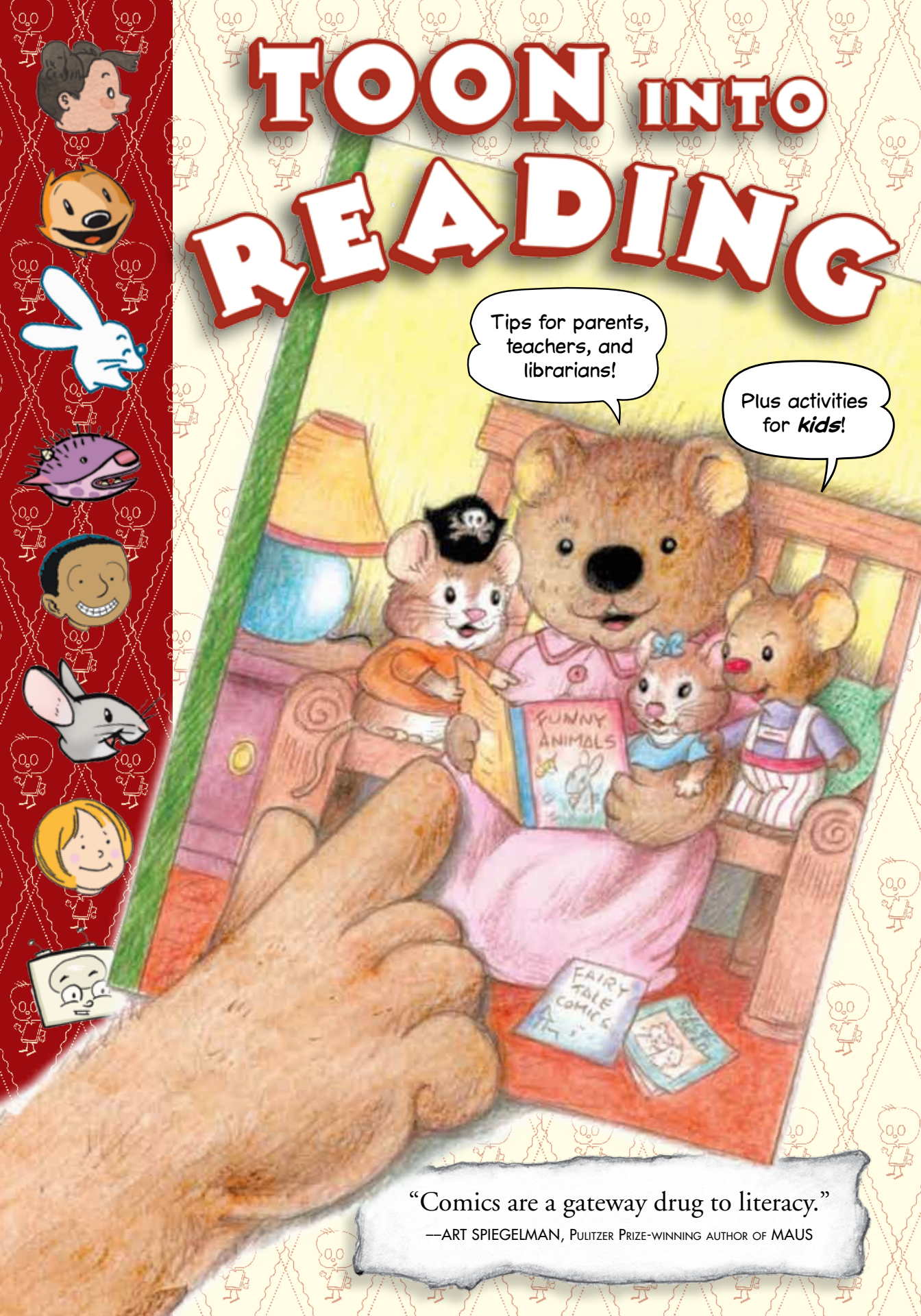


TOON INTO READING

Tips for parents,
teachers, and
librarians!

Plus activities
for *kids!*



“Comics are a gateway drug to literacy.”

—ART SPIEGELMAN, PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING AUTHOR OF MAUS

TOON INTO READING!™ Kids LOVE comics. The details in the pictures make them want to read the words. Comics beg for repeated readings and let both emerging and reluctant readers enjoy stories with a rich vocabulary. Here are a few tips for reading comics with kids...

1 FIND THE RIGHT BOOK

There are many comics and graphic novels out there, but not all are appropriate for every age. Look for titles made especially for children. It's best to choose a story that fits the child's age and interests.

"Many times students who do not want to read or write black text on a white page will eagerly read TOON Books and create colorful illustrations and text of their own."

—Brian Wilhorn, reading teacher and author of *HelpReadersLoveReading.com*



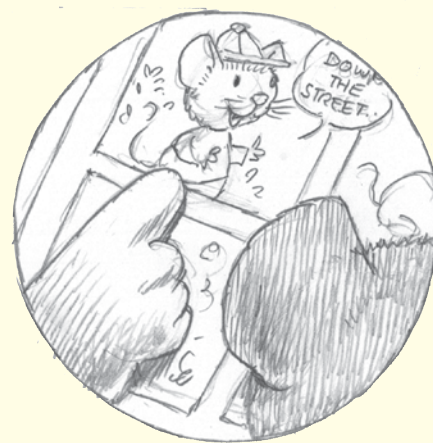
WHAT WORKS?

The TOON Books collection is designed for the emergent or reluctant reader.

2 GUIDE YOUNG READERS



WHAT WORKS?
Keep your fingertip below the character that is speaking.



© TOON BOOKS, AN IMPRINT OF CANDLEWICK PRESS • AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD

3 HAM IT UP!

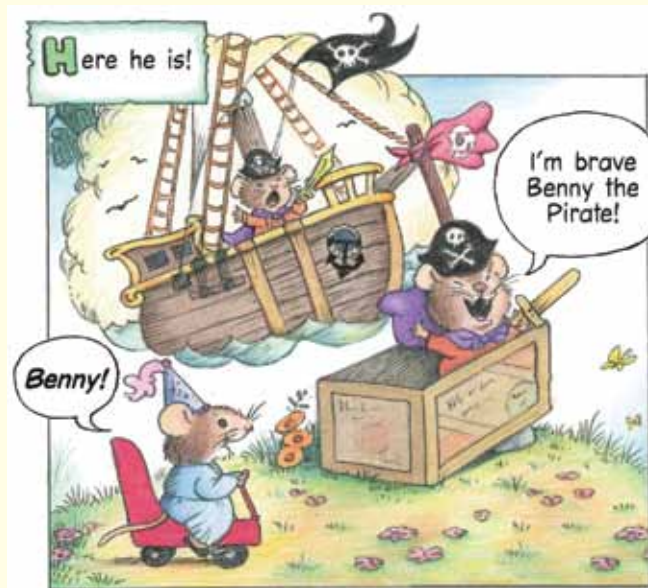
Think of the comic book story as a play. Don't hesitate to be a ham! Read with expression and intonation. Assign parts or get kids to supply the sound effects—a great way to reinforce phonics skills.



WHAT WORKS?
Even very young readers will enjoy making the easy-to-read sound effects.

4 LET THEM GUESS

Comics provide a large amount of context for the words, so emerging readers can make informed guesses. In *Benny and Penny in Just Pretend* by Geoffrey Hayes, for example, the first time the word "PIRATE" is introduced, the artist also shows a pirate ship, two pirate hats, and two pirate flags.



"TOON Books really help my students understand who is talking and relating what they're saying to the emotion on the character's face, which can be a difficult concept for many of my students, particularly those with autism, to understand."

—Nova Ronningen,
K-3 Learning Specialist,
Molalla Elementary, Oregon

WHAT WORKS?
The child who makes informed guesses is reading. Enjoy and hold back from correcting.

See our FREE online literacy tools for kids at:
TOON-BOOKS.com

5 TALK ABOUT THE PICTURES

The artist communicates information through the shape of the panels (and can make you laugh by putting panels upside down...). The readers look at what the characters look at. The composition of the right-hand page points to the bird flying away, breaking out of the panel.



WHAT WORKS?

Get kids talking, and you'll be surprised at how perceptive they are about pictures.

POINT OUT THAT EACH BOX IS CALLED A PANEL, AND THAT EACH PANEL IS A UNIT OF TIME. ALSO HELP KIDS RECOGNIZE THE DIFFERENT BALLOONS:



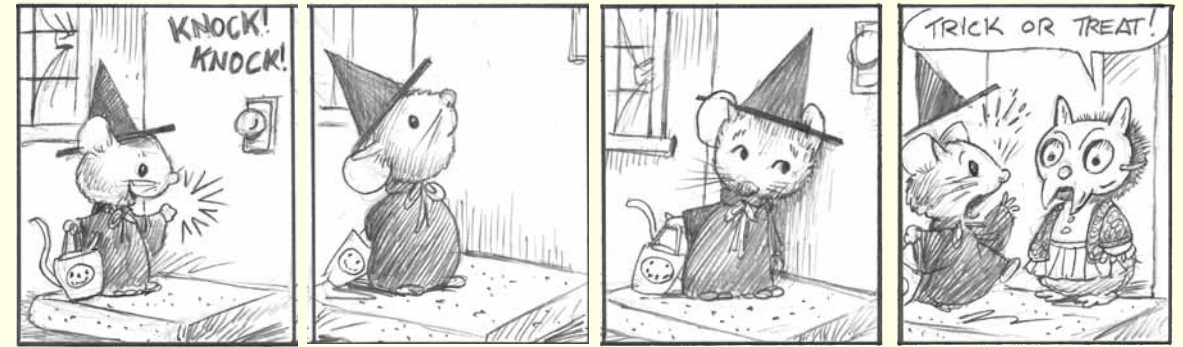
SPEECH BALLOONS

THOUGHT BALLOONS

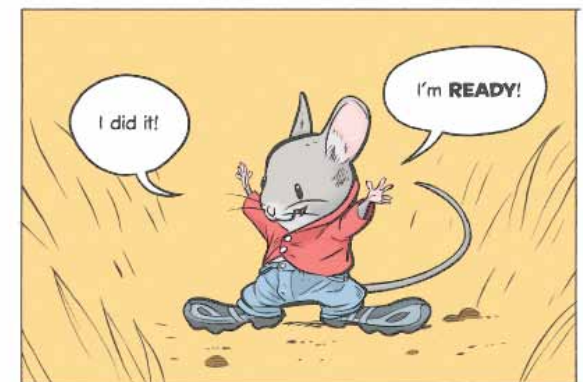
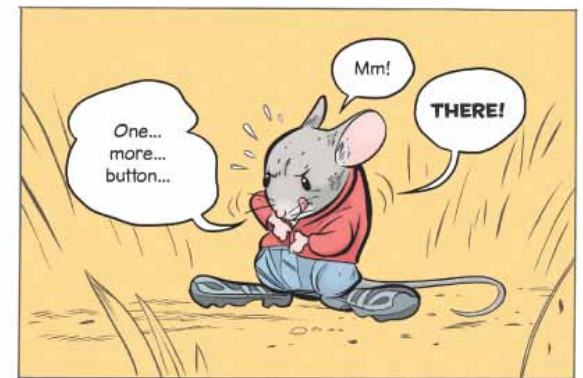
SOUND EFFECTS

6 TAKE TIME WITH SILENT PANELS

Comics use panels to mark time, and silent panels count. Look and "read" even when there are no words. Often, humor is all in the timing!



7 PICTURES TELL THE STORY!



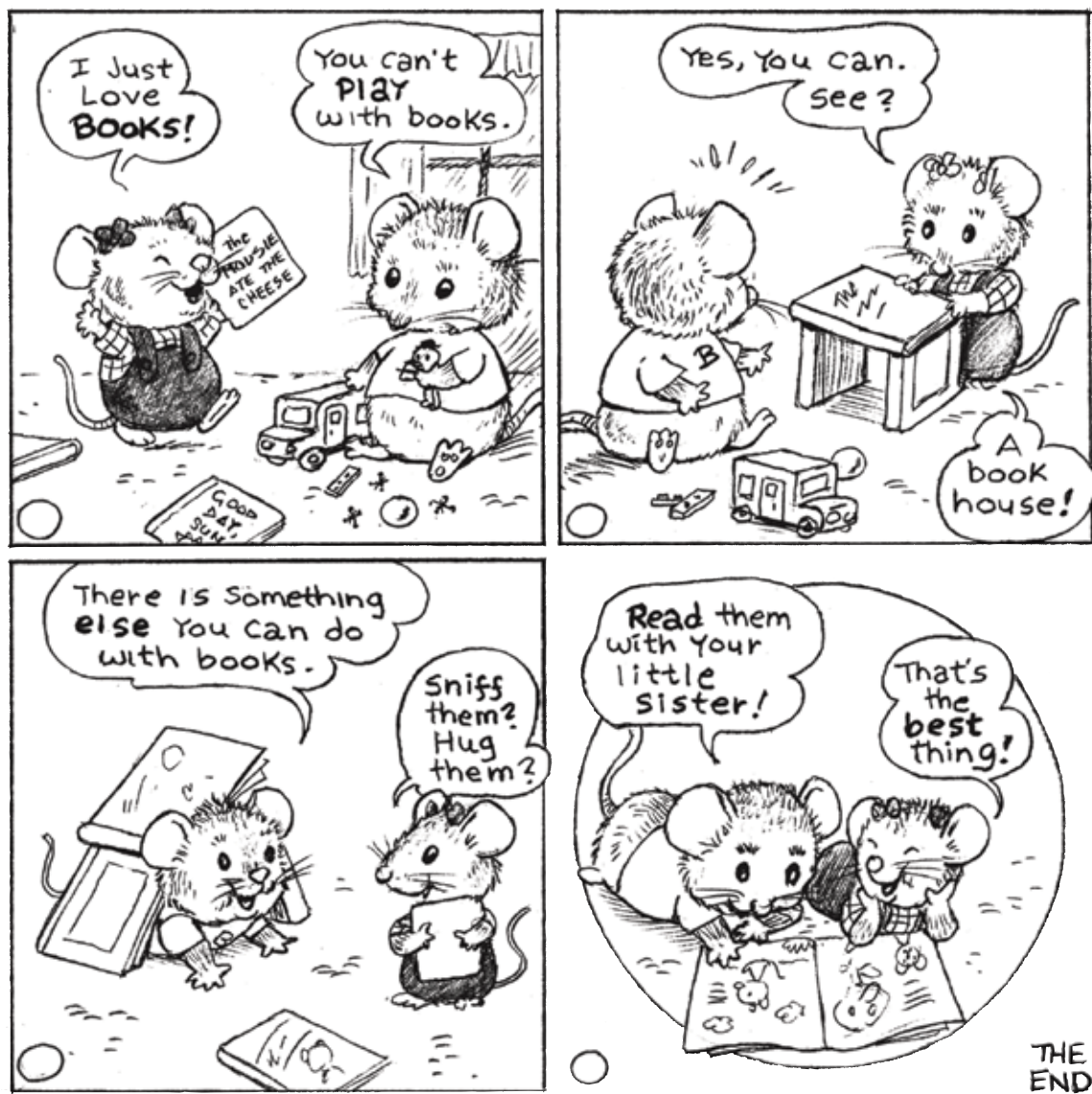
In a comic, you can often read the story even if you don't know all the words! Jeff Smith, the master cartoonist behind the *Bone* series and the *Little Mouse Gets Ready* TOON Book, is a visual storyteller. Get young readers to tell you what's happening in the sequence at right based on Little Mouse's facial expressions and body language.

WHAT WORKS?

When reading comics, kids see the hand of the artist and it makes them want to tell their own stories. Encourage them to talk, write and draw!

8 GET OUT THE CRAYONS!

Hey, kids! Add colors to Benny and Penny's world. You can also cut the panels out and scramble them. Can you put them back in the correct order?



WHAT WORKS?

Young readers are young writers. Start by telling your story:

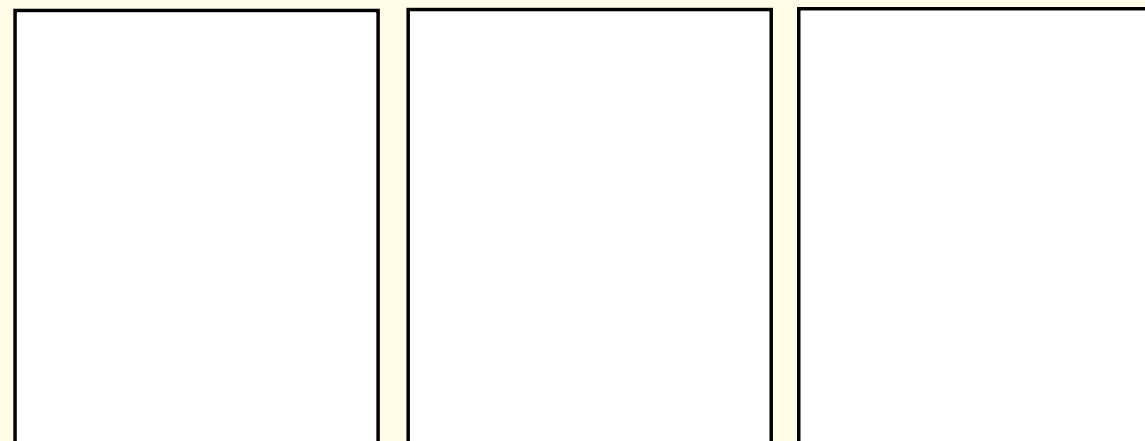
FIRST: _____

THEN: _____

and AT THE END: _____

MAKE YOUR OWN COMIC!

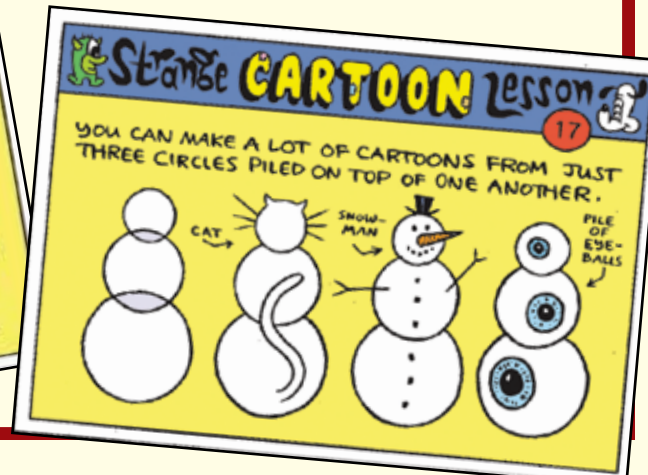
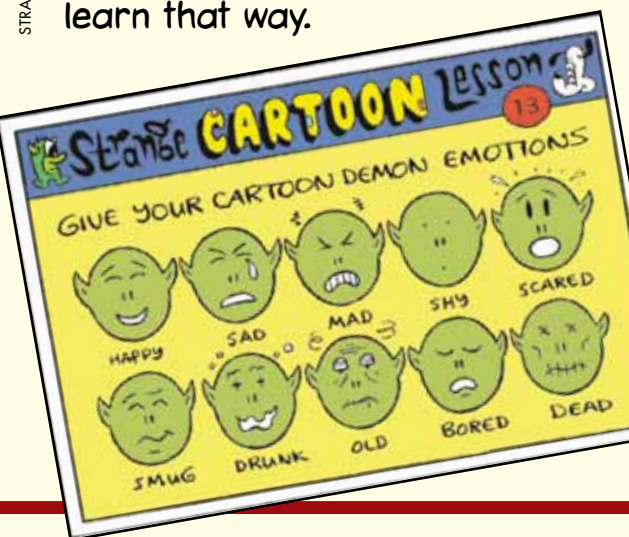
TITLE: " _____ "



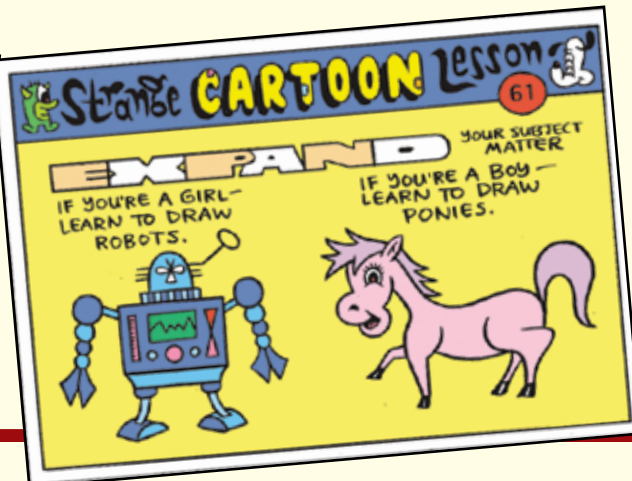
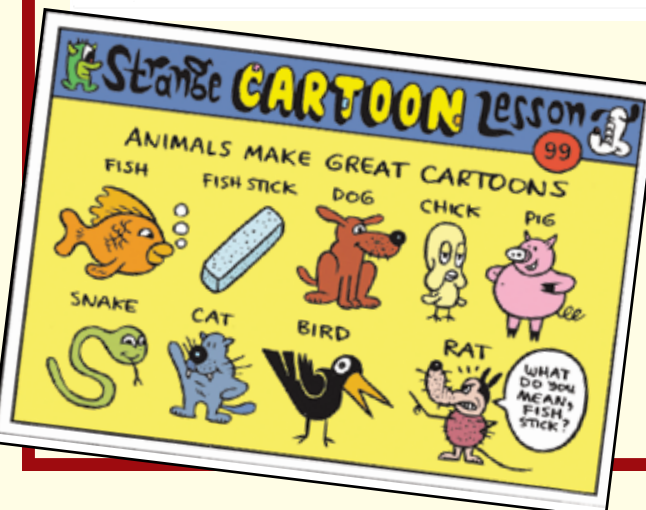
It's OK to trace: all cartoonists learn that way.

WHAT WORKS?

Write the words first, then draw balloons around them!



STRANGE CARTOON LESSONS BY KAZ, FROM THE LITTLE LIT LIBRARY® © TOON BOOKS & RAW JUNIOR, LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



9 LET THEM RE-READ



Not only do children love to read comics, they also love to RE-read them. When re-reading a comic, kids find all the details that make comics so pleasurable, and when they re-read, emerging readers become fluent readers.

10 ABOVE ALL, ENJOY!

There is of course never one right way to read, so go for the shared pleasure. Once children make the story happen in their imagination, they have discovered the thrill of reading, and you won't be able to stop them. At that point, just go get them more books, and more comics.

THE TOON INTO READING™ PROGRAM

The award-winning TOON Books® are used extensively on school reading lists, in libraries, and at bedtime! Step by step, the TOON Books® will welcome your emerging or reluctant reader into a lifelong love of reading!

LEVEL 1 GRADES K-1 LEXILE BR-100 • GUIDED READING A-G • READING RECOVERY 7-10

FIRST COMICS FOR BRAND-NEW READERS



- 200-300 easy sight words
- short sentences
- often one character
- single time frame or theme
- 1-2 panels per page



LEVEL 2 GRADES 1-2 LEXILE BR-170 • GUIDED READING G-J • READING RECOVERY 11-17

EASY-TO-READ COMICS FOR EMERGING READERS

- 300-600 words
- short sentences and repetition
- story arc with few characters in a small world
- 1-4 panels per page



LEVEL 3 GRADES 2-3 LEXILE 150-300 • GUIDED READING J-N • READING RECOVERY 17-19

CHAPTER-BOOK COMICS FOR ADVANCED BEGINNERS

- 800-1000+ words in long sentences
- broad world as well as shifts in time and place
- long story divided in chapters
- reader needs to make connections and speculate



See our FREE online literacy tools for kids at:

TOON-BOOKS.com