



Learning with Lincoln Institute

Sponsored by Teaching with Primary Sources at Eastern Illinois University and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
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Go Figure with Idioms

By Sharon Allen

Students will analyze a primary source political cartoon that will help them gain an understanding of and the ability to identify idioms.



Overview

Objectives:

After completing the activity, students will be able to:

- become familiar with primary sources
- understand meaning of idioms
- analyze a cartoon for meaning
- identify idioms in various works

Understanding Goal:

Student will use the primary source to be able to understand an idiom and locate them in future reading.

Investigative Question:

When you look at this cartoon, what figurative language do you see and what does it mean?

Time Required:

One class period (47 minutes)

Grade Level:

5 - 6

Topic:

Literature, Presidents, Government

Era:

National Expansion and Reform, 1815-1860

Illinois Learning Standards:

Language Arts: 2A

For information on specific Illinois Learning Standards go to www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/



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Preparation

Background for Lesson:

This cartoon is a figurative portrayal of the conflict within the Republican Party resulting from Abraham Lincoln's nomination for president in 1860. The cat in the bag represents "Spirit of Discord". To see the complete summary go to Library of Congress call number PGA-Currier & Ives-Letting the Cat Out of the Bag. The background summary was taken from the same article as listed.

Library of Congress Items:

Title: "Letting the Cat Out of the Bag"



Collection or Exhibit: Prints and Photographs
Media Type: Cartoon
URL: [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?pp/ils:@filreq\(@field\(NUMBER+@band\(cph+3a15262\)\)+@field\(COLLID+pga\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?pp/ils:@filreq(@field(NUMBER+@band(cph+3a15262))+@field(COLLID+pga)))

Additional Materials:

Cartoon Analysis Sheet

Procedure

Description of Teacher Actions:

1. This is a second lesson on figurative language. The first lesson was an overview of the different types of figurative language. (simile, metaphor, alliteration, personification, onomatopoeia, idioms and hyperbole)
2. Discuss briefly with students what is happening during this time period.
3. Discuss the meaning of the word idiom. (the words in the phrase don't mean what they actually saw)
4. Show student the cartoon listed above.
5. Prompt students to answer the question listed in the investigative questions section as they are viewing the cartoon. (When you look at this cartoon, what figurative language do you see and what does it mean?)
6. Discuss other idioms they may be familiar with.



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Extension

Ideas:

1. Give students a list of idioms. Have them try to give the meaning.
2. Give students an idiom and have them draw the meaning.
3. Make a card match game. Have idioms on one set of cards and their meanings on another set. Students must match idiom to meaning.

Evaluation

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1. Teacher monitors student response
2. Students participate in class discussion students complete cartoon analysis sheet after class
3. Students complete cartoon analysis sheet after class discussion



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Attachments

CARTOON ANALYSIS	First glance...	
	Look at the cartoon you were given or selected and list any of the following you see:	
	Title	
	Objects/People	
	Words/Phrases	
	Dates/Numbers	
	Sensory Qualities	
	Are lines bold, fussy, light, hard or soft?	
	Taking a closer look...	
	Images	
	Which objects are used as symbols?	
	Why were the symbols used?	
	Is anything exaggerated? How?	
	Is the cartoon realistic or abstract?	
	List adjectives that describe emotions visible in the cartoon.	
Words		
Which words or phrases appear to be important? Why?		
Cartoon Purpose		
Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.		
Explain how the words in the cartoon explain the symbols.		
What is the message of the cartoon?		
Who are the types of people who might agree with the cartoon? What might be the public's reaction to this song?		