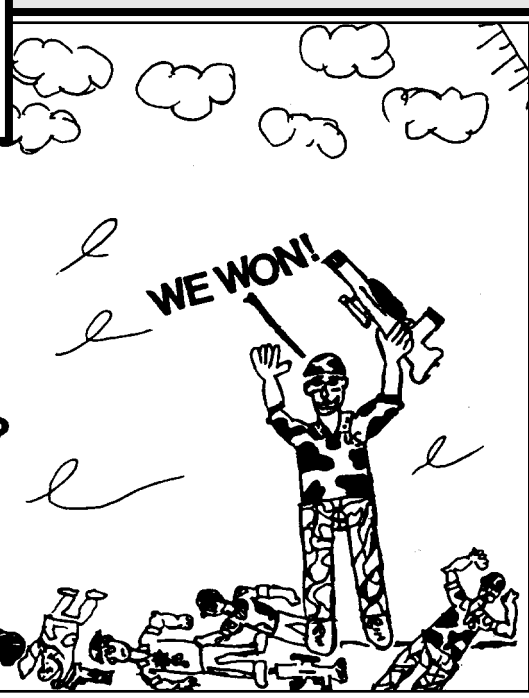
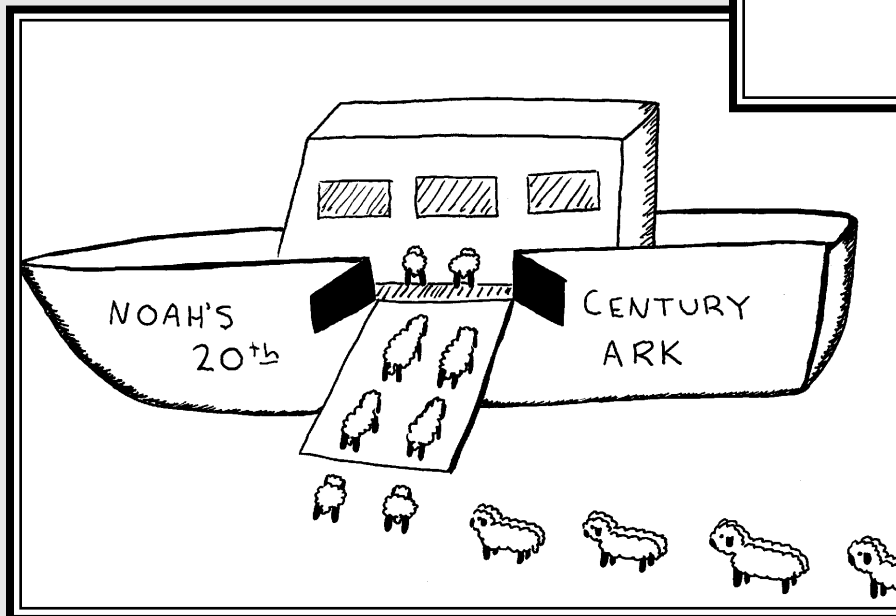


THE LANGUAGE OF EDITORIAL CARTOONS



Teacher's Guide



A video from
Knowledge
Unlimited®, Inc.

Introduction

Goals

The goals of *The Language of Editorial Cartoons* video and this teacher's guide are to encourage students to pay more attention to editorial cartoons and use them as a source of ideas in clarifying their own views about controversial social and political issues. The video is primarily a motivational tool. It is meant to arouse interest in and provide an initial understanding of the art of editorial cartooning. The teacher's guide provides a series of carefully sequenced lessons that teach students in a systematic way to understand and begin to draw editorial cartoons.

Learning Objectives

After viewing the video and completing the activities in this guide, students should be able to do the following:

1. Describe major differences between editorial cartoons and other forms of political and social commentary.
2. Identify the main idea of an editorial cartoon.
3. Identify the following major features in any political cartoon: symbols and analogies, humor and irony, caricature and stereotypes, captions and other words.
4. Draw editorial cartoons of their own.
5. Make critical judgments about the effectiveness of an editorial cartoon independently of whether they agree or disagree with the cartoon's message.
6. Recognize the value of editorial cartoons in helping people sharpen and clarify their own views about important social and political issues.

Description of the Video and the Teacher's Guide

The Video

The Language of Editorial Cartoons introduces students to the role of editorial cartoons by first focusing on the overall function disagreement and reasoned debate play in a democracy. It does this by looking at one important controversy: the debate over the Persian Gulf War in late 1990 and early 1991. The video also looks at some editorial cartoons from past U.S. history. The remainder of the program features an interview with editorial cartoonist Jon Kovalic, who describes his thoughts about editorial cartooning, using his own cartoons to illustrate techniques and philosophical points.

The Guide

This teacher's guide consists of the following:

1. A brief introduction, stating goals and objectives and describing the video and guide.
2. A "readiness activity," to be done before viewing the video, and five follow-up lessons to be done after viewing it.
3. Four reproducible activity sheets that accompany Lessons 1-4.
4. A brief list of additional resources.

A Readiness Activity

(Do this activity before viewing the video.)

Objective: To have students make some initial judgments about editorial cartoons. To arouse interest in editorial cartoons.

1. Divide the class into four or five smaller groups. Give each group a set of three editorial cartoons on a single subject. Explain briefly that an editorial cartoon is one that makes a point or expresses an opinion about a topic or problem in the news.
2. Tell the groups that they will have about 15 minutes to discuss their three cartoons and complete the following tasks:
 - a. Explain the main idea or point of each cartoon.
 - b. Pick the one cartoon they agree with most. (If they can't reach agreement, they must be prepared to explain their differences.)
 - c. Pick the one cartoon they think is most effective, whether they agree with it or not.
3. Have each group report briefly on its decisions. At this point, do little to explain or correct what may seem to be inadequate understandings. Make a few comments on each group's report, and then inform the class that they will be viewing a video about editorial cartooning that will help them understand more about this form of communication.

Follow-up Lessons

(Do these activities after viewing the video.)

Lesson 1 Analogy and Symbol.

Objective: To help students understand what analogies and symbols in cartoons are and why they are essential ingredients that help make cartoons thought-provoking.

Use Activity Sheet for Lesson #1 (page 5).

1. Show students several cartoons that illustrate the use of symbols and analogies. Stress that a good editorial cartoon is more than a simple, literal statement of an opinion or idea. Explain that analogies, symbols, and metaphors are what make a cartoon more than a mere slogan on a sign or poster.
2. Read the students this statement by cartoonist Roy Paul: "The strength of an editorial cartoon lies in its analogy. The best of the editorial cartoonists do not depict a problem in literal terms. They liken it to something else and invite the reader to stretch his imagination." Discuss this statement with your class.
3. Reproduce and pass out copies of Activity Sheet for Lesson #1. Have students complete the lesson.
4. In small groups, have students share and discuss their completed activity sheets for this lesson.

Lesson 2 Humor and Irony

Objective: To help students get some idea of the kinds of ironic humor common in editorial cartoons and to see when they are and are not appropriate to the cartoon's purpose.

Use Activity Sheet for Lesson #2 (page 6).

1. Show students several cartoons that are clearly funny, ranging from those that use gentle humor to those that are much more biting. Point out that editorial cartoons do not have to be funny, but that serious or solemn cartoons run the risk of being too heavy-handed to be effective.
2. Reproduce and pass out copies of Activity Sheet for Lesson #2. Have students complete the lesson.
3. Optional follow-up: ask students to draw a serious cartoon making a point similar to one made in one of the cartoons they used in the activity sheet for this lesson.

Lesson 3 Stereotype

Objective: To help students better appreciate the difference between caricature and stereotyping in editorial cartoons and to understand that stereotypes can be misused to reinforce simple-minded and harmful prejudices.

Use Activity Sheet for Lesson #3 (page 7).

1. Collect and show the class a number of cartoons that employ caricatures of leaders and other famous figures. Ask them to discuss the way such caricatures add to the overall effectiveness of the cartoons.
2. Discuss the difference between a caricature of a single individual and a stereotype about a group. Point out that caricatures often exaggerate what is unique about a person, whereas stereotypes obscure this by stressing features associated with an entire group. Point out that such stereotypes are often very unfair and insulting.
3. Reproduce and pass out copies of Activity Sheet For Lesson #3. Have students complete the lesson.
4. Use some of the cartoons the students collect to create a bulletin board display entitled "The Dangers of Stereotyping."

Lesson 4 Captions and Words

Objective: To help students see that words can be used in cartoons in a great many ways and to understand that words should reinforce the cartoon's visual features.

Use Activity Sheet for Lesson #4 (page 8).

1. Find editorial cartoons using words in the following ways: as titles, as captions, as labels on objects in the cartoon. Discuss these with your students and compare them to some cartoons that use no words at all.
2. Reproduce and pass out copies of Activity Sheet for Lesson #4. Have students complete the lesson.
3. As a group, share and discuss some of the captions the students come up with for the cartoon in the activity sheet.

Lesson 5 Evaluating Cartoons.

Objective: To help students make more thoughtful judgments about editorial cartoons, including those with which they agree and those with which they do not agree.

1. Assign each student the task of finding two editorial cartoons on any topics, but with these requirements: 1. the student must feel that both cartoons make strong points effectively; 2. the student must agree with one cartoon and disagree with the other.
2. Have each student write two brief paragraphs to accompany each cartoon. One paragraph should explain what make the cartoon effective. The other should explain why the student agrees or disagrees with the cartoon's point.
3. Have each student create a poster with his or her cartoons and paragraphs. Discuss the students' choices as a class. Use the posters for a display on editorial cartoons.

Name _____ Date _____

Activity Sheet for Lesson #1

Analogy & Symbol

Editorial cartoonists often use figures from fables or children's stories in their cartoons. For example, many cartoons use the figures of the wolf and Little Red Riding Hood. In these cartoons, the wolf stands for some problem or someone who is bad. Little Red Riding Hood stands for someone who is being fooled or tricked. In the space below, draw your own cartoon showing both the wolf and Little Red Riding Hood.

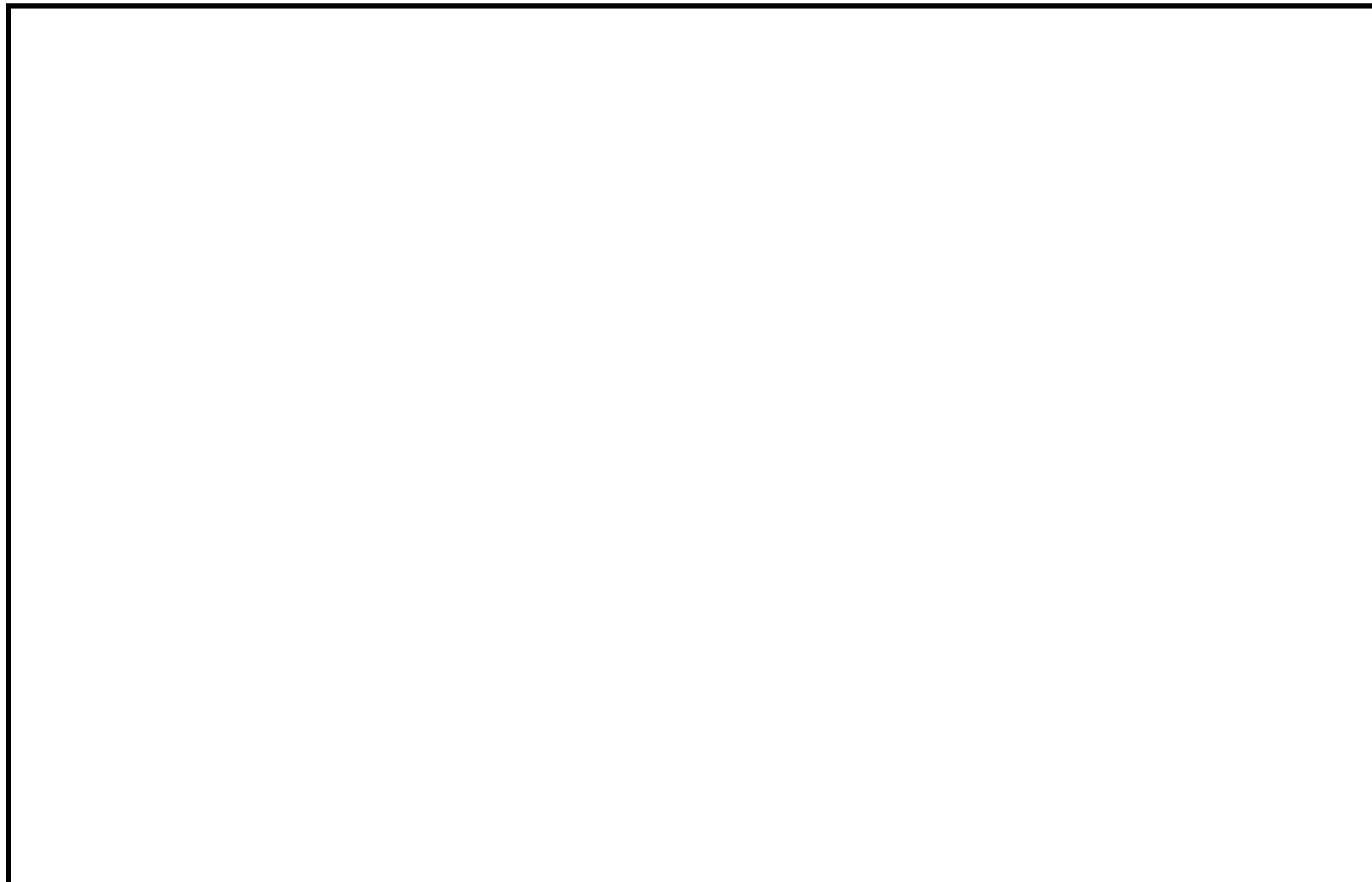
The point of your cartoon will depend on how you label each of the two figures — and what you have them say. Below are five suggested names for the wolf and five for Little Red Riding Hood. Choose one name for each figure and use it in your cartoon. Add words to show what the figures are saying. As a group, share and discuss these cartoons.

WOLF

Congress
news reporters
the president
business owners
criminals

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

the public
the president
news reporters
taxpayers
children



Name _____ Date _____

Activity Sheet for Lesson #2

Humor & Irony

Editorial cartoons often try to make us laugh about very serious problems or dangers in our world. Look through recent newspapers for examples of editorial cartoons you think are funny. Attach two of them in the space provided here. Then answer the questions below.

Which cartoon is funniest? _____

Which cartoon makes its point best? _____

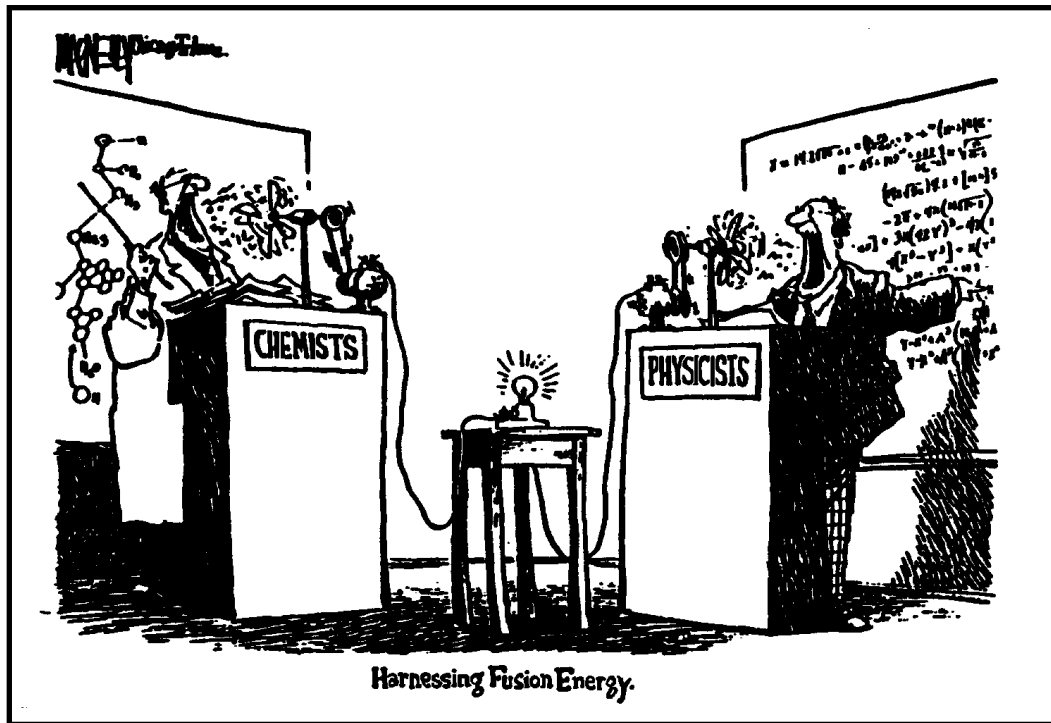
Which cartoon do you like best? Why? _____

Activity Sheet for Lesson #3

Stereotype

A stereotype is a commonly accepted but too-simple idea or belief about some thing or group. In cartooning, a stereotype is a figure easily recognized as a member of some group. In this cartoon, for example, the two figures are scientists. Stereotypes of scientists often show them as older men, mostly bald but with a little frizzy hair, white coats, etc.

Stereotypes make it easy to identify quickly the group a cartoon figure stands for. But some stereotypes may also be insulting to the groups they stand for. Over several weeks, find editorial cartoons with stereotypes of the groups listed below. Cut out one cartoon for each group and attach these cartoons to this sheet. Then, to the right of each group's name, answer this question: Is the stereotype unfair? As a group, discuss the stereotypes in the cartoons and whether or not they are fair.



STEREOTYPE

- older people
- Arabs
- businessmen
- Japanese
- politicians

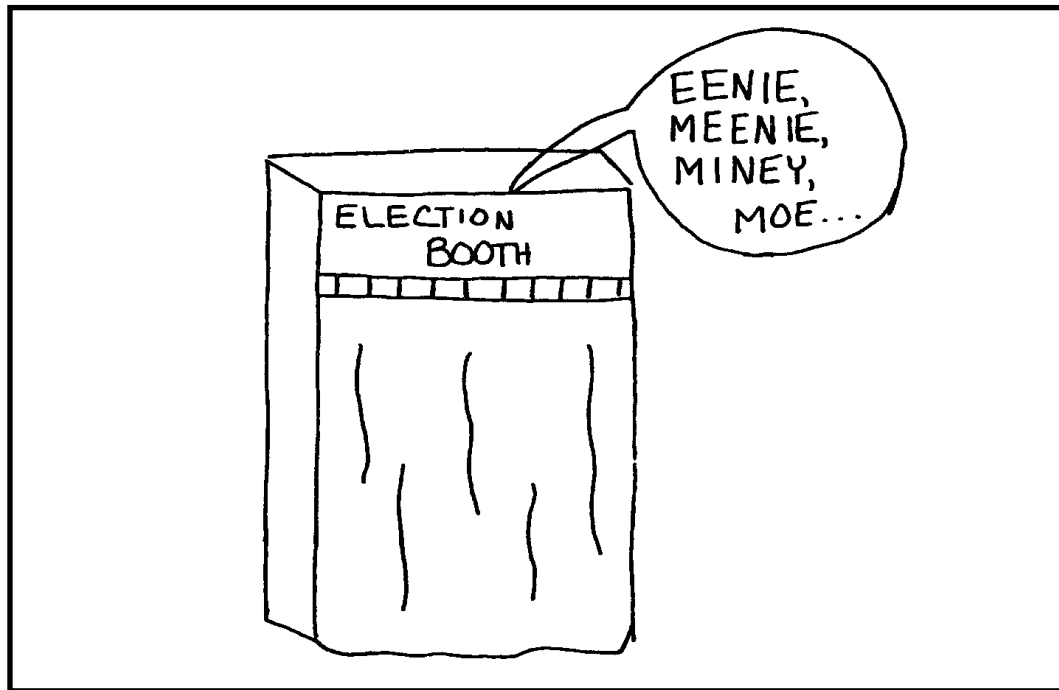
IS THE STEREOTYPE UNFAIR?

Name _____ Date _____

Activity Sheet for Lesson #4

Captions

Most cartoons use words. And sometimes, the words state the point of the cartoon in a very clear way. But in the best cartoons, the words only help the other parts of the cartoon make one overall point. In that way, the reader usually has to think harder about the cartoon and decide whether or not to agree with its main point.



The student editorial cartoon above uses one very simple object — a voting booth — and a few words to make an important point. The words are “Election Booth” and a well-known rhyme. Study this cartoon closely and then answer the questions below.

What point is the cartoon making about the candidates in this election? _____

Make up a caption that could be used beneath the cartoon in place of the rhyme. _____

Do you think your caption makes the cartoon easier to understand? Why? _____

Do you think your caption makes the cartoon better? Why or why not? _____

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