



Ellis Island

Post-visit Activity: Analyzing Political Cartoons

The following activity from the National Park Service allows students to analyze political cartoons that compare past and present issues on immigration. Source: www.nps.gov/elis/learn/education/classrooms/peak-immigration-years-lesson-plan.htm

Options:

1. Use the questions below to guide discussion related to the political cartoons. Class activity and discussion.
2. Print the cartoons and place students in small discussion groups or project images and analyze as a class.
3. Print or project the cartoons. Make copies of the student worksheet for students to analyze cartoons individually. Discuss as a class and debrief.

Questions to consider for discussion:

Why do you think people created and published these cartoons?

What was the illustrator trying to say?

How did he or she attempt to do this?

Are the characters in the cartoon symbols of a broader group or idea?

What group or individual perspectives are NOT represented in this illustration?

What was each author hoping to achieve?



Who is the intended audience?

How does each illustrator want the reader to feel about immigration?

Whose interests do these viewpoints serve?

Do you agree or disagree with the cartoonist's point of view? Explain.

How did the American society express their concerns about newly-arrived immigrants?

When you compare the cartoons, what is the difference between the statements they are trying to make?

To what extent have these issues changed or not changed over time?



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3. How did he or she attempt to do this?
4. Are the characters in the cartoon symbols of a broader group or idea?
5. What group or individual perspectives are NOT represented in this illustration?
6. What was each author hoping to achieve?
7. Who is the intended audience?



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