

Historical Background

“The nullification crisis was the result of the different impact that protective tariffs had on the North and the South. A protective tariff is designed to raise import taxes on goods coming from foreign countries in order to make them more expensive than goods produced in the United States. This would benefit the emerging industries in the North. However, since South Carolina was largely agricultural, a protective tariff would raise the price of the manufactured goods that South Carolinians would buy from the industrial north or from Great Britain. Therefore southerners objected to raising the protective tariff. When the United States Congress passed a protective tax in 1828, then Vice President John C. Calhoun anonymously wrote *South Carolina Exposition and Protest*. Calhoun claimed that it was a states’ right to declare such a law unconstitutional and nullify it through a special state convention. This position threatened the unity of the United States and was widely debated in both Washington, D.C. and South Carolina. South Carolinians split into a States’ Rights Party (Nullifiers) and a Union party (Unionists). In 1832, the Nullifiers won control of the General Assembly. When the United States Congress passed another tariff in 1832, the South Carolina legislature called a meeting to nullify the tariff. John C. Calhoun resigned the vice presidency and entered the U. S. Senate where he was a strong voice against the tariff and for nullification. President Andrew Jackson condemned the flouting of federal law and urged Congress to pass a Force Bill that would authorize the national government to send troops to collect the tariff in South Carolina. The crisis ended with a compromise. Congress lowered the tariff and the South Carolina repealed the nullification. However, South Carolina then nullified the Force Bill, thus asserting a state’s right to declare an act of Congress to be unconstitutional in that state. The states’ right idea would continue to develop.”

South Carolina Social Studies Support Document, Grade 8, 2008 http://ed.sc.gov/agency/Standards-and-Learning/Academic-Standards/old/cso/social_studies/social.html

John C. Calhoun is arguably one of the most influential South Carolinians of the early 19th century. Calhoun served as Secretary of War, Secretary of State, Senator and Vice President. In 1832 he challenged the Federal government over tariffs and threatened to lead South Carolina’s secession from the union, setting a precedent of the state’s willingness to challenge the Federal government and bringing up the issue of secession 30 years before the Civil War. Calhoun was a respected national politician and gave credence to the state’s rights argument. Calhoun died in 1850, and, though he had previously shown disdain for the Federal government, he was seen as a rational leader who understood the severity and potential consequences of secession. Upon his death South Carolina’s fate was left in the hands of a younger generation of politicians known as the “fire-eaters” who had fewer ties to the Federal government and were seen as reckless. The selection used for this activity highlights Calhoun’s reputation as a rational politician that understood the consequences of secession and had a deeply held respect for the sanctity of the Union and the sacrifices made by the revolutionary generation.

South Carolina Standards

8-3.2 Explain the impact of key events leading to South Carolina’s secession from the Union, including the nullification crisis and John C. Calhoun, the Missouri Compromise, the Tariff of

1832, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act and subsequent armed conflict, the Dred Scott decision, the growth of the abolitionist movement, and the election of 1860.

Objectives

- Students will analyze an article titled John C. Calhoun's 'Strange Dream'.
- Students will develop a political cartoon that visually depicts the message behind the article.

Time Required

1-2 class periods

Recommended Grade Level

Middle/High

Lesson Materials

- Digital copy of 1859 newspaper article relating dream had by John C. Calhoun in 1850 downloaded from the [University of South Carolina's Digital Collections website](#) "[A Strange Dream](#)"
- A copy of the rubric (see below) for each student
- Class set of colored pencils, crayons markers etc.
- Class set of Blank 8x11 printer paper

Lesson Preparation

1. Print copy of all necessary materials
2. Prepare a presentation for students using the background information above.
3. Students should also have a general knowledge of the purpose of political cartoons and their ability to convey an opinion through a still image.

Lesson Procedure

1. Teacher should introduce John C. Calhoun and his importance to South Carolina's political history. (5 min. considering students have already studied the Nullification Crisis and are familiar with Calhoun)
2. Teacher should read the article aloud to students. (5 min.)
3. Distribute a copy of the article and a rubric to each student. Ask students to put their name on the rubric as they will be turned in with cartoon (3 min.)
4. Explain that there is no way of proving whether Calhoun actually had this dream, but regardless, the editor of the newspaper thought it was important in 1859 for people to think that Calhoun had indeed felt guilty for encouraging secession. Ask the students why it would have been important for a Northern paper to show Calhoun as having a guilty conscience over secession? What message is being sent by this article?
5. Distribute to each student one sheet of blank standard 8x11 printer paper, also make available markers crayons etc. (5 min.)
6. Explain to students that they are the political cartoonist for the paper that published the Calhoun article and the editor has asked them to create a cartoon to accompany the article. Student cartoons should clearly depict the central themes behind Calhoun's dream and convey to readers that Calhoun understood the dire consequences behind

secession and that his conscious feared reprisal in another life. Students should write a brief explanation of the cartoon on the back of the paper. (40 min.)

7. Collect rubrics and cartoons (use attached rubric for grading)

Assessment

Political Cartoon Rubric

Lesson Extension Options

- Have students formulate an opinion to determine if John C. Calhoun really had this dream. They should use evidence from the article to support their opinions.

Digital Collections Information

This lesson plan is based on images and/or documents derived from the K-12 Primary Resources Pilot Project collection available from the University of South Carolina's Digital Collections Library. To see more from this collection please visit the following link.

<http://www.sc.edu/library/digital/collections/K-12.html>

To see other collections that may be helpful to your search, visit the Digital Collections homepage by clicking here <http://sc.edu/library/digital/index.php> or visit SCDL's collections by clicking here <http://www.scmemory.org/index.php>.

Rubric for Student Created Political Cartoons

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Organization and Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - limited preparation and poor organization - lacks connection between ideas generated and examples demonstrated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -organization is attempted but is incomplete - needs additional connections between the ideas and more examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organization of the illustrations is clear and concise - ideas and examples demonstrated are well linked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organization is creative and preparation is readily evident - creative use of ideas, examples and resources
Knowledge of the Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lacks clarity and purpose; little attempt made to achieve the purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - states the purpose but does not effectively achieve it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - topic is focused and authentically achieves the purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - topic is focused, clear and authentically and creatively achieves the purpose of satirizing the subject
Use of Persuasive Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -few or no persuasive techniques used or used improperly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -multiple persuasive techniques used somewhat properly and somewhat effectively in attempts to clarify your position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -multiple persuasive techniques mostly used properly and effectively, making a clear case for your position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -multiple persuasive techniques are used properly and effectively, making a clear case for your position
Creativity of the Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - final media product is not neat and lacks necessary detail - little attempt made to engage the audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - final product's appearance has limited impact - some attempt made to engage the audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - final product's appearance is attractive and creative - engages the audience to be receptive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - final product's appearance is uniquely creative - engages the audience to be responsive

John C. Calhoun's 'Strange Dream'

<p>Explanation on the Back of Page</p>	<p>-explanation of the meaning of cartoon is not on the back, or is not very clear, concise, and not consistent with the drawing on the front</p>	<p>-explanation of the meaning of cartoon is on the back, is somewhat clear, concise, and mildly consistent with the drawing on the front</p>	<p>-explanation of the meaning of cartoon is on the back, is clear, concise, and consistent with the drawing on the front</p>	<p>-explanation of the meaning of cartoon is on the back, is very clear, concise, and consistent with the drawing on the front</p>
<p>Total ___ /20</p>				