**Cartoon Analysis Guide**

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| **Symbolism** | Cartoonists use simple objects, or **symbols**, to stand for largerconcepts or ideas.After you identify the symbols in a cartoon, think about what thecartoonist means each symbol to stand for. |
| **Exaggeration** | Sometimes cartoonists overdo, or **exaggerate**, the physicalcharacteristics of people or things in order to make a point.When you study a cartoon, look for any characteristics that seemoverdone or overblown. (Facial characteristics and clothing aresome of the most commonly exaggerated characteristics.) Then,try to decide what point the cartoonist was trying to make by**exaggerating** them. |
| **Labeling** | Cartoonists often **label** objects or people to make it clear exactlywhat they stand for.Watch out for the different labels that appear in a cartoon, and askyourself why the cartoonist chose to **label** that particular person orobject. Does the label make the meaning of the object more clear? |
| **Analogy** | An **analogy** is a comparison between two unlike things. Bycomparing a complex issue or situation with a more familiar one,cartoonists can help their readers see it in a different light.After you’ve studied a cartoon for a while, try to decide what thecartoon’s main analogy is. What two situations does the cartooncompare? Once you understand the main **analogy**, decide if thiscomparison makes the cartoonist’s point more clear to you. |
| **Irony** | **Irony** is the difference between the ways things are and the waythings should be, or the way things are expected to be. Cartoonistsoften use **irony** to express their opinion on an issue.When you look at a cartoon, see if you can find any irony in thesituation the cartoon depicts. If you can, think about what point the**irony** might be intended to emphasize. Does the irony help thecartoonist express his or her opinion more effectively? |
| **Historical Context** | Knowledge of the time period represented in the political cartoon and the events coinciding with that same time period in order to apply **historical context** to interpret the artist’s perspective on the event or person(s) being depicted in the cartoon. |

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/activities/political-cartoon/lm_cart_analysis_guide.pdf>