


Analyzing Political Cartoons CARC Social Studies

Please note, all support materials are after the lesson plan template beginning on page 5. Each support page is linked in the lesson plan. Click on the red push pin () in each support page to return to the lesson plan template.

Grade Level	6	General Outcome	This focus of this activity is to develop skills of critically analysing political cartoons.
Time Frame	3 – 4 classes	Enduring Understanding (purpose of the lesson)	Students gain a better understanding of techniques used to create an effective political cartoon through analysis of several cartoons and creation of their own.
Developed By	Karin Brusse-Paterson		
Critical Challenge/Big Idea	Create an effective political cartoon.		
Other Questions of Inquiry	What are the big issues in our society today? What is the cartoonist opinion of or position on the issue at hand?		
Value and Attitude Outcomes	Knowledge and Understanding Outcomes	Skills and Process Outcomes	
		develop skills of critical and creative thinking 6.S.1.1 assess significant local and current affairs from a variety of sources, with a focus on examining bias and distinguishing fact from opinion 6.S.1.2 critically evaluate ideas, information and positions 6.S.1.3 re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue	

		<p>6.S.1.4 generate original ideas and strategies in individual and group activities</p> <p>demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy</p> <p>6.S.8.1 express opinions and present perspectives and information in a variety of forms such as oral or written presentations, speeches or debates</p> <p>6.S.8.2 express reasons for their ideas and opinions, in oral or written form</p> <p>develop skills of media literacy</p> <p>6.S.9.1 detect bias presented in the media</p> <p>6.S.9.2 examine and assess diverse perspectives regarding an issue presented in the media</p> <p>6.S.9.3 analyse significant current affairs</p>
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NOTE: Not all of the outcomes are summatively assessed and therefore their numbers do not appear in bold above.

<p>Summative Assessment Strategies</p>	<p>Political Cartoon Rubric</p>	
<p>Introductory Activity/ The Hook</p>	<p>Activity 1: First Impressions</p> <p>1. Using current political cartoons ask students what they see at first glance. Then ask them what issue they think the cartoonist is illustrating. Let students know that their first impressions have to do with the criterion of “immediate impact”. This means how good the cartoon is at drawing the reader into it.</p> <p>There are a number of excellent sources for political cartoons including newspapers, magazines and websites (see “Resources” section below).</p>	
<p>Teaching/ Learning Strategies and Activities</p>	<p>Activity 2: Whole Class Cartoon Analysis</p> <p>2. One at a time, explain the techniques of cartooning including caricature, audience, subject and style, symbolism, context, stereotyping, words (titles, captions, labels, etc.), expression and body language, relative size of objects, use of light and dark, and tone, showing examples of each. Depending on the class, you can cover any or all of these techniques.</p>	

3. Have students discuss examples of each technique addressed in a whole class discussion. Comparing techniques in cartoons is an excellent method of ensuring student understanding.

An excellent resource for information on these different techniques is [Reading Between the Lines](#) also available in a [black and white version](#) (see Resources section below for web information). The examples in this resource are Australian; however, the principles and questions apply to all political cartoons.

Another excellent resource for decoding political cartoons is Charles Hou's article [Decoding Political Cartoons](#) (see "Resources" section below).

4. Discuss with students the impact of these techniques. Do they help to make the message clearer? Do they help to reveal important details? Show students examples and non-examples of political cartoons that increase the clarity of cartoons and illustrate important details.

Activity 3: Partner Analysis

5. Using different cartoons for different partner groups have students continue to practice analysing political cartoons in a think-pair-share situation or in partner groups then sharing their interpretations with the class.

Activity 4: Cartoon Creation

6. Once students have examined a few cartoons, have them create an effective political cartoon. If this assignment is to be summatively assessed have students create the cartoons on their own. Their cartoons must meet the following criteria:
 - Immediate Impact (Evokes an immediate response that will draw the reader into the cartoon)
 - Clarity of message (Sends a direct message or one the reader can clearly interpret)
 - Use of techniques (Has used a variety of techniques correctly)
 - Reveals important details (about an event or issue)
7. To scaffold this activity, brainstorm, as a class, a list of 'issues' in our world, country, province, or community from which they can choose. Have students decide on two techniques they intend to use and provide them with a copy of [Creating a Political Cartoon](#). Students must draw their cartoon using the techniques they have chosen and then explain how their cartoon meets the criteria. This explanation can be either written or oral and allows the teacher better evidence of understanding particularly for those who struggle with drawing.

Resources

Hou, C. (2004). *Decoding political cartoons*. Library and Archives Canada. Retrieved May 28, 2011 from <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/education/008-3050-e.html>

National Museum of Australia Canberra. (2010) *Reading between the lines*. A downloadable PDF version retrieved 24 May 2011

	<p>from http://www.nma.gov.au/education/school_resources/civics_and_citizenship/reading_between_the_lines/</p> <p>Canadian Political Cartoons Websites: http://www.mackaycartoons.net/ http://www.mapleleafweb.com/political-cartoons http://www.fewings.ca/</p> <p>American Political Cartoon website: www.caglepost.com</p>
Formative Assessment Strategies	<p>Student feedback. Teacher feedback, during cartoon creation and discussion.</p>

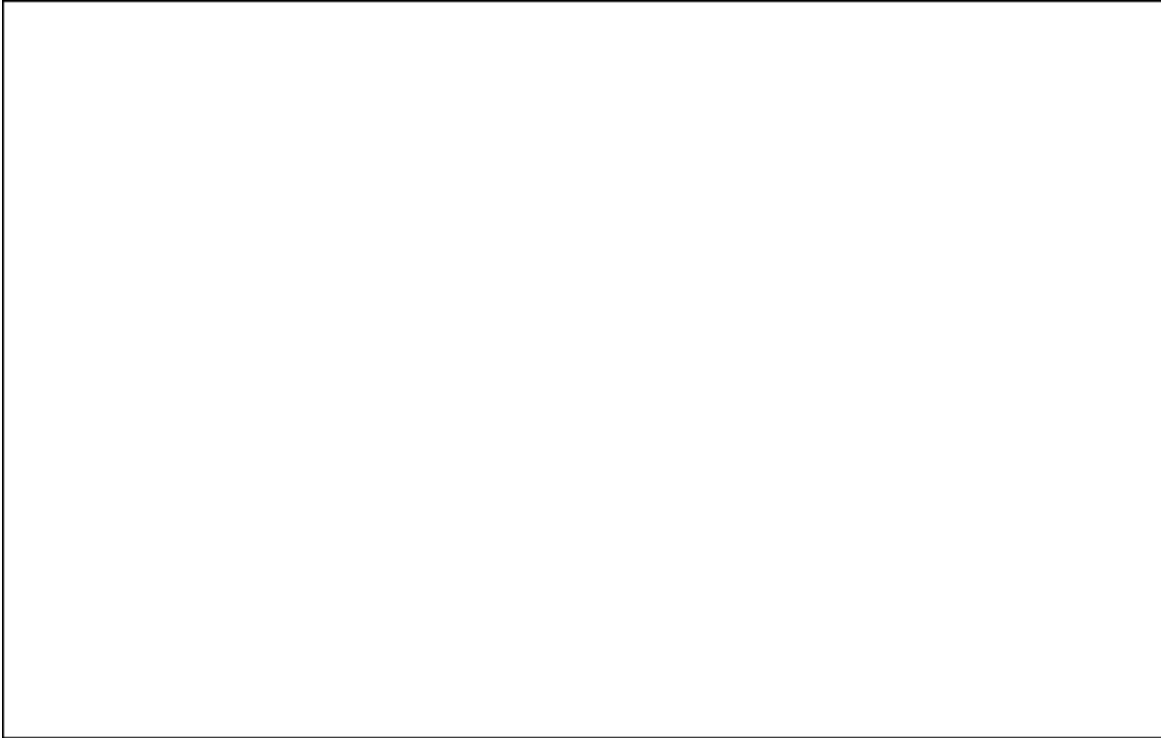
Adapted from: Wiggins, Grant and J. Mc Tighe. (1998). *Understanding by Design*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
ISBN # 0-87120-313-8 (ppk)

Political Cartoon Rubric

Level Criteria	Excellent	Proficient	Adequate	Limited
Analyses current events (6.S.9.3)	Demonstrates perceptive understanding of issue with rich and detailed information	Demonstrates thoughtful understanding of issue with specific information	Demonstrates basic understanding of issue with simplistic information	Demonstrates questionable understanding of issue with a undeveloped information
Justifies choices (6.S.8.2)	Provides explicit reasons for cartoon choices	Provides logical reasons for cartoon choices	Provides reasonable reasons for cartoon choices	Provides unsupported reasons for cartoon choices
Communicates ideas (6.S.8.1)	Use of techniques enhances communication. Message is vivid .	Use of techniques supports communication. Message is interesting .	Use of techniques partially supports communication. Message is basic .	Use of techniques interferes with communication. Message is lacks appeal .

Creating a Political Cartoon 📌

The issue I'm illustrating is _____



Caption (if any) _____

Explanation:

Impact: _____

Clarity: _____

Techniques: _____

Reveals Details: _____
