

GROWTH AND REFORM

Interpreting a Political Cartoon

The temperance movement of the 1800s was spurred, in large part, by women and religious leaders. Families had long been suffering the physical and financial effects of drinkers' over-consumption. Because women did not have the right to vote, they relied on grassroots efforts to reform drinkers and to persuade lawmakers to ban the sale of alcohol. ♦ Look at the cartoon below. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions that follow.

The Temperance Movement

"The Bar of Destruction," by Thomas Nast originally published in Harper's Weekly, March 21, 1874.
Library of Congress

Questions to Think About

1. What is happening in this cartoon?
2. What symbols does the cartoonist use to make a statement about drinking?
3. **Detect Points of View** How do you think the cartoonist feels about the temperance movement? Explain your answer.
4. **Evaluate Information** Do you think this cartoon accurately depicts the issues surrounding alcohol use during the 1800s? Explain your answer.