



Political Cartoons - What's It All About?



Cartoonists use simple objects, or symbols, to stand for larger concepts or ideas. (Doves for peace, serpent for evil)

After you identify the symbols in a cartoon, think about what the cartoonist intends each symbol to stand for.

Symbolism

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

Exaggeration trying to make through exaggeration.

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?

Labeling

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.

Analogy

(He is like a rock - this means he is steadfast and strong)

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? (A shark in a lifeguard's chair on the beach - this isn't the way it's supposed to be!

Irony

Once you've identified the persuasive techniques that the cartoonist used, ask yourself:

What issue is this political cartoon about?

What is the cartoonist's opinion on this issue?

What other opinion can you imagine another person having on this issue?

Did you find this cartoon persuasive? Why or why not?

What other techniques could the cartoonist have used to make this cartoon more persuasive?

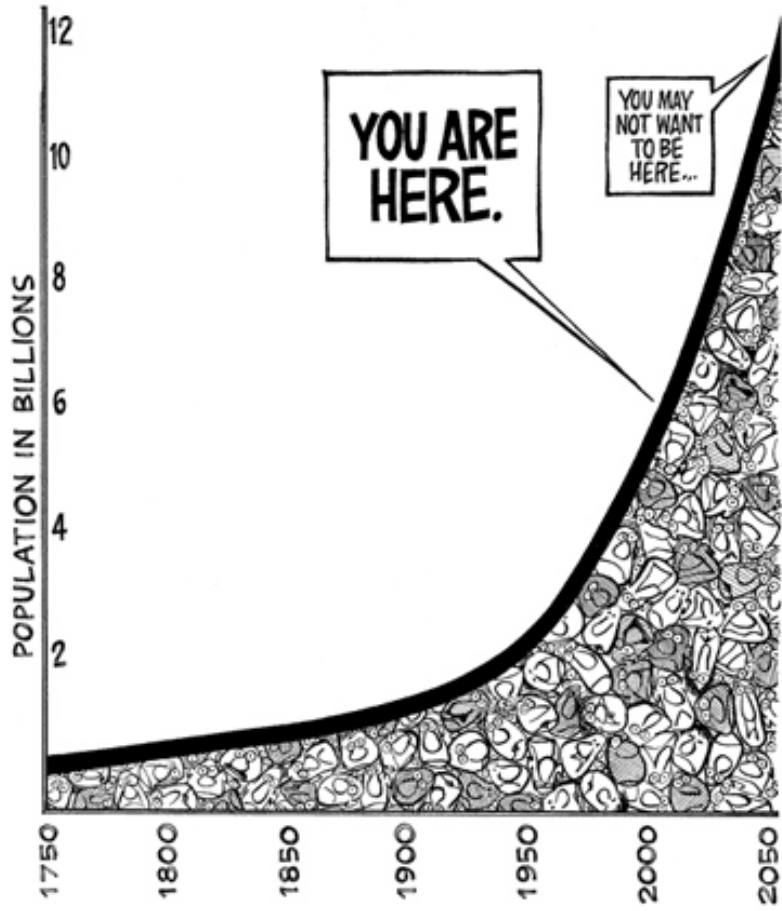
Once you have reviewed the information on different techniques cartoonists use, analyze the 3 cartoons below that are based on population and migration. Then fill answer the questions that are above about each cartoon.

1



“Man, they can't do anything right.
Half the countries are underdeveloped.
The other half are overdeveloped.”

2



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