

TEACHER GUIDE

1872 DOC. #2: Grant “The Working-Man’s Banner”

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

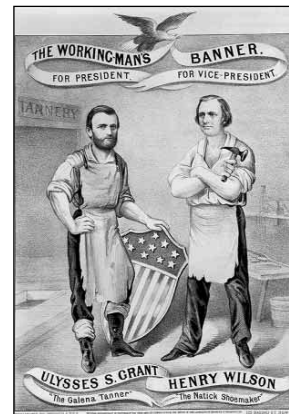
Appeals to the “common man” had become familiar since the 1828 campaign of Andrew Jackson. In earlier campaigns these appeals often centered on farmers and frontiersmen, such as Abe Lincoln as the “rail splitter.” By the second half of the 19th century workers in the industrial cities of the North were becoming a large and important segment of the voting public and presidential campaign imagery shifted to court those new votes.

> **Project** the document.

This banner in support of the Republican ticket was made for the 1872 campaign by the famous printers Currier & Ives. Grant had worked for a short time tanning animal hides in a leather store in Galena, Illinois. Grant’s running mate, Henry Wilson of Natick, Massachusetts, had once worked in a shoe factory. The Republican Party formed “Tanner Clubs” to organize rallies for their candidates.

QUESTION	What messages about the candidates are communicated? What is your evidence?
SUGGESTED ANSWER	They are working men.
EVIDENCE	“The Working-Man’s Banner,” “The Galena Tanner,” “The Natick Shoemaker”; the candidates are dressed like workers and holding the tools of their trade
QUESTION	Who is the target audience for this banner? What is your evidence?
SUGGESTED ANSWER	The target audience is blue collar workers in the growing industrial cities of the North.
EVIDENCE	“Working-Man’s” title and images suggest that Grant and Wilson were “working men just like you”; by contrast Horace Greeley was a newspaper editor and thus “not like you”

1872 DOC. #2



Grant “The Working-Man’s Banner”

PowerPoint Slide

FURTHER QUESTIONS

Since most Presidents have come from great wealth, why do candidates try so hard to appear like they're from the working class?

Does Grant's experience as a tanner and Wilson's experience as a shoemaker make them more or less qualified for the offices they are seeking?

What do appeals to the "common man/woman" look like today?

CONNECTIONS

(see thematic listing)

Class/Labor

Commoner

Target Audience (working class)