

Candidates for political office use various methods to gain the support of voters. They express their beliefs. They push to enact legislation. However, to succeed they need the support of voters who put them in office. Both Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson were successful in gathering public support. Both presidents served two terms in office and both brought enormous changes to life in the United States while they served.

In this activity, you will analyze political cartoons, video segments, speeches, and other pieces of writing that showcase either Theodore Roosevelt or Woodrow Wilson. You will decide which person would make the best candidate for an additional term in office. Then, you will write an editorial and create a campaign poster in support of either Roosevelt or Wilson.

I. Introduction

1. Study the two political cartoons below.

No Lack of Big Game

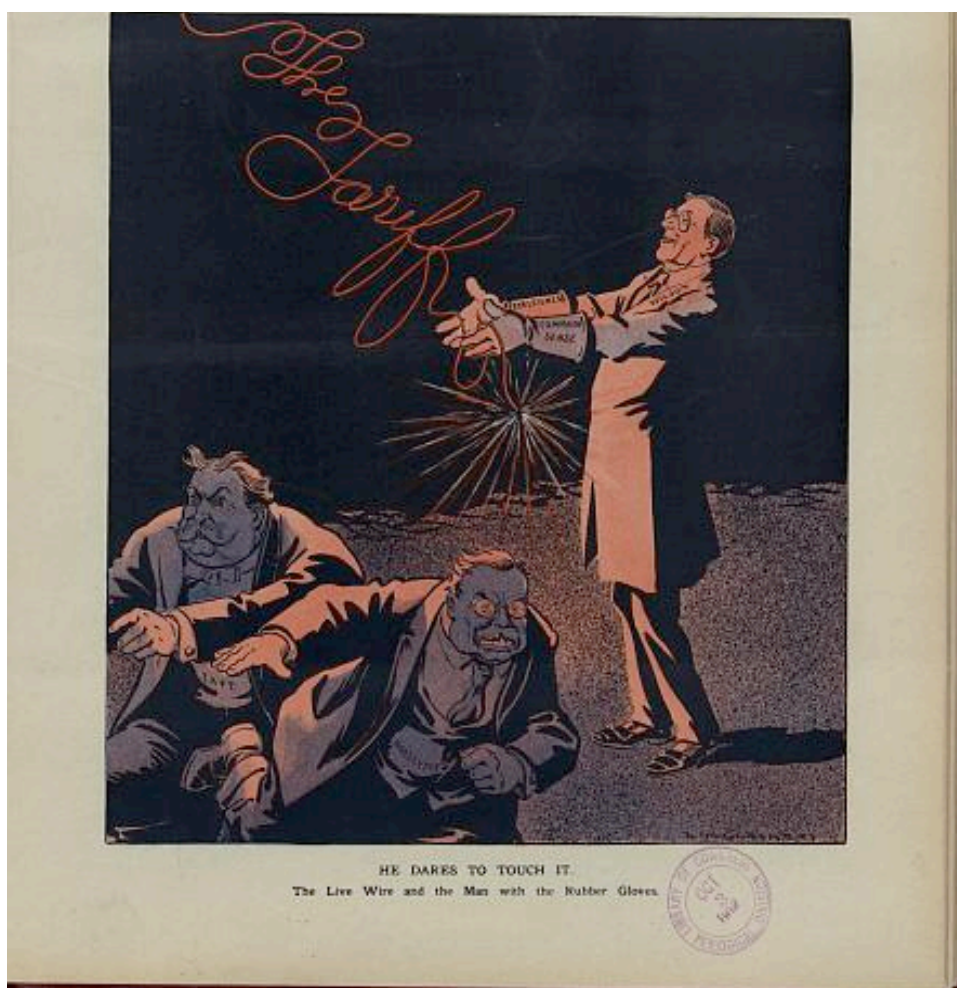
In this cartoon, President Roosevelt is dressed as a Rough Rider as he aims a gun at three creatures that are fleeing. One octopus is labeled “Beef Trust” and the other is labeled “Standard Oil Trust.” A bird labeled “Hard Coal Trust” flies away.



Bartholomew, Charles Lewis. *No lack of big game. The president seems to have scared up quite a bunch of Octopi.* Between 1901 and 1912. Prints and Photographs Division. Library of Congress. Web.

He Dares to Touch It

In this cartoon, President Wilson wears rubber gloves labeled “Fearlessness” and “Common Sense” while touching a live wire that reads “The Tariff.” Theodore Roosevelt and William H. Taft run away from Wilson in fear.



Glackens, L. M., artist. *He Dares to Touch It*. New York: Keppler & Schwarzmann, October 2, 1912.
Prints and Photographs Division. Library of Congress. Web.

2. What does each cartoon want you to understand about Presidents Roosevelt and Wilson? Spend three minutes on a stop and jot, writing a few quick ideas about the main idea of each cartoon.

3. Work together with a partner and discuss some of your ideas. Use the information you have gathered from studying the cartoons to discuss and take notes about the questions in the graphic organizer below.

Question 1: What is Roosevelt “hunting” in the political cartoon?

Question 2: Which of Roosevelt’s policies could be compared with big-game hunting?

Question 3: Who would be likely to vote for Roosevelt based on the message in this cartoon?

Question 4: What is Wilson the “electrician” doing in the cartoon?

Question 5: Why is touching the electrical charge of “tariffs” dangerous?

Question 6: Who are the men cowering in fear in the cartoon? Why is this significant?

II. Research Each Candidate

1. Use the video segments, speech, text, and images about Roosevelt and Wilson to complete the graphic organizer. In the graphic organizer, take notes on each president's views in the categories identified below. Then, after exploring the resources, decide which president's views on the subject were most likely to appeal to the public and why.

Criteria:	President Roosevelt	President Wilson	Which is more likely to appeal to the public? Why?
Big Business			
Reform Efforts			
Banking Initiatives			

Criteria:	President Roosevelt	President Wilson	Which is more likely to appeal to the public? Why?
Support for Laborers			
Environmental Protections			

2. After reviewing the sources, use the space below to identify the candidate you would support to run for a third term. Create a bulleted list of reasons to explain why.

Candidate: _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

Resources

“Roosevelt and Corporations” from *The Unfinished Nation: Warrior to Priest: Presidents of the Early 1900s*

This video segment explains how President Roosevelt viewed corporations and why he initiated trust-busting suits to rein them in.

Video Segments from *Just the Facts: The Emergence of Modern America: The Progressive Era*

“The Square Deal”

This video segment examines how President Roosevelt focused reform efforts on monopolies in various industries and created compromise between businesses and labor unions.

“The Wilson Administration”

This video segment compares President Wilson to President Roosevelt and examines his leadership in tariffs, banking, taxes, and the electoral process.

“Woodrow Wilson on Labor”

This audio recording was made by Woodrow Wilson during the presidential campaign of 1912. He expresses support for workers but explains his opposition to a minimum wage while criticizing his opponents.

Read the text below for a transcription of Wilson’s speech:

To look at the politics of the day from the viewpoint of the laboring man is not to suggest that there is one view proper to him, another to the employer, another to the capitalist, another to the professional man, but merely that the life of the country as a whole may be looked at from various points of view, and yet be viewed as a whole. The whole business of politics is to bring classes together upon a platform of accommodation and common interest. In a political campaign the voters are called upon to choose between parties and leaders. Parties and platforms and candidates should be frankly put under examination to see what they will yield us by way of progress. And there are a great many questions which the working man may legitimately ask and quest until he gets a definite answer.

The predictions of the leader of the new party are as alarming as the predictions of the various stand-patters. He declares that he is not troubled by the fact that a very large amount of money is taken out of the pockets of the general taxpayer and put into the pockets of particular classes that protect his manufacturers, but that his concern is that so little of this money gets into the pockets of the laboring man and so large a proportion of it into the pockets of the employers. I have searched his program very thoroughly for an indication of what he expects to do in order to see to it that a larger proportion of this prize money gets into the pay envelope—and I have found only one suggestion. There is a plank in the program which speaks of establishing a minimum, or a living wage, for women workers. And I suppose that we may assume that the principle is not in the long run meant to be confined in its application to women only. Perhaps we are justified in assuming that the third party looks forward to the general establishment by law of a minimum wage.

It is very likely, I take it for granted, that if a minimum wage were established by law the great majority of employers would take occasion to bring their wage scale as nearly as might be down to the level of that minimum. And it would be very awkward for the working man to resist that process successfully because it would be dangerous to strike against the authority in the Federal government. Moreover, most of his employers—at any rate, practically all of the most powerful of them—would be wards and proteges of that very government which is the master of us all. For no part of this program can be discussed intelligently, without remembering that monopoly, as handled by it, is not to be prevented, but accepted and regulated.

When you have thought the whole thing out, therefore, you will find that the program of the new party legalizes monopolies and, of necessity, subordinates working men to them and to the plans made by the government, both with regard to employment, and with regard to wages. Take the thing as a whole, and it looks strangely like economic mastery over the very lives and fortunes of those who do the daily work of the nation. And all this under the overwhelming power and sovereignty of the national government. What most of us are fighting for is to break up this very partnership between big business and the government.

Wilson, Woodrow. *Woodrow Wilson on Labor*. New York, New York, 1912. *National Jukebox*. Library of Congress. Web.

Excerpt from *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography*, 1913

When I became President, the question as to the method by which the United States Government was to control the corporations was not yet important. The absolutely vital question was whether the Government had power to control them at all. This question had not yet been decided in favor of the United States Government. It was useless to discuss methods of controlling big business by the National Government until it was definitely settled that the National Government had the power to control it. A decision of the Supreme Court had, with seeming definiteness, settled that the National Government had not the power.

This decision I caused to be annulled by the court that had rendered it; and the present power of the National Government to deal effectively with the trusts is due solely to the success of the Administration in securing this reversal of its former decision by the Supreme Court.

Roosevelt, Theodore. *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography*. New York: Macmillan, 1913.. Web.

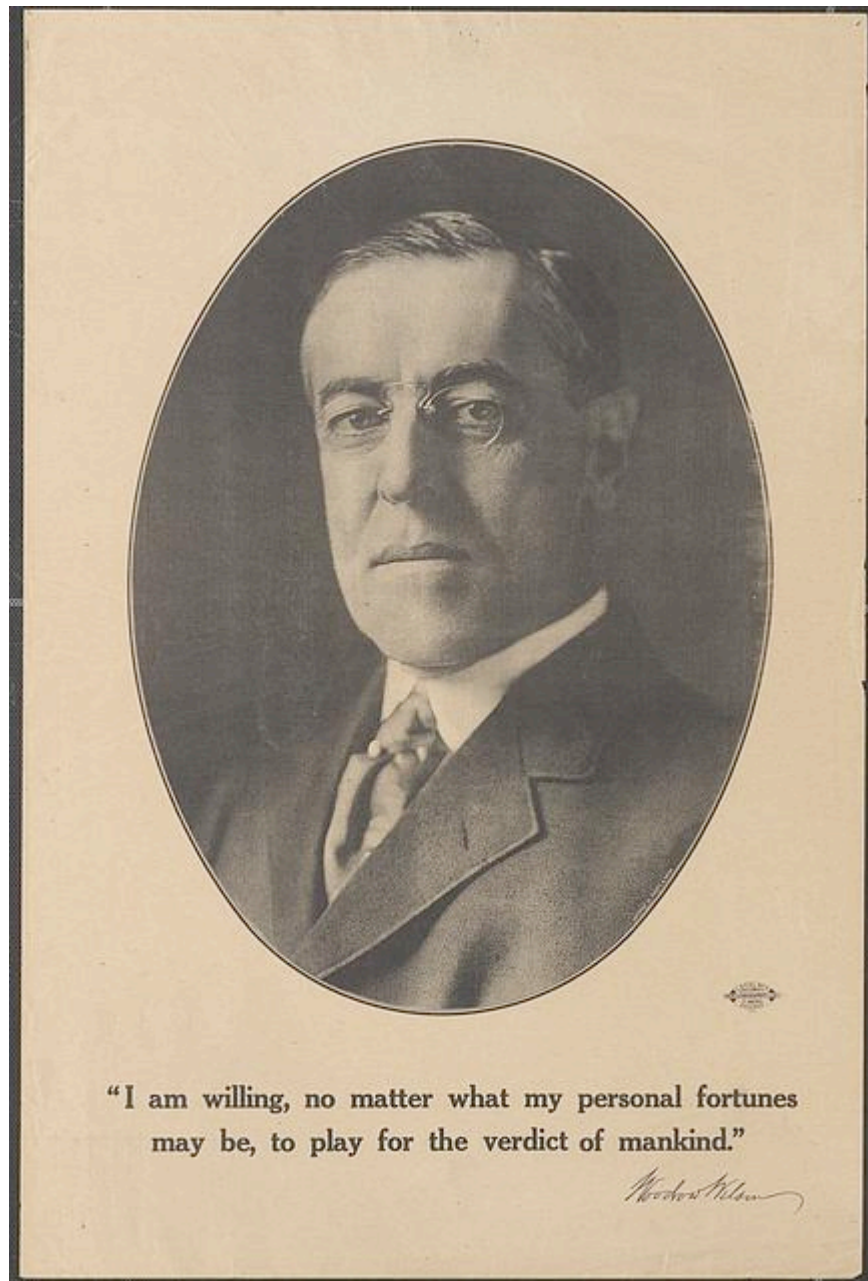
Excerpt from *Wilson's State of the Union Address*, 1913

How the tempting resources of the country are to be exploited is another matter, to which I shall take the liberty of from time to time calling your attention, for it is a policy which must be worked out by well-considered stages, not upon theory, but upon lines of practical expediency. It is part of our general problem of conservation . . . We must use the resources of the country, not lock them up. There need be no conflict or jealousy as between State and Federal authorities, for there can be no essential difference of purpose between them. The resources in question must be used, but not destroyed or wasted; used, but not monopolized upon any narrow idea of individual rights as against the abiding interests of communities. That a policy can be worked out by conference and concession which will release these resources and yet not jeopardize or dissipate them, I for one have no doubt; and it can be done on lines of regulation which need be no less acceptable to the people and governments of the States concerned than to the people and Government of the Nation at large, whose heritage these resources are. We must bend our counsels to this end. A common purpose ought to make agreement easy.

Wilson, Woodrow. *State of the Union Addresses*. 1913. Web.

Political Poster for Theodore Roosevelt, 1904

Davenport, Homer. *Uncle Sam: He's Good Enough for Me.* 1904. *Prints and Photographs Division*. Library of Congress. Web.

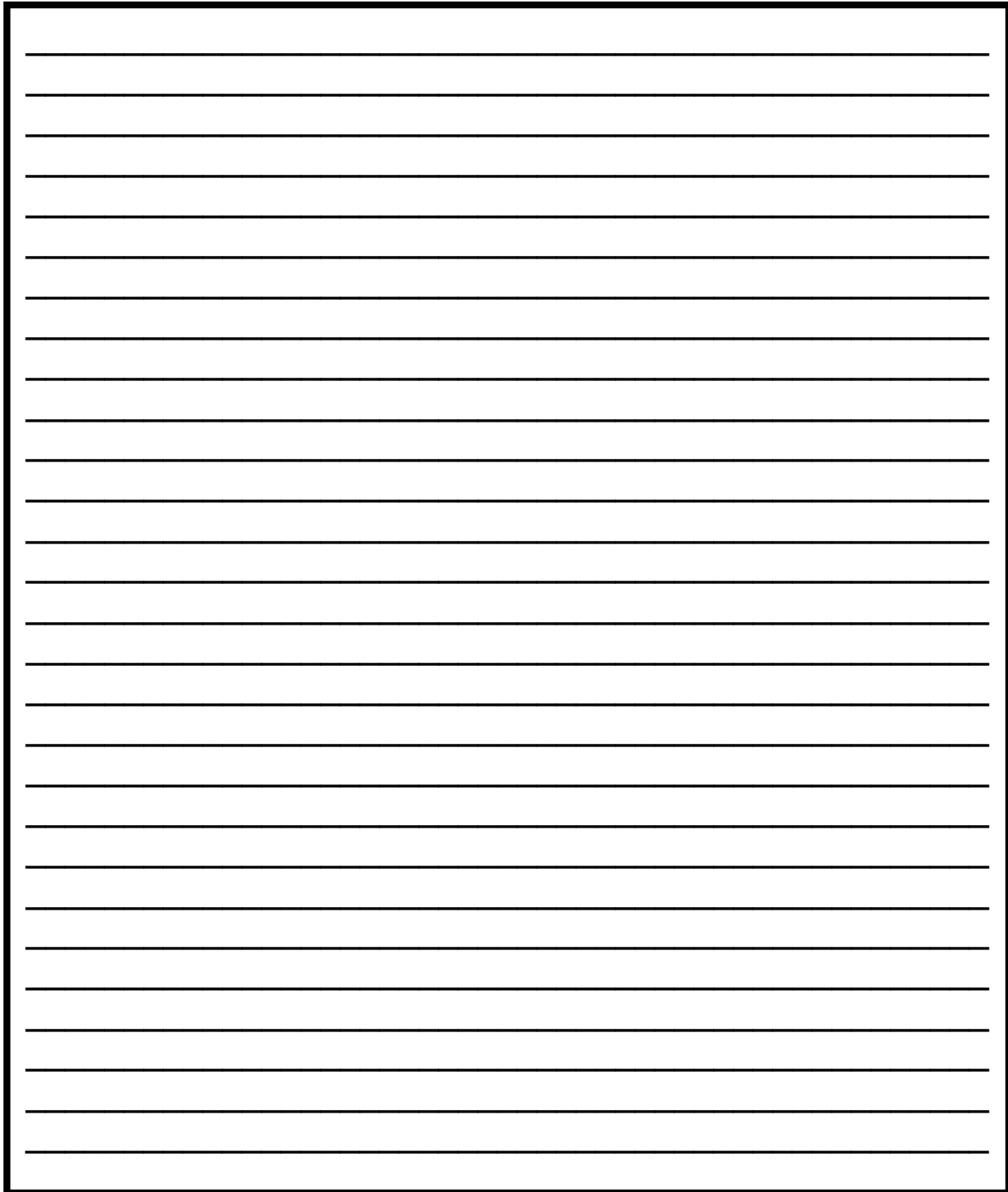
Political Poster for Woodrow Wilson, 1916

Harris & Ewing. *I am willing, no matter what my personal fortunes may be, to play for the verdict of mankind.* 1916. Prints and Photographs Division. Library of Congress. Web.

III. Write an Editorial and Design a Campaign Poster

1. Based on your review of the sources, use the space provided below to write an editorial supporting either Roosevelt or Wilson for a third term in office. The editorial must be supported by evidence and explained clearly.

[illegible]

A large rectangular box with a black border, containing 25 horizontal lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the box.

2. Use a separate page to create a campaign poster that can either be similar in style to the campaign posters you studied or posters that use an approach more like the political cartoons that you have reviewed. Design the poster to support either Roosevelt or Wilson for a third term in office.