

Teacher Key: Founding & Early Republic

What each labeled part shows. These describe the image only. Each cartoon was made by someone with a point of view, noted under "Viewpoint." Let students build and defend their own readings.

Station 1: Join, or Die (1754)

Context: Printed during the French and Indian War, around the Albany Congress. A popular belief held that a cut snake could revive if its pieces were rejoined before sunset.

A: The head of a snake, mouth open. Nearby letters "N.E." stand for New England.

B: Tail pieces labeled "S.C." and "N.C." (South and North Carolina), each cut apart from the rest.

C: The caption "JOIN, or DIE." printed under the snake.

Viewpoint: Franklin was a Pennsylvania delegate pushing a plan for colonial union.

Source: Benjamin Franklin, Pennsylvania Gazette, 1754. Library of Congress: www.loc.gov/item/2002695523/. Public domain.

Station 2: The Repeal, or the Funeral of Miss Ame-Stamp (1766)

Context: Drawn in London when Parliament repealed the Stamp Act in 1766. A mock funeral procession of officials carries a small coffin for the Stamp Act down to the Thames.

A: Two skulls on posts above an open family vault with a long inscription.

B: A London warehouse with a sign reading "Goods now shipped for America."

C: Bales and a box at right, with labels including "Stamps from America" and "Black Cloth."

Viewpoint: Made for a British audience; many London merchants favored repeal because the act hurt trade with the colonies.

Source: Unidentified British artist (often attributed to Benjamin Wilson), Published in London, 1766. Library of Congress: www.loc.gov/item/2006678564/. Public domain.

Station 3: The Able Doctor, or America Swallowing the Bitter Draught (1774)

Context: Published after Parliament passed the Coercive (Intolerable) Acts, including the Boston Port Act that closed Boston harbor following the Boston Tea Party.

A: A paper sticking out of a man's pocket labeled "Boston Port Bill."

B: A man pouring liquid from a teapot into the mouth of a woman held down on the ground; the woman is often read as America.

C: A man in a Scottish kilt holding a sword, standing apart and watching. In the background a city is labeled "Boston cannonaded."

Viewpoint: Published in London, where opinion on the colonial crisis was divided.

Source: Unidentified British artist, London Magazine, 1774. Library of Congress: www.loc.gov/item/97514782/. Public domain.

Station 4: The Bostonians Paying the Excise-Man, or Tarring & Feathering (1774)

Context: Based on the January 1774 tarring and feathering of customs official John Malcolm in Boston. In the background, men dump tea from a ship.

A: A noose hanging from the branch of a tree.

B: The tree is labeled "Liberty Tree," with a paper reading "Stamp Act" posted upside down.

C: A tarred-and-feathered man being forced to drink from a teapot by a crowd.

Viewpoint: A British print; some read it as criticizing the crowd, others as reporting colonial anger.

Source: Attributed to Philip Dawe, Published in London by Sayer & Bennett, 1774. John Carter Brown Library (via Wikimedia Commons): [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Philip_Dawe_\(attributed\),_The_Bostonians_Paying_the_Excise-man,_or_Tarring_and_Feathering_\(1774\).jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Philip_Dawe_(attributed),_The_Bostonians_Paying_the_Excise-man,_or_Tarring_and_Feathering_(1774).jpg). Public domain.

Station 5: Property Protected à la Française (1798)

Context: Drawn during the XYZ Affair, when French agents asked U.S. diplomats for a bribe and loan before talks. On a hill at right, a figure watches from the English side.

A: A woman in a feathered headdress, a common symbol for America, surrounded by five men.

B: A sack on the ground labeled "National Sack" and "Diplomatic Perquisites."

C: A five-headed figure holding a dagger. Five heads match the five-member French Directory.

Viewpoint: British-made at a time when Britain and France were at war.

Source: Unidentified British artist, Published in London by S.W. Fores, 1798. Library of Congress: www.loc.gov/item/93509853/. Public domain.

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Station 6: King Andrew the First (1833)

Context: Made during the fight over the Second Bank of the United States, which Jackson vetoed in 1832. The side text reads "Of Veto Memory" and "Had I Been Consulted."

A: A crown on the head of a man dressed as a king (Andrew Jackson).

B: A rolled paper in his hand labeled "Veto."

C: A torn paper under his feet labeled "Constitution of the United States." Other torn papers nearby mention "Internal Improvements" and "U.S. Bank."

Viewpoint: Made by Jackson's opponents (who soon formed the Whig Party); supporters saw his vetoes as defending ordinary people.

Source: Unidentified American artist, Printed broadside, 1833. Library of Congress: www.loc.gov/item/2008661753/. Public domain.