



# Teacher Activity Guide

Activities are based on the 2020 Newspaper in Education publication *Democracy Reignited* created by the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program in partnership with Florida Humanities and Florida Press Educational Services.

### **Going beyond the text: Successful democracy**

Democracy succeeds when “informed, active and humane citizens coexist with institutions that uphold the rule of law and shared values,” according to Facing History and Ourselves. Democracy can be fragile, especially when we the people do not actively participate. Democracy can be fragile, especially when we the people do not actively participate. A democratic society represents more than just voting in elections.

Self government requires citizens who are “informed and thoughtful, participate in their communities, are involved in the political process, and possess moral and civic virtues,” defines 4-H. These are intense but necessary points. In your own words, in the form of a journal entry, write down what these ideas mean to you. Then discuss these ideas with your class. Next, look in your newspaper for examples of citizens who fit or practice these ideals. Write down the main point of the article, and why you have chosen this citizen, or group of citizens, as an example of someone working towards democracy.

Share what you have learned with your class.

**Benchmark:** SS.711.C.2.4

### **Going beyond the text: Obligations, duties and responsibilities**

What is an obligation, duty and responsibility when it relates to citizenship? Using an online dictionary or encyclopedia, define each of these three words. After you define the words, list an example for each term in relationship to the topic of citizenship. Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, voting, attending civic meetings, petitioning government, and running for office. A task that is for the common good can be applied to fulfilling the obligations and/or responsibilities of citizenship. Activities that relate to active participation in society and government may include specific obligations or responsibilities.

Once you have defined these ideas and come up with examples, look through the newspaper for examples of significant contributions of citizens to a democratic society. Create a chart or infographic showing who these citizens are and what significant contributions they have made to a democratic society.

Share what you have learned with your class.

**Benchmark:** SS.711.C.2.4

### **Going beyond the text: Bill of rights**

The Bill of Rights comprises the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution. Research these 10 amendments and define the five freedoms protected by the First Amendment. Provide an example of each of the five freedoms. In the form of a blog post, evaluate how the Bill of Rights influences individual actions and social interactions. Using your newspaper, find scenarios to identify rights protected by the Bill of Rights. Also, using your newspaper, find scenarios to recognize violations of the Bill of Rights or other constitutional amendments. Be sure to explain what the rights are that are being protected and violated.

**Benchmarks:** SS.711.C.2.5; SS.711.C.2.8

## Going beyond the text: Voting

**Part I:** One of the most important roles and responsibilities of U.S. citizens is to vote. Voting is how citizens can actively participate in society, government and the political system. Over a two-week period, read the comics in the newspaper. At the end of the two weeks, choose a cartoon character to nominate for class president. Have your teacher split your class into three groups. Each group will represent a political party and will nominate one character to be class president.

Analyze the character's actions to determine who the best candidate will be. As a group, create a campaign poster and speech for the candidate. The information about the character should be determined from the character's actions and words in the comic strip. Present your campaign to the class.

**Part II:** In your groups, analyze one of the other group's candidates. Address the following questions:

- Who is the candidate?
- Does this character fit the constitutional requirements to run for federal, state or county office? Why or why not?
- What are the character's qualifications for public office based on their experience, platforms and political advertisements created by the group?

Using the news articles in the newspaper as a model, write a newspaper article about this candidate. Using the editorials in the newspaper as a model, write a newspaper editorial about this candidate. Share your articles with your class.

**Benchmarks:** SS.711.C.2.7; SS.711.C.2.8; SS.711.C.2.9

## Going beyond the text: Special interest groups

Special interest groups play a large role in the American political system. Look for special interest groups that influence politics. Do some research on these groups on the Internet. You can find some of these groups in reference to proposed Florida Amendments or amendment revisions. Some helpful sites may be Ballotpedia.org and the Florida Division of Elections. In addition, you can search the archives of the newspaper for special interest groups.

Based on your research, write a fully developed paragraph about the information you find. Next learn how the media monitors special interest groups and their influence on the government. You can search the archives and current editions of your local newspaper as well as other newspapers around the state. Also, watch the local and regional news to see if there are stories about special interest groups.

Write down the information you have learned and create a chart of infographic to share with your class.

**Benchmarks:** SS.711.C.2.10; SS.711.C.2.11

### **Going beyond the text: Citizens versus government**

Look through the newspaper to identify groups that influence public perspectives, locally, regionally and nationally. Look for scenarios that exemplify the reaction or perspective of different groups. Through these articles, examine how multiple perspectives shape participation in the political process. Find several articles to represent these public perspectives. Write down the main idea of these articles. Compost a tweet for each of the perspectives. Share what you have discovered with your class.

**Benchmark** SS.711.C.2.13

### **Going beyond the text: Citizenship in the 22nd century**

At various times throughout history, citizenship has been granted or denied based on criteria such as age, class, property ownership, gender, ethnicity, religion and place of birth.

In Robert A. Heinlein’s Hugo Award-winning novel *Starship Troopers*, set on a post-World War III Earth, citizens do not automatically have the right to vote. Instead, they must earn the right to vote by serving in the military. In *Starship Troopers*, only veterans may vote or hold public office, and much of the population cannot participate in government. Although they enjoy all the rights and protections of citizenship, they are barred from arguably its most important responsibility.

Is military service the only way to serve your country? Look through your newspaper for other examples of ways to serve your country. Do veterans deserve to receive benefits not enjoyed by all citizens? What about other groups of professionals in service to their country? Is participation in government an “unalienable right?” Is non-service a good justification for denying some people participation in the government under which they live? What other reasons might justify denying people the right to vote? Write a paper reflecting on your thoughts about these issues.

**Source:** The Heinlein Prize Trust

**Benchmark:** SS.711.C.2.4

### **Going beyond the text: Preserving liberties**

Many veterans and public servants, such as law enforcement officers, firefighters and teachers, have made sacrifices to preserve the liberties American citizens hold dear. With your class, discuss First Amendment rights and other liberties that Americans enjoy daily. Look for articles in the newspaper about other countries where the rights are withheld or are being violated. Write your thoughts in your journal about what you have read. Then, write an editorial about what you think should be done to help the people whose rights have been violated. Use the editorials in the newspaper as models.

**Benchmark:** SS.711.C.2.4; SS.711.C.2.5; SS.711.C.2.13

## **Going beyond the text: Democracy and freedom**

When Hitler seized power in Germany in 1933, Jewish intellectuals who had held prestigious positions in Germany's renowned universities were targeted for expulsion. Intellectuals, such as professors, scientists, musicians and philosophers, were forced to leave the country or succumb to the wrath of the government.

Being forced to leave their homes with little more than the clothes on their backs, many of these scholars sought refuge in America, hoping to continue their academic careers. When they arrived in America, they found themselves in a strange and mysterious country, a nation clawing its way out of the Great Depression and teeming with anti-Semitic and anti-German sentiment.

While the most famous refugees, such as Albert Einstein, were welcomed into prestigious universities, most of these refugee scholars faced an uphill battle trying to reclaim their place in a hostile academic world. Surprisingly, many of these scholars were welcomed into historically all black colleges in the South. For many of these black colleges, including Howard University, Hampton Institute and Tougaloo and Talladega Colleges, these refugee professors were seen as a talented addition to the faculty.

Tallegada College teacher Lore Rasmussen recounted, "When they found out that I had escaped the Nazis and I was a refugee, they said, 'Well, you should be glad to be in a place where there is democracy and freedom.'"

Read the Lore Rasmussen quote and think about the irony of the statement. What is irony? What do the terms "freedom" and "democracy" mean to you? Free write about these ideas on a piece of paper. Then discuss your thoughts with your class. Next, research these ideas in your school media center or local library. Write a report detailing what you have learned. Be sure to use examples from your research to support your ideas. Be sure to document your information. Share your information with your class.

**Source:** Public Broadcasting System (PBS): "From Swastika to Jim Crow"

**Benchmarks:** SS.711.C.2.1; SS.711.C.2.2; SS.711.C.2.3

## **Going beyond the text: Serving your community**

What does it mean to be charitable? Do charity and charitable mean the same thing? Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."

Most cultures encourage some form of charity or service; it is one of the things they have in common. Look through the newspaper for examples of ways to serve your community. Write a blog post encouraging others to participate in service or charity projects in the community.

**Benchmark:** SS.711.C.2.4

## **Going beyond the text: Hidden bias**

Not knowing correct information can lead to hidden bias. Psychologists at Harvard University, the University of Virginia and the University of Washington created “Project Implicit” to develop hidden bias tests (called implicit association tests, or IATs, in the academic world) to measure unconscious bias.

Hidden bias tests measure unconscious, or automatic, biases. Your willingness to examine your own possible biases is an important step in understanding the roots of stereotypes and prejudice in our society. Test yourself at [implicit.harvard.edu/implicit](http://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit). Tests can be taken anonymously and take about 10 minutes.

Look through the comics in the newspaper. What types of stereotypes can you find in the comic strips? Write down what the stereotypes are. Are these stereotypes based on myths or exaggerations? Are these stereotypes dangerous assumptions? Share your thoughts with your classmates.

Sources: Project Implicit; Teaching Tolerance

**Benchmarks:** SS.711.C.2.11; SS.711.C.2.12; SS.711.C.2.13

The following chart and questions are from the Library of Congress Cartoon Analysis Guide. Have your students use this chart and the questions to interpret the cartoons.

## Cartoon Analysis Guide

Use this guide to identify the persuasive techniques used in political cartoons.

### Cartoonists' Persuasive Techniques

<b>Symbolism</b>	<p>Cartoonists use simple objects, or <b>symbols</b>, to stand for larger concepts or ideas.</p> <p>After you identify the symbols in a cartoon, think about what the cartoonist means each symbol to stand for.</p>
<b>Exaggeration</b>	<p>Sometimes cartoonists overdo, or <b>exaggerate</b>, the physical characteristics of people or things in order to make a point.</p> <p>When you study a cartoon, look for any characteristics that seem overdone or overblown. (Facial characteristics and clothing are some of the most commonly exaggerated characteristics.) Then, try to decide what point the cartoonist was trying to make by exaggerating them.</p>
<b>Labeling</b>	<p>Cartoonists often <b>label</b> objects or people to make it clear exactly what they stand for.</p> <p>Watch out for the different labels that appear in a cartoon, and ask yourself why the cartoonist chose to label that particular person or object. Does the label make the meaning of the object more clear?</p>
<b>Analogy</b>	<p>An <b>analogy</b> is a comparison between two unlike things. By comparing a complex issue or situation with a more familiar one, cartoonists can help their readers see it in a different light.</p> <p>After you've studied a cartoon for a while, try to decide what the cartoon's main analogy is. What two situations does the cartoon compare? Once you understand the main analogy, decide if this comparison makes the cartoonist's point more clear to you.</p>
<b>Irony</b>	<p><b>Irony</b> is the difference between the ways things are and the way things should be, or the way things are expected to be. Cartoonists often use <b>irony</b> to express their opinion on an issue.</p> <p>When you look at a cartoon, see if you can find any irony in the situation the cartoon depicts. If you can, think about what point the irony might be intended to emphasize. Does the irony help the cartoonist express his or her opinion more effectively?</p>

Once you've identified the **persuasive techniques** that the cartoonist used, ask yourself these questions:

What issue is this political cartoon about?

What do you think is the cartoonist's opinion on this issue?

What other opinion can you imagine another person having on this issue?

Did you find this cartoon persuasive? Why or why not?

What other techniques could the cartoonist have used to make this cartoon more persuasive?

**Benchmarks:** SS.711.C.2.11; SS.711.C.2.12



# Cartoons for the Classroom

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



## King's dream and voting rights



By Dennis Draughon / Courtesy of AAEC

### Talking points

1. What are these cartoonists saying about the state of Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream 50 years after his historic speech?
2. King's 1963 March on Washington helped pass the Voting Rights Act. What recently happened to the act?
3. Why were certain states singled out by the act?
4. What has recently occurred in some of those states?
5. Do voter identification laws hinder voting rights?
6. What are the pro and con arguments about those laws?

### Between the lines

"I gave a little blood on that bridge in Selma, Ala., for the right to vote. I am not going to stand by and let . . . take the right to vote away from us." - Rep. John Lewis.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/voting-rights-economic-fairness-among-marchers-aims-as-they-mark-1963-march-on-washington/2013/08/24/215c1ba8-0c91-11e3-89fe-abb4a5067014\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/voting-rights-economic-fairness-among-marchers-aims-as-they-mark-1963-march-on-washington/2013/08/24/215c1ba8-0c91-11e3-89fe-abb4a5067014_story.html)

### Additional resources

More by Dennis Draughon

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/cartoon/browse.cfm/DraugD>

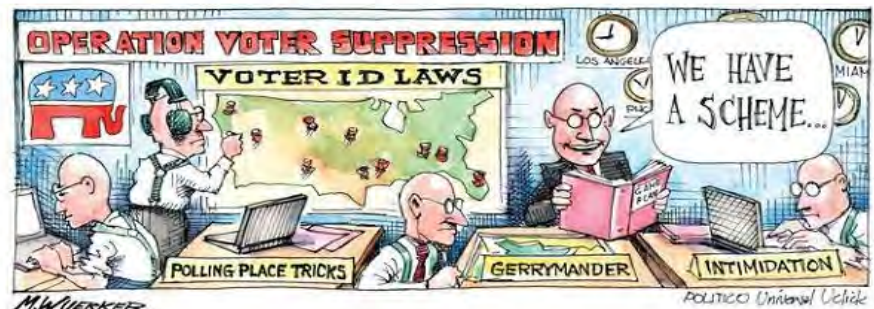
More by Matt Wuerker

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/cartoon/browse.cfm/WuerKM>

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<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>



Copyright by Matt Wuerker.

By Matt Wuerker, Politico.com / Courtesy of AAEC

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## Face masks about health or politics?



Elena Steier / Courtesy of AAEC

### Talking Points

1. What are these cartoons saying about wearing face masks during the deadly COVID-19 pandemic?
2. Are state rules requiring the use of face masks unfair or unlawful? Why or why not?
3. Do “free rights” include actions that endanger others?
4. Was President Donald Trump wrong to ignore face mask rules and requests during a visit to a Ford plant last week?
5. How has wearing or not wearing a mask become a political statement?
6. Do you ever wear a mask?

### Between the lines

“I don’t give a damn about your health.” - Kroger customer reply to a worker’s request that he wear a face mask. At least 100 U.S. grocery store workers have died from the virus since late March.

<https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2020/05/21/kroger-grocery-store-essential-workers-hazard-pay/5227345002/>

### Additional resources

#### ■ [More by Elena Steier](#)

<https://www.editorialcartoonists.com/cartoonists/steiee/cartoons/cartoons-2020/>

#### ■ [More by Bruce Plante](#)

<https://www.cagle.com/author/bruce-plant/>

#### ■ [Editorial Cartoonists](#)

#### [Association of American](#)

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>



Bruce Plante / Courtesy of Cagle.com

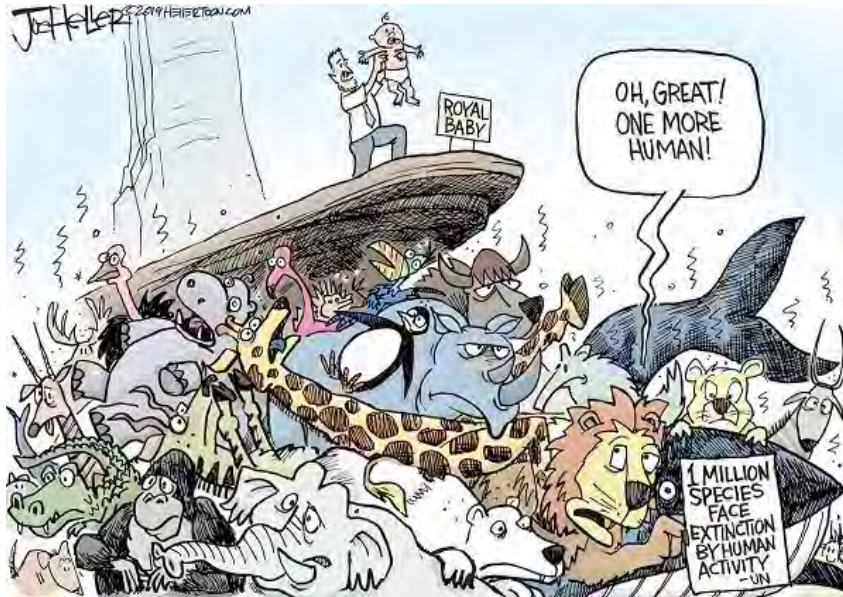


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## Are we fueling a great extinction?



Joe Heller, Green Bay Press-Gazette / Courtesy AAEC

### Talking Points

1. One million plant and animal species face extinction, many within decades, because of human activities, scientists say. What do these cartoons say?
2. A growing human population is squeezing out other species. How rapidly have humanity's numbers expanded?
3. The UN report says mass extinction also threatens human beings. How?
4. Is climate change also killing off species?
5. How does farming threaten other species and our climate?
6. Could we become extinct?

### Between the lines

"Humanity unwittingly is attempting to throttle the living planet and humanity's own future." - Biologist Thomas Lovejoy.

<https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2019/05/06/science/ap-sci-un-extinction-report.html?>

### Additional resources

#### ■ More by Joe Heller

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/cartoon/browse.cfm/HelleJ>

#### ■ More by Steve Sack

<https://www.cagle.com/author/steve-sack/>

#### ■ Association of American Editorial Cartoonists

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>

### GLOBAL WARMING ACCELERATING ANIMAL EXTINCTIONS



Steve Sack, Minneapolis Star Tribune / Courtesy of Cagle.com



# Cartoons for the Classroom

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



## Is fear the worst viral epidemic?



Dave Whamond / Courtesy of Cagle.com

### Talking Points

1. What do these cartoons say about the world's stock and bond markets reacting to the spread of the new coronavirus?
2. Do investors make rational decisions or are they driven by the fear of losing money and the fear of missing out on an opportunity to make money?
3. What is a market panic?
4. Do you make rational decisions based on facts or do you react to emotions? Both?
5. What is the danger of relying only on your "gut feelings"?
6. Can human beings ever be completely rational?

### Between the lines

"The world in our heads is not a precise replica of reality. Our expectations ... are distorted by the prevalence and emotional intensity of the messages to which we are exposed." - Economist Daniel Kahneman.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/13/world/asia/coronavirus-risk-interpret.html>

### Additional resources

■ [More by Dave Whamond](#)

<https://www.cagle.com/author/dave-whamond/>

■ [More by John Darkow](#)

<https://www.cagle.com/author/john-darkow/>

■ [Association of American](#)

[Editorial Cartoonists](#)

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>



John Darkow / Courtesy of Cagle.com





## How safe is it to go back to school?



Adam Zyglis, The Buffalo News / Courtesy of Cagle.com

### Talking Points

1. What are these cartoonists saying about calls to send students back into classrooms amid the COVID-19 surge?
2. The coronavirus is dangerous to older people. How does it affect most kids and teens? Has the virus hurt any of them?
3. Are you eager to get out of the house and go back to class?
4. Do you worry about getting the virus and infecting your parents or others who may be vulnerable to COVID-19?
5. Adam Zyglis uses the "Grim Reaper" in his cartoon. Can you find the image in other cartoons?

### Between the lines

"Just the flippancy of talking about 'well, if we reopen schools only this percentage of teachers and students will have problems or health issues,' but when you do that math, even that small percentage is still thousands." - Teacher Brian Johnson

<https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/education/2020/07/16/tennessee-doctors-teachers-call-reopening-schools-insane-and-irresponsible-coronavirus/5451460002/>

### Additional resources

#### ■ More by Adam Zyglis

<https://www.cagle.com/author/adam-zyglis/>

#### ■ More by Ed Wexler

<https://www.cagle.com/author/ed-wexler/>

#### ■ Association of American Editorial Cartoonists

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>



Ed Wexler / Courtesy of Cagle.com