

Comic Strip

1. Find Inspiration for Your Comic

The first step is to **choose an overall theme for your comic**. Who are the characters? What is the setting?

2. Sketch the Characters

Now that you know what you want your comic to be about, it's time to **sketch what the characters will look like**, in both words and drawings.

The key is to **create characters that look nothing like one another** so they're easily distinguishable on the page.

3. Write the Story

Think about the overall story you want to tell with your comic series. Choose between a storyline or gag-a-day style.

A **storyline or story arc** is like a comic book, with each comic strip in the series carrying over to the next and building an ongoing story.

Gag-a-days are self-contained jokes that do not carry over to the next day's or week's strip.

Gag-a-day Comic Format:

Most gag-a-days are made up of three panels:

Introduction

Build-Up

Punchline

Here's an example:

- **Panel One (Introduction):** Isabel: "Hi there. This is my bearded dragon, Fluffy. But he's not a real dragon!"
- **Panel Two (Build-Up):** Isabel: "Real dragons have wings!" [Behind her Fluffy has grown wings.]
- **Panel Three (Punchline):** Isabel: "And they breathe fire." [Fluffy is melting a chair with fiery breath.]

After you **write out the story**, it's time to **create the comic strip**.

4. Do the Lettering

- Make a **series of lines** that cover the top third of your panel.
- Pencil in the words. Refer to the storyline you wrote earlier.
- You'll draw word balloons around them later.
- Proofread your words and correct any spelling or grammatical errors.

5. Penciling

- Now let's see some art!
- Draw the characters in pencil underneath the words they're saying.
- Get crazy with the **faces and expressions**.
- These are cartoons. They're supposed to be silly!
- Next, draw word balloons around the letters. Be sure to include a **"tail"** going to the appropriate character.
- **The key to every comic is clarity. If the reader can understand what's happening, that's a successful comic!**

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6. Inking

- Carefully **ink over the words** you penciled earlier.
- Draw and ink the word balloons.
- Ink the characters, background and props.
- Once everything is dry and complete, hold firm to one end of the paper and erase the pencil lines with a large eraser. Use a single “brush away” motion.
 - *Note:* Never erase toward where you’re holding the paper, you’ll crinkle it or worse, tear it!



Marks are awarded as follows:

1. Clarity and Neatness – easy to read, clearly written & drawn – **4 marks**
2. Spelling & Grammar – **4 marks**
3. Content – in your own words and accurate – **4 marks**
4. Theory – sound theory explained carefully – **4 marks**
5. Effort – **4 marks**

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	4	3	2	1
Clarity and Neatness	Cartoon is easy to read and all elements are clearly written, labeled, or drawn.	Cartoon is easy to read and most elements are clearly written, labeled, or drawn.	Cartoon is hard to read with rough drawings and labels.	Cartoon is hard to read and one cannot tell what happens where.
Spelling & Grammar	No spelling or grammatical mistakes on a cartoon with lots of text.	No spelling or grammatical mistakes on cartoon with little text.	One spelling or grammatical error on the cartoon.	Several spelling and/or grammatical errors on the cartoon.
Content	All content is in the student's own words and is accurate.	Almost all content is in the student's own words and is accurate.	At least half of the content is in the student's own words and is accurate.	Less than half of the content is in the students' own words and/or is accurate.
Theory	Cartoon contained sound theory explained carefully.	Cartoon contained sound theory, explanation somewhat confusing.	Cartoon did not contain sound theory OR explanation very confusing.	Cartoon did not contain sound theory AND explanation very confusing.
Effort	Maximum effort.	Medium effort.	Poor effort.	Lack of effort.