Questions

1. Who is the figure depicted in the cartoon?
2. How has the artist portrayed him?
3. Why do you believe the artist chose to depict him in this way?
4. What is a presidential veto? (Use a dictionary if needed)
5. What controversial action did President Jackson take in 1832-33 that is the subject of this cartoon?
6. What items are in the cartoon that refer to the action in #5?
7. Do you feel the artist supports President Jackson’s action? Why or why not?
8. Should there be limits on presidential power beyond what is stated in the constitution? Why or why not?
Answers

1. President Andrew Jackson
2. As a king, very similar to one found in a deck of cards.
3. Kings are notorious for abusing their power and often act only in their best interests; (to portray him as a king in a deck of cards makes him accessible to even the common man who ought to recognize this depiction).
4. After Congress passes a law the president can sign it into law or veto it, to prevent it from passing. Although Congress can override the veto it takes a majority to do so.
5. From the Library of Congress, “A caricature of Andrew Jackson as a despotic monarch, probably issued during the fall of 1833 in response to the President’s September order to remove federal deposits from the Bank of the United States. The print is dated a year earlier by Weitenkampf and related to Jackson’s controversial veto of Congress’s bill to recharter the Bank in July 1832. However, the charge, implicit in the print, of Jackson’s exceeding the President’s constitutional power, however, was most widely advanced in connection not with the veto but with the 1833 removal order, on which the President was strongly criticized for acting without congressional approval.”
6. Also from Library of Congress, “He holds a “veto” in his left hand and a scepter in his right. The Federal Constitution and the arms of Pennsylvania (the United States Bank was located in Philadelphia) lie in tatters under his feet”.
7. Answers will vary but ought to contain reasons to support their answer. If they feel the artist does not support him they might mention that the depiction is not flattering and does show Jackson in a positive way.
8. Again, answers will vary.