

Unit: Immigration

Title of lesson: Immigration Attitudes through Cartoon Commentary

Time frame: 1-2 sessions, depending on use of groups and pre-lesson homework.

Standards addressed:

National History Standards in Historical Thinking

2 Historical Comprehension

A. Identify the author or source of a historical document or narrative and assess its credibility.

B. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage.

3 Historical Analysis and Interpretation

B. Consider multiple perspectives of various peoples in the past by demonstrating their differing motives, beliefs, interests, hopes and fears.

4 Historical Analysis and Interpretation

A. Formulate historical questions from encounters with historical documents, eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos, historical sites, art, architecture, and other records from the past.

Alaska State Content Standards in History

A) A student should understand that history is a record of human experiences that links the past to the present and future by

6. knowing that cultural elements reflect the ideas and attitudes of a specific time and influence human interactions.

Social Studies Knowledge, Skills, Dispositions:

Content Knowledge:

Students will know that cartoon commentary (political cartoons) are a purposeful form of communication; they have literal and symbolic meaning; they reflect ideas and attitudes of a specific time; they are used to reflect and/or sway public opinion; they may reveal prejudice and play on stereotypes.

Skills:

Differentiate between bias/opinion and fact; detect bias; extract significant ideas from supporting illustrative details; form an opinion based on critical examination of relevant information; communicate own beliefs.

Dispositions: Willingness to look at an issue from another view point; willingness to listen and contribute to discussions.

Learning objectives: Students will be able to:

BASIC:

Use source information to identify author, publication, and time period;

Recognize objective and subjective elements of the cartoon by

identifying specific images in the picture (concrete/objective) and

identifying symbolic images (abstract/subjective)

Identify characteristics of political cartoons.

ADVANCED:

Analyze bias and stereotypes of selected cartoons;

Interpret meaning based on knowledge of time period;
Evaluate for purpose and validity of the cartoon as a commentary reflecting prevailing attitudes.

Cooperative skills addressed: contributing to discussion; active listening.

Technology inclusion: Overhead/transparencies; Internet and computer projector if available (instead of using overheads); this lesson could be adapted to use while in a computer lab.

Materials needed:

- hand-outs of the selected cartoons "Greatest Fear" (one copy per student or less if grouping in pairs or quads). Copy only the cartoon, without the notes or citation.
- copies of cartoon analysis handout (PDF file), one per student;
- article "Deciding Who Shall Come" (either for teacher background, or to use as pre-lesson homework, or in class in paired readings);

Lesson Plan/Lesson Design

1. Prior assignment/preparation -- Students should already have some experience "reading" (analyzing) primary documents. If they are new to this, first do lessons on analyzing pictures and text. They also should be able to give an acceptable definition of primary document.

Hook into their prior knowledge of cartoons. (What is a cartoon? What are some purposes? Where do you find cartoons?) Most students will probably show prior knowledge connected to comic strips, which are social commentaries; Doonesbury often offers political commentary, too. You may want to provide editorial sections of newspapers or magazines with one-panel cartoon political commentaries to prompt more ideas.

It is important that the students have some historical context in order to analyze the cartoons at the higher level of the lesson objectives. To this end, you may want to assign the article "Deciding Who Shall Come" as homework prior to teaching this lesson. [Direct students during reading to take notes on reasons immigrants came and barriers to immigration.] If you do not assign this as homework, you can extend the lesson by having the students read it before they start working with the cartoons, or you can present the information in a mini-lecture/discussion.

2. Opening activity -- Tap prior knowledge with opening question either for discussion (in small groups reporting to the class) or as a fast-write response (if using interactive history notebook, this would go at top of left hand page). Opening Question choices: What is your favorite cartoon and why? OR What are cartoons and where do you find them? OR What is a commentary?

3. Specific lesson design-- This lesson looks cartoon commentaries from the 1880s and the 1920s. Several are by cartoonist Thomas Nast and several from Puck Magazine, probably by cartoonist Joseph Keppler. They deal with fears of immigration, exclusionary attitudes and policies. most are provided with the lesson as PDF files. One cartoon is suggests, with an online reference for retrieval, if you want to contrasting commentary about open door policy to immigration.

Establish purpose of lesson: To learn more about immigration — specifically barriers to and attitudes about — by analyzing cartoon commentaries from the 1880s through the 1920s.

Have students share some of their responses to the opening question. Distill what they say into a class list on the board or chart paper under the categories "purpose," "type," "where found."

Throughout this lesson, you will be guiding them to identify basic characteristics of cartoon commentary (social or political). (You may give them this information directly, or you may let them work with the cartoons and let them derive a list of characteristics at the end of the lesson, or after working over several days with different cartoons.) Characteristics include: drawings that tell a story, often in one picture frame; the objects and people in the cartoon may look real or familiar, but are also symbolic (stand for something else or an idea); a point of view is expressed that mirrors events or attitudes in the larger society; everything in the panel is put there by design with a purpose.

Tap into their prior knowledge about the big ideas of immigration. This will vary depending on how far into the unit you are, but key points for this lesson are tied to the enduring understandings and essential questions of unit.

Highlight key points from the article "Deciding Who Shall Come" either in discussion from homework notes, or read and discuss in class now.

See Analyzing Cartoons / General Considerations for lesson guide lines; Summaries and notes about cartoons provided with lesson follow.

4. Assessment -- Collect analysis sheets as a formative assessment. Use one of the cartoons as a summative assessment, for each student to complete an analysis on his/her own. Have students write an opinion about one of the cartoons studied. Respond to the questions: How does it help them understand immigration issues or the immigrant experience in a different way?

If there is an issue within the school community that would lend itself to commentary, have the students create their own cartoon commentary.

ANALYZING CARTOONS / GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Model the process first for the students. Consider using "Greatest Fear 1.pdf." You can then give them the complete cartoon (Greatest Fear all.pdf) and they can complete the analysis for the two remaining images in the panel as a whole class guided activity.

You can continue working through the other cartoons as time allows in whole-class guided format, or give different cartoons to small groups to work through, then come to the overhead and present their analysis.

In analyzing a cartoon, you want students to work from concrete to abstract.

Using the cartoon analysis handout (from National Archives), work through the questions in Level 1. At this level, students identify only what they can *see* (the concrete images). You may want them to divide the cartoon into sections and work section by section, so they focus on specific images. You may need repeated reminders at this point to talk about only what they can specifically see, not what they think or feel about the image.

Then move to Levels 2 & 3.

Work through these questions with the class, discussing their answers as you go along.

As you move through these cartoons, help the students make connections with how the cartoon reflects the time period and attitudes, and how it relates to barriers faced by immigrants. These will lead into discussions about bias and stereotypes.

(After discussing several cartoons, you can guide students in identifying the characteristics of cartoon commentary.)

When making student copies, only include the image — not the summary notes.

The teaching notes provided below are, in most cases, the same from the PDF files of the cartoons. You can also retrieve the digital images from the Internet by going to the links provided.

Cartoon "Greatest Fear" (Three versions are provided: "Greatest Fear all.pdf" has all three images in one panel; the images are apart in the other two pdf files.) Give students a copy of the cartoon only. (Cartoonist not identified.)

Teaching Notes: Go to the Library of Congress link below for a digital copy or to order a copy.

SUMMARY (from LoC): A one panel, three scene cartoon showing, in the first scene, an Irish man with the head of Uncle Sam in his mouth and a Chinese man with the feet of Uncle Sam in his mouth, in the second scene they consume Uncle Sam, and in the third the Chinese man consumes the Irish man; on the landscape in the distant background are many railroads.

MEDIUM: 1 print: lithograph.

CREATED/PUBLISHED: San Francisco: White & Bauer, [between 1860 and 1869]

REPOSITORY: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

DIGITAL ID: (b&w film copy neg.) cph 3a23482 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a23482>

VIDEO FRAME ID: LCPP003A-23482 (from b&w film copy neg.)

CARD #: 98502829

Cartoon "Hands off gentlemen." Work through the analyzing cartoon handout in the same manner as before. This is a complex image with some strong language.

PDF provided. Digital copy available from

<http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/imageapp.php?Major=IM&Minor=F&SlideNum=10.00>

SUMMARY ("Hands off, gentlemen! America means fair play for all men." This 1871 cartoon by Thomas Nast shows the hatred directed toward the Chinese. The Irish, first in pursuit, had previously been the target of earlier immigrant groups. Captions on signs: "If our ballots will not stop them coming to our country, the bullet must!", Riots by 'Pure White' strikers, Europeans are the bulk of our 'American' pauperism."

About Thomas Nast

Thomas Nast -- A German immigrant, born 1840, brought to New York in 1846 by his mother. For more information, go to <http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Thomas-Nast>
Nast's most important forum was *Harper's Weekly*, the leading illustrated American periodical of the last half of the nineteenth century. HarpWeek has identified the 2200-plus cartoons that Nast drew for *Harper's Weekly*—the first in 1859, the last in 1896, and the rest mainly between 1862 and 1886. They were instrumental in winning four presidential elections—for Abraham Lincoln in 1864, for Ulysses S. Grant in 1868 and 1872, and for Grover Cleveland in 1884. For more information, go to Harp Week at <http://www.thomasnast.com/>

Cartoon "Shadows of ancestors" PDF provided. Also available at

<http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/imageapp.php?Major=IM&Minor=F&SlideNum=39.00>

SUMMARY: Cartoon of the shadows of immigrant origins looming over restrictionist American plutocrats. By J. Keppler, published in Puck Magazine

NOTES ON Cartoonist Joseph Keppler (1838-1894). Excerpted from

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/ARTkeppler.htm>

Joseph Keppler was born in Vienna, Austria, on 1st February, 1838...After emigrating to the United States in 1867 Keppler worked as an actor in St. Louis before launching a humorous weekly newspaper in the city. This was not a success and a German-language weekly he started in 1870 also ended in failure.

He moved to New York and became a staff cartoonist for the magazine, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated*. Frank Leslie believed that Keppler would provide ideal competition for Thomas Nast at *Harper's Weekly*. In 1876 he started his own illustrated magazine, *Puck*. The name of the magazine was taken from the elfin character in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*...Each week the front-cover of the magazine featured a different cartoon. The centerfold and front and back covers were also in colour....*Puck* started as a German-language weekly but an English version appeared the following year. The 16 page magazine sold for ten cents. For several years the English language magazine operated at a loss and was subsidized by the German version. However, circulation gradually increased and by the early 1880s Keppler was selling over 80,000 copies a week... Keppler had traditional views on the role of women and never tired of poking fun at those involved in the campaign for women's suffrage. Nor did he show much sympathy for the emerging trade union movement. After his death in 1894, *Puck* was taken over by his son, Joseph Keppler Jr., who was also an cartoonist.

Cartoon Anti-Immigration (cartoonist not identified)

PDF provided. Also available at

<http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/imageapp.php?Major=IM&Minor=F&SlideNum=78.00>

SUMMARY: Cartoon, anti-immigration. "Instead of Modifying the Immigration Law to let more of these in, We should be strengthening the Immigration law and sending These HOME." "These" include alien thugs, an alien bagman, an alien bootlegger, alien drug peddler, alien bandit, alien woman criminal and undesirable alien. In the picture on left, those with arms outstretched to get in are shown as old, hag-like and untidy.

Citation: *Saturday Evening Post*, April 10, 1926, p. 35.

Cartoon "Immigration Restriction..." (cartoonist not identified) PDF provided. Also available at

<http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/imageapp.php?Major=IM&Minor=F&SlideNum=79.00>

SUMMARY: Shows Congress as a man using his foot to stamp out the fuse on a bomb that might blow up the dam of immigration restriction. Behind the dam are "Alien undesirables," a sea or flood of faces. Below the dam, threatened if it breaks, are two buildings, the schoolhouse and the church.

Citation: *Saturday Evening Post*, March 28, 1929, p. 31.

Cartoon "E Pluribus Unum..." PDF provided. Also available from

<http://immigrants.harperweek.com/ChineseAmericans/Illustrations/078EPluribusUnumMainBI.htm>

Notes: By Thomas Nast, 1882, Harper's Weekly; this ties in directly with Chinese Exclusion Law. Also links to essential question of unit "How is immigration related to U Pluribus Unum?"

Cartoon "Spoiling the Broth" PDF provided. Also available at

<http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/imageapp.php?Major=IM&Minor=F&SlideNum=28.00>

SUMMARY "Spoiling the Broth!," a Gale cartoon of 1921. Additional information on this cartoon is difficult to find. Is Gale a magazine or cartoonist? However it shows the Flood of Immigration pouring into The Melting Pot and spilling over while Uncle Sam has his back turned, reading a newspaper (H.C.L. Business Outlook) All around the pot are Unassimilated Aliens.

Cartoon "Welcome to All!" (For contrasting commentary to restrictionist policies.)

Available at

<http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/imageapp.php?Major=IM&Minor=E&SlideNum=3.00>

SUMMARY: This Puck cartoon of 1880 expresses the American's image of his country's immigration policies. Caption above Uncle Sam: U.S. Ark of Refuge. Caption on small sign: Free education, free land, free speech, free ballot, free lunch

Cartoon Which color is to be tabooed next? Thomas Nast

Available at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3e02195>

SUMMARY: Cartoon concerning Irish and Chinese immigration to the United States, showing "Fritz" and "Pat" seated at table talking.

