

**ACTIVITY 10**

**Interpreting Political Cartoons**



**The Embargo Act of 1807**

By 1807 the United States found itself right in the middle of the French-British dispute. France would not allow United States ships to trade with Britain, and Britain would not allow United States trade with France. United States ships bound for Europe were often stopped by the British or the French. Sometimes they were stopped by both.

Thomas Jefferson hoped to preserve United States neutrality. He got Congress to pass the Embargo Act of 1807, which made it illegal for United States merchants to import or export goods. While the embargo hurt Britain and France, it hurt the United States more. The region of the country that felt the greatest blow was New England, where economic survival depended on trading with foreign countries.

In this environment, the Embargo Act became the subject of many cartoons, both pro and con.

The cartoon on this page takes a strong stand on the act. Study the cartoon, then answer the questions that follow.

**OGRABME, or, The American Snapping-turtle**



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### Analyzing the Cartoon

1. The snapping turtle in this cartoon represents the Embargo Act of 1807. Who does the man with the barrel represent? What is he trying to do?

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2. Note the ship waiting offshore. To which country does the ship belong? How do you know this? What is the ship waiting for?

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### ★ ★ ★ CRITICAL THINKING ★ ★ ★

3. **Analyzing Information** Americans had fun playing with the letters of the word *embargo*. What is the meaning of the statement of the smuggler, "Oh! this cursed Ograbme!"?

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4. **Making Generalizations** Is the cartoonist in favor of or against the Embargo Act? Explain your answer.

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5. **Drawing Conclusions** Like the smuggler in the cartoon, play with the letters of the words "Embargo Act." Create any words or statements that use the letters in "Embargo Act." You can use any letters more than once. You do not need to use all the letters.

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