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Political Cartoons

During the Civil War, the art of political cartoons in newspapers grew in frequency and significance. Political cartoonists throughout the country used cartoons to convey their thoughts and feelings concerning the war and its leaders. In chapter five of *Across Five Aprils*, the author describes a cartoon that Jethro sees in Ross Milton's office. It shows Abraham Lincoln demoting an incompetent General McClellan. The cartoon would look something like this:



Take a look in your local newspaper. You are sure to find one or more political cartoons done in a similar manner. Generally there are few words in such cartoons; the picture tells most of the story.

What are some things happening in the world of politics today? Choose a topic, and on a separate sheet of paper, draw a political cartoon of your own. Be sure the message is clear, and be prepared to share your cartoon with the class.

Teacher Note: Discuss the meaning of the cartoon Jethro sees.

Barn Raising

Neighbors come from miles around to help the Creightons construct a new barn. Working together, the group is able to replace the old barn in just one day's time.

Gatherings such as this to build a barn for a neighbor are called barn raisings. Nobody charges a fee for the work. Everyone just pitches in willingly, with the expectation that if he or she is ever in need, the neighbors will be there to help him or her as well.

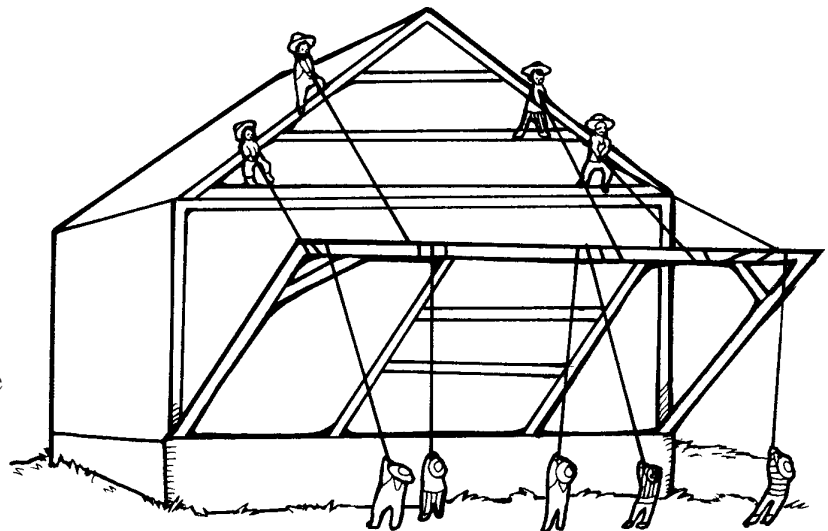
Now it is your turn to have a “barn” raising of your own. Gather into small groups and work together to construct a small-scale model of a barn.

Materials:

- ruler
- building materials (such as craft sticks, cardboard, or clay)
- adhesive materials (such as craft glue or string)
- baseboard (such as sturdy cardboard or a thin sheet of wood)
- scissors, paint, and paintbrushes, as needed
- paper and pencil

Directions:

1. Work together to plan a design for your barn. Draw it on paper, figuring the dimensions (height, width, and length).
2. Make a list of the specific materials you will need.
3. Gather your materials.
4. Divide up the work plan so that each of you are responsible for a part of the finished barn.
5. Construct your individual pieces and attach them, completing your model barn on the baseboard.
6. If desired, decorate the baseboard with painted grass, trees, and other plants.
7. Present your finished barn to the class, telling them about your design and how you worked together to complete it. (For example, who did what, and how well did you work together?)



Class Discussion:

Imagine that you had done this project on your own. Discuss the differences in time and the finished product, comparing the group's work with what your own might have been.