

Cartoon PD in a Package

Develop confidence
and proficiency in
using cartoon
resources



An educational resource produced by
the John Curtin Prime Ministerial
Library

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Front cover: detail from cartoon by George Finey, first published 14 February 1942 in the Daily Telegraph (Sydney)

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Section One: Instructions to the Teacher

Connections to the Curriculum Framework and the History Syllabus

Cartoon PD in a Package was written by experienced classroom teachers all of whom have played a significant role in the delivery of professional development in History in Western Australia over the last decade and more. The cartoon package addresses the following areas of the Curriculum Framework and the Year 11 & 12 History syllabus:

Year 7-10 Early Adolescence

Investigation, Communication and Participation

Students:

- Gather information from a range of sources including the print media.
- Evaluate the reliability of sources of information considering different perspectives and viewpoints.
- Make judgements on issues as they examine the opinions and motives of others.

Time, Continuity and Change

Students:

- Develop their understanding of the impact of people, events and ideas from one time period to the next and over time.
- Comprehend that the past has impacted on today's society and environment.
- Describe causes and consequences of events or social and political movements.
- Conclude that perspectives and interpretations of people, events and issues differ, depending on one's beliefs and heritage.
- Compare different views of people about the same issue or event and suggest reasons why, over time, these portrayals and attitudes may have changed.

Years 10 – 12 Late Adolescence/Young Adulthood

Investigation, Communication and Participation

Students:

- Use a variety of methods to investigate issues.
- Collect data from both primary and secondary sources. Sources include cartoons.
- Evaluate data for bias, reliability and the perspective of the source.

Time, Continuity and Change

Students:

- Conduct more detailed inquiry into how people's ideas and identity have been shaped by their interpretation of past events.
- Gather evidence from both primary sources, like cartoons, and secondary sources, such as those listed on page 6, and critically evaluate the credibility of the information.
- Classify information in terms of reliability, accuracy and bias.
- Study important themes including those related to political, economic and social organization.

Year 11 and 12 History Syllabus

Cartoon PD in a Package will assist teachers to fulfil the syllabus requirements for developing Process S skills of analysis, argument, communication and research as outlined in the Year 11 & 12 T E E Syllabus statement for History. These skills include the following:

Analysis

- Respond to historical evidence creatively and critically in order to make meaning of, and to reconstruct the past.
- Separate fact from opinion.
- Identify bias, prejudice and motive.
- Recognise stereotypes.
- Use evidence to make informed judgements.

Argument

- Support judgements with balanced and informed argument.
- Recognise the provisional nature of historical judgements.

Communication

- Discuss historical problems in clear and effective prose.
- Communicate ideas and information logically.
- Make decisions and justify them.
- Demonstrate informed opinions and attitudes relevant to any given situation.

Research

- Identify the key issues to be investigated.
- Gather, organise and synthesise the relevant information.

General Introduction

T E E markers have identified cartoon interpretation as an area of weakness in the teaching of History in WA schools. To help address this weakness, the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library has developed a self-contained package designed to train teachers how to develop students' skills in the interpretation of cartoons.

Cartoon PD in a Package is designed to increase the confidence and proficiency of teachers in using cartoons as learning resources for students from as young as Year 9. The resultant improvement in student understanding and interpretation of cartoons will flow on and eventually lead to better performance in this area in the T E E, as well as producing citizens with a life-long appreciation of this form of social and political commentary.

The value of this package lies in its self-contained nature which allows it to deliver quality professional development without a presenter and at a time that suits the individual teacher. Teachers outside the metropolitan area who are unable to attend PD workshops will find this package invaluable.

The package contains 11 different cartoons divided as follows:

- Section Two is a collection of six cartoons appropriate for teaching lower secondary school students how to interpret cartoons using the methodology of 'scaffolding'.
- Sections Three and Four use 'chunking' methodology to interpret a collection of six cartoons appropriate for teaching T E E History students (three for Australia 1900-1945 and three for 1945-1990 units).

The package includes:

- Secondary support materials to provide the historical context for the cartoons.
- A series of step-by-step activities designed to help teachers interpret the cartoons and then teach students how to do the same thing.
- Instructions about how to use 'scaffolding' and 'chunking' methodologies.
- Sample assessment questions for each cartoon.
- Answer guides to the assessment questions.
- Suggestions for extension work.
- Terminology for interpreting cartoons.
- An example of how to identify parts of a cartoon and how to 'chunk' and 'scaffold' cartoons.
- All cartoons in the 'scaffolding' section are already separated for easy use.
- A series of photographs from which to make overhead projection sheets to support the cartoon interpretation process.
- A list of suggested text books or other sources for further reading and research.
- Large photographs of key historical figures

Suggested Reading

You may find the following titles helpful:

Cohen, M. *Ideals and Reality*. Longman Australia, 1998.

Darlington, R. *Land of Hopes and Illusions*. Shakespeare Head Press Australia, 1987.

Dennis, L. *Australia Since 1890*. Second edition, Longman Australia, 1999.

Gurry, T. (ed) *An Emerging Identity*. Heinemann Educational Australia, 1985.

Mason, K. J. *Experience of Nationhood*. Third edition, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1992.

Interpreting Cartoons: A Process

Step One: Look at the **origin/source** of cartoon including date if available. What is significant about these?

Step Two: Look at the title if available. What might this tell you about the action, setting, message and purpose of the cartoon?

Step Three: List the **elements** that make up the cartoon. These are the various parts of the cartoon itself –Who/what is in the cartoon? Where is it? What is happening?

Most cartoons use **symbols** - simple pictures that convey ideas.

Metaphors are 'big picture' ideas – they are often apparent in the setting of the cartoon such as a medieval scene or in a swamp.

Step Four: Look at the caption if available. Link this to the elements.

Step Five: Pull Steps One to Four together...this is the **message**. What is the cartoonist saying? Use evidence from the cartoon to support your interpretation.

Step Six: **Context** – the circumstances which surround the cartoon. These are people, places, actions and events.

Step Seven: Is the cartoon **biased**? Has the cartoonist taken sides? Look carefully at the caption and the source of the cartoon. Link these to the cartoon itself. Do these give you any clues about the cartoonist? Look at the expression on any faces or the body language conveyed in the cartoon.

Step Eight: What is the cartoonist trying to achieve? What is the **purpose** of the cartoon? Why did the cartoonist choose this particular incident, event, issue or theme? Why did the cartoonist convey the message in this particular way? What drove the cartoonist to draw this cartoon? – this is the **motive**.

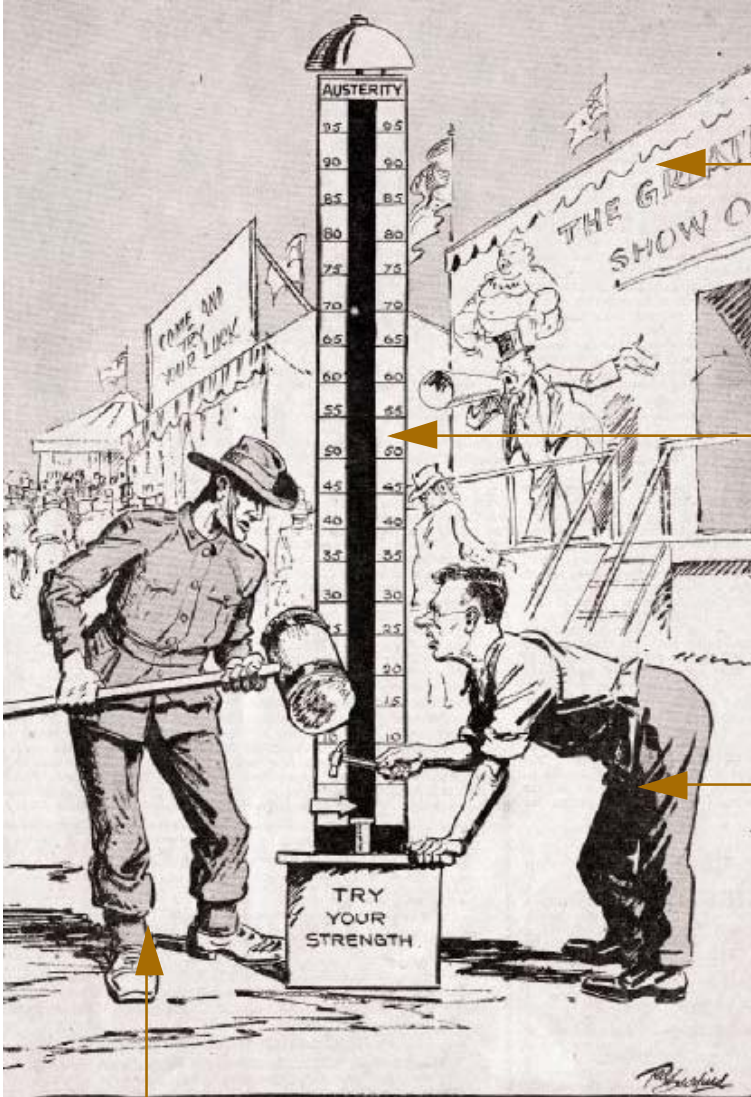
Interpreting Cartoons: An Example

Origin (source)

Origin (date)

'Bulletin'

9 September 1942



Fairground / sideshow alley. Note various elements (**Symbols**) of the fair (**Metaphor**).

'Test your strength' - a measure of austerity in this case. Note arrow at base. (**Elements**)

Prime Minister Curtin. Note his 'working' clothes and size of his mallet. (**Elements/Context**).

Elements (Title): Enthusiasm is not enough

Elements (Caption): 'Give it a belt with this, cobber!' Note implied friendliness by use of term 'cobber' (a mate).

Soldier of the 2nd AIF. Note uniform and large mallet as he addresses Prime Minister Curtin. (**Elements/Context**)

Interpreting Cartoons: Terminology

TERM	DEFINITION	HOW TO APPLY
ORIGIN	Source of the document	Look for author, cartoonist, journal, newspaper. What date is the document? Is that significant?
ELEMENTS	All the items that make up the document.	Make a list. Who or what is in the cartoon? Where is the action taking place? Make note of the title and any captions. Link these to the other elements.
SYMBOLS	Simple pictures that convey ideas.	eg Boomerang – comes back; black cat – bad luck; sign – pointing the way
METAPHORS	'Big picture' ideas, often the setting of a cartoon.	eg. Boxing ring – a place of competition with a referee, Fair ground – fun and unusual place costing a lot of money! Old car – worn out, old version
MESSAGE	What is the cartoonist saying?	Use the origin and elements to support your interpretation.
CONTEXT	The circumstances that surround the document.	Who are the people and what are the events and actions going on around the document? Date?
BIAS/ ATTITUDE	Taking sides.	Look carefully at the caption, title and origin of the document. Do these give you any clues about the author/cartoonist's point of view? Look at the expressions on faces, body language and relative sizes of characters
PURPOSE/ MOTIVE	What is the cartoonist trying to achieve? What 'drove' the cartoonist to draw this cartoon in this way?	Why did the cartoonist choose this particular incident/event, issue or theme? How have they conveyed the message?
TOPE	The mood created by the cartoon.	eg happy, sad, angry, satirical, threatening, etc.
CARICATURE	The exaggeration or extortion of features of a person or object.	Consider whether the caricature is demonising or deifying.

Common Symbols used in Cartoons

Cartoonists, film animators, advertisers and other artists use common symbols to convey concepts, ideas or feelings in their works.

Ask your students to think about what they would draw to convey the following:

Concept, idea or feeling	Examples of common symbol
Australia	Kangaroo, koala, outline of the map of Australia or the Australian flag
Sydney	The Opera House, Sydney Harbour Bridge
An Australian soldier	Australian slouch hat with the badge that looks like a rising sun
United States of America	Statue of Liberty, Uncle Sam figure
A queen or king	A crown
The power of a king	A throne and/or sceptre and orb
Australian government	Parliament House in Canberra
The Christian Religion	The crucifix
Danger	A snake, circling sharks, a crumbling cliff or bridge, a small crack in a dam, a sinking boat
Death	A skeleton, the Grim Reaper with scythe, a grave stone or cemetery, a flag flying at half mast
An argument	A boxing ring with two boxers facing each other
An agreement	Two people shaking hands
An atomic bomb blast	Mushroom shaped cloud
Peace	A white dove or dove with olive branch
A meeting	A long table with chairs around it