

## Advanced-Level Activity

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to

- compare and contrast different perspectives of the **French Revolution** as depicted in two nineteenth-century works of art;
- conduct independent research on the French Revolution or **Industrial Revolution**, focusing on the effects of these events on daily life;
- discuss the use of **satire** and **caricature** to comment on historical and current events;
- create **cartoons** that utilize satire to comment on contemporary issues.

### Materials

- Reproduction of *Contemptuous of the Insults* by Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes
- Reproduction of *A Centennial of Independence* by Henri Rousseau
- Reproduction of *Christ's Entry into Brussels in 1889* by James Ensor
- Background Information and Questions for Teaching about the paintings
- 9 x 12 inch Bristol board
- Pencils
- India ink
- Small natural-hair brushes

### Lesson Steps

1. Display a reproduction of *Contemptuous of the Insults* and allow students time to look closely at the work. Ask students the following questions:
  - What do you see?
  - What do you notice about the characters?
  - What can you tell about them from their clothing and accessories?
  - What are the characters doing?
  - How do the characters feel about one another? How do you know?
  - Identify physical features that seem exaggerated. (*The size and facial expressions of the French military figures are exaggerated.*)
  - What was your initial reaction to this drawing? Did you find it funny? Why or why not? Why do you think the work would be humorous to some people but not others? (*Humor has varied over the centuries to fit the tastes of different people and time periods.*)
2. Provide students with the historical context surrounding the image. Inform students that **Napoleon Bonaparte** (the emperor of France) had set out to "liberate" Spain and make it part of his empire. In 1808 he designated his brother Joseph as the king of Spain and sent over a hundred thousand soldiers to ensure his rule. Napoleon, feeling that he embodied the French Revolution ideals of liberty and equality, expected his occupation to be welcomed. The Spanish, however, rebelled in a gruesome war that would last five years. By 1813, Spanish troops (as well as troops from Britain and Portugal) were able to drive out the French. Now that students have additional background information, ask them what they think Goya's perspective is on France's occupation of Spain. What do they see that makes them say that? How does the artist use satire to convey his perspective? Point

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out the text below the image, "Despreciar los ynsultos" (Contemptuous of the insults). Ask students what they think the title means.

3. Display a reproduction of *A Centennial of Independence*. Discuss the painting using grade-appropriate questions from steps 1–3 in the Beginning-Level Activity, then refer to information provided in steps 3–4 of the Intermediate-Level Activity.
4. Instruct students to conduct independent research on the history of France's First Republic, including its origins in the French Revolution. Instruct students to find five examples of how the ideals of the French Revolution affected the lives of people living in France and five examples of how revolutionary ideals affected the lives of people in other countries. The following resources may be helpful:
  - "America & France" on the PBS Web site *Marie Antoinette and the French Revolution* ([www.pbs.org/marieantoinette/revolution/america\\_france.html](http://www.pbs.org/marieantoinette/revolution/america_france.html))
  - *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution* on the Center for History and New Media Web site ([chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/](http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/))
  - *Napoleon* on the PBS Web site ([www.pbs.org/empires/napoleon/home.html](http://www.pbs.org/empires/napoleon/home.html))
5. Compare and contrast different perspectives of the French government as depicted in *Contemptuous of the Insults* and *A Centennial of Independence*. Pass out Background Information about both objects. Does one of the works of art communicate a clearer perspective than the other? Why or why not? Just as the painting and the drawing were created as political commentary on events of their time, what forms of political commentary are available today?
6. Display a reproduction of *Christ's Entry into Brussels in 1889*. Ask students relevant discussion questions listed in steps 6–9 in the Intermediate-Level Activity. Point out that the artist includes caricatures and satire in his painting. Tell students that they will create a cartoon inspired by Ensor or Goya that includes caricatures and/or utilizes satire to comment on current events. Direct students to review current print or online news sources and select a current event to be depicted in a cartoon.
7. Tell students that they are going to create a political cartoon that represents a current event. Direct students to include one to three figures and elements that poke fun at a subject. Ask students to try using an exaggerated gesture or facial expression. Distribute 9 x 12 inch Bristol board, pencils, india ink, and thin brushes. First, students will sketch their drawing in pencil. When they are finished lightly drawing in pencil, have students add india ink with a brush. For thinner areas of gray, instruct students to wet the brush first to allow the ink to appear more translucent.
8. After the drawings are complete, instruct students to write a caption for their cartoons.

### Assessment

Assess students based on their class participation, their thorough completion of the independent research, and their ability to draw and ink a cartoon of a current event using an exaggerated gesture or facial expression.

