

**TEACHER GUIDE**

# 1832 DOC. #2: King Andrew Handbill

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

One of the consequences of Jackson’s popularity and power was an increase in personal attacks on him in print. Before Jackson, political cartoonists typically criticized the President indirectly, but Jackson appeared bigger than life with his commanding style that challenged Congress, the courts, and the banks. His powerful presence made a clear target for his enemies.

Jackson’s opposition to the Bank of the United States, which he called the “Mammoth Monopoly,” became a central issue in the campaign of 1832. In July 1832 President Jackson vetoed a bill to re-charter the Bank on the grounds that it was inefficient, monopolistic, and profitable mainly to foreigners and wealthy aristocrats. Some who opposed the Bank wanted to get more currency in circulation by the issuance of paper money not tied to gold and silver. Jackson opposed this “soft money” position and felt that all currency must be based on gold or silver. Shortly after the veto he traveled from Washington to the Hermitage, his home, paying for all expenses only in gold as a means to reinforce his support for “hard money.”

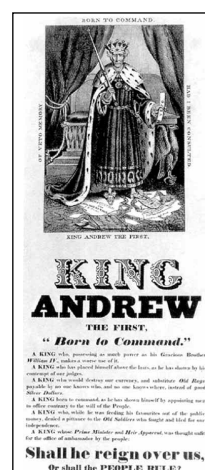
The reference to King William IV of England is to the son of King George III whose rule the colonists had overthrown in the American Revolution.

Jackson’s “heir apparent” was Martin Van Buren whose appointment as ambassador to Britain was denied in the Senate by then Vice President John Calhoun’s tie-breaking vote. Van Buren later replaced Calhoun as Jackson’s running mate in 1832.

> **Project 1832 doc. #2a.**

QUESTION	<b>On first glance is this a pro-Jackson or anti-Jackson image? Why?</b>
SUGGESTED ANSWER	It’s anti-Jackson.
EVIDENCE	“King Andrew, Born to Command” portrays Andrew Jackson as a king in the British imperial tradition; most voters would remember the tyranny their parents’ generation fought to overcome during the American Revolution

**1832 DOC. #2a**



**King Andrew Handbill**

**PowerPoint Slide**

**QUESTION** How does the illustrator attempt to persuade viewers that Jackson acts like a king?

**SUGGESTED ANSWER** He has a throne, a robe, and a crown. He is trampling on the Constitution and on the U.S. Bank. He is holding a veto in one hand, and a scepter in the other.

> **Project** 1832 doc. #2b.

**QUESTION** What are the different criticisms of Jackson on the handbill? Give evidence from the document to support your claim.

**SUGGESTED ANSWER** Jackson is becoming like a king.

**EVIDENCE** text “King Andrew”; images of thrown, crown, trampling on the Constitution and the U.S. Bank

**SUGGESTED ANSWER** Jackson’s vetoes give him too much power.

**EVIDENCE** holding a veto in one hand and a scepter in the other

**SUGGESTED ANSWER** Jackson supports political patronage.

**EVIDENCE** “...feeding his favorites out of the public money...”

**SUGGESTED ANSWER** Jackson will abandon gold and silver for paper money.

**EVIDENCE** text “destroy our currency, and substitute old rags...”

**SEE NOTE**

**NOTE**

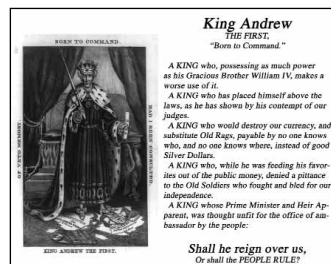
This criticism distorts Jackson’s support for “hard money.”

**FURTHER QUESTIONS**

Can you think of current examples where a President has been accused of over-stepping his power? Is it good or bad for our democratic system for a President to be challenged in this way?

Do cartoonists have the power to change people’s minds about a candidate? Why or why not?

**1832 DOC. #2b**



**King Andrew Handbill (Cut Up)**

**PowerPoint Slide**

**ADDITIONAL INFO**

Jackson’s opponents, who would later become the Whig party, had been long critical of his assumption of “imperial” authority going back to Jackson’s unauthorized conquest of Spanish Florida in 1818. Henry Clay, in particular, has suggested that Jackson wanted to become a military dictator in the mold of Julius Caesar or Napoleon Bonaparte. In addition the Whigs were concerned about Jackson’s unprecedented use of vetoes for political purposes and his opposition to the U.S. Bank. Washington’s oldest newspaper, the *National Intelligencer*, editorialized that Jackson’s bank veto had rendered the Constitution a “dead letter” and the “will of a DICTATOR ... the Supreme Law!”

**CONNECTIONS**

(see thematic listing)

**Attack Fear**

Incumbent presidents have sometimes been attacked for having unchecked power. In 1940 when Franklin Roosevelt ran for an unprecedented 3rd term some accused him of becoming a potential dictator (1940 doc. #2). In 1972 cartoonist Herblock critiqued the corruption of the powerful and popular Nixon administration and predicted its downfall (1972 doc. #4).