



EXAMPLE ONLY—You need to find your own cartoon

**Cartoon Analysis Guide**

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

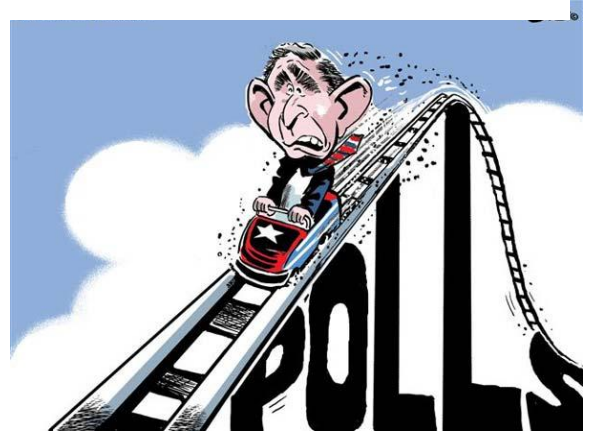
**Symbolism**—Cartoonists use simple objects, or **symbols**, to stand for larger concepts or ideas. After you identify the symbols in a cartoon, think about what the cartoonist intends each symbol to stand for.

**Exaggeration**—Sometimes cartoonists overdo, or **exaggerate**, the physical characteristics of people or things in order to make a point. When you study a cartoon, look for any characteristics that seem overdone or overblown. (Facial characteristics and clothing are some of the most commonly exaggerated characteristics.) Then, try to decide what point the cartoonist was trying to make through exaggeration.

**Labeling**—Cartoonists often **label** objects or people to make it clear exactly what they stand for. Watch out for the different labels that appear in a cartoon, and ask yourself why the cartoonist chose 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 that share some characteristics. By comparing 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 the cartoon’s main analogy is. What two situations does the cartoon compare? Once you understand the main analogy, decide if this comparison makes the cartoonist’s point more clear to you.

**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. When you look at a cartoon, see if you can find any irony in the situation the cartoon depicts. If you can, think about what point the irony might be intended to emphasize. Does the irony help the cartoonist express his or her opinion more effectively?



1. What is the event or issue that inspired the cartoon? **Make sure to attach cartoon to this sheet!**

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2. Are there any real people or places in the cartoon? List who these people are. If not, what images are portrayed in the cartoon?

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3. Identify the specific artistic techniques used in the cartoon (i.e., symbolism, analogy, exaggeration, labeling, and irony). What is the artist trying to show the reader by using these techniques?

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4. What is the cartoonist's point of view about the topic portrayed in the cartoon? Give examples to support your interpretation.

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5. Which unit(s) would this cartoon fit under and why? Explain.

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