

## **“Hard Times Come Again No More” and Economic Depressions**

### **The Basics**

#### **Time Required**

1-2 class periods

#### **Subject Areas**

AP US History

Expansion and Reform. 1800-1860

#### **Common Core Standards Addressed:**

Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12

#### **Author**

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### **The Lesson**

#### **Introduction**

Once James Monroe leaves the presidency in 1824, the Founding Fathers era is over and the United States finds itself redefining America and Americans. The election of 1824 brought a new breed of politicians and voters. The country begins to force its way to the west under Manifest Destiny as immigrants and citizens alike find themselves moving from rural to urban areas. Industry begins its takeover of the U.S. economy setting the foundations for trust building and hurling the United States into economic depression.

The song selections incorporated into these lessons illustrate many of the feelings of everyday citizens regarding issues facing Americans in this new era of U.S. History. They also serve as a new way of thinking about the events dryly explained in textbooks.

#### **Guiding Questions**

- What is an economic depression?
- What are the leading causes and effects of an economic depression?
- How does the economy recover from a depression?

#### **Learning Objectives**

After completing this lesson students will:

1. Explain the effects of an economic depression on different classes of society.
2. Satirize the actions of the government regarding the depressions of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Preparation Instructions**

Song used in this lesson:

“Hard Times Come Again No More” (Stephen Foster, 1855)

### **Lesson Activities**

1. Class begins with a journal writing activity, 3 minute timed writing to this prompt:

What is an economic depression?

Students will have a chance to share responses and get teacher-directed definitions.

2. Next students will look at the political cartoons and as a class discuss the images and its meanings. One option is to examine one cartoon together then let students look at the others on their own or in pairs.

3. Handout the lyrics to “Hard Times Come Again No More” and have students look at the images again.

### **Assessment**

1. In pairs and using available classroom resources such as the internet, textbooks, etc., Have students complete the Depression Study Guide.
2. Once the study guide is complete, re-examine the song lyrics, discuss the study guide answers and how all of this related to the working class. Let each student pick one aspect of the depressions examined and create a political cartoon clearly illustrating their point.

### **Extending the Lesson**

Extensions can include researching other songs written about this time period, comparing this depression to future economic crises in the U.S., ramifications of the depression on future elections, and the effects depression and government response had on business practices, labor relations, business expectations and government regulations.

### **Resources**

#### **Lyrics**

“Hard Times Come Again No More”

While we seek mirth and beauty and music light and gay,  
There are frail forms fainting at the door.

Though their voices are silent, their pleading looks will say  
Oh! hard times, come again no more.

Let us pause in life's pleasures and count its many tears,  
While we all sup sorrow with the poor.  
There's a song that will linger forever in our ears,  
Oh! Hard times, come again no more.

Chorus.

Hard times, come again no more.  
'Tis the song, the sigh of the weary,  
Hard times, hard times, come again no more.  
Many days you have lingered around my cabin door.  
Oh Hard times, come again no more

There's a pale drooping maiden who toils her life away  
With a worn heart whose better days are o'er.  
Though her voice would be merry, 'tis sighing all the day -  
Oh! Hard times, come again no more.

Chorus.

Hard times, come again no more.  
'Tis the song, the sigh of the weary,  
Hard times, hard times, come again no more.  
Many days you have lingered around my cabin door.  
Oh Hard times, come again no more

'Tis a sigh that is wafted across the troubled wave,  
'Tis a wail that is heard upon the shore,  
'Tis a dirge that is murmured around the lowly grave -  
Oh! Hard times, come again no more.

Chorus.

Hard times, come again no more.  
'Tis the song, the sigh of the weary,  
Hard times, hard times, come again no more.  
Many days you have lingered around my cabin door.  
Oh Hard times, come again no more

\* "Economic Depressions of the United State"

<http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/watkins/depressions.htm>

\* Digital history website – lesson module regarding the Jacksonian Era

<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/modules/jacksonian/index.cfm>

\* Library of Congress Political Cartoon Analysis

[http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/political\\_cartoon/cag.html](http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/political_cartoon/cag.html)

\* National Achieves Cartoon Analysis

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon.html>

\* Ohio History Central Online Encyclopedia

<http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/entry.php?rec=537>

\*Harper's Weekly Cartoon for the Panic of 1857

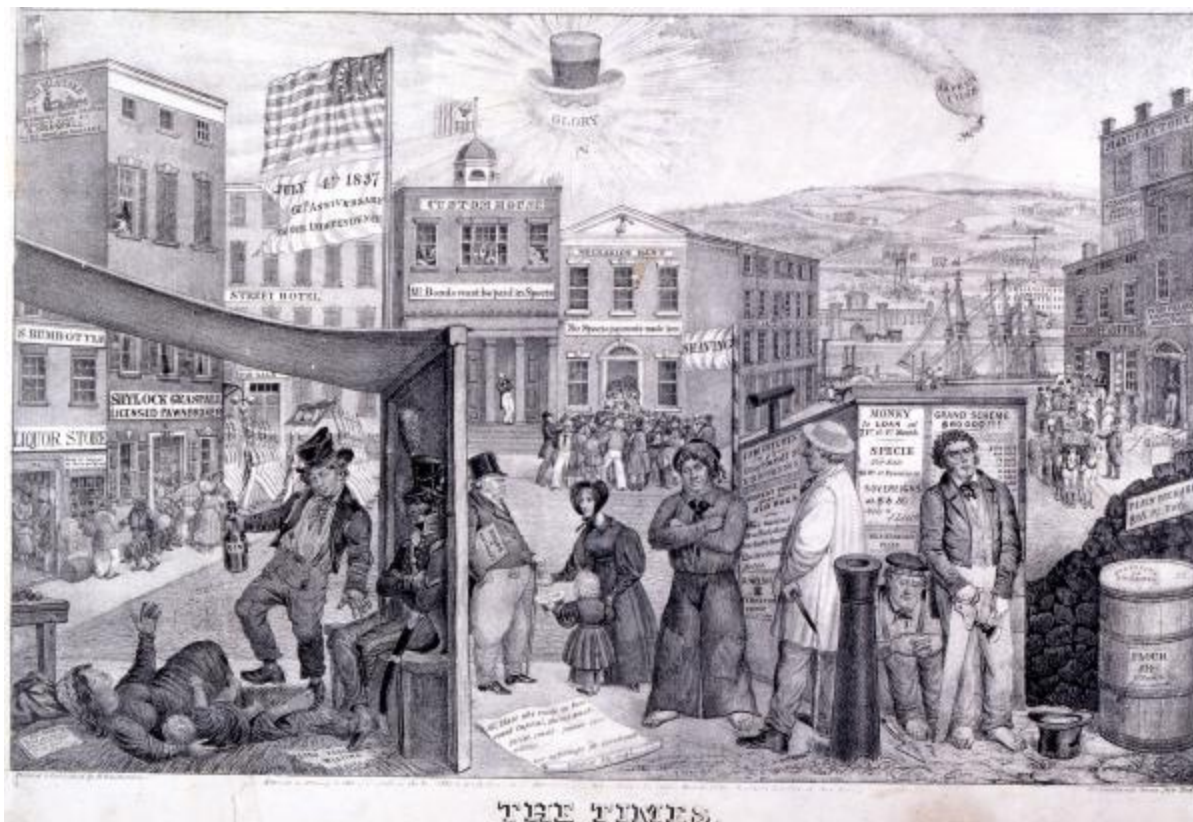
<http://www.harpweek.com/09Cartoon/BrowseByDateCartoon.asp?Month=October&Date=24>

\* President James Buchanan Cartoons (especially referring to Buchanan as an Irish Mother)

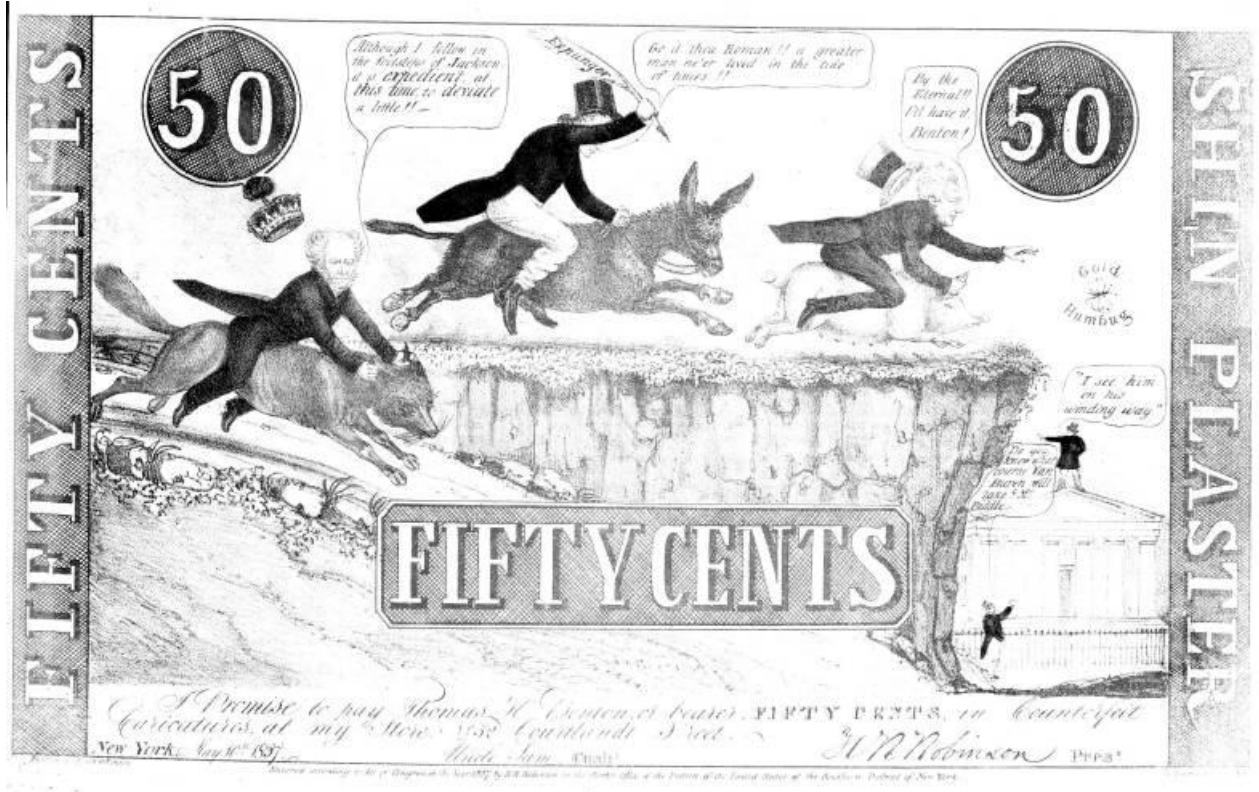
<http://www.assumption.edu/users/McClymer/his260/IntroBuchanan.html>

\* 19th Century Art World Wide (especially referring to Irish beggar cartoon)

[http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/winter\\_03/articles/mano.html](http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/winter_03/articles/mano.html)

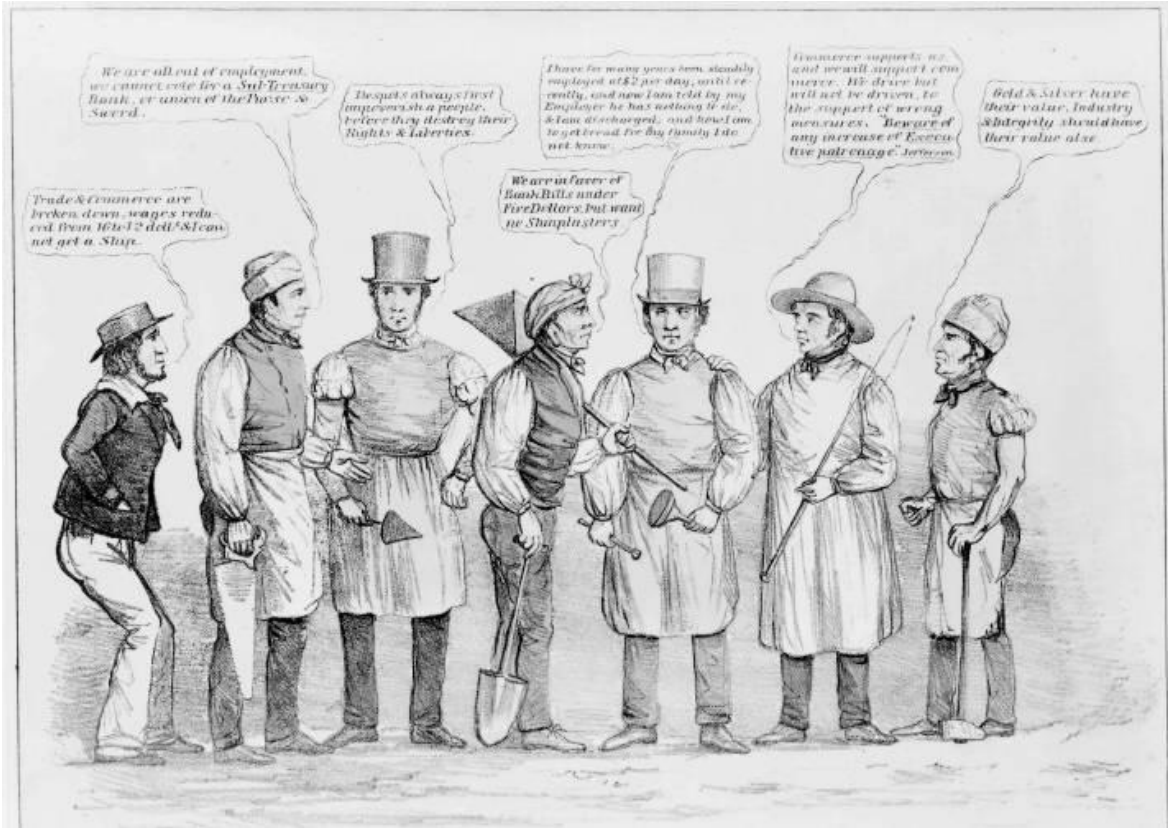


“A commentary on the depressed state of the American economy, particularly in New York, during the financial panic of 1837.” (From the Library of Congress). For more information, please visit Explore PA History. (<http://explorepahistory.com/displayimage.php?imgId=1-2-172F>)



For more information concerning this image visit: HarpWeek, Political Cartoon.

(<http://loc.harpweek.com/LCPoliticalCartoons/IndexDisplayCartoonMedium.asp?SourceIndex=People&IndexText=Jackson&UniqueID=29&Year=1837>)



For a complete explanation of this image, please visit: [HarpWeek](http://www.harpweek.com), Political Cartoons

(<http://loc.harpweek.com/LCPoliticalCartoons/IndexDisplayCartoonMedium.asp?SourceIndex=Topics&IndexText=Panic+of+1837&UniqueID=42&Year=1838>)



"IRISH BEGGAR" cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, 7 November 1857, p. 720. Special Collections, Michigan State University Libraries. Photograph by the author. From "Anti-Catholicism in Albert Bierstadt's *Roman Fish Market, Arch of Octavius*" by Paul A. Manoguerra, *Nineteenth Century Art Worldwide*, 2:1 (Winter, 2003). [http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/winter\\_03/articles/mano\\_3.html](http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/winter_03/articles/mano_3.html)

"The Irish, as caricatured in the *Harper's* series, fight, live among dogs, imbibe alcohol, and openly corrupt the American naturalization and political processes.



## Cartoon Analysis Guide

Use this guide to identify the persuasive techniques used in political cartoons.

- Symbolism** Cartoonists use simple objects, or **symbols**, to stand for larger concepts or ideas.
- After you identify the symbols in a cartoon, think about what the cartoonist intends each symbol to stand for.
- Exaggeration** Sometimes cartoonists overdo, or **exaggerate**, the physical characteristics of people or things in order to make a point.
- When you study a cartoon, look for any characteristics that seem overdone or overblown. (Facial characteristics and clothing are some of the most commonly exaggerated characteristics.) Then, try to decide what point the cartoonist was trying to make through exaggeration.
- Labeling** Cartoonists often **label** objects or people to make it clear exactly what they stand for.
- Watch out for the different labels that appear in a cartoon, and ask yourself why the cartoonist chose to label that particular person or object. Does the label make the meaning of the object more clear?
- Analogy** An **analogy** is a comparison between two unlike things that share some characteristics. By comparing a complex issue or situation with a more familiar one, cartoonists can help their readers see it in a different light.
- After you've studied a cartoon for a while, try to decide what the cartoon's main analogy is. What two situations does the cartoon compare? Once you understand the main analogy, decide if this comparison makes the cartoonist's point more clear to you.
- Irony** **Irony** is the difference between the ways things are and the way things should be, or the way things are expected to be. Cartoonists often use irony to express their opinion on an issue.
- When you look at a cartoon, see if you can find any irony in the situation the cartoon depicts. If you can, think about what point the irony might be intended to emphasize. Does the irony help the cartoonist express his or her opinion more effectively?

Once you've identified the persuasive techniques that the cartoonist used, ask yourself:

- \*What issue is this political cartoon about?
- \*What is the cartoonist's opinion on this issue?
- \*What other opinion can you imagine another person having on this issue?
- \*Did you find this cartoon persuasive? Why or why not?
- \*What other techniques could the cartoonist have used to make this cartoon more persuasive?

[http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/political\\_cartoon/cag.html](http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/political_cartoon/cag.html)

# Cartoon Analysis Worksheet

<b>Level 1</b>	
Visuals	Words (not all cartoons include words)
1. List the objects or people you see in the cartoon.	1. Identify the cartoon caption and/or title.  2. Locate three words or phrases used by the cartoonist to identify objects or people within the cartoon.  3. Record any important dates or numbers that appear in the cartoon.
<b>Level 2</b>	
Visuals	Words
2. Which of the objects on your list are symbols?  3. What do you think each symbol means?	4. Which words or phrases in the cartoon appear to be the most significant? Why do you think so?  5. List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon.
<b>Level 3</b>	
A. Describe the action taking place in the cartoon. B. Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols. C. Explain the message of the cartoon. D. What special interest groups would agree/disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?	

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon.html>

“Hard Times Come Again No More”

Stephen C. Foster, 1855

1. Let us pause in life's pleasures and count its many tears  
While we all sup sorrow with the poor.  
There's a song that will linger forever in our ears,  
Oh, hard times, come again no more.  
'Tis the song, the sigh of the weary.  
Hard times, hard times, come again no more.  
Many days you have lingered all around my cabin door.  
Oh, hard times, come again no more.

2. While we seek mirth and beauty and music light and gay.  
There are frail forms fainting at the door.  
Though their voices are silent, their pleading looks will say.  
Oh, hard times, come again no more.  
'Tis the song, the sigh of the weary.  
Hard times, hard times, come again no more.  
Many days you have lingered all around my cabin door.  
Oh, hard times, come again no more.

3. There's pale drooping maiden who toils her life away  
With a worn out heart, whose better days are o'er.  
Though her voice it would be merry, 'tis sighing all the day,  
Oh, hard times, come again no more.  
'Tis the song, the sigh of the weary.  
Hard times, hard times, come again no more.  
Many days you have lingered all around my cabin door.  
Oh, hard times, come again no more.

'Tis the song, the sigh of the weary.  
Hard times, hard times, come again no more.  
Many days you have lingered all around my cabin door.  
Oh, hard times, come again no more.

## Depression Study Guide

Complete with a partner using available resources.

1. What happened to the U.S. Banking system?
2. What was President Van Buren's response to the Bank crisis?
3. Why did he choose this response?
4. How did the economy respond to the crisis and the President's actions?
5. What year does the Depression officially begin?
6. What are the official causes of the depression?
7. How does the economy begin to recover?
8. What affect did this depression have on working Americans?
9. What year does this first Depression officially end?
10. What is the difference between a "Depression" and a "Panic"?
11. When did the next Panic begin in the US?
12. Why did this event occur?
13. What did the Ohio Life Insurance and trust Co. have to do with the Panic?
14. What else caused the market economy to decline?
15. What does speculation mean?
16. How would speculating contribute to economic crisis?
17. What parts of the country were hardest/least hit?
18. What thinking/beliefs did this phenomenon create?
19. What was the government response?
20. Which was worse, 1837 or 1857? Why?