

NIE Comic Relief

- Turn to the Comics and circle all the contractions you find. Write down the words that were used to make each contraction.
- Clip comic strips apart and have students put them back in the correct order (teaches sequential development).
- Erase the captions. Pass these blank strips to students and have them write their own. Compare what they write with the original captions. Do they tell the same or a different story?
- Read the comics for a few days. Cut out characters that remind you of members of your family. Paste on a sheet of paper and describe how each character reminds you of that family member.
- Be a comic: You'll need a partner. Read a comic strip and act it out for a friend or relative. Then have them read the comics and try to guess which one you acted out. Take turns. **Skills:** Identifies sequence/characters in stories. Follows written directions and completes a task.
- Go through the comics and list all the occupations identified.
- Choose your favorite strip in today's comics. Answer the 5 W's about your strip. Predict what will happen next.
- Who is your favorite comic strip character? Decide, then draw your own comic strip depicting this character as a new student in your school.
- Choose a comic strip character. Then look through the classifieds and select an appropriate car or truck for him/her. Next, find them a place to live suitable for their personality. Now look at the help wanted ads and select a job that would be appropriate for your character. Have a classmate look at your findings and see if they can identify your character.
- Develop a popularity poll of comic strip characters. Survey both classmates and adults. Create a graph to reflect your results.
- The comics take up one page in the newspaper. Figure out what percentage this is.
- How many comic strips are there? Is this more or less than the other members of your class? Create a chart reflecting this information for the entire class.
- Think you know a lot about comics? Mark the following statements true or false:
 1. All comics are written to make you laugh.
 2. All comic strips are made up of four picture panels.
 3. All words of characters are in balloons.
 4. Only easy words are used in comic strips.
 5. All comic strips are continued.

Then, turn to the comics and prove or disprove your answers. **Skills:** Infers feelings and emotions. Follows directions to complete a task. Compares information to recognize agreement of contradiction. Identifies sections of a newspaper.

- Comic strips have the same basic elements as novels and short stories, including plot, characters, a time and place setting, action and theme. Have students select five continuous story comic strips and describe these elements.
- Have students read several days' worth of comic strips. Then have them identify as many examples of poor grammar as they can. Have them re-write the comics to use correct grammar. Can they explain why some artists intentionally use poor grammatical construction?
- Synonyms are words that have the same or nearly the same meaning as another word. Joyful, happy and elated are examples. Have students select any five comic strips. For each, have them select two words and substitute a synonym of their choice. Did their selections change the humor or meaning of the comic strips?
- Comic strip humor comes in various forms: slapstick, wit, irony, satire, pun. Have students find an example, if possible, for each type of humor. Identify each type and attach the examples to a sheet of paper. Have them look up each definition in the dictionary.
- Use the comics to teach characterization. Write a paragraph telling how the author developed the character.
- Cut out five cartoons in the newspaper. Under each cartoon list all of the emotions that are shown.
- Kill off one of the characters in your favorite comic strip. Write an obituary for that character.
- Write a compare/contrast of two cartoon characters.
- Imagine that today's comics were rocketed into outer space and read by space aliens who have no other knowledge about life or people on earth. What misconceptions might they have about earth based solely on what they see in today's comics? For example: Do cats really talk? Find at least five possible misconceptions they might believe from the comics. Compile a list from the entire class.
- Fact and Fiction: Which cartoons show something that could be real-life? Which ones are unreal or fiction?
- Some comics make us laugh. Some are serious. Turn to the comics and in a group or two or three, find the following items. Write the name of the comic and/or character in the space provided:
 1. A comic character that is not human: _____
 2. One that makes mistakes: _____
 3. One with only one frame: _____
 4. A comic strip that kids would like to read: _____
 5. One that adults would like to read: _____
 6. One that deals with family issues: _____
 7. A comic character that is a child: _____

When your team is finished, stand up and say, "We're done!"

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