

Imagination: Comics



Silver Starr



The Raven

In this sheet you'll find information and activities about comic books. You'll also see examples of some of Australia's most popular comic book series which are featured in the Mirror of the World website.

In the spotlight

Silver Starr Super Comic No 1
Stanley Pitt
1949

The Dark Nebula No 6
Tad Pietrzykowski (Writer), Glenn Lumsden (Artist)
1990

Platinum Grit Issues 1 & 2
Trudy Cooper (Artist/Writer) & Danny Murphy (Co-writer)
1996

The Raven No 4
Paul Wheelan
1962

Zxenith No 1 (1st Series)
Sal Lima (Writer) and Leigh Rust (Artist)
1995

Words to know

speech balloon, thought bubble, panel, onomatopoeia

Pages to visit

<http://www.mirroroftheworld.com.au/>

<http://www.mirroroftheworld.com.au/imagination/>

http://www.mirroroftheworld.com.au/imagination/pop_culture/

http://www.mirroroftheworld.com.au/imagination/pop_culture/comics/index.php

Heroes & villains

Many American superheroes like Superman, Batman and Spiderman, have been made into famous movies – but long before they were in movies, these characters appeared in comic books. How many other comic book characters can you think of?

Who would have thought that libraries would collect comics? The State Library of Victoria has a large collection of historical and modern comics from Australia and all over the world.

Activity 1 – Get interactive!

Go to the Comics section in the Mirror of the World website. Have a look at the comic book titles, looking carefully at the characteristics of superhero.

http://www.mirroroftheworld.com.au/imagination/pop_culture/comics/index.php

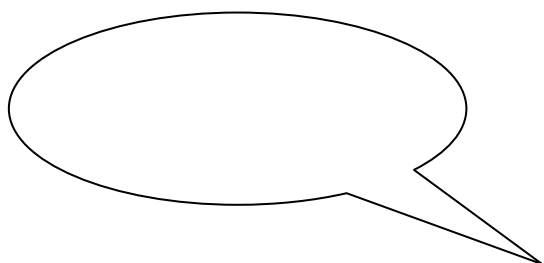
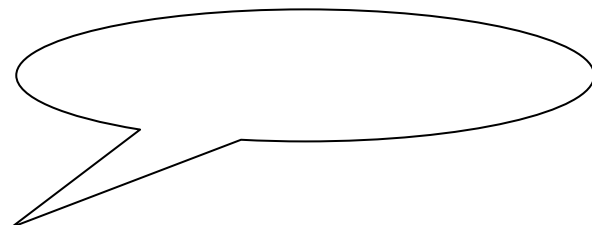
Now write down some interesting facts about the comic book characters shown. Do they have common features and/or elements such as clothing, body shapes, colours?

What do they look like? What do they do? Do they have special powers or unique personality traits? What are they?

Dark Nebula
The Phantom
The Raven
Platinum Grit
Silver Starr
Zxenith

Activity 2 – Get into the swing of things

Draw two characters fighting crime or evil in the space below. Make up your own speech bubbles.



Question time

1. Are any of the characters similar to other characters you already know from comics, movies or TV?
What are some similarities?

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2. What would be the best super power to have? Explain your choice.

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3. What would be some positive / negative / interesting things about having super powers? List them in the table below.

Superpower/unique trait	Positive +	Negative -	Something interesting !
eg. flying			

Pow! Snap! Crash!

Notice how comics make use of these action words to give the pages dramatic impact. They're known as **onomatopoeia**. (Try saying *that* three times fast!).

Onomatopoeia means making a word that sounds like the thing it is describing. These kinds of words are used all the time in comic books, because they are great for describing the sounds of loud actions. For example, when a cork comes out of a bottle we write POP! When somebody drops a plate we write CRASH! And when an animal makes a noise we write what it sounds like, eg - OINK!

Activity 3 – Match the action to the word

Try matching these actions to the onomatopoeic word that describes them.

Whoosh!	Someone eating an apple
Click	A fierce dog
Bang!	Someone using a whip
Grrr!	Someone switching the light on
Tinkle	A ball going through the air
Crunch	A gun being shot
Crack!	A small bell being rung

Can you think of any more onomatopoeic words? Write them down here.

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Now write a short poem using as many onomatopoeic words as you can!

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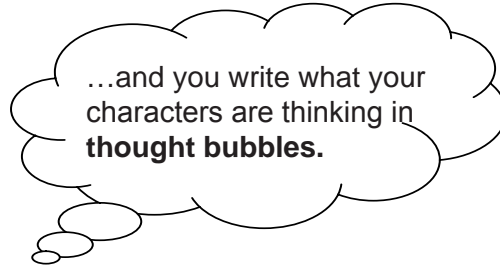
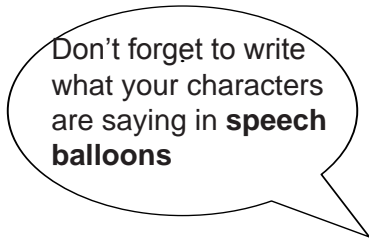
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Activity 4 – Make your own comic strip

Draw your own comic strip in five **panels** (this is what the boxes in comics are called). To see some comics that other students have made, visit this website:

<http://www.amazing-kids.org/akcomics.htm>



...but first you will need to make a plan!

Step 1

First, sketch what your main character will look like from the front, back and side...

Front	Back	Side

Step 2

Now complete this plan to help make your comic strip.

	What will happen in this panel? Describe in words what you will draw.	What will you write in the speech balloons and thought bubbles?	What sounds will you use?
1	Introduce the superhero by placing him in a setting.		
2	What is the story, what is happening, what is she/he doing? Is anyone else involved? Is she/he a villain causing problems?		
3	What amazing thing does the superhero do to solve the problem?		
4	How does your superhero deal with the villain(s)?		
5	How does the story end?		

Step 3

Now you are ready to create your comic strip using the steps below:

- Look at your earlier sketches of your main character. Are you happy with how they look? Try drawing them a few more times to see if you can improve them.
- Look back at your plan and use this to help you create your comic strip.
- Draw five panels onto a blank page. (If you finish early, draw another five panels.) They might all be the same size, or you might want some different sizes – depending on your plan.
- Remember to leave room for characters, thought bubbles and speech balloons. Draw these lightly in grey lead pencil first and write what the characters are saying and thinking.
- Once you are happy with how it looks, trace over pencil with a black pen.
- Now colour in your character and the background. Leave the thought bubbles and speech balloons white.
- When you have finished, cut up your comic strip into panels to see if another student can put it back together in the right order.

Activity 5 - Get interactive!

Do you want to know more about comics? Go to the State Library of Victoria's website to listen to the Heroes and Villains podcast.

<http://learning.slv.vic.gov.au/heroes/audiotour/>

Did you know?

Do you know what the most expensive comic book in the world is? *Action Comics* #1, published in 1938, was the first Superman comic book to be printed. It is now worth nearly A\$1,000,000!

Comic book collectors like their comic books in perfect condition – some people keep them in special plastic bags and never even open the packaging to read them. Would you be able to resist the temptation?

