

Cartoons for the Classroom

Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)



Cartoon Courtesy Nick Anderson/Houston Chronicle

Defining the Separation of Powers

Between the lines

Our nation's founders created a system of government based on a separation of powers so that each branch serves as a check and balance on the others. Stated simply:

- ▶ The legislative branch has the power to make the law.
- ▶ The executive branch has the power to enforce the law.
- ▶ The judicial branch has the power to interpret the law.

Talking points

1. From warrantless NSA surveillance to the use of military tribunals to try detainees at Guantanamo Bay without the approval of Congress, some of the President's actions have riled Congress -- and a few cartoonists. Explain how this cartoon interprets the President's actions.
2. Nick Anderson's philosophy: "An editorial cartoonist, fundamentally, should be anti-establishment. No matter which party is running the government, it is the essence of satire to question authority." Do you agree with his philosophy? Why is it healthy to question authority?
3. Anderson depicts the President in a cowboy outfit, complete with hat, boots belt buckle and lariat. Why use these symbols to caricature George Bush?

Get out your newspaper

Gather a collection of political cartoons from your newspaper. Using the Cartoon Evaluation Worksheet (available online at the NIE Website) analyze each cartoon and explain the issues addressed and determine the artist's point of view.

Additional resources

Association of American Editorial Cartoonists
<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>

More by Nick Anderson
<http://editorialcartoonists.com/cartoon/browse.cfm/AnderN/>