

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Political Cartoons

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*Introduction:* The growing threat of ISIS has created a great deal of controversy about how the United States should respond. President Obama has decided to use air strikes to attack ISIS strongpoints, and the public has reacted with various degrees of criticism or concern. Some believe that the U.S. government should be acting more offensively and presenting a stronger front, while others are wary about the costs involved with more engagement in the Middle East.

The strong feelings raised by this issue are the fodder of political cartoonists in this country and around the world. The cartoons not only reflect the events of the times, but also offer an interpretation or express a strong opinion about these events.

Cartoonists use a variety of methods to convey their ideas. The techniques they use include:

**Labels:** Cartoonists often identify or name certain things in their cartoons so that it is apparent what the things represent.

**Symbolism:** Cartoonists may use simple objects to represent larger ideas or concepts.

**Analogy:** Cartoonists may compare a simple image or concept to a more complex situation, in order to help the viewer understand the situation in a different way.

**Irony:** A cartoonist may express an opinion on a topic by highlighting the difference between the way things are and the way things should be, or are expected to be.

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*Instructions:* Work with your group to analyze the two cartoons your teacher has assigned you. You will be asked to identify the techniques each cartoonist used. The following questions will help guide your thinking.

- If the cartoonist used **labels**, what things in the cartoon are labelled? Why do you think the cartoonist chose to label those things?
- If the cartoonist used **symbolism**, what things in the cartoon are symbols? What do they stand for?
- If the cartoonist used an **analogy**, what two ideas or situations are compared? How does this comparison help the viewer see the complex situation in a different way?
- If the cartoonist used **irony**, what does the cartoonist show about the way things are? How does the cartoonist think things should be?

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**1. Observation**

Describe the objects or people in the cartoon.

Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.

2. Identify at least two techniques that the cartoonist used and explain what ideas are conveyed through each technique.

a.

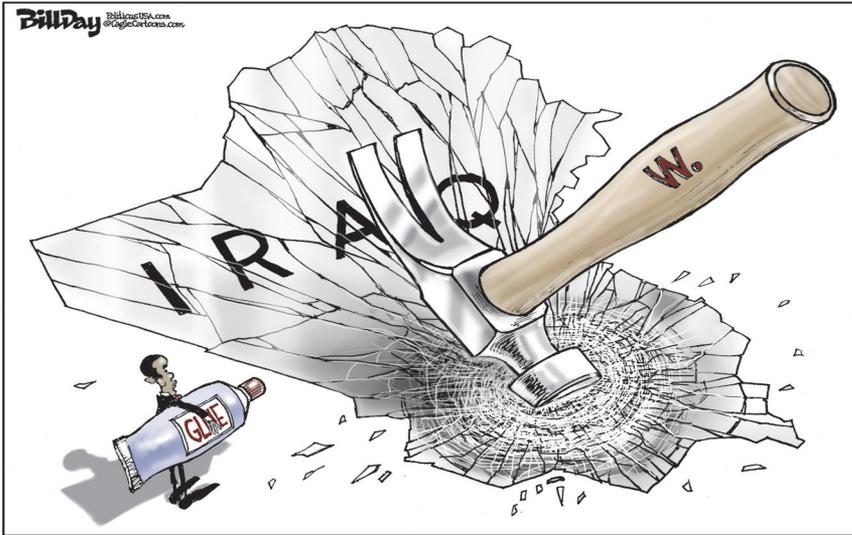
b.

c.

3. What is the message of the cartoon?

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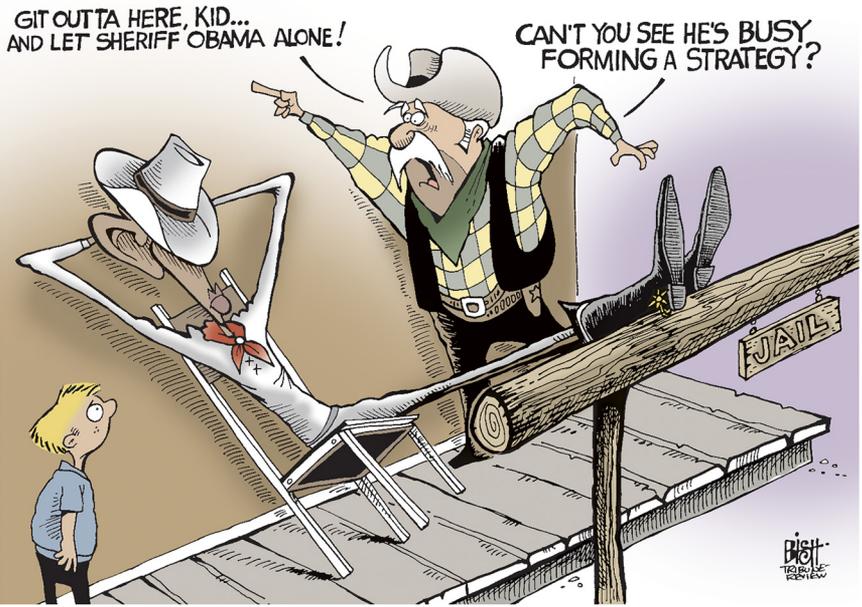
a.

b.

c.

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c.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Iraqi Rebels Capture US-Supplied Arms from Retreating Government Forces



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CartoonArts International / NYT Syndicate  
CartoonArts International: www.nytsyn.com/cartoons.

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