

Assignment Instructions: Comic Strip or Political Cartoon Analysis

Writing Assignment: Comic Strip or Political Cartoon Analysis

You are required to submit the FINAL copy of this assignment, but you may first submit an optional DRAFT. This will allow you to receive qualitative feedback that can inform your revision. You should always avoid focusing solely on the grader's DRAFT feedback; use the feedback as a supplement to the course lessons and your own revision ideas. Always expect the revise beyond what the DRAFT grader specifically notes.

You have two options for this assignment:

Option #1: Analysis of an Individual Comic Strip or Political Cartoon

Choose **one comic strip or political cartoon**. If you visit the website of a newspaper such as *The Baltimore Sun*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, etc., you should be able to search for comic strips or political cartoons easily.

Which techniques does the creator of the comic strip use? How does the creator make his/her point in the comic strip? What do we learn about the characters and/or ourselves from this comic strip or political cartoon? If colors are available, what do they tell us about this comic or cartoon? What language is used and how can that be interpreted?

And importantly, which of the *key terms from the topic lesson* can you discuss in your analysis? For example, how of elements of *imagery, symbolism, metaphor, and/or irony* help reveal the cartoon's message?

As with all academic essays you write in this course, this essay should have a well-defined **introduction with a thesis statement, body, and conclusion**.

In essence, what are some of the **physical elements present in the cartoon**¹ - characters, text, colors, etc., along with **figurative elements such as metaphor and symbolism**, that help **to explain the cartoon's message**? It can be helpful to focus on a single element in the cartoon in its own body paragraph (including the element in the topic sentence and in the thesis) and describe how it portrays the cartoon's message before moving to the next cartoon feature in a new paragraph.

Sample Thesis Statement: "John Smith uses (add one element from the cartoon), (add a second element from the cartoon), and (add a third element from the cartoon) to show (add the cartoon's message)."

¹A successful analysis will go beyond the obvious, literal elements of the cartoon and will analyze figurative elements, too. use the course topic lessons to inform your analysis.

Option #2: Analysis of Multiple Comic Strips or Political Cartoons

Choose **two political cartoons or comic strips** created by the same person. Which techniques does the creator of the political cartoons use? How does the author make his/her point in the political cartoons? What do we learn about the characters and/or ourselves from these political cartoons? How does the language transmit the creator's message? Using a **comparison or contrast mode of development**, draw conclusions about the techniques the author uses in the political cartoons and how they apply to our lives. As with all academic essays you write in this course, this essay should have a well-defined **introduction with a thesis statement, body, and conclusion**.

Use the **point-by-point or subject-by-subject structure** to compare and contrast about three to five elements found in the cartoons that help to explain how they apply to our lives or to a message present in today's society. After you compare and contrast each paragraph, be sure to explain the message those elements and the cartoons help to depict.

Sample Thesis Statement: "John Smith's cartoon strips *Cartoon 1* and *Cartoon 2* use (add one element from the cartoon), (add a second element from the cartoon), and (add a third element from the cartoon) to explain (add the cartoon's message)."

Be sure to **document the cartoon or comic strip on a Works Cited page**. Please visit the following source for citing an electronic image: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/08/>

The guidelines for this assignment are as follows:

Length: The assignment should be at least 500 words.

Header: Include a header in the upper left-hand corner of your writing assignment with the following information:

- Your first and last name
- Course Title (Composition II)
- Assignment name (i.e., Cartoon Analysis)
- Current Date

Format:

- MLA-style source documentation and Works Cited²
- Your last name and page number in the upper-right corner of each page
- Double-spacing throughout
- Standard font (Times New Roman, Calibri)
- Title, centered after heading
- 1" margins on all sides
- Save the file using one of the following extensions: .docx, .doc, .rtf, or .txt

Underline your thesis statement in the introductory paragraph.

²This resource may be helpful as you are making MLA formatting decisions: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/08/>