

... cartoons are meant to sway people's opinions ...

**This chapter teaches how:**

- to read and analyze both the print and visual text of a cartoon
- cartoonists express a point of view through graphics
- to use cartoon analysis strategies
- to create and draw your own political cartoon.

Political cartoons in newspapers are often humorous but have a different purpose than comic strips. While comics are created to entertain the reader, the political cartoon communicates a viewpoint about an issue. The newspaper's editorial page contains the political cartoon and articles expressing the opinions of the paper's owners.

**Step 1: Taking Aim At The Target**

The cartoonist often uses insult as a tool to express an idea. By insulting a person or organization the cartoonist tries to change the reader's opinion about an issue.

Cartoonists deliberately exaggerate the subject's distinctive features or peculiarities to produce a comic or grotesque effect.

The cartoon on the right features former Prime Minister Mulroney and former Defense Minister Joe Clark. Notice the exaggeration in Mulroney's chin, the full battle dress on Clark, the excessive number of weapons Clark carries, the child's mittens on a string through Clark's sleeves, and Clark's name on his helmet "RAMJO" – a reference to the "RAMBO" films. The cartoonist is using exaggeration and humour as a tool to communicate his point of view about the government's handling of the crisis.

**Step 2: Learning Cartoon Analysis: Getting the Point**

In order to understand the viewpoint of a cartoonist, study the drawing carefully. Both print (words) and visual (pictures) texts are in the drawing for a purpose. A cartoon serves the same purpose as an editorial. It communicates a personal point of view.



Andy Donato's "RAMJO" cartoon above is a good example. Notice that there is no background setting in the drawing. Donato decided he did not need a background because the two caricatures are the focus and convey the meaning that he wants. Mulroney's pin stripe suit communicates power and authority. Clark's clothing conveys his eagerness to go to war.