

Cartoons for the Classroom

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



Taking a stand

Persuasion requires that you have an opinion and want others to share it

The objective of a political cartoon is to influence someone's thoughts or actions. As persuasive art, political cartoons are really editorials -- propaganda meant to provoke a response. War is an issue that evokes strong opinions from both sides. You can't be wishy-washy in your stand if your goal is to sway public opinion about a topic you care about.



Cartoon courtesy Allen Forkum & John Cox / <http://www.coxandforkum.com/>

Talking points:

Write a short definition for each of the following.

Persuasion _____

Propaganda _____

Alan Forkum explains his cartoon (above): "Anti-war protesters often use the death of innocent victims in foreign countries to condemn American military intervention. Yet if the prevention of innocent deaths is one of the protesters' main concerns, why isn't any significance given to the deaths of innocent Americans?"

At right, James Casciari drives home a message about the cost of war in terms of lives lost.

Which cartoon do you feel is more successful at getting its message across? And which message is closer to the way you feel about the war? Does either cartoon cause you to consider a different perspective?

Additional resources

Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)

<http://politicalcartoonists.com>

More from Allen Forkum (writer) & John Cox (artist)

<http://www.coxandforkum.com/>

Get out your newspaper

Gather a couple week's worth of political cartoons from your newspaper, paying particular attention to cartoons that deal with the war. Using the Cartoon Evaluation Worksheet (available online at the NIE Website) analyze each cartoon and identify the symbols used and spell out the message. Define the cartoonist's stand on the war (supportive or critical). What makes the opinion clear to you?



Cartoon courtesy James Casciari / Scripps Howard News Service