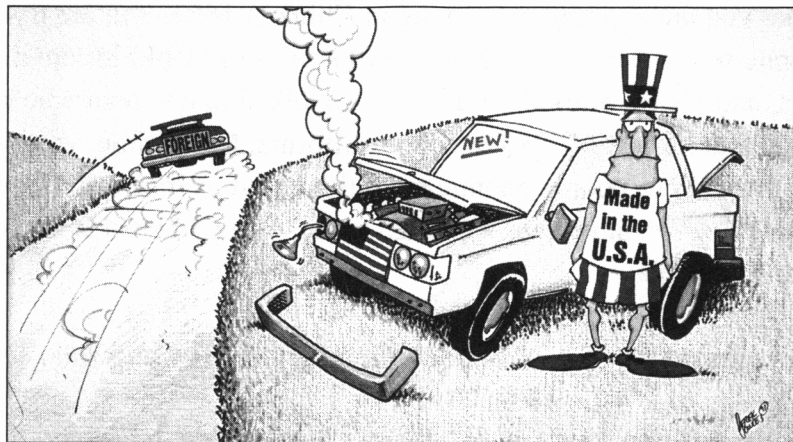


Interpreting Political Cartoons

What is it? Political cartoons appear on the editorial pages of newspapers. They may be funny, but their purpose is to carry a message or opinion. Cartoonists use characters and symbols—animals, people, or objects—to communicate their point. **Interpreting a political cartoon** means figuring out the cartoonist's message.

How to do it. Identify the symbols and characters in the cartoon. What does each one stand for? Are there labels or captions to give you clues? Are the characters and symbols simplified or exaggerated to make a point? What details are emphasized? What action is taking place in the cartoon? Fit these pieces of information together to determine the message of the cartoon.

Try it. Interpret this political cartoon by answering the questions below.



1. What are the characters and symbols in the cartoon, and what does each one represent?
2. How do the words help you identify the cartoonist's intention?
3. What action is taking place in the cartoon?
4. What opinion is the cartoonist expressing?