Political Cartoons: Elements

# Elements of a Cartoon:

These are ways artists’ express their perspectives. Fill in a definition and example for each one.

1. **Symbolism**
2. **Captions and Labels**
3. **Analogy**
4. **Irony**
5. **Caricature/Exaggeration**

Political Cartoons: Models

# Directions:

Your small group is going to analyze models of political cartoons.

# Words: Captions, Labels, and Dialogue.

1. What **captions, labels, or dialogue** is in the cartoon? Write them down.
2. What effects do these words have? What understanding do they give the viewer that you wouldn’t have otherwise?

# Images: Style, Symbols, and Exaggeration

1. Identify any **symbols** in the cartoon. List the symbols, and what they stand for. Remember, a symbol might not stand for a concrete object, but for an idea.
2. Are there any **exaggerations/caricatures** in this cartoon? List them, and for each one, explain what the exaggeration is trying to communicate.

# Other Devices: Analogy and Irony

1. Is this cartoonist making an **analogy** in this cartoon?
   1. If yes, what two things are they comparing? What are they trying to emphasize or highlight through this comparison?
2. Is the cartoonist using **irony** in this cartoon? Explain where you see irony, and how it impacts the message of the cartoon.

# Final Analysis: Message and Perspective

1. What is the **message/perspective** of this cartoon? State it in one sentence.
2. Of the devices use, which do you think is most important in this cartoon to communicate the message? Explain why.

Political Cartoons: Brainstorming

# Perspective:

What perspective do you want your cartoon to communicate? It can be the same as your op-ed thesis, or a variation on that theme. Write it in the space below.

# Symbols:

Brainstorm at least 3 symbols you could use to stand for people, places, things, or ideas that are important to your idea. Draw each symbol, then briefly explain what it is, and what it stands for.

* *Example:* *I’ve chosen to use the symbol of prostitutes to represent different countries that are competing for jobs. This shows that they are in competition, and that they are truly desperate.*

# Analogy:

Think of two different things you could compare your issue in order to make your perspective clear. Write down those comparisons, and what you would be emphasizing through those comparisons. It can be helpful to think of metaphors or similes.

* *Example: The spread of American culture across the world is much like a military invasion. In both cases, people are being forced to accept something that may not be good for them. Through this comparison, I will emphasize how overwhelming the spread of American culture is, and how difficult it could be to stop, given its advanced “weapons”.*

# Caricature/Exaggeration:

Think of three different things that could be exaggerated visually in your cartoon. These could be aspects of a person, place, or thing. Draw the exaggerated versions, and explain for each why you would exaggerate them.

* *Example: In this cartoon, I’ve exaggerated the obesity of corporate America. He is hugely fat, which highlights the power imbalance and inequality between him and the workers in the cartoon.*

# Draft It!

On an 8.5 x 11 piece of paper, do a rough draft of your cartoon idea. Please make sure it meets the following requirements:

1. No stick figures.
2. Use at least 3 of the different cartooning techniques.
3. Fill the space on the paper.
4. Have a clear perspective related to your Op-Ed thesis.