

# Newspaper Funnies

Did you read a newspaper this morning? You might have checked a basketball game score or looked for a weather report. For many kids, the first stop in the newspaper is the comics, or funnies, page. This week, in honor of Newspaper in Education Week (March 7-11), The Mini Page learns more about newspaper comics.

## Humor in newspapers

The first comics in newspapers weren't comic strips. Instead, cartoonists used humor to comment on events happening in the world. Benjamin Franklin created the first cartoon that appeared in an American newspaper, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*.

In 1754, Benjamin Franklin drew this cartoon to urge the British colonies to fight the French and Native Americans for control of more land. During the Revolutionary War, the cartoon became a symbol of the colonies uniting against the British.



image courtesy Library of Congress

## Competing for readers

In the 1890s in New York City, two newspaper publishers, William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer, were competing for readers. Pulitzer had a brand-new color press that he decided to use for comic art in the *New York World*. Pulitzer hired artist Richard Outcault in 1894, and in May 1895 “Hogan’s Alley” appeared in the *World*. The comic series featured a little boy character known as the Yellow Kid.



image courtesy Andrews McMeel Syndication

## The Yellow Kid

“Hogan’s Alley” was about a group of kids in a neighborhood, but the Yellow Kid soon became the star of the comic. His popularity helped sell more copies of the *World*. Hearst and Pulitzer began to fight over the cartoonist Outcault, and finally both papers were publishing their own version of the Yellow Kid with two different artists!

Newspaper publishers realized how important comics were to selling more papers.

## Getting comics to readers

Today, cartoonists have many places to share their ideas with others. They can create for the internet on websites and blogs, in comic books, or for television and movies through animation.

In the newspaper, whether in print or online, most of the cartoons you read are syndicated (SIN-dih-cay-ted). This means that the cartoonist has an agreement with a company (or syndicate) that promotes and sells the comic to different newspapers all around the world.



“Peanuts,” started in 1950 by Charles M. Schulz, became one of the most beloved cartoons in history and is still seen in newspapers today.

Peanuts © Peanuts World-wide LLC. Dist. by AMS

## Try ‘n’ Find

Words that remind us of newspaper comics are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward. See if you can find:

ARTIST, CARTOON, COLOR, COMIC, CREATOR, HEARST, HUMOR, JOKE, NEWSPAPER, ONLINE, PRINT, PUBLISHER, PULITZER, READERS, STRIP, SYNDICATED, WOMEN, WRITER.

A	P	U	B	L	I	S	H	E	R	D	G	O	J	N
R	E	Z	T	I	L	U	P	A	H	R	V	N	O	O
X	B	H	P	I	R	T	S	H	P	D	P	L	K	O
R	O	M	U	H	V	R	E	T	I	R	W	I	E	T
S	Y	N	D	I	C	A	T	E	D	D	H	N	V	R
P	A	N	E	W	S	P	A	P	E	R	M	E	M	A
N	E	M	O	W	E	A	R	T	I	S	T	Q	Z	C
Y	H	E	A	R	S	T	P	S	R	E	D	A	E	R
C	O	M	I	C	E	E	J	C	O	L	O	R	B	M
C	N	T	N	I	R	P	F	C	R	E	A	T	O	R



## Cook’s Corner

### Veggie Blossom

#### You’ll need:

- 1 round cucumber slice
- 7 to 9 round carrot slices
- 1/2 celery stalk

#### What to do:

1. Wash all vegetables; peel and slice.
2. Place cucumber slice in middle of plate.
3. Position carrot slices around the cucumber to form petals.
4. Spread peanut butter or cream cheese on celery stalk. Place stalk on lower part of cucumber slice to form a stem.
5. Arrange spinach leaves on either side of the celery stalk. Makes 1 “blossom.”



\* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

## 7 Little Words for Kids

Use the letters in the boxes to make a word with the same meaning as the clue. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in the solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

1. place to store ice cream (7) \_\_\_\_\_
2. ocean west of California (7) \_\_\_\_\_
3. it follows you around all day (6) \_\_\_\_\_
4. willing to share (8) \_\_\_\_\_
5. fast African cat (7) \_\_\_\_\_
6. what you wear to bed (7) \_\_\_\_\_
7. a break from school (8) \_\_\_\_\_

TAH	FIC	AT	OUS
DOW	FREE	PAJA	ZER
ION	VAC	SHA	ER
GEN	CHEE	MAS	PACI



Answers: freezer, Pacific, shadow, generous, cheetah, pajamas, vacation.

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## Getting started

Cartoonists say the hardest part about their job is coming up with ideas for new strips. Most will write and draw at least a week’s worth of strips at a time. Sometimes they follow one story for the whole week, and other times each strip is a separate joke.

Some comics are created by two people, an artist and a writer. They may come up with ideas together, or the writer may give his story to the artist to be illustrated.

Cartoon artists may use different techniques to create their art. Some use a computer tablet that lets them “draw” right onto the screen. Others use pen and ink, and some use brushes or a combination of tools.

## Women in cartooning

Women were drawing comic strips for newspapers as early as 1901. In 1932, Martha Orr introduced a character named Mary Worth to newspaper readers. Today “Mary Worth” is written and drawn by other creators.

Another favorite, “Brenda Starr,” was started by female cartoonist Dale Messick in 1940. “Cathy” and “For Better or For Worse,” both written and drawn by women, appeared in newspapers in the 1970s.

## Resources



### On the Web:

- [kids.kiddle.co/Cartoonist](https://kids.kiddle.co/Cartoonist)

### At the library:

- “Create Your Own Graphic Novel: A Guide for Kids” by David Wayne Chiu

## Mini Jokes



**Frank:** What’s the difference between a newspaper and a TV?  
**Frances:** Ever tried swatting a fly with a TV?

## Eco Note



A new study finds that human activities have transformed nearly a fifth of the planet’s land surface since the 1960s, roughly equivalent to the areas of Europe and Africa combined. During that period, Earth’s forest cover alone has been reduced by nearly 386,000 square miles, with farmland and grazing pastures increasing by about the same amount.

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## For later:

Look through your newspaper’s comics section. Which cartoons are your favorites? Why? Share your opinions with classmates or family members.

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