The President has many important roles to fulfill. The President is held responsible for the health of the economy in both good times and bad. Voters expect the President to propose legislation that will make the economy grow and provide more jobs. Shortly after George W. Bush, commonly known as “W”, took office in 2001, the economy stopped growing and unemployment rose. Study the cartoon below and answer the questions that follow.

Interpreting Political Cartoons

1. What animal is the President riding? Why is this animal an appropriate choice?
2. What is President Bush’s proposed solution for the economy? How do we know this?
3. What common stereotype associated with President Bush is the basis for this cartoon?
4. Identifying Assumptions What assumptions did the cartoonist make about the possibility that Bush’s solution would help the economy?
Andrew Jackson, President of the United States from 1829 to 1837, inspired both admiration and scorn. By some, he was loved and considered the common people's friend. By others, he was hated for wielding immense political power. Many cartoonists of his era portrayed President Jackson as "King Andrew I." Study the cartoon and answer the questions that follow.

Interpreting Political Cartoons

1. What is pictured under Jackson's right foot?

2. Jackson's critics often said Jackson "ruled with the power of the veto." Give two examples of how the cartoonist illustrates this criticism.

3. What do you think the cartoonist is trying to say about Jackson by portraying him as a king? Is this a positive or negative portrayal?

4. Identifying Alternatives How else might a cartoonist portray President Jackson as an overly strong leader? How might a cartoonist who supports Jackson portray the President as a leader of the common people?
Section 2
Presidential Succession and the Vice Presidency

While the position of President of the United States is a powerful one, the position of Vice President remains mostly ceremonial. Still, choosing a vice presidential candidate has become a challenge because the choice can impact the campaign of the presidential candidate. Study the cartoon below and answer the questions that follow.

Interpreting Political Cartoons

1. Who do the characters making the announcement represent?
2. What is the reaction of the public to that announcement?
3. What is the reason for that reaction?
4. What is the significance of the fact that the announcements of the two characters are made at the same time and are received in the same way?
5. Demonstrating Reasoned Judgment Explain the advantages and disadvantages of giving the Vice President more than just ceremonial responsibilities.