

Name:

Date:

Analyzing Political Cartoons

Title of political cartoon: _____

Getting started: Before you begin analyzing, take a full minute to observe the cartoon carefully. Look closely at every detail—characters, objects, text, and symbols. In your own words, describe what you see. Don't rush—focus on what is in the image before trying to interpret it.

Step 1: Visual elements analysis

1. List all specific objects, people, text elements, and dates or numbers that appear in the cartoon.

Objects	
People	
Text	
Dates/Numbers	

2. Is there a caption for this cartoon? If so, write it below.

Step 2: Symbols and words analysis

1. Refer back to your list from Step 1. Are any of the objects or images symbols? What might each one represent? Use the chart below to record your thinking.

Symbol	What It Represents	Why I Think This

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- Which words or phrases in the cartoon seem most important to understanding the message? Why are these particular words or phrases impactful or meaningful in this context?

- What emotions does this cartoon evoke? Which specific visual elements or techniques (such as exaggeration, contrast, or facial expressions) contribute to these feelings?

Use specific adjectives to describe the mood or tone of the cartoon. Some helpful adjectives include:

angry	hopeful	serious	sarcastic	confused	proud	worried
determined	fearful	frustrated	humorous	critical	ironic	
tense	celebratory	helpless	bold	dramatic	skeptical	urgent

Step 3: Message analysis

- Describe the specific action, event, or situation shown in the cartoon. What is happening? What story is being told through the imagery?

- How do the words in the cartoon (captions, labels, or speech bubbles) clarify the meaning of the images? What might be confusing without them?

- What overall message, opinion, or argument is the cartoonist trying to communicate? What evidence from the cartoon supports your interpretation?
