

AMERICAN IMPERIALISM: THE SPANISH AMERICAN WAR – POLITICAL CARTOON ANALYSIS

CARTOONISTS PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUES - When analyzing political cartoons, it is important to remember that they are metaphorical. Each object is meant to explain something about the artist's perspective or opinion on a particular subject. Cartoonists utilize a variety of techniques to present their opinion. Use the descriptions below to guide your analysis of the political cartoons you have been given.

Symbolism

Cartoonists use simple objects, or symbols, to stand for larger ideas, concepts, or events.

After you identify the symbols in a cartoon, think about what the cartoonist intended them to stand for.

Exaggeration

Sometimes cartoonists exaggerate the physical characteristics of people or things in order to make a point.

Look for the characteristics that look over-the-top (facial characteristics and clothing are the most common). Then try to decide what point the artist is trying to make by exaggerating them.

Labeling

Cartoonists often label people or objects to clarify what they stand for.

Look closely for any labels in the cartoon, and ask yourself why the cartoonist felt it was necessary to do this. How does the label make the idea clearer to the viewer?

Analogy

An analogy is a comparison between two unlike things. By comparing a complex issue or situation with a more familiar one, cartoonists can help their viewers see it in a different light.

Looking at the cartoon, try to decide what its analogy is. What two situations does the image compare? How does it make the cartoon easier to understand?

Irony

Irony is the difference between the way things are and the way things are expected to be. Cartoonists often use irony to express their opinion on an issue.

When analyzing a cartoon, see if you can find any irony in the situation the cartoon depicts. What point does the irony emphasize? How does the irony help the cartoonist express his point?

Cartoon: Letter/Title	What issue is this political cartoon about?	What is the cartoonist's opinion on this issue?	What persuasive techniques does the cartoonist utilize in this cartoon?	How do the techniques make the cartoon more effective/clearer?