

MOAD

Museum of Australian Democracy
at Old Parliament House



John Frith: The art of politics

Teacher Resource Years 7 - 10

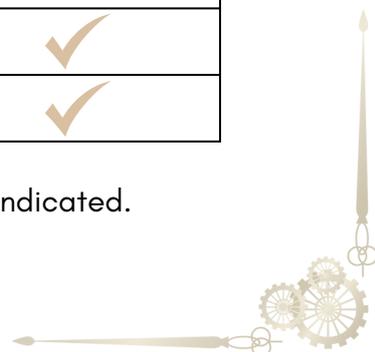
Support students as they analyse and evaluate
the historical political cartoons of John Frith.

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Activity Pages	Page Number	English	History	Civics & Citizenship
Decree Nisi	<u>10</u>	✓	✓	
Curse the Press!	<u>11</u>	✓		✓
Barometer Rising	<u>12</u>	✓	✓	
Sealed with a Kiss	<u>13</u>	✓	✓	
Harder to Handle	<u>14</u>	✓		
Mind the cobwebs!	<u>15</u>	✓		✓
Ready ... Aim ... WAIT!	<u>16</u>	✓	✓	✓
Crazy Mirrors	<u>17</u>	✓	✓	
Clouded Crystal Ball	<u>18</u>	✓		
Holt vs Calwell	<u>19</u>	✓		✓
Untitled - JFK	<u>20</u>	✓	✓	
Operation Stretch	<u>21</u>	✓	✓	
Reluctant Striptease	<u>22</u>	✓	✓	
Untitled - MLK Jr.	<u>23</u>	✓	✓	✓
Voice of Defiance	<u>24</u>	✓	✓	✓

All images in this resource are from the MoAD Collection, unless otherwise indicated.



Teacher Guide: Using this Resource

Year levels: 7-10

This resource is designed to support you as your students use these historical political cartoons from John Frith to **develop** and **practice** their **analytical** and **investigative skills**.

Students will be guided to:

- identify historical perspectives and contexts
- identify how ideas are portrayed
- explain how these cartoons reflect their historical contexts
- assess how useful these cartoons are in understanding the past
- explore and critique the techniques used in political cartoons
- consider the impact of each cartoon with a researcher's perspective and more.

Inquiry questions for every cartoon

Cartoonists use **multiple techniques** to convey their message.

Students can build their analytical skills by examining how they combine and work together.

With each cartoon students can consider:

Techniques:

- Context - When was this cartoon created? What issues do you recognise in the image?
- Text - Are there any signs, captions, speech bubbles, puns, topics of discussion?
- Symbolism - What symbols can you see? Do they add any context or message?
- Caricature - Can you identify any personal features? Who is this image representing?
- Stereotypes - Are there any stereotypes present?
- Humour - What forms of humour have been used? What effect might this have?
- Pop Culture - Are there any references to popular culture in the image?

Questions:

- Describe what you can see happening. What overall message is being conveyed?
- What can you learn about the attitudes in Australian society at the time this cartoon was published?
- What more would you like to know about this topic?

See page 9 for an example.

Visit the MoAD website for more:

- [Political Cartoons](#)
- [Media Literacy](#)
- [Drawn Together](#)
- [Professional Development](#)

Useful links:

- [John Frith's Dreadnought Story](#)
- [Oral History Interview - John Frith 1994](#)
- [Senate Select Committee 1962-63](#)

John Frith: The Man

For more than sixty years John Frith entertained Australians with his powerful and insightful cartoons.

John Eric, born in 1906 in London, was the youngest of 3 children of Henry and Kate Frith.

Henry died in 1909, leaving Kate to keep the household running. For John, this meant he was sent to boarding school aged just 4 years old. At first, this was nearby. When John was 6, he attended boarding school in Kent, then from age 8 to 16, John boarded at school in Watford.

While at boarding school, John discovered that he had a talent for drawing. He sketched both the students and the teachers. John often swapped these sketches for treats such as extra pudding from fellow students. There was a downside though, some teachers didn't like John's caricatures of them and punished him severely.

When he was 14, Kate took John on a visit to Hastings, on the south coast of England, where they joined other tourists viewing the explorer Shackleton's ship, 'The Quest'. John even met Shackleton during this visit.



In 1922, aged 16, John travelled to Australia as part of the Dreadnought Program. John was sent to a dairy farm in Cowra, NSW, where he learned about farming and caring for dairy cows. John described this experience as 'not to my liking'.

This photograph is of John during his time in Cowra.

John returned to England in 1923 where he tried a few different jobs, including as a door-to-door vacuum cleaner salesman, before securing work with Sale and Company, which was part of the banking corporation run by Hudson Bay Company.

John continued with his hobby of sketching and drew some of the senior office members of Sale and Company. George Sale - the son of the company director - was impressed with John's talent.



John Frith: The Man

Frith stripped back the layers of national and international events, exposing their complexities in a simple and humorous way.

In 1927, George Sale offered John a job in the Yokohama offices of their company. John thought this sounded like a wonderful opportunity to see more of the world and he was very impressed with how much more he would be paid in Japan. The luxurious ocean liners 'Majestic' and 'Empress of Asia' took John from England to Japan, via New York and Vancouver.

Once in Japan, it immediately became clear to John that he had been offered this job because of his artistic ability. Almost as soon as he arrived, George Sale whisked him to a company dinner party where he was tasked with drawing all the guests!

John experienced a lot of 'culture shock' while living and working in Japan and Korea. In 1929, he decided he wanted to return to England, so he resigned and joined a co-worker who was moving to Australia. When their ship docked in Sydney, John decided he would stay.

The Great Depression had already started to impact life in Sydney in 1929, but at first this wasn't a problem for John as he had been careful with his savings. Unfortunately, he was conned out of most of his money and left in a very dire situation. His luck changed when he went to Martin Place one day and sketched an 'official looking person' laying a wreath at the cenotaph. By showing this drawing to a few artists at the pub, John inadvertently got the attention of the art editor at The Bulletin. Within a few days, John was offered a job and his career in political cartooning began.



Photograph of Frith c. 1929



John Frith: The Man

Frith was a skilled caricaturist and drew upon his large repertoire of characters to present a sharp and revealing interpretation of Australian politics and life.

John married in 1932. He and his wife, Dorothy, had three children. During their time in Sydney, John worked for The Bulletin from 1929 to 1944, then he became the first political cartoonist to work for The Sydney Morning Herald. In 1950, John took up a new job with The Herald, in Melbourne. John retired in 1969 and went on to enjoy life as a sculptor as well as producing many caricature portraits.

John passed away in 2000.

During John's life and career, he met and worked with some well known and influential historical figures including:

- Ernest Shackleton
- Roald Amundsen
- Norman Lindsay
- Sir Isaac Isaacs
- Robert Menzies
- Ben Chifley
- John Curtin
- Dr Herbert Evatt



John sometimes drew himself in his cartoons, either in caricature form or as a bird.

Keep a tally of how many times you spot this!

On the next page, there is a timeline activity.

John had a long and fascinating life, during which he must have experienced countless momentous events.

Imagine what some of these events were and add them along side John's timeline.

What are some events that John experienced or people that he met that you would like to know more about?



Which events would you add to these timelines that John Frith lived to see?

World events



John Frith

1906

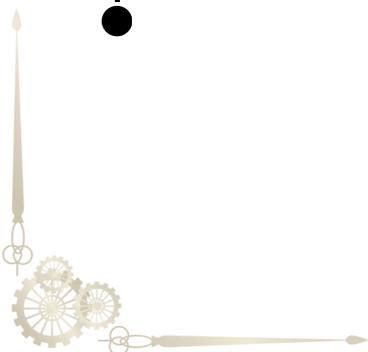
Born in England

- 1909** ● Father died
Attended boarding school
- 1922** ● Dreadnought program in Australia
- 1923** ● Returned to the UK; began working life
- 1927** ● Sent to Japan by employer
Stopped in Sydney on return to UK.
- 1929** ● Decided to stay.
Began working for The Bulletin
- 1932** ● Married Dorothy Mae Horseley
- 1944** ● Became the first cartoonist for the Sydney Morning Herald
- 1950** ● Began working for The Herald in Melbourne
- 1969** ● Retired from formal work, continued artistic career

2000

Died in Australia

Australian events



Student Guide: Getting Started

Cartoonists use **multiple techniques** to convey their message.

Build your analytical skills by examining how they combine and work together.



For each cartoon think about:

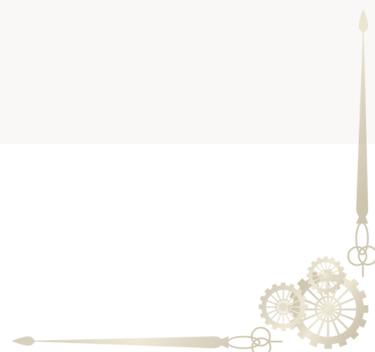
Techniques:

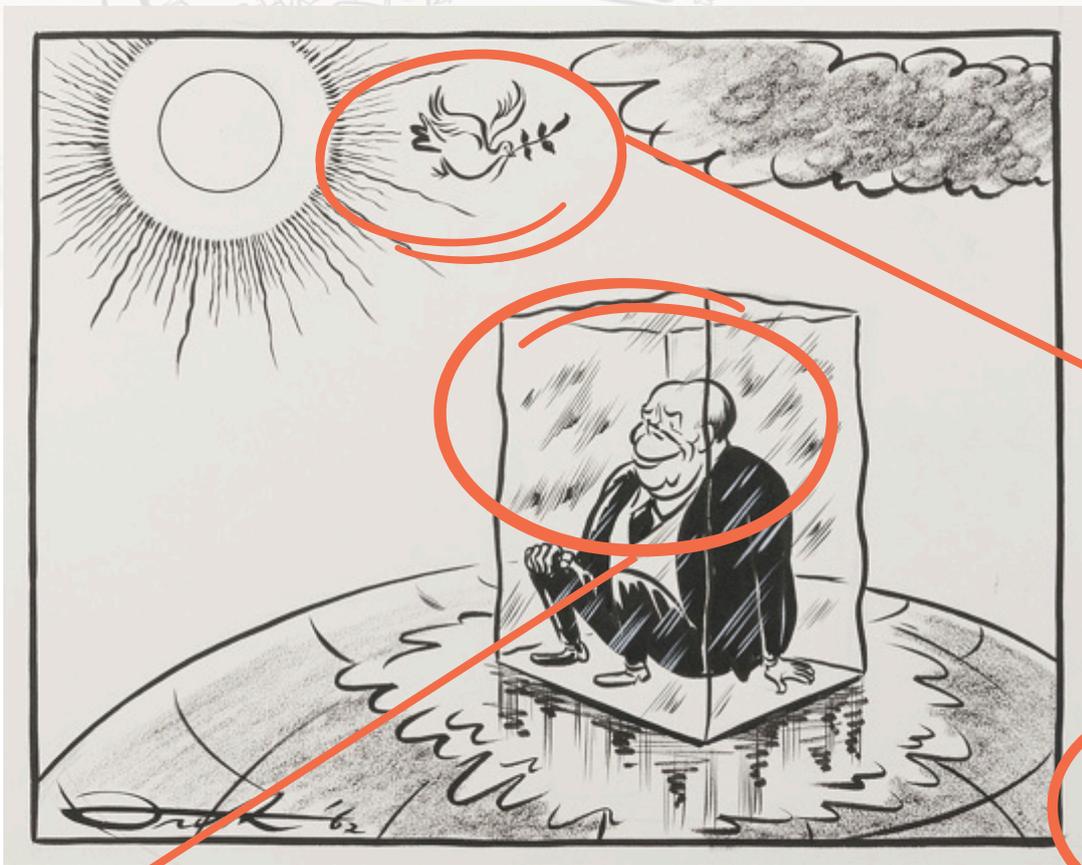
- **Context** - When was this cartoon created? What issues do you recognise in the image?
- **Text** - Are there any signs, captions, speech bubbles, puns, topics of discussion? If so, what information is included?
- **Symbolism** - What symbols can you see? Do they add any context or message?
- **Caricature** - Can you identify any personal features? Who is this image representing?
- **Stereotypes** - Are there any stereotypes present? If so, what are they?
- **Humour** - What forms of humour have been used? What effect might this have?
- **Pop Culture** - Are there any references to popular culture in the image? If so, what are they?



Questions:

- Describe what you can see happening. What overall message is being conveyed?
- What can you learn about the attitudes in Australian society at the time this cartoon was published?
- What more would you like to know about this topic?





Symbol - peace dove.

'Thawing out?'
14 December 1962
The Herald

Caricature - Soviet Union leader Nikita Khrushchev's features have been exaggerated, such as his balding head and round face.

Context- date of publication. 1962 was during the Cold War.

Humour - use of a pun in 'thawing'.



Try this!

Here is one way you can start to **analyse** a cartoon. You can use this example to guide you as you **investigate** other historical political cartoons.

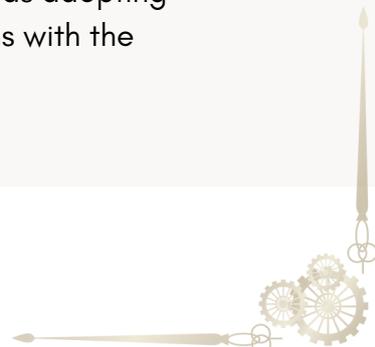
Description:

John Frith has drawn Khrushchev inside a melting ice cube while sitting on top of the world. The sun is shining and a peace dove is flying overhead. Frith uses the title of the cartoon as a question to readers.

Historical context:

This cartoon was drawn during the Cold War. Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev was adopting a less aggressive posture in order to improve diplomatic and economic relations with the U.S.A.

- **What would you add to this analysis?**





'Decree Nisi of consent with custody of child'.

29 September 1943
The Bulletin

Historical Context

In 1943, the Labor Party, led by Prime Minister John Curtin, was re-elected with a significant increase of seats in the House of Representatives in the federal election. The opposition was made up of a coalition of the United Australia Party and the Country Party. In response to the results of the election, the opposition parties decided to end their coalition.

Decree nisi is the legal term (from Latin) that means a court has decided that a divorce can proceed.

Let's Investigate

John Frith has drawn the leaders of the opposition parties as a divorcing couple.

Connect each politician to the role Frith has drawn them in:

- | | |
|------------------|----------|
| ◦ Robert Menzies | ◦ Mother |
| ◦ Arthur Fadden | ◦ Child |
| ◦ Billy Hughes | ◦ Father |

- Which features and characteristics has Frith used to help you identify each politician?
- What do you think Frith is suggesting about the personalities of each politician in this cartoon?
- Why do you think Frith has depicted the political separation of the opposition parties as a 'divorce'?
- Why does the 'father' have custody of the 'child'? Describe how you think the 'father' feels about this.
- Which significant global event was happening at the time this cartoon was published?
- How useful is this cartoon in helping you to understand some of the attitudes about politicians from this era? How does this compare to current attitudes?





'Curse The Press!'

c. 1945
Sydney Morning Herald

Historical Context

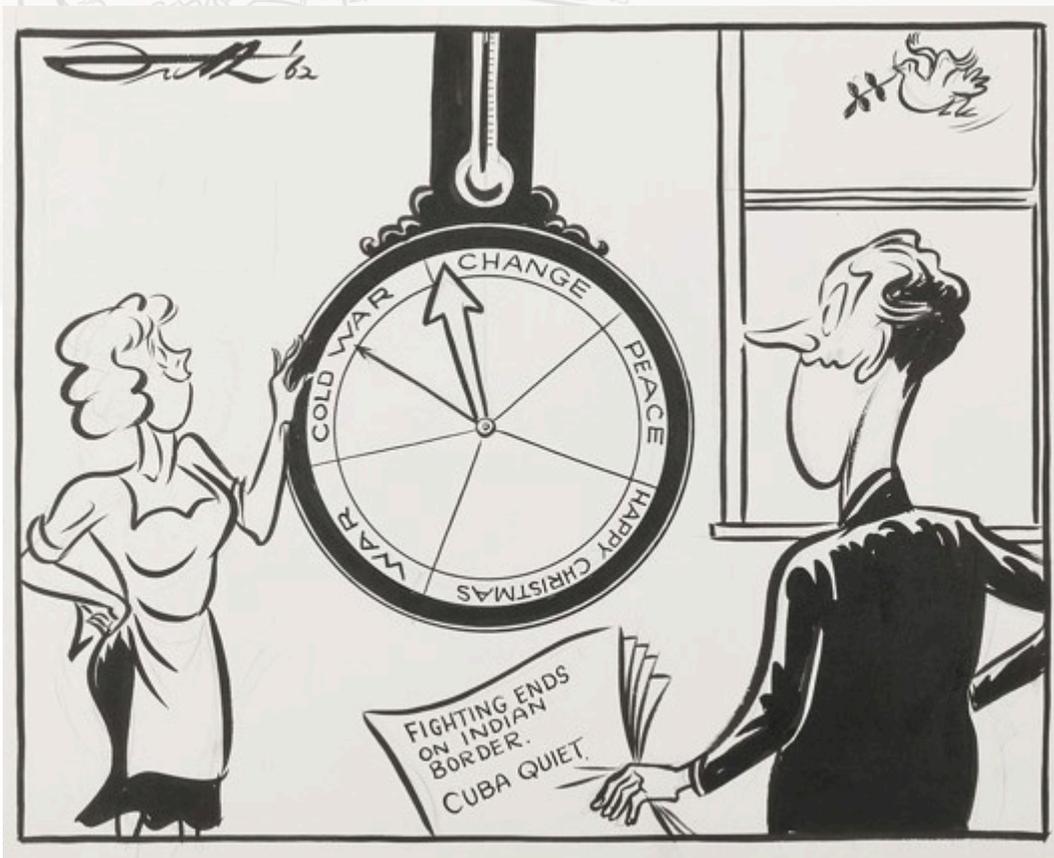
One of the first tasks John Frith was given when he began with the Sydney Morning Herald was to focus on the Minister for Information, Arthur Calwell. Calwell repeatedly complained about the press and had a rough voice, so when Frith began depicting him as 'Cocky Calwell', the editors were delighted. When Frith began working in Melbourne, he was asked to stop drawing Calwell, the Federal Member for the electorate of Melbourne this way, as it was seen as too disrespectful if it came from his home town newspaper.

Let's Investigate

- Which world event was coming to an end when this cartoon was published?
- What message does this cartoon send about Arthur Calwell?
 - How has this been conveyed?
 - How successful do you think Frith has been at conveying this message?
- How do you think Mr Calwell might have responded to being drawn as a screeching cockatoo?
- Why do you think Frith has drawn the cockatoo with most of its feathers gone?

Arthur Calwell was the Federal Member for the electorate of Melbourne from 1940 - 1972.

- Find out who holds this electorate today and look for political cartoons about this person, then compare how they are depicted with Arthur Calwell.



'Thank heaven - the barometer is rising!'

23 November 1962
The Herald

Historical Context

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union secretly installed nuclear-armed missiles in Cuba to launch attacks on the United States of America. In October 1962, this resulted in an international confrontation known as the Cuban Missile Crisis. While most of the world was focused on this crisis, with the real threat of a nuclear war, the Chinese Army invaded the Aksai Chin region of the Chinese-Indian border.

Let's Investigate

John Frith has drawn two people looking at a barometer, one is holding a newspaper. A barometer is a weather instrument used to measure atmospheric pressure. When pressure is low, this indicates that the weather is worsening or a storm is on the way.

- What do you think Frith meant by adding the text 'thank heaven - the barometer is rising'?
- What does the text on the barometer and the newspaper tell you?

Frith's barometer has two arrows.

- What are they pointing to? What does this tell you?
- What symbols and stereotypes do you recognise?
 - What comparisons about stereotypes can you make between the 1960s and today?
- What do you think Frith wants the reader to understand from this cartoon?
- How effectively has Frith conveyed this message?
- How do you think readers might have been feeling at the time this cartoon was published?



'De Gaulle and Adenauer seal friendship pact with a kiss.'

24 January 1963
The Herald

Historical Context

January 1963 saw the signing of the historic Elysee Treaty in Paris, France. This treaty between France and Western Germany ended centuries of French–German conflict and began a strong political and social alliance. French President De Gaulle and German Federal Chancellor Adenauer also sealed this treaty with a kiss on the cheek, a French custom of friendship.

Let's Investigate

- John Frith has imagined other adversarial leaders performing the same act of friendship as France and Germany's leaders. Connect each person with their leadership title:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Prime Minister of Israel ◦ President of Cuba ◦ Australian Prime Minister ◦ President U.S.S.R ◦ German Federal Chancellor ◦ President of Egypt ◦ President U.S.A ◦ Chairman of the People's Republic of China ◦ Australian Opposition Leader ◦ President of France 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Gamal Abdel Nasser ◦ Charles De Gaulle ◦ Konrad Adenauer ◦ David Ben-Gurion ◦ John F Kennedy ◦ Robert Menzies ◦ Mao Zedong ◦ Arthur Calwell ◦ Fidel Castro ◦ Nikita Khrushchev
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- What are the characteristics that Frith has used to identify each leader?
- What do you think of Frith's idea that other leaders could follow the example set by De Gaulle and Adenauer?
- Why is the Elysee Treaty still important today? What might not exist without it?
- What current conflicts would you like to see end with a pact of friendship and peace?



'He'll be even harder to handle now!'

13 March 1963
The Herald

Historical Context

In March 1963, public notification was made that Prime Minister Robert Menzies would be the first Australian to be appointed a Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle by Queen Elizabeth II. This order was reserved for just twelve people of Scottish heritage at a time. Menzies' formal knighthood ceremony was held in July 1963.

Let's Investigate

Frith has drawn Prime Minister Menzies as a thistle flower with opposition leader Arthur Calwell on the right.

- What messages do you think Frith is inferring with the title of this cartoon?
- How would you describe Menzies' personality using only this cartoon?
 - How realistic do you think this might be?

Being awarded a title such as 'Knight of the Thistle' is a rare event, particularly for an Australian.

- How do you think this kind of honour was perceived in Australian culture and society in the 1960s?
 - What are your opinions about this kind of honour today?
 - What are some of the factors that influence your opinion?
- Do you think Knighthoods and other elite honours are relevant today?
 - Share some of your reasons for your answer.
 - What are some of the values and attributes that you think deserve attention and status in Australian politics, culture and society today?



'Mind the cobwebs! ...
and this is where the
senators sit WHEN they
sit.'

9 May 1963
The Herald

Historical Context

The Herald reported that members of the Senate were spending an average of six hours each month in the Senate chamber.

Let's Investigate

John Frith has drawn a tour guide showing visitors the entrance to the Senate chamber at Parliament House.

- How would you describe the emotional **tone** of this cartoon?
 - Which techniques has Frith used to achieve this?
 - How fair do you think this is?

Hansard records show that in 1963, Senators had 42 sitting days.

- How does this compare to current numbers?
- What changes can you think of that might have influenced these numbers?
- What do Senators do when they are not working in the Senate?
- What other roles in parliament are some Senators responsible for?

Find out what the 1962-1963 select Senate committee was focused on.

- What impact do you think this senate committee has had on modern Australian media?





'Ready...Aim...WAIT!'

17 May 1963
The Herald

Historical Context

This cartoon was published with the caption: *'We'd like this nailed up, too!'*

The Australian Coalition government was negotiating with the US government for a naval signal station to be located in Australia. The Australian Labor Party, in opposition, wanted the right to stop any signals that would authorise an attack that the Australian government did not agree with. The 1963 lease to the US government did not allow any degree of control over the station or its use by Australia.

The signal station was:

- commissioned in 1967
- built in Exmouth, Western Australia
- named Naval Communication Station Harold E. Holt, in memory of Prime Minister Holt in 1968.

Today, it:

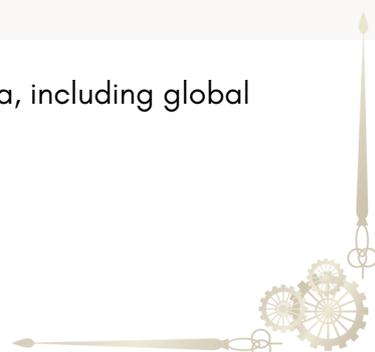
- is the most powerful transmission station in the southern hemisphere
- provides very low frequency radio transmission to both US Navy and Royal Australian Navy ships and submarines
- is used in the western Pacific and eastern Indian oceans.

Let's Investigate

- Why do you think Frith has drawn Arthur Calwell wearing a Roman centurion's helmet?
- What are your opinions about the 1963 lease?
 - How fair to Australia was this lease?
- Do you agree with Calwell's request that Australia be consulted if an attack was authorised by the US government?
 - Share your reasons for your answer.

The 1970s saw significant protest against this US military presence in Australia, including global concerns about the use of nuclear missiles.

- What are some of the costs of this kind of installation for Australia?
 - What are some of the benefits?





'Crazy Mirrors'

11 June 1963
The Herald

Historical Context

Soviet Union Leader Nikita Khrushchev and American President John F. Kennedy were attempting to negotiate a treaty that would ban nuclear weapons testing. Both leaders were under pressure to be seen as tough with one another.



Let's Investigate

This cartoon was published with the caption: *'We'd see more clearly if we looked straight at each other.'*

- What can you learn from this caption?
- Does this caption help your understanding of this cartoon and its title? Share your reasons for your answer.
- Which 'war' was ongoing when this cartoon was published?
- How would you describe the depiction of the two leaders in the mirror?
 - Why do you think Frith has used this imagery?
 - How does this imagery make you feel?

Deeper historical context for this cartoon goes back to the Second World War, when the U.S.A dropped nuclear weapons on Japan at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.

- Why do you think 1963 world leaders were trying to secure the nuclear weapons testing ban?

The Partial Test Treaty Ban was signed in August 1963 by the U.S.A., U.S.S.R and the UK.

- How do you think people felt about this at the time?
- Do you think this kind of treaty is still important today? Share your reasons for your answer.
- Which political leaders of today do you think could replace Kennedy and Khrushchev in this cartoon?





'The Clouded Crystal Ball'

9 October 1963
The Herald

Historical Context

This cartoon was printed with the caption: *'No, I can't see the election date in this'.*

A federal election was not due until 1964 but had been speculated about for some time. Frith has depicted Prime Minister Menzies as the fortune teller, with opposition leader Calwell as the seated customer and the deputy opposition leader, Whitlam, standing behind him.

Let's Investigate

John Frith has drawn Prime Minister Menzies as a fortune teller.

- Why do you think Frith has used the imagery of a fortune teller?
- What symbol has Frith used to help you identify Menzies?
- Why do you think Frith has given this the title 'The Clouded Crystal Ball'?
- In Australia's democracy, who has the power to call a federal election?
- How would you describe the expressions of the faces of Calwell and Whitlam?
- What are some of the reasons that you can think of that would make Menzies take his time in declaring when a federal election would be held?
- How do you think the Australian people might have been feeling about this period of uncertainty about the next election?

Menzies eventually declared the federal election for 30 November 1963.

The Liberal-Country Party coalition (led by Menzies) went on to win a seventh consecutive term. This is the only time a party has held government for this long.

- Do you think that a political party could achieve this again in Australia?
 - Share some reasons for your answer.



20 November 1963
The Herald

Historical Context

Federal treasurer, Harold Holt, had accused opposition leader, Arthur Calwell, of wanting to replace the preferential voting system with the 'first past the post' system.

Let's Investigate

John Frith has drawn Prime Minister Menzies and Arthur Calwell as cricket batsmen.

- Why do you think Frith chose this sport?
- What do you think Frith wants the reader to think when they look at the cricket bats and who is holding them?
- Which words would you use to describe how Frith has depicted Menzies and Calwell?
 - What do you imagine they might be saying to one another?

If the 'first past the post' voting system had been used, Calwell's Labor Party would have won the 1961 federal election.

Compare the two voting systems.

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each system?
- Which system do you prefer? Why?

This cartoon was published 10 days before the 1963 federal election.

- What impact do you think this cartoon might have had on voters?

This cartoon was published without a title.

- What title would you use?



26 November 1963
The Herald

Historical Context

On November 22nd 1963, the American President, John F. Kennedy, was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. The funeral was held on November 25th.



Let's Investigate

This cartoon has no title.

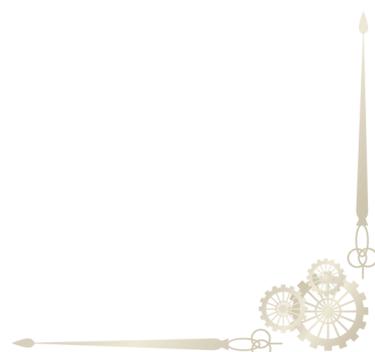
- Why do you think John Frith might have made this decision?
- What impact do you think this decision had on readers in 1963?
- How does this impact you as a reader now?
- Do you think this cartoon needs historical context for you to know what it is about?
Share some reasons for your answer.

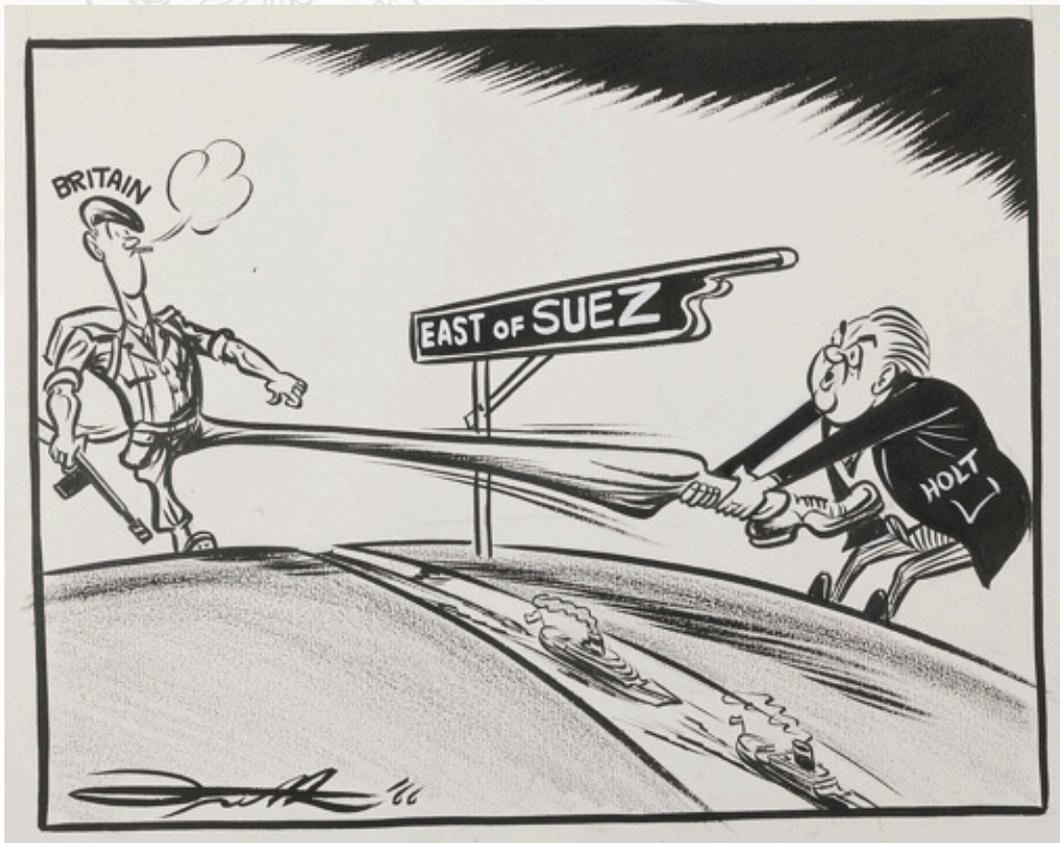
The Australian Federal Election was held on November 30th, 1963.

The government, led by Robert Menzies, retained power and gained 10 seats in the House of Representatives.

The opposition leader, Arthur Calwell claimed that the Kennedy assassination had been a significant distraction for voters. In 1963, while enrolling to vote was compulsory, voting was not. Voting became compulsory in Australia in 1984.

- Do you agree with Calwell's claims?
- Do you think compulsory voting is a good idea?
Share some reasons for your answers.





'Operation Stretch'

1 June 1966
The Herald

Historical Context

The United Kingdom's 1966 Defence White Paper recommended major changes to their defence policy. These changes would see the removal of British troops from Singapore, Malaysia and parts of the Middle East. These regions were referred to as "East of Suez" as they are located to the east of the Suez Canal in Egypt. The Australian Prime Minister, Harold Holt, didn't agree with this recommendation.

Let's Investigate

This cartoon was published with the caption: 'Don't take your foot away—yet.'

- What do you think John Frith wanted the reader to understand by adding this caption?
- How do you think Australians might have been feeling about the British Forces leaving this region?

From 1962, Australian Defence Forces had been involved in wars in Borneo and Vietnam. The problem of increasing the number of servicepeople had been addressed in 1964, with the introduction of the National Service Act, which allowed for the use of conscription to help grow the Australian Army. The first troops to be conscripted did not leave Australia until the first half of 1966.

- Why do you think Frith has drawn Harold Holt holding onto the leg of the British soldier?
- How would you explain the title Frith has used for this cartoon?
- What are some of the consequences for Australia as a result of the British decision to remove troops from the region?
- Which countries joined Australia and the U.K. in the Five Powers Defence Arrangements that were established in 1971 after this White Paper decision?
 - Is this still active today?



'Reluctant Striptease'

12 October 1967
The Herald

Historical Context

During the Vietnam War, the U.S.A had begun 'Operation Rolling Thunder' in 1965. This involved the heaving bombing of North Vietnam with the intention of forcing them to stop their support of the communist insurgency in South Vietnam.

In 1967, the South Vietnamese President-elect, Nguyen Van Thieu, planned peace talks with the leader of North Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh. One suggestion from Thieu was to offer a bombing 'freeze' to Minh.

Let's Investigate

John Frith has drawn Ho Chi Minh as an audience member interrupting a performance by Paul Hasluck and Lyndon B. Johnson.

Match each person with their correct title.

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| • Ho Chi Minh | • Australian Minister for External Affairs |
| • Lyndon B. Johnson | • Leader of North Vietnam |
| • Paul Hasluck | • President, U.S.A. |

- Why do you think Frith has drawn this imagined interaction as a 'striptease' performance?
- Why do you think Frith has described this as 'reluctant'?
- What do you think Hasluck might be saying in this scenario?

Minister Hasluck supported President Johnson's plans to continue the bombing campaign in North Vietnam.

- What are some reasons you can think that Hasluck and the Australian government had for this support?
- Do you agree with this support? Share reasons for your answer.



8 April 1968
The Herald

Historical Context

Martin Luther King Jr. was a civil rights activist and leader in the United States of America. When Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee on April 4, 1968, riots broke out in more than 100 cities across the U.S.A. April 7, 1968 was declared national day of mourning. The funeral service was held on April 9.

Let's Investigate

This cartoon has been published with no title or caption.

- Why do you think John Frith chose to do this?
- Which words would you use to describe this cartoon?
- What title and caption would you apply to this cartoon?
- How does this cartoon make you feel?
- Which city is this cartoon set in?

On August 28, 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. went to the Lincoln Memorial in Washington as part of a civil rights march. There, he delivered his now famous 'I have a Dream' speech, which included these lines:

"We have come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now.
... Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy."

In the U.S.A., Martin Luther King Jr. is honoured each year on the 3rd Monday in January, to coincide with his birthday of January 15.

- What impact do you think the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. had on people's thoughts and feelings about civil rights movements everywhere?
- Who are some Australian civil rights activists that you know about?



'Voice of Defiance'

29 August 1968
The Herald

Historical Context

Czechoslovakian civilians were protesting the Soviet Union-led invasion and its aftermath. Over 250 000 Warsaw Pact troops invaded Czechoslovakia on August 20th 1968, in response to the democratic reforms the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia had begun to implement earlier in 1968 in what was called the 'Prague Spring'. Some protesters were killed and injured; others continued to protest against this invasion on the Czechoslovakian Day of Independence, August 28th.

Let's Investigate

John Frith has drawn the protestor and the soldier with massive size differences.

- Why do you think he did this?
- What are some words you would use to describe the protestor and the soldier as Frith has drawn them?

Frith has drawn the protestor shouting through the head of the soldier.

- What does this tell you about the situation in the cartoon?
- How does this situation make you feel?

Frith has used the symbol of the hammer and sickle on the soldiers uniform.

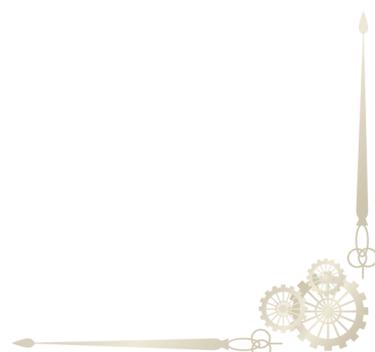
- What does this symbol represent and why do you think Frith chose it?

This invasion was condemned by many countries, including communist-led ones. Democratic countries such as the U.S.A. and Australia were critical, but did not act to support the Czechoslovakian people.

- What events had happened and were ongoing that would have contributed to this decision?

Many of the protestors were students.

- What do you think of their decision to protest?
- Would you have joined them? Share some reasons for your answer.



John Frith's advice to aspiring cartoonists

'Well, to be a successful cartoonist, to start with you must be a successful caricaturist, because you don't want to draw a cartoon with one or multiple figures and have to label each one. Never in my lifetime did I have to label Menzies or Bolte or Hughes or even Greg Norman in the sport world. They all look like the people that I am drawing, and that is one of the great essentials.'



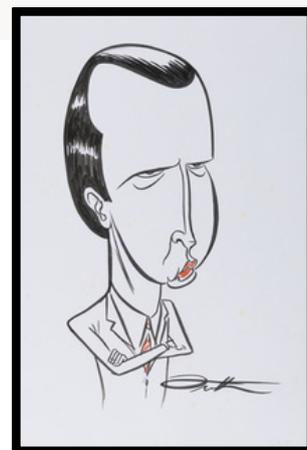
Prime Minister Gough Whitlam

'So for any young person desirous of being a cartoonist, you should bear in mind: don't present any work or seek a job with any newspaper at all until you've pretty well mastered the art of caricature.'



Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser

'And then when you've mastered that, you've got to be able to think for yourself and make sure you think in simple terms inasmuch as when you draw a cartoon, you're not drawing it for the super-intelligent person or just the intelligent person, because each and every one of us is made differently. Our brains work differently and our eyes work differently.'



Prime Minister Paul Keating

'... The cartoon point must be made clear and if you haven't made it clear within ten to twelve seconds, then that person is going to turn the page and he's got no more interest in your cartoon.'



Opposition Leader
Andrew Peacock

... And I must admit it's given me a great deal of pleasure.'

This quote is taken from the oral history recording made with John Frith in 1994, held in the National Library of Australia collection

