

REFUGEES

The 1951 United Nations Convention defines the term “refugee” as follows:

“A person who owing to a **well-founded fear** of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, **owing to** such fear, is **unwilling to avail himself** of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.”

Please download the following document:

<https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0003/7967/Tell it Like it is May 2016.pdf>

1. Before reading it, make sure you make a list of all possible stereotypes that are often used about refugees.
2. To what extent can you say that this document debunks stereotypes usually used about refugees? Explain how the stereotypes are debunked. You should try to remember some figures in order to be able to illustrate your arguments in an oral commentary.
3. For more definitions and the differences between “Refugee,” “Asylum seeker,” “Refused asylum seeker,” “Economic migrant,” please read the beginning of the document. Again, you should remember about the differences in order to be able to comment on the use of these words by politicians etc. The words used are likely to indicate what politicians think about refugees.

TEXT 1

(Check the vocabulary in yellow in a dictionary: www.wordreference.com for example)

Summarize the text in about 200 words, using your own words.

French media have mostly talked about the refugee crisis in Europe. Were they right to do so? Why? Why not?

Try to remember some particular cases which are described in the text, in order to illustrate your arguments in an oral commentary.

Do you think “summits” are efficient when it comes to issues like the refugee crisis?

Why won't ¹the world **tackle** the refugee crisis?

Two summits this week will try to address the 65 million displaced and 20 million in danger. But they are under fire before talks have even begun

¹ Ici le will/won't indique la volonté / Exemple typique: “Will you marry me?” “I will... or [if there is a problem...] I won't.”



About 150 refugees and migrants wait for help during a rescue operation on the Mediterranean Sea off Libya. Photograph: Santi Palacios/AP
Tracy McVeigh and Mark Townsend
Sat 17 Sep 2016 *The Guardian*

§1. It is now the greatest movement of **the uprooted** that the world has ever known. Some 65 million people have been displaced from their homes, 21.3 million of them refugees for whom **flight** is virtually compulsory – involuntary victims of politics, war or natural catastrophe.

§2. With just less than 1% of the world's population **homeless and seeking a better, safer life, a global crisis is under way**, exacerbated by a lack of political cooperation – and several states, including the United Kingdom, are **flouting² international agreements** designed to deal with the crisis.

§3. This week's two major summits in New York, called by the United Nations general assembly and by President Barack Obama, are coming under intense criticism before the first world leaders have even taken their seats.

§4. Amnesty, Human Rights Watch and refugee charities are among those accusing both summits of being "**toothless**"³ and saying that the declaration expected to be ratified by the UN on Monday imposes no obligations on the 193 general assembly nations to **resettle refugees**.

§5. The **Obama-led summit**, meanwhile, which follows on Tuesday, is designed to extract **pledges of funding** which critics say too often fail to materialise.

§6. Steve Symonds, refugee programme director at Amnesty, said: "Funding is great and very much needed, but it's not going to tackle the central point of some sharing of responsibility. The scale of imbalance there is growing, and growing with disastrous consequences."

§7. He said nations were sabotaging agreements through self-interest. "It's very, very difficult to feel any optimism about this summit or what it will do for people looking for a safe place for them and their

² To flout regulations = to laugh at them, to ignore them

³ toothless here means powerless

families right at this moment, nor tackle the awful actions of countries who are now thinking, ‘If other countries won’t help take responsibility, then why should we?’ and are now driving back desperate people.

§8. “Compelling refugees to go back to countries where there is conflict and instability doesn’t help this awful merry-go-round going on and on.”

§9. Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch, attacked the UN summit as a missed opportunity, adding that “millions of lives hang in the balance”. He said there were now huge concerns that the very foundations of refugee protection were under threat (= jeopardized) from forced repatriation, border walls and aggressive policing by nation states.

§10. The world’s newest country, South Sudan, saw its one millionth citizen flee on Friday – something which may threaten the progressive, welcoming policies of neighbouring Uganda, where migrants are given land and encouraged to contribute.

§11. The figure also represents a miserable milestone for another neighbour, Kenya, where hundreds of thousands of other refugees from the Somalian conflict and famine are already living in camps. The east African nation is threatening to close down the largest, at Dadaab, and is coming under fire for its efforts to start trying to push back refugees into their war-torn countries of origin.

§12. Pakistan is facing the same criticism for its efforts to forcibly return a number of its 2 million Afghan residents, some of whom have been in the country for years. A clampdown on refugees from Syria coming into Jordan – a country which already hosts a million Syrians – has left 75,000 people stranded in a desert no-man’s land between the two countries.

§13. Turkey, Bulgaria and Greece have cited a lack of support from other countries for forcing them to take restrictive action on Syrian and Afghan refugees. Chancellor Angela Merkel’s open-door policy in Germany now looks unstable, because of other European countries reacting to the crisis by firmly closing their doors instead of following the German lead, as she had hoped.

§14. In Britain, both Liberal Democrat leader Tim Farron and Labour’s Yvette Cooper have called on Theresa May to do more when she goes to New York on Monday. Just one sixth of the cash pledged at a summit hosted by David Cameron in London in February to tackle the refugee crisis in Syria has materialised.

§15. Cooper said May needed to show leadership, especially on the situation at Calais. “She must go to this summit to galvanise support for refugees and show that Britain can and will meet our commitments. Right now the decisions parliament and our country have taken are being mired in red tape and government is foot-dragging. Britain has always done its bit to help those fleeing persecution: we have to live up to those values again.”

§16. Farron said he welcomed Obama’s initiative but added: “I am doubtful that anything more substantial than warm words will materialise from this high-level meeting. The thousands of desperate people still drowning in the Mediterranean are testament to the failure of the international community, especially our own government and states across Europe, to safely and fairly deal with refugees fleeing Syria and Iraq, as well as those escaping the poverty of failed states in Africa.”

§17. But it is the very lack of cooperation that makes the UN summit vital, according to Mukesh Kapila, professor of humanitarian affairs at Manchester university and a UN adviser.

§18. “We live in an age where even established principles of humanity and decency are under constant threat,” he said. “In an age where politicians can be elected to power on platforms of lies, and established norms are under threat, there is something to be said for even anodyne statements reiterating our principles.

§19. “Even if world leaders have been forced to turn up by the clever move by Obama to have his own second summit – even if it results in yet more jobs created in New York – it’s still a red line.

§20. “The humanitarian organisations are **rubbing their hands in glee** at being able to patronise and criticise. I challenge their self-serving leaders to propose practical solutions, because a safety valve of free movement which only helps those with the capacity and strength [to travel] is no solution.

§21. “My worry is that this summit will not do refugees a favour because it doesn’t distinguish between refugees and migrants. The big numbers allow governments to use fear and make bad policies.

§22. “The number of true refugees is minuscule: it’s a few days of flights into Heathrow. I have sympathy for people fleeing illegally for a better life – one can’t blame them – but the people facing real poverty cannot put one foot in front of another, let alone **migrate across** oceans and desert: you only do that if you are fleeing real persecution, or are young and strong and your family have **gathered the money together**.”

§23. “It’s great that Ban Ki-Moon has made humanitarian work his focus in his final year, better late than never.”

§24. The UN came into being at the time of the last great refugee crisis, when 40.7 million people were **displaced** from their homes across post-second-world-war Europe, and more in Africa, China and Asia. In that war-battered world, legal and organisational efforts were mounted, two million Soviets were returned home – some forcibly – and millions of concentration-camp survivors, forced labourers and other victims of the Nazis were settled in countries such as France, Belgium, and Greece.

§25. That postwar chaos gave birth to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, which guaranteed a “right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution”, and forbade the arbitrary deprivation of nationality. The Geneva Convention of 1951 defined refugees, accorded them specific rights, and prohibited their forcible return from countries of refuge.

§26. But problems remained. “We have always had enormous difficulty in persuading countries to behave in an international way,” said Kapila, “but we need now to concentrate on root causes of large population migrations, celebrate those with the ability and courage to stay where they are, when they can, and help solve the myriad causes of unhappiness in the world.

§27. “I have no expectations of the summits so I won’t be disappointed,” he said.

§28. But Ariane Rummery, a UNHCR spokeswoman, said that tomorrow’s expected UN declaration was a “miracle”. The UN general assembly is expected to formally adopt a declaration agreed on 2 August, reaffirming the rights of refugees and migrants and pledging support to the countries most affected by large movements of people.

§29. “The sheer number of people forced to flee today means we cannot have ‘business as usual’,” said Rummery. “UNHCR sees the summit as an extremely positive event – a historic opportunity to garner the political will of world leaders to save lives, protect rights and share responsibility on a global scale.

§30. “The criticisms overlook the significance of this summit in the current context. The fact that the text of the New York declaration was agreed by 193 member states of the UN represents a significant achievement – if not a miracle – in the current context of increased displacement, uncertainty, significant pressures on hosting countries and divisive politicised discussions at the national, regional and international level,” she said.

§31. “We need to convert this **political will** into action to address the drivers and causes of displacement, while helping refugees and communities **hosting** them.

§32. “The declaration reaffirms key legal principles of refugee protection, including the institution of asylum and the principles of *non-refoulement*, which prohibits sending people back to countries where they face danger. Importantly, the summit builds upon these key legal instruments to meet the challenges of refugee crises in today’s world, and **garnering more global cooperation and responsibility-sharing.**”

TEXT 2

This text tackled another reason why people can be displaced: climate change.

Before reading the text, can you think of the regions in the world that might be most affected by this problem and why? What could be the consequences? Who do you think should be held responsible for this?

The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees is mentioned again here. Is it adapted to this new situation according to the journalist? Why? Why not?

Explain the reasons why climate change forces or will force people to leave their country.

**Australia urged to prepare for influx of people displaced by climate change
Refugee Council president says new migration category would protect **those fleeing the effects of global warming** and warns that many could be forced from **low-lying Pacific islands****



Kiribati⁴: Toani Benson stands on the ruins of the store that sold him petrol for his school's generator in the mid-1990s. Photograph: Mike Bowers/The Global Mail
Bernard Lagan for the *Global Mail*
Tue 16 Apr 2013

⁴ Check where Kiribati is on a map.

§1. Australia, a close neighbour of small, low-lying South Pacific states at the frontline of climate change, should prepare for an **influx of people displaced by rising sea levels and storms**, the president of the country's main refugee advisory body has said.

§2. Phil Glendenning, president of the Refugee Council of Australia has advised the Australian government that it should prepare to **create a new migration category** for those fleeing the effects of climate change.

§3. No country currently has a special visa category for those displaced by climate change, but Glendenning said there was a new cohort of displaced people emerging and the rest of the world needed **to take notice**.

§4. Glendenning said he was not speaking for the Refugee Council and was not suggesting those displaced by climate change be admitted into Australia as refugees fleeing persecution.

§5. The key legal document that defines refugees, the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, defines a refugee as a person who has a well-founded fear of persecution in their homeland because of their race, religion, nationality of membership of a particular group.

§6. The convention – forged in 1951 in the aftermath of world war two – does not offer protection to those claiming to be endangered by climate change. Its limits were tested in New Zealand last year by a 36-year-old Kiribati man who argued before an immigration tribunal that he should not be **deported** because he feared for his own future and that of his children's because of the effects of climate change in his country, **barely** two metres above sea level.

§7. The tribunal rejected his claims and confirmed his deportation order after holding that the Refugee Convention gave no protection to those claiming to be endangered by climate change.

§8. Glendenning, who was in Kiribati in March, says Australia needs to formally recognise people displaced by climate change because there's "a big chance" that climate change in the Pacific would force large numbers of people from their homelands.

§9. Glendenning says Australia and other countries should prepare to cater for potentially thousands of people displaced by climate change.

§10. "These are people who are not suffering from persecution because of their beliefs, race or because they belong to a particular group. So they don't meet the Refugee Convention criteria but, nevertheless, there will be a need for people to be resettled because they have been displaced by climate change," says Glendenning. "This is a new cohort of people who are emerging, the rest of the world needs to pay attention."

§11. Australia's Labor government – **trailing massively in opinion polls** and facing an election in September at which the increased numbers of asylum seekers is expected to be **a hot issue** – is unlikely to agree to increase its **migration intake** before the election.

§12. The opposition, a Liberal-National coalition that is expected to unseat Julia Gillard, has already vowed to cut Australia's refugee intake by 6,000 places and appears unlikely to agree to increased migration to **cater for** those displaced by climate change.

§13. Glendenning says he has raised the need for a special migration category for those displaced by climate change with senior officials in the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

§14. "This is beginning to emerge as an international issue ... the Department of Immigration didn't **rule it out**, of course. It didn't get a negative hearing, it's [a proposal] very much in its infancy."

§15. Kiribati, formerly part of the British-administered Gilbert and Ellice Islands, straddles the equator. Its 33 tiny atolls and islands – many of which are uninhabited – extend for 5,000 kilometres across the Pacific Ocean. Most are extremely low-lying and the country's main atoll of Tarawa is now dangerously **overcrowded** as more people from outer islands **flock to** Tarawa **seeking work** and protection from climate change.

§16. Rising sea levels and more intense **storms** have **inundated** low-lying coastal land within Kiribati, contaminating vital fresh water supplies beneath some atolls, killing food plantations and **shrinking the available land**.

§17. Kiribati's president, Anote Tong, a graduate of the London School of Economics, has told his people that many should prepare to leave under a policy he terms "migration with dignity". Last month he announced that Kiribati would **purchase 3,000 hectares of agricultural land in Fiji to grow food and as an investment**. He has denied that he plans to send people there to live.

§18. President Tong, who has long campaigned for greater international recognition and aid for his country's **plight**, told the Global Mail that despite **frantic efforts** within Kiribati to **stem the effects** of climate change – by building sea walls and protecting fresh water supplies – his people would have to migrate to survive. He says Kiribati will increase its efforts to train and educate its young people so that they have a greater chance of making a new life in a different country.

§19. "For our people to survive, then they will have to migrate," says president Tong. "Either we can wait for the time when we have to move people en masse or we can prepare them – beginning from now ..."

TEXT 3

Now, a text about Paris and refugees, and a controversy in the La Chapelle-Pajol neighbourhood.

To what extent can it be said that this question is being used for political purposes? Bring arguments from the text to prove it.

Comment and prepare a commentary about what is said in §22: "Asked what the solution is, he says: 'For some, [it's] law enforcement; for some, education or sharing values, for them to be able to understand where they are and how they can find their way in France.'" What is your opinion about this aspect? Explain and add arguments.

'No-go zone' for women? How street harassment in Paris boiled over Some blame migrants for the harassment of women in the La Chapelle-Pajol neighbourhood, others cry racism. But has all the political mud-slinging distracted from the real issue – of women's safety?

Thu 1 Jun 2017 / *The Guardian*

§1. Caroline says the harassment occurs on a daily basis. "Being whistled at is almost constant."

§2. Walking through the La Chapelle district of Paris, where she lives, Caroline (not her real name) says she has been called names and asked: "What's up your skirt?" After **glancing at** a man in passing 10 days ago, he told her: "Lower your eyes, slut."

§3. Street harassment is "everywhere for women", she says. "But it happens much more in this

neighbourhood.”

§4. The question of the treatment of women among the **jumble of streets** surrounding the Place de La Chapelle in northern Paris has divided local residents in recent weeks; so much so that Caroline asked to use a pseudonym, after being insulted and **threatened** on social media.

§5. On one side are those who claim that this small slice of the 18th arrondissement, known as La Chapelle-Pajol, has become a **“no-go zone”** for women. On the other are migrants’ rights groups, who say these complaints are motivated by xenophobia towards the district’s itinerant migrant population.

§6. The issue is causing **rifts between neighbours** – often those who live in the same building.

§7. The dispute began with a petition, launched by a small group of women with the support of two neighbourhood associations: SOS La Chapelle and Demain La Chapelle (Tomorrow La Chapelle). Provocatively titled “Women: A Threatened Species in the Heart of Paris”, the petition attracted nearly 20,000 signatures in less than two weeks, and has had a huge impact in an already febrile political environment.

§8. The petition claims that women are insulted “in all languages”. It also says the area is **beset by drug and human trafficking, pickpockets and alcoholism**. An article in Le Parisien newspaper the same day pointed the finger more directly at the “dozens of migrants” in the area.

§9. La Chapelle has become **host** to a large number of homeless migrants and informal economies that can **spring up around them**. In part, this is due the recent installation of an official refugee camp on the nearby city limits, the flow of migrants between Paris and Calais – accessible from the nearby Gare du Nord and A1 motorway – as well as historical ties for newcomers in this part of the city. The groups are almost exclusively male.

§10. “The presence of migrants in the area has no direct link with the issues and concerns of women in public space,” local mayor Eric Lejoindre said.

§11. The political response has been **swift**. The day after the petition was launched, local candidates for the **rightwing** Les Républicains party arrived at a demonstration at Place de La Chapelle to denounce “illegal occupation of public space and **street harassment**”.

§12. At the same time, posters **popped up** along **hoardings** outside public buildings, displaying an open letter from “The women of the 18th”.

§13. “We are against the instrumentalisation of feminism to racist and anti-poor ends against the background of the electoral campaign,” it reads.

§14. The local mayor, Eric Lejoindre, says street harassment is a problem, but “the presence of migrants in the area has no direct link with the issues and concerns of women in public space”.

§15. “I do not want to take advantage of the media coverage of the neighbourhood to stigmatise a population,” he said by email.

§16. France’s parliamentary elections take place on 11 and 18 June, and with the introduction of many new players, including new president Emmanuel Macron’s party, La République en Marche!, the field is the most open France has seen in generations.

§17. “We have seen a lot of political reclaiming [of the issue], from the extreme left to the extreme right and in between,” says Loïc Guzman, the acting president of Demain La Chapelle.

§19. Guzman says he took on the presidency of the organisation after his predecessor left the area with

her two children because she felt unsafe.

§20. He is careful to state that he does not consider this issue of street harassment to be a migrant problem per se. “The topic is really just street harassment of women in the district,” he says. “We are not **targeting** migrants.”

§21. Still, he says the problems began when an informal migrant camp sprung up under the railway lines at La Chapelle station, and criminal networks moved in to cater to their needs. He says it’s these men – who continue to sell phone cards, contraband cigarettes, fake papers and drugs – who are the main issue.

§22. Asked what the solution is, he says: “For some, [it’s] law enforcement; for some, education or sharing values, for them to be able to understand where they are and how they can find their way in France.”

§23. Caroline also says it’s not a migrant problem, and insists the initial petition has been misinterpreted by all sides. “I’ve tried to discuss it with people,” she says. “I think we agree, but our interests aren’t the same. I’m **interested in defending** women and they have other interests.”

§24. After the petition was launched, Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo tweeted that she was aware of the issue, and was determined to act. The solution so far has been to dramatically **ramp up police presence** around the Place de La Chapelle, to the gratification of residents’ groups.

§25. But some women feel increased police presence only makes matters worse. Anna-Louise Milne, who has lived in the area for 20 years, says the **heavy-handed response** is increasing tensions.

§26. “Of course I want to be able to sit out in the street with my kids,” she says. “Do I want that at the expense of major police presence? Quite frankly, no.”

§27. Milne is an academic at the University of London in Paris, and researches the refugee experience in Paris. She also spends her mornings providing breakfast to migrants living on the streets in La Chapelle as part of Quartiers Solidaires (neighbourhood solidarity).

§28. On the issue of street harassment in Paris, she says: “It’s offensive and it’s **appalling** but it’s not because of the young guys who are on the street here. It’s certainly not the ones in the most precarious situations.”

§29. She says the issue of vulnerable migrants in Paris is not one the UK can ignore, given that many of the men who are in Paris have fled from the **now-raised “jungle” in Calais**, and ultimately want to cross the channel. She **puts it bluntly**: “Calais is in Paris, and this is a Franco-British problem.”

§30. Few dispute that street harassment is widespread in the French capital, and that it happens in the area in question. I live in the 18th arrondissement, and was harassed five times during the reporting of this story, sometimes within the La Chapelle-Pajol area, sometimes outside it.

§31. No one is comfortable in this situation. No one wants to denigrate women’s experiences of harassment, nor does anyone want to be seen as racist for complaining about harassment in a context where migrants are in the spotlight.

§32. Still, some feel the initial issue – women’s safety – has been lost. “It’s too mixed up,” Caroline says. “There are too many issues being put on the table here.”

VIDEOS

Please watch these videos to understand what has been called “the refugee crisis”.

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7YAOUzq4gB8>

Where did these people start their journey?

How many of them are there?

What are the places they want to go to? (Can you guess why?)

What do they try to escape? (Try to be as precise as you can)

Why is there a controversy about the term migrant or refugee? (Re-use the definitions you read about at the beginning of the lesson)

What can you say about the number of refugees countries had planned to host and real numbers? What does it reveal?

What is David Cameron's argument?

Is it the first time Europe has seen such a crisis? Explain.

To what extent is the situation today different than in the past?

A burden = fardeau

To bicker = to quarrel

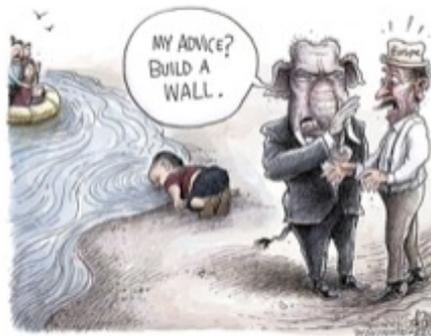
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12FT7cOLaZ4>

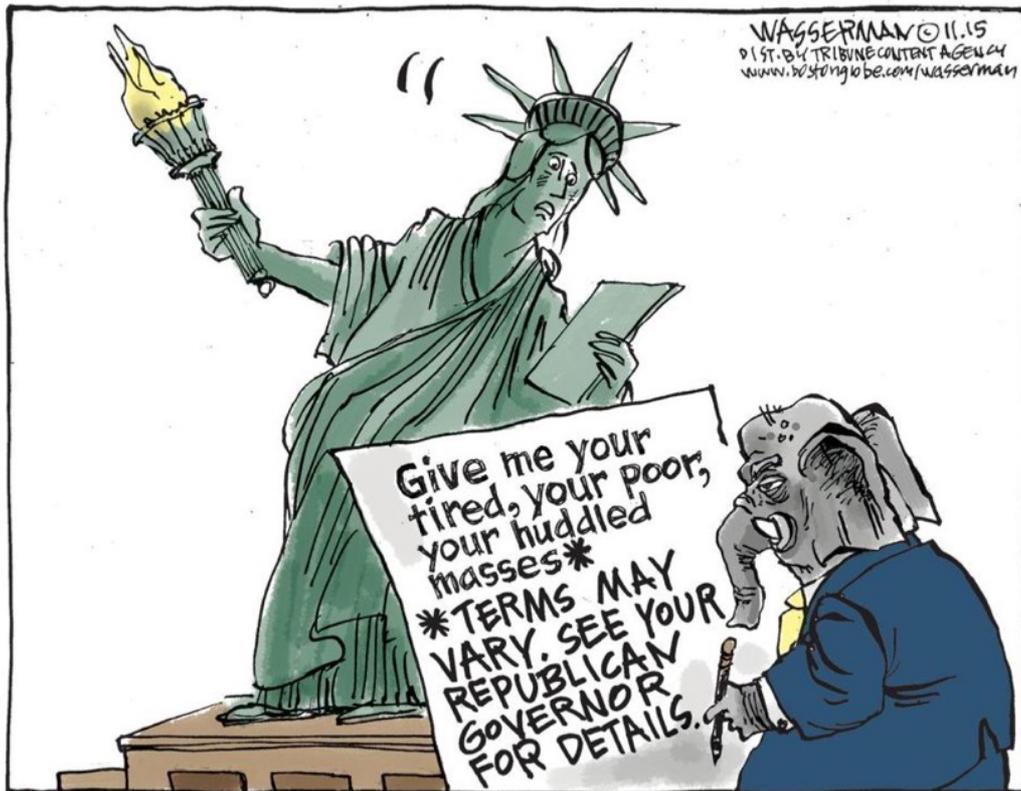
Summarize, in your own words, this video. Use as much vocabulary learnt in the lesson as you can.

Research on the internet: compare the number of refugees in Lebanon and Jordan in relation to their respective populations: what is the percentage of refugees there? What about France? What do you think about this difference?

CARTOONS

Comment on the following cartoons, trying to identify who the protagonists are and what references the cartoonists allude to.





Help: <http://www.todayifoundout.com/index.php/2014/04/donkey-elephant-come-represent-u-s-political-parties/>