cartoon. If students are confident of their ability to analyze cartoons go on. If they are still having difficulties, spend another class period analyzing cartoons.
3. Acquaint students with LOC and primary source cartoons.
4. Have students go online and investigate the resources available in the cartoon collection found in LOC's Prints & Photographs Online catalog.

### Student Investigative Activity

1. Display Lincoln cartoon on projector. As a group, use analysis guide to analyze the cartoon and fill in worksheet.
2. Brainstorm what students know about President George Bush.
3. Go to the website with cartoons containing President George Bush.
4. Then analyze the cartoon using a cartoon analysis guide. Find a President Bush cartoon online at: Bring Em On (MSNBC), <http://cagle.msnbc.com/news/Bring-Em-On/2.asp>
5. Compare the two cartoons and discuss how cartoons have influenced thinking.
6. Use a Venn diagram and compare what we know about President Lincoln and what we know about President Bush.
  - Answers could reflect how they became presidents, their challenges/accomplishments during presidency, serving during wartime, military careers, etc."



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### Assessment/ Evaluation

1. After completing a venn diagram give students a choice of one of three culminating activities.
  - Write a comparison paper using the information that we have gathered.
  - Create a power point presentation.
  - Design and analyze their own political cartoon.
2. Go over grading rubrics.
3. Evaluate culminating activity, classroom participation, an individual cartoon analysis using rubrics.

### Best Instructional Practices:

#### Teaching for Understanding

Incorporating a modeling activity on how to analyze political cartoons increases student success in analyzing their own cartoon.

#### Literacy Instruction/Reading Comprehension

All final products includes student writing to show understanding of the topic under study.

#### Differentiated Instruction

Allowing students to choose one of three different levels of culminating activities allows for differentiation of product.

#### Technology Integration

Students increase their information literacy skills by searching websites for relevant information to complete their assignments. Student products also include the use of technology.



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## Attachments

### Library of Congress Resources:

Title:		I am glad, I am out of the scrape!	
	Collection or Exhibit	Prints and Photographs	
	Media Type:	Cartoon	
	URL:	<a href="http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?pp/PPALL:@field(NUMBER+@1(cph+3b35988))">http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?pp/PPALL:@field(NUMBER+@1(cph+3b35988))</a>	
Title:		"The nigger" in the woodpile	
	Collection or Exhibit	Prints and Photographs	
	Media Type:	Cartoon	
	URL:	<a href="http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?pp/PPALL:@field(NUMBER+@1(cph+3a11429))">http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?pp/PPALL:@field(NUMBER+@1(cph+3a11429))</a>	
Title:		The Commander-in-Chief conciliating the soldier's votes on the battle field	
	Collection or Exhibit	Prints and Photographs	
	Media Type:	Cartoon	
	URL:	<a href="http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?pp/PPALL:@field(NUMBER+@1(cph+3b36102))">http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?pp/PPALL:@field(NUMBER+@1(cph+3b36102))</a>	



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### Cartoon Analysis Guide

Use this guide to identify the persuasive techniques used in political cartoons.

Symbolism	
Cartoonists use simple objects, or symbols, to stand for larger concepts or ideas.	
Identify symbols in the cartoon and explain what you believe the cartoonist means each to represent.	
Exaggeration	
Sometimes cartoonists overdo, or exaggerate, physical characteristics of people or things in order to make a point	
Look for characteristics that seem overdone or overblown. (Facial features and clothing are some of the most commonly exaggerated characteristics.) Tell what point the cartoonist may have been trying to make by exaggerating them	
Labeling	
Cartoonists often label objects or people to make it clear exactly what they stand for.	
Look for different labels that appear in a cartoon, and explain why the cartoonist may have chosen to label that particular person or object. Does the label make the meaning of the object more clear?	
Analogy	
An analogy is a comparison between two unlike things. By comparing a complex issue or situation with a more familiar one, cartoonists can help their readers see it in a different light	
After studying a cartoon, explain what you believe the main analogy is. What two situations are compared? Once you understand the main analogy, decide if this comparison makes the cartoonist's point more clear	
Irony	
Irony is the difference between the ways things are and the way things should be, or the way things are expected to be. Cartoonists often use irony to express their opinion on an issue	
Look for irony in the situation the cartoon depicts. Explain what point the irony might be intended to emphasize. Does irony help the cartoonist express his or her opinion more effectively?	



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Once you've identified the persuasive techniques that the cartoonist used, ask yourself these questions:

What issue is this political cartoon about?
What do you think is the cartoonist's opinion on this issue?
What other opinion can you imagine another person having on this issue?
Did you find this cartoon persuasive? Why or why not?
What other techniques could the cartoonist have used to make this cartoon more persuasive?



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## U.S. NATIONAL ARCHIVES & RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

### **Cartoon Analysis**

Level 1	
<p>Visuals</p> <p>1. List the objects or people you see in the cartoon.</p>	<p>Words (not all cartoons include words)</p> <p>1. Identify the cartoon caption and/or title.</p> <p>2. Locate three words or phrases used by the cartoonist to identify objects or people within the cartoon.</p> <p>3. Record any important dates or numbers that appear in the cartoon.</p>
Level 2	
<p>Visuals</p> <p>2. Which of the objects on your list are symbols?</p> <p>3. What do you think each symbol means?</p>	<p>Words</p> <p>4. Which words or phrases in the cartoon appear to be the most significant? Why do you think so?</p> <p>5. List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon?</p>
Level 3	
<p>A. Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.</p> <p>B. Explain how the words in the cartoon daily the symbols.</p> <p>C. Explain the message of the cartoon.</p> <p>D. What special interest groups would agree/disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?</p>	



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## Model PowerPoint

# Political Cartoons

## Zoom In Inquiry



I never saw my friend that was so white as our table. He is here in conversation with the Abolition party, but our Differences in comparison of each other are considerable.

Do we not see old John you and your friend are now speaking of the "Big Picture" through the walls.

Examine the clues carefully. Determine what you see and what questions you might ask to get the "Big Picture". What do you think this is a picture OF?



I never saw my friend that was so white as our table. He is here in conversation with the Abolition party, but our Differences in comparison of each other are considerable.

Do we not see old John you and your friend are now speaking of the "Big Picture" through the walls.

Has this changed your Opinion? When do you think this Was created? Predict what message they are trying to send.

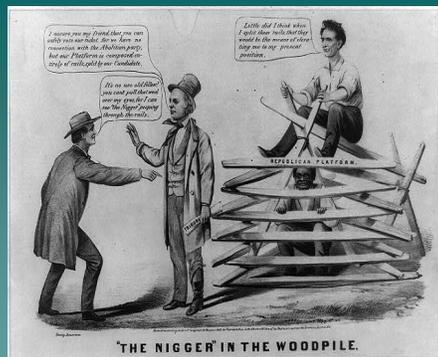


I never saw my friend that was so white as our table. He is here in conversation with the Abolition party, but our Differences in comparison of each other are considerable.

Do we not see old John you and your friend are now speaking of the "Big Picture" through the walls.

Little did I think when I built this table that I would be the means of their being so in my presence.

Do you recognize the new character? Look at the expressions, are they happy? Does this image send a good or bad impression? Why?



I never saw my friend that was so white as our table. He is here in conversation with the Abolition party, but our Differences in comparison of each other are considerable.

Do we not see old John you and your friend are now speaking of the "Big Picture" through the walls.

Little did I think when I built this table that I would be the means of their being so in my presence.

REPUBLICAN PLATFORM

THE NIGGER IN THE WOODPILE.

After seeing the whole picture, how has your impression changed? Is this what you expected?



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## Political Cartoons

Process	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Excellent
1. Has clear vision of final product	1,2,3	4,5,6	7,8,9
2. Properly organized to complete project	1,2,3	4,5,6	7,8,9
3. Managed time wisely	1,2,3	4,5,6	7,8,9
4. Acquired needed knowledge base	1,2,3	4,5,6	7,8,9
5. Communicated efforts with teacher	1,2,3	4,5,6	7,8,9

Product (Project)	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Excellent
1. Format	1,2,3	4,5,6	7,8,9
2. Mechanics of speaking/writing	1,2,3	4,5,6	7,8,9
3. Creativity	1,2,3	4,5,6	7,8,9
4. Demonstrates Knowledge	1,2,3	4,5,6	7,8,9
5. Other	1,2,3	4,5,6	7,8,9

Total Score \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Comments:



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### Political Cartoon Essay Rubric

	Criteria				pts
	4	3	2	1	
Position Statement	Position is clearly stated and consistently maintained. Clear references to the issue(s) are stated.	Position is clearly stated and consistently maintained. References to issue(s) at hand are missing.	Position is stated, but is not maintained consistently throughout work.	Statement of position cannot be determined.	
Supporting Information	Evidence clearly supports the position; evidence is sufficient.	Evidence clearly supports the position; but there is not enough evidence.	Argument is supported by limited evidence.	Evidence is unrelated to argument.	
Organization	Structure of work is clearly developed.	Structure developed reasonably well, but lacks clarity	Some attempt to structure the argument has been made, but structure is poorly developed.	There is a total lack of structure.	
Tone Of Letter	Tone is consistent and enhances persuasiveness.	Tone enhances persuasiveness, but there are inconsistencies.	Tones does not contribute to persuasiveness	Tone is inappropriate to purpose	
Sentence Structure	Sentence structure is correct	Sentence structure is generally correct. Some awkward sentences.	Work contains structural weaknesses and grammatical errors.	Work pays little attention to proper sentence structure.	
Punctuation & Capitalization	Punctuation and capitalization are correct.	There is one error in punctuation and/or capitalization.	There are two or three errors in punctuation and/or capitalization.	There are four or more errors in punctuation and/or capitalization	
Total Points					

Teacher Comments:



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## Presentation Rubric

	Criteria				Points
	1	2	3	4	
Organization	Audience cannot understand presentation because there is no sequence of information.	Audience has difficulty following presentation because student jumps around.	Student presents information in logical sequence which audience can follow.	Student presents information in logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow.	—
Content Knowledge	Student does not have grasp of information; student cannot answer questions about subject.	Student is uncomfortable with information and is able to answer only rudimentary questions.	Student is at ease with content, but fails to elaborate.	Student demonstrates full knowledge (more than required) with explanations and elaboration.	—
Visuals	Student used no visuals.	Student occasionally used visuals that rarely support text and presentation.	Visuals related to text and presentation.	Student used visuals to reinforce screen text and presentation.	—
Mechanics	Student's presentation had four or more spelling errors and/or grammatical errors.	Presentation had three misspellings and/or grammatical errors.	Presentation has no more than two misspellings and/or grammatical errors.	Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors.	—
Delivery	Student mumbles, incorrectly pronounces terms, and speaks too quietly for students in the back of class to hear.	Student incorrectly pronounces terms. Audience members have difficulty hearing presentation.	Student's voice is clear. Student pronounces most words correctly.	Student used a clear voice and correct, precise pronunciation of terms.	—
				Total---->	—

Teacher Comments: