

School Isn't Like the Cartoons

Grade Level: High School

Subject Area: US History

Duration: 20 minutes for prep + 4-6 (1) hour classes

Key Words: education, equal access, “separate, but (not) equal”, resources, political cartoon

SUMMARY: Teacher leads the students through a warm up review of the issues related to unequal, (de)segregated education and school settings from the 1950s/60s. This is followed by a class discussion of current examples of political cartoons to determine the necessary components of a political cartoon. Using this information, students create their own political cartoon that reveals the similarities between unequal school settings from the 1950s/60s to the current school settings. Students are pushed to consider what it means and looks like to receive an equal and equitable education, and will relate this segment of the civil rights movement to their perception of school in the 21st century.

Measurable Objective: Students accurately compare two examples of equal access to education, one representative of the 1950s and one representative of the last five years, by creating a comparative political cartoon and writing an accompanying paragraph that explicitly reveals the message of their political cartoon.

Facet: GAIN PERSPECTIVE and OVERCOMING THE NAÏVE VIEW

Materials list:

- Teacher Guide
- Student Worksheet
- Warm up guide
- Examples of Political Cartoons
- Rubric
- Dice
- markers, pens, pencils

Optional - if you want to have the students draw their cartoons elsewhere or digitally

- Poster paper (white blank and construction paper)
- chromebooks - access to google drawing

Making connections: This activity provides an overview of educational inequalities from the 1950s/60s and pushes students to reflect on and make comparison to the current issues in regards to education. Students have the opportunity to make connections between the past, as well as share their own values and concerns for current education. This activity also introduces students to the elements of political cartoons, and provides the creative opportunity to create their own political cartoon. Students are encouraged to choose an issues or issues they believe are greatly affecting students today in order to create this representative comparison.

Background information: The relevant information needed for this content is a review of unequal schooling conditions during the 1950s and 1960s, which is included in the “Roll your Chances” warm up for Steps 3 and 4 on the student worksheet. As a class, you will discuss the characteristics of a political cartoon, which is a cartoon that contains a message or commentary about a specific thought or opinion. Specific characteristics to be pointed out are the use of color, phrases, captions, imagery (the size of certain parts to highlight or mimic part of the message), included recognizable individuals (like leaders), etc. Brainstorm with the students potential current issues within k-12 education, which are similar to those in the past. Some current examples are: safety (specifically related to school shootings), lack of resources (see the examples of teacher strikes, who are posting photos of their classrooms), students of color are more frequently sent to the principal’s office in comparison to white students (for the same actions they are sanctioned different punishments), standardized testing, inconsistency with teachers, etc.

Procedure:

TEACHER: Print and pass out the warm up guide, dice, and Student worksheet. (PDF copies linked and embedded underneath the materials list on the “Module 2” webpage).

Student Worksheet - DIRECTIONS: For this activity, create a political cartoon about the educational inequalities within classrooms from the 1950s/60s and comparing them to today’s current classrooms. Think, what concerns or issues are currently affecting students? **Carefully read and complete each step below.**

Warm up: The following steps 1 - 4 are all included on the student worksheet.

Step 1 - As a class answer the following questions:

1. What is a political cartoon? What is the purpose of a political cartoon?
 - a. **TEACHER:** introduce the concept of a political cartoon. Tell the students to turn to a neighbor, discuss what they know about political cartoons, and then ask for share outs. Explain to the students that a political cartoon is a drawing that expresses an opinion, most commonly associated with the politics and leaders of our country. Next, display the examples of political cartoons. Ask the questions in step 2.
 - b. **Step 1 and Step 2 Examples of Political Cartoons:** Linked and embedded within “Examples of Political Cartoons” under Materials on the Module 2 webpage.

Step 2 - Take a couple of minutes looking at the political cartoon examples, and then answer the following questions:

1. What characteristics of the political cartoons stand out to you? Which characteristics and techniques help share the message of the political cartoon?
 - a. **TEACHER:** Guide the students through this discussion. Utilize the examples provided in the background information. Then, direct the students to take out the warm up guide and dice.

The following is the warm up guide and Review activity sheet- Each pair of students receives a dice and guide to complete Step 3.

- **Warm Up Guide Sheet: Step 3** - Roll your chances! See what type of school experience you could have had in the 1950s/60s. Use the warm up sheet, and record your results below:

Warm Up Sheet:

Category -	If you roll a...		
Type of School:	odd # = segregated		even # = desegregated
How many students:	#1 or 2 = less than full	#3 or 4 = full	#5 or 6 = overcrowded
Types of resources:	#1 or 2 = old, outdated, not enough	#3 or 4 = have enough	#5 or 6 = new, updated, have more than enough
Teacher training:	#1 or 2 = Teachers overqualified	#3 or 4 = Teachers were not qualified	#5 or 6 = Teachers qualified
Likelihood of going to college:	#1 or 2 = 0%	#3 or 4 = 25%	#1 or 2 = 50%

Back to the Student Worksheet: Step 3 - Roll your chances! See what type of school experience you could have had in the 1950s/60s. Use the warm up sheet, and record your results below:

Type of School:	
How many students:	
Types of resources:	
Teacher Training:	
Likelihood of going to college:	

Step 4 - Make two lists about the issues affecting students and the classroom. One list includes issues during the 1950s/60s, and the other list will includes current issues.

Educational Inequalities of the 1950s/60s	Educational Inequalities of today/current society
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

***Misconception Alert*:** *At this point in the activity, students might be need additional support and prompting in order to respond to and come up with example of educational inequalities in current society. A key component of this lesson is for students to overcome the naive view that individuals in the US are treated equally or experience the same degree of equality. Although individuals do have a right to a free, public education, an individual's educational experience is greatly impacted by a wide range of circumstances, such as the school's access to resources or funds, which are affected by local property taxes, training provided to and the expected qualifications of staff/teachers, class size (teacher to student ratio), support staff, English language development, available extracurriculars, honors and advanced courses that are offered, and community development and engagement. This reveals that individuals experience different degrees of equality and equity in regards to their education. Consider asking the students the following questions:*

- *How do schools differ from each other?*
- *What do all students need in order to be successful, and how well are schools across the country doing to meet those needs?*
- *How would you describe a fair education?*
- *As a student, what concerns do you have about your school and/or district?*

Activity:

1. *After the warm up activity (Steps 1-4 of the student worksheet), the students will move into creating their own political cartoon.*
 - a. **(included on the student worksheet) Step 5** - Create your own cartoon! Draw, outline, and color a political cartoon of your own design to create a comparison between the issues within education inequalities of the 1950s/60s and current society. You will be graded on the accuracy of your representation of school issues from the 1950s/60s and current society, the comparison made between the two time periods, and your use of at least three of the following design elements: captions, phrases, past or current leaders, irony, exaggeration, and/or symbols relevant to educational inequalities.
2. *After the cartoon is complete*

- a. **(included on the student worksheet) Step 6** - Write a paragraph response explicitly sharing the message your political cartoon works to convey.

Wrap up - Sharing and Sorting the Art

1. All students join as a group with their finished products. Together, they must group themselves based on the similarities of the current educational issue they focused on. After grouping themselves based on similarity, as a class they must determine and line up based on the importance of their selected issue. This pushes the students to further compare their selections, as well as work together to come to a consensus on the ranking of their educational concerns. Again, it should be reinforced that there are issues within education across the United States that affect students' opportunities to receive an equal and equitable education.

Formative Assessment: Linked and embedded within "Rubric" under Materials list on the Module 2 webpage.

Some opportunities for extensions/Differentiation:

- allow the students to create this digitally
- Modify or provide choice for the size of their political cartoon
- offer more time as needed
- encourage the students create an artistic signature
- challenge students to include an issue currently affecting their specific school/district

Resources: For a digital approach to the political cartoon

- google drawing
- canva

STUDENT WORKSHEET: *this is a copy of the worksheet provided to students*

Name:

Date:

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DIRECTIONS: For this activity, you will be creating a political cartoon about the educational inequalities within classrooms from the 1950s/60s and comparing them to today's current classrooms. Think, what concerns or issues are currently affecting students? **Carefully read and complete each step below.**

Step 1 - As a class answer the following questions:

2. What is a political cartoon? What is the purpose of a political cartoon?

Step 2 - Take a couple of minutes looking at the political cartoon examples, and then answer the following questions:

2. What characteristics of the political cartoons stand out to you? Which characteristics and techniques help share the message of the political cartoon?

Step 3 - Roll your chances! See what type of school experience you could have had in the 1950s/60s. Use the warm up sheet, and record your results below:

Type of School:	
How many students:	
Types of resources:	
Teacher Training:	
Likelihood of going to college:	

Step 4 - Make two lists about the issues affecting students and the classroom. One list will include issues during the 1950s/60s, and the other list will be about current issues.

Educational Inequalities of the 1950s/60s	Educational Inequalities of today/current society
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Step 5 - Create your own cartoon! Draw, outline, and color a political cartoon of your own design to create a comparison between the issues within education inequalities of the 1950s/60s and current society. You will be graded on the accuracy of your representation of school issues from the 1950s/60s and current society, the comparison made between the two time periods, and your use of at least three of the following design elements: captions, phrases, past or current leaders, irony, exaggeration, and/or symbols relevant to educational inequalities.

Step 6 - Write a paragraph response explicitly sharing the message your political cartoon works to convey.

References

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