

Political Cartoon Analysis

We've all heard the expression "A picture is worth a thousand words." This is especially true of political cartoons, which can make a powerful statement but can, at the same time, be complicated to understand. Guide your students through this process the first time. It is useful to teach students how to deconstruct the cartoon. Once students master this process, cartoons will always be accessible to them.

Marbury v. Madison (1803)
Dred Scott v. Sandford (1857)
Brown v. Board of Education (1954)
Miranda v. Arizona (1966)
U.S. v. Nixon (1974)
Texas v. Johnson (1989)

This exercise was created using the political cartoon analysis [worksheet](#) from the National Archives and Records Administration.

Analyze a political cartoon by answering the questions below or completing the chart provided.

Note to teachers: You may want to guide your students through this process the first time.

1. What do you see in the cartoon? Make a list. Include objects, people, and any characteristics that seem to be exaggerated.
2. Which of the items on the list from Question 1 are symbols? What does each symbol stand for?
3. What is happening in the cartoon?
4. What is the cartoonist's message?
5. Do you agree or disagree with the cartoonist's message? Explain your answer.