

Cartoons for the Classroom



Presented in cooperation with the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)

WHY CHANGE THE SOCIAL SECURITY "TRUST" FUND? IT'S WORKING SO WELL!



Between the lines

President Bush recently launched an aggressive campaign to sell his controversial plan for saving Social Security to the nation and a hesitant Congress. In general terms the plan calls for allowing younger workers to divert some of their Social Security payroll taxes into personal investment accounts. But in a poll released as the campaign kicked off, only 18 percent of those asked believed Social Security was facing a crisis.

Cartoon courtesy Chuck Asay
Colorado Springs Gazette

Explaining Social Security with a metaphor

A metaphor is an implied comparison between ideas to suggest a likeness or analogy between them. It's a tool that can help you understand difficult concepts like, say, the problems with Social Security by simplifying the idea. In this cartoon, the first three panels offer an explanation of the problem through an analogy of workers carrying the load for retirees. The analogy forms a logical basis for the opinion posed by the artist in the final panel.

Additional resources

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

More by Chuck Asay at the Colorado Springs Gazette
<http://www.gazette.com/display.php?id=1305133&secid=13>

Talking points

1. Chuck Asay uses an analogy to explain the problem with the current Social Security system. Does the analogy seem to fit the problem as you understand it?
2. If there are fewer young workers today to "carry the load" what's the answer? Reduce benefits for retirees? Or ask the younger workers to pay more? Is there another solution you can think of?
3. If Asay's analogy is correct, does the donkey's accusation in the last panel make sense?
4. Who does the donkey represent? Whose side is the artist on? Can you form an argument that counters what the cartoon implies?

Get out your newspaper

Gather political cartoons that deal with this issue from your newspaper over the next two weeks. Using the Cartoon Evaluation Worksheet (available online at the NIE Website) analyze each cartoon and explain the point of view of the artist. Gather news stories about those issues and evaluate the cartoonists' opinions.