

## TOPIC 5 – BOSSES AND REFORMERS

### Topic Overview

Topic 5 highlights the struggle for political control of North Dakota during the early days of statehood. It includes primary sources that will help you understand ways in which influential political leaders gained and used their power to shape the politics, policies, and government of North Dakota.

### Topic Objectives

- As a result of the study of Topic 5, you will be able to
  - Analyze and interpret primary documents.
  - Examine motives and methods used by early bosses and reformers in shaping the political landscape of North Dakota.

### ND Content Standards

- 8.1.2
- 8.4.1
- 8.4.4

### Common Core Standards

- RH 2
- RH3
- RH8
- WHST1
- WHST 2
- WHST 9

### Topic Activities

- Learning from Historical Documents
- Organizing Data
- Creative Interpretation



### Learning from Historical Documents

To access a photo/document/map, refer to the topic reading assignment or use the SEARCH feature to enter its name or number.

Topic 5 addresses political changes that took place in North Dakota between 1861 and 1920. This was a time of significant political and economic growth and is one of the most exciting and complex periods of North Dakota's history. As the territory moved toward statehood, the people wrestled with political questions and struggled to find the answers they sought. To gain an understanding of events and changes, historians go to primary sources in the search for evidence about what happened in the past and why.

Political cartoons are primary sources that are used to present opinions, comments, or criticisms of a situation, person, or event. Political cartoons use humor, exaggerations, and other emotional appeals to sway the opinions of others. These opinions brought forth in political cartoons are often heavily biased. The cartoons may be satirical or serious in tone, depending on the audience, the artist, and the idea illustrated.

Use the following steps to analyze **Political Cartoon McKenzie** so you can conclude what the artist is trying to convey:

Step 1: Take a few minutes to look closely at the cartoon, taking time to read the words and notice as many details as possible.

Step 2: Identify the cartoon caption and/or title.

Step 3: Make a list of the objects and/or people in the cartoon. Look for any labels that appear in the cartoon and ask yourself why the cartoonist chose to label that particular person or object. Record your ideas.

Step 4: Describe what is happening in the cartoon – provide important clues (words, phrases, etc.) – in your response.

Step 5: What do you think is the political or social message of the cartoon? Explain.

## Organizing Data

A statue of John Burke is located on the North Dakota State Capitol Grounds and also in the National Statuary Hall of the Capitol Building in Washington, D. C.

In the box below, list characteristics that made John Burke stand out as one of the most distinguished and honored North Dakotans. Discuss with a partner or small group whether you think he would be as popular today as he was in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Give reasons to support your stance.

### John Burke

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## Creative Interpretation

To access a photo/document/map, refer to the topic reading assignment or use the SEARCH feature to enter its name or number.

Alexander McKenzie was known as the “political boss” of North Dakota. From your reading and viewing the political cartoon entitled *Getting Ready To Carry The State* **Political Cartoon McKenzie**, list contributions Alexander McKenzie made to North Dakota. From these points, create a short biography of Alexander McKenzie to use in introducing him to another class member or small group.

This activity lends itself well as an extension to the *Learning from Historical Documents* activity.

### Contributions of Alexander McKenzie to North Dakota

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### Introduction of Alexander McKenzie