



## LOC TPS APGov Presidential legacies

9-12 Grades

This activity is sponsored in part by the Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources Eastern Region Program, coordinated by Waynesburg University.

Two to three class periods of 45 – 60 minutes

Description of activity: Students will examine and analyze political cartoons related to certain presidents, taking into consideration the historical context and evaluate the argument.

Activity Goals: Analyze political cartoons, evaluate the arguments made, and remember the unique circumstances and legacies of particular presidents.

Focus Question: How do we remember our presidents? How did the challenges of their time shape their presidential legacies?

Context: This activity would fit in nicely close to the end of a unit on the presidency.

Objectives: AP Gov EK 5.B.1.a; EK 5.B.3.c; EK 5.B.5.A; LO 5A and B; Skills 1, 2, and 4

and Virginia SOLS

GOVT.1 The student will demonstrate mastery of the social studies skills citizenship requires, including the ability to

1. analyze primary and secondary source documents;
2. create and interpret maps, diagrams, tables, charts, graphs, and spreadsheets;
3. analyze political cartoons, political advertisements, pictures, and other graphic media;
4. distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information;
5. evaluate information for accuracy, separating fact from opinion;
6. identify a problem and prioritize solutions;
7. select and defend positions in writing, discussion, and debate.

GOVT.7 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the organization and powers of the national government by

1. examining the legislative, executive, and judicial branches;
2. analyzing the relationship between the three branches in a system of checks and balances.



*Improving Historical Thinking Skills through Source-Based Instruction*  
Paige K Solomon, Norfolk Collegiate

Assessment: There are analysis questions to go along with each source as well as a formative assessment task at the end of the activity.

Activity Details

Primary Sources: see below

Procedure:

What you will need before implementing: This lesson is dependent on computer and internet access for all students. The documents, directions, and chart should be shared digitally with all students (in Google Docs or another format).



What are the legacies of these U.S. presidents?  
How did the challenges of their time shape their presidential legacies?



King Andrew the First  
[New York? : s.n.], 1833.

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2008661753/>

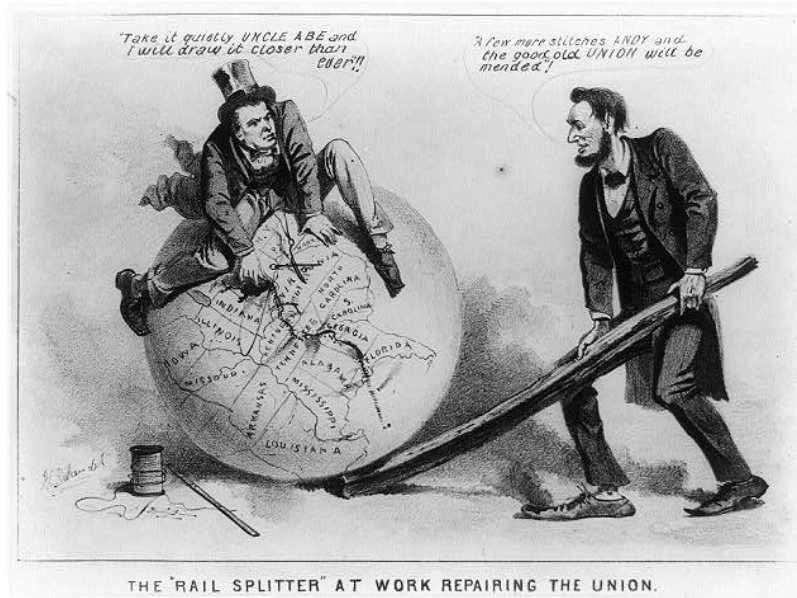
Explain the message of this cartoon.

What circumstances surrounded the creation of this image?

How did the historical context affect the message?

What was the motive or purpose of the artist here?

Which groups/factions of the public would likely have agreed with the message?



The "rail splitter" at work repairing the union

Joseph E. Baker

1865

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2008661827/>

Explain the message of this cartoon.

What circumstances surrounded the creation of this image?

How did the historical context affect the message?

What was the motive or purpose of the artist here?

Which groups/factions of the public would likely have agreed with the message?



Cartoon showing Ulysses S. Grant, as an acrobat, on trapeze "third term," holding on to "whiskey ring" and "Navy ring," with strap "corruption" in his mouth, holding up other acrobats, Shepard, George M. Robeson, William W. Belknap, Murphy, Williams, and Orville E. Babcock / J. Keppler.

Joseph Ferdinand Keppler

1880

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/97515760/>

Explain the message of this cartoon.

What circumstances surrounded the creation of this image?

How did the historical context affect the message?

What was the motive or purpose of the artist here?

Which groups/factions of the public would likely have agreed with the message?



[The Agony and the Ecstasy](#), 1966.

Published in the Washington Post, May 31, 1966.

Herbert L. Block Collection

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/herblock-gallery/herblock-looks-at-1966.html#obj003>

What did this image imply about the presidency?

What do you think the artist meant by the title?

What can this tell us about the role of the US president?



[“Remember—Return with My Shield or on It,”](#) 1966.

Published in the Washington Post, May 31, 1966.

Herbert L. Block

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/herblock-gallery/herblock-looks-at-1966.html#obj002>

What is the message relating to a sitting president and members of Congress up for reelection?

What additional information can you glean about the political climate of the time?

How might this relate to the presidential election of 1968?



*"Ah'm makin' way fer Bobby K,"* ca. 1968.

John Jensen

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004679175/>

Explain the message of this cartoon.

Can you provide the historical context?

What was the motive or purpose of the artist here? Does he seem to approve or disapprove of President Johnson's decision?

Do you think that the president made an appropriate decision based on the events of the time? If so, why? If not, why not?



I've got an idea for '96- I go back, I beg forgiveness, play the whole redemption bit, the reformed underdog back from Hell, I get re-elected, we take over...

Pat Oliphant

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/oliphant/part4.html#obj41>

<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/97521140/>

Explain the message of this cartoon.

What circumstances surrounded the creation of this image?

How did the historical context affect the message?

What was the motive or purpose of the artist here?

Which groups/factions of the public would likely have agreed with the message?





“Who’s in Charge Here?” 1979.

Published in the Washington Post, July 18, 1979.

Herbert Block

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/herblock/it-gets-into-everything.html#obj6>

Explain the message of this cartoon.

What circumstances surrounded the creation of this image?

How did the historical context affect the message?

What was the motive or purpose of the artist here?

Which groups/factions of the public would likely have agreed with the message?



There he goes again

Pat Oliphant

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/oliphant/part3.html#obj16>

Explain the message of this cartoon.

What circumstances surrounded the creation of this image?

How did the historical context affect the message?

What was the motive or purpose of the artist here?

Which groups/factions of the public would likely have agreed with the message?



*Influence*. September 19, 1997.

Pat Oliphant

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/oliphant/part7.html#obj52>

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/97521186/>

Explain the message of this cartoon.

What circumstances surrounded the creation of this image?

How did the historical context affect the message?

What was the motive or purpose of the artist here?

Which groups/factions of the public would likely have agreed with the message?

Formative Assessment:

In small groups, students should review the images and identify an important aspect or criticism associated with each president.

Of all the presidents included here, which one has been the most misunderstood or underappreciated?

Craft your argument in a short essay. Be sure to provide supporting evidence to bolster your argument.

Try to convince the others in your group that your choice is the best.