

Political Cartoon

“How They’re Acting”



Published in November 1912, Document 4 depicts the public faces of the candidates and speculates as to the uneasiness they might be feeling before election day.

Answer these questions in complete sentences. Complete the Cartoon Analysis to help you answer these questions.

Symbols are used in cartoons to visually present abstract ideas. Many such as Uncle Sam are widely recognized. What symbols are used in this cartoon? Can you think of any other symbols you have seen pictured in editorial cartoons?

Cartoonists employ humor to make powerful statements in an effective, less heavy-handed manner. Does this cartoon use humor to make its point? If so, how? Is it sarcastic? Ironic? Ridiculing?

Exaggeration is what sets editorial cartoons apart; they must grab the reader and deliver a message in a few seconds. What is exaggerated in this cartoon, and what purpose does it serve? Caricature exaggerates or distorts a person's prominent feature(s) to allow the viewer to identify him or her quickly. How is caricature used in this cartoon?

Cartoon Analysis

Level 1

Visuals

1. List the objects or people you see in the cartoon.

Words (not all cartoons include words)

1. Identify the cartoon caption and/or title
2. Locate three words or phrases used by the cartoons to identify objects or people within the cartoon
3. Record any important dates or numbers that appear in the cartoon.

Level 2

Visuals

2. Which of the objects on your list are symbols?
3. What do you think each symbol means?

Words (not all cartoons include words)

4. Which words or phrases in the cartoon appear to be the most significant? Why do you think so?
5. List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon.

Level 3

1. Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.
2. Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols.
3. Explain the message of the cartoon.
4. What special interest groups would agree/disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?