

# The Nation Splits Apart

## Social Studies Skills

### Interpreting Political Cartoons

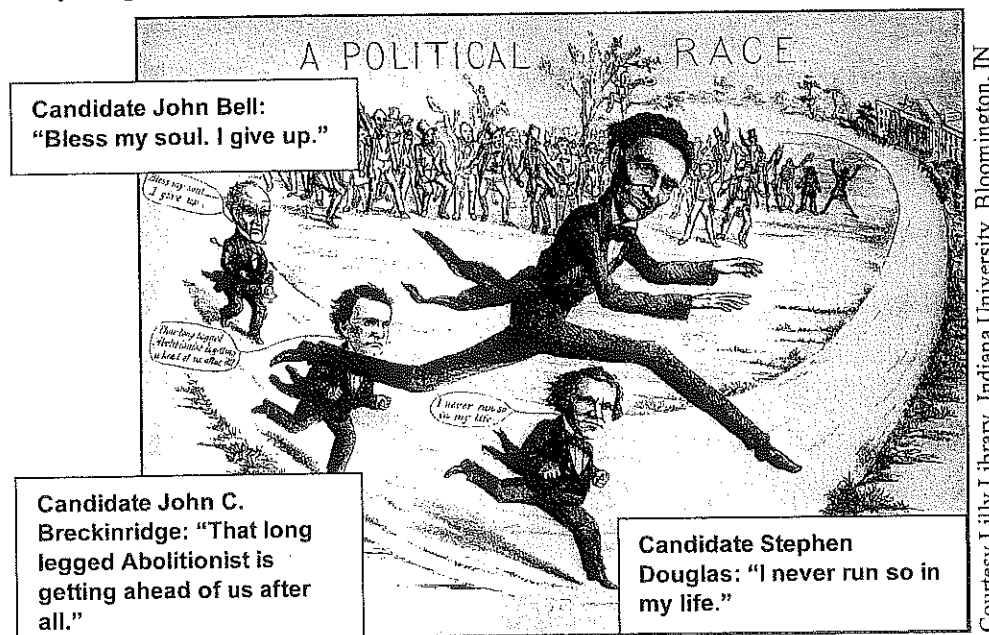
#### LEARN THE SKILL

Political cartoons are a type of visual that expresses a point of view. In political cartoons, artists use exaggerations of subjects or events to convey a specific message. Historians use political cartoons to understand how a particular person or event was perceived at the time. To interpret political cartoons, try the following strategies.

- Identify who or what the cartoon is portraying.
- Read the text and study all the symbols, looking for clues to the cartoon's point of view.
- Determine what the cartoon's message is.
- Compare the message with the facts—ask whether the message is historically accurate.

#### PRACTICE THE SKILL

Study the political cartoon from 1860, then answer the questions below.



#### APPLY THE SKILL

1. Who or what is the cartoon portraying?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the artist's message? What clues lead you to that message?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you think this cartoon was drawn by a Lincoln supporter or opponent? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_