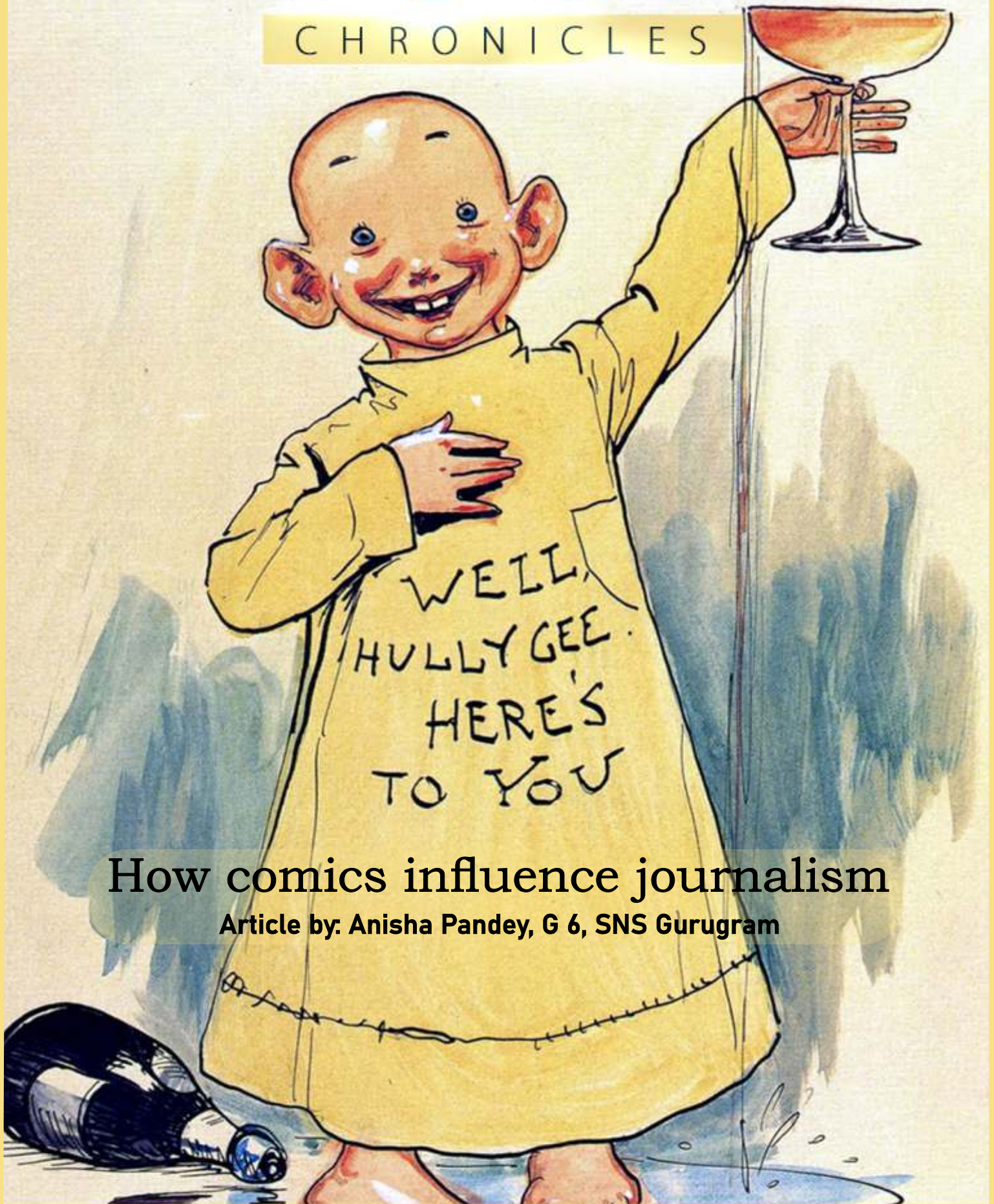


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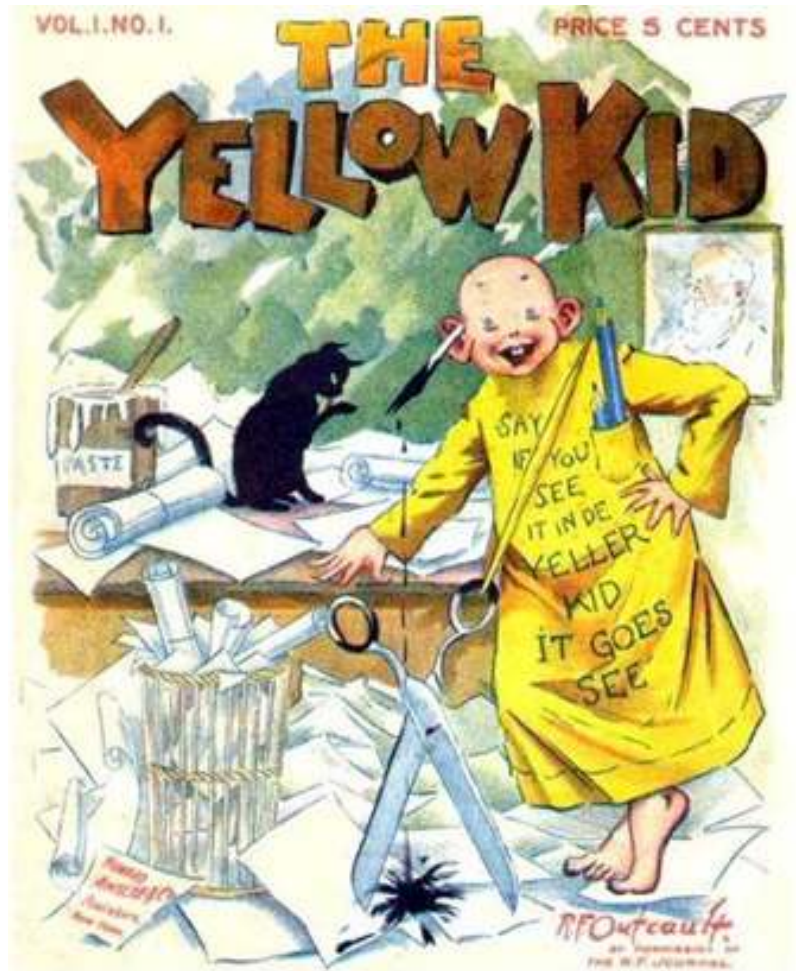
How comics influence journalism

Article by: Anisha Pandey, G 6, SNS Gurugram

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How Comics Influenced Journalism

By Anisha Pandey, Grade 6, SNS Gurugram



Have you ever clicked on a link of an online news report hoping for something captivating or knowledgeable, but all you see are bold headlines screaming something like: **“EVERYTHING WILL KILL YOU! READ THIS TO SAVE YOUR LIFE.”**



These crazy news reports have a name and a long history as well.

Yellow journalism is a term that describes reckless and exaggerated presentation of news. It includes sensational headlines that immediately catch the eyes of the readers. In other words, it refers to **the melodramatic way of writing or presenting the news to increase reader/ viewership and eventually earn more money.**

So, why is this act specifically known as 'yellow' journalism? Why not "blue journalism", or any other favourite colour of yours?

This unique name (yellow journalism) originated from a comic strip printed in a newspaper named the 'New York World' back in 1860s. Initially, the comic was called "The Kid", however, it was changed to "The Yellow Kid" in the late 1800s due to sudden increase in

popularity. **This was in relation to the main character's yellow dress made with some quick-drying yellow ink.**

Created by Richard F. Outcalt, this comic mainly revolved around a rural area of New York called Hogan's Alley. **The main character- Mickey Dugan (The Yellow Kid)- was a barefoot young peasant boy, with a bald head, big ears and two protruding teeth.**

Overall, his signature style included being draped with a long, yellow nightshirt that mostly carried a message. He lived in a slum filled with other awkward characters and spoke with a slight lisp in a ragged slang. **The aim of this comic was to ridicule industrial, political and societal figures.**

This comic was first printed in 1895 in Joseph Pulitzer's New York World, the leading newspaper in New York at that time.

Envious by the gains of Pulitzer, William Randolph Hearst, the publisher of the New York Journal took



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Richard Outcault in his team. Pulitzer hired artist George Luks to continue the comic with his characters there by giving the city of New York two Yellow Kids. This led to a menacing war and utter rivalry among the two giant newspapers.

This epic circulation war involved fighting across a non-verbal platform, the words of which however, stung so badly, was what these two men were indirectly or secretly doing. The newspapers came up with preposterous headlines, dominant graphics with oversized pictures along with the twisting stories.

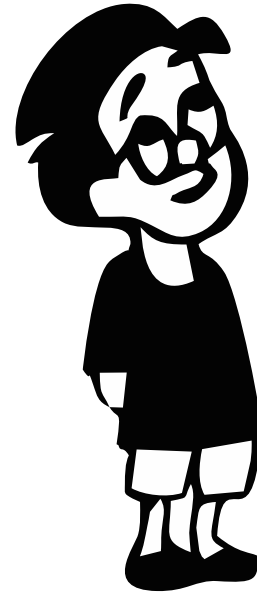
This new style of reporting was called "yellow journalism". That is why Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst have been given credit for playing a role in the creation of yellow journalism as well as for setting up the modern newspapers.

This is how the term "Yellow Journalism" was invented. It is also sometimes prominently referred to in our times as well. So, the next time you flip the pages to read a funny comic in the newspaper, or spot some insane headlines, do remember how a simple comic can influence or inspire a whole new trend.



Drawing Out the Truth

By Tara Rao, Grade 8, SNS Gurugram



Since I was small, my family has always got the Indian Express newspaper. I was not interested in reading the news, but I liked the comic section. I would open it and look at funny comic strips like Marvin and Calvin and Hobbes. My third-grade teacher told my mom that I should be reading the newspaper.

I thought of it as a task and didn't enjoy it. Then lockdown hit, and every morning I would have to wake up and be at home all day. Gradually, in 7th grade, I would spend every morning sitting silently at the dining table, eating a fried egg and drinking milk alongside my grandmother, taking



turns to read the paper. We still do. In a way online school helped me gain an interest in reading the newspaper.

I'm now going to turn 13, and have started understanding many topics that earlier would not make sense to me. **One of them is political cartoons. In the Indian Express, there is a small section reserved for the daily cartoon drawn by a very witty political cartoonist named E.P. Unny.**

He has illustrated cartoons for decades, and the comics he makes are slightly harder to comprehend by the brain of an 8-year-old. Now, with my increased understanding, I love the funny and clever cartoons he makes.

He has no fear of mocking big and powerful people whom I cannot name. The standard character in Unny's comic is a boy with glasses. There is a story behind this too. **Unny explains**

that on a trip he saw a bright, young boy with glasses distributing newspapers. This boy inspired the iconic character that we see in his comic today.

Expression in the form of art is something that people in power find hard to shut down because of the support it receives from the audience. Political satires in the form of comics can sum up the entire news within its square boxes.

Political cartoons first emerged in India as a reaction to the British colonization of the country. Satirical cartoons were very popular at that time and continue to be a big hit with the public even today.

When a political crisis like the Emergency occurred, comics provided the space to share one's opinion without using many words. These works resonated with the audience and also helped lighten the atmosphere.

Cartoonists like R.K. Laxman and K. Shankar Pillai are some of the most well-known artists in the



industry. Mario Miranda is another well-known cartoonist, but he focuses more on social situations than politics.

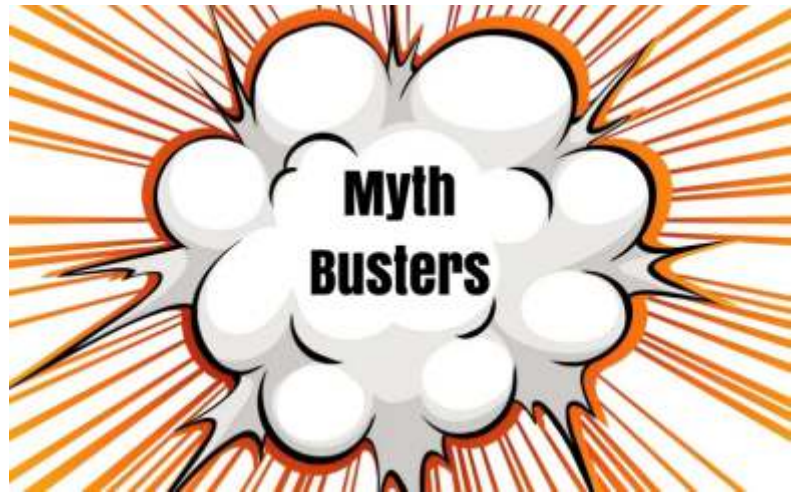
I find that along with being witty and clever, it takes a lot of courage for political cartoonists to create something that questions or stands up to power and influence.

Comics are hard to create but are a necessary mode of expression that need to be preserved.



Myth Busters

By Pranet Khetan, Grade 8, SNS Gurugram



Did you know that your brain has enough storage to store most of the internet? Yes, it does feel strange when, knowing that fact, you still aren't able to mug up definitions for your science exam. It is common to talk about the brain in terms of 'processing power' and 'storage' but the reality is that our brains are different from any computers we have today.

Let us dive into some myths about our brain and mind.

Myth 1: The Unrealised Potential Myth

The Myth: You only use 10 percent of your brain, and the rest 90 percent is untapped potential.



This is one of the most commonly believed myths that most people do not bother to clear up.

The Origin: **Albert Einstein supposedly once told a journalist that he 'uses only ten percent of his brain'**. This myth has also been circulating (for a long time) in the 1900s pop culture, and many self-help books including those published by the bestselling author, Dale Carnegie.

Busted: This myth has been rampant for a long time, as is being used by 'time management coaches' and 'new-age tuition classes'. **I think it is time we realised that there is (mostly) no 'untapped potential' we have in our brain.** Of course, we could improve our learning skills, but that doesn't mean we're suddenly starting to use '100%' of our brains.

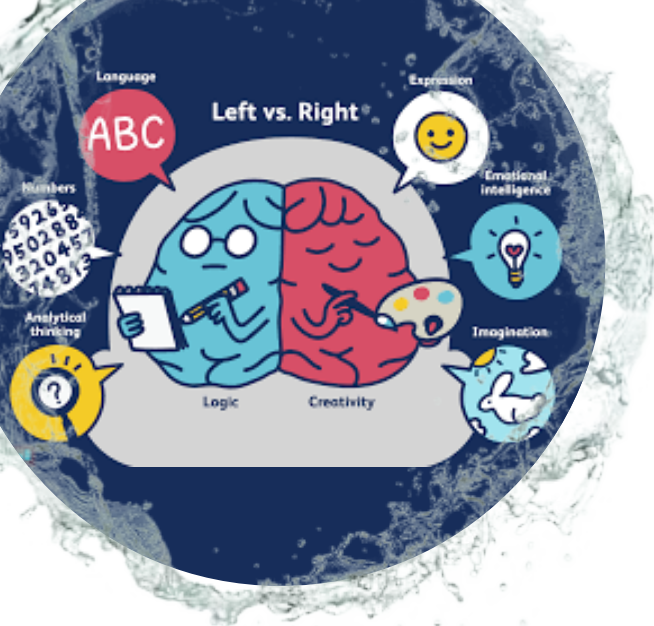
We already use close to 100% of our brains at a

given moment of time. **Our brain doesn't just have to calculate things, it has to process and understand what we see, our reactions to it, and the sensory input from all other 5 senses.** Not only that, but it has to regulate most of the essential life processes that occur in our body (like digestion, circulation, respiration, muscular movement, and more).

Another reason why this myth is just wishful thinking is that our brain makes up just 2% of our body's mass, but uses over 20% of its energy. The brain is energy and resource intensive compared to the rest of our body.

The evolution of life doesn't allow for wasted potential; it could mean the difference between life and death in a tricky situation.

Our evolution wouldn't allow for 90% of our brains to be wasted, because brain tissue is resource-intensive to create and maintain, though it does seem nice to have some 'unrealised potential' just waiting for you to tap into it.



Myth 2: The Left Brain/Right Brain Myth

The Myth: Just like people have dominant hands (right vs left), people also have a dominant side of their brains. Left-brained people are generally more 'rational, analytical and logical' while right-brained people are generally more 'creative, intuitive and free' thinkers.

Why do people just want to categorise themselves all the time? It really seems as if they want to use their differences to describe the thing they care about most – themselves – using positive, 'scientific' words, and for good reason, too! Imagine how nice it would feel when a friend calls you a creative, intuitive and free thinker just because you use your left hand to write with!

The Origin: This myth is not entirely false. Researchers in the past have cut the corpus

callosum, the structure that links the two hemispheres of our brain, to treat a form of epilepsy. They compared the loss of brain functionality to pinpoint some aspects of our brain's functioning.

They found out that the left hemisphere does control some aspects of logic and reasoning, while the right hemisphere is responsible for more spatial tasks.

Ever since that research was published, this myth spread like wildfire. Everyone was calling themselves 'left-brained' or 'right-brained' as a representation of their personality.

Busted: The truth is that both sides of our brain work closely together even to perform the most basic tasks. For example, the left side of our brain specialises in picking out sounds that may be words and working out their grammatical correction, but it cannot truly interpret them.

For that, the right side of the brain specialises in



processing language, including its nuances, emotional features, context and more. Also, the differentiation between the functioning of the two sides doesn't really affect a human's personality: **everyone is unique, and we don't have to be divided into two distinct groups.**

Myth 3: You need to know a single language well before learning another one

The Myth: You need to know a single language well to be able to learn another one, or else your understanding of both languages will be lost.

A good example to bust this myth is how we learn both Hindi and English at the same time. Although we may use one more than the other (or use a totally different mother tongue), it doesn't mean that we don't know any of these languages properly, or that they compete for resources in our brains.

The Origin: Such kinds of language myths typically arise from politics and culture. In many places, some languages are considered 'superior' to others, and people even wash their children's mouths with soap (yes, seriously!) because they have spoken an 'inferior' language, which may contaminate their 'superior' language.

People also don't realise the difference between 'blending' languages and 'confusing' languages. For example, many of us may speak Hinglish (a combination of Hindi and English), but that doesn't mean that we don't know either of the languages properly. **It is just convenient to be able to use both at once! This is also another reason these language-related myths arose.**

Busted: The human brain is dynamic and flexible. When we are children our brain has a great capacity to learn new things in our childhood. This is the time when you should learn as many languages as possible. **Multilingual children are generally better at understanding the structure, emotions and nuances of languages.**

The Dalai Lama

By Bhavya Sud, Grade 6, SNS Gurugram



29th June, 2022

I was on a holiday in McLeodganj, but I woke up early because it was a very special day. We were going to meet The Dalai Lama.

We reached early in the morning at Namgyal Monastery. We waited for at least 45 minutes until we saw a car



coming down with His Holiness, Dalai Lama. There were so many people who were in line to visit.

They dressed up traditionally and wore lots of jewellery. **One by one, people went to meet him and ask for his blessings.** It was our turn. We touched his feet and held his hand. **I couldn't believe it! He held our hand as we all smiled at the camera for our group photograph.**

He gave us blessings and then my friend asked him a question, "What happens after death?" A man next to him translated it into Tibetan language. **He then replied that many people have different ideas, but according to Buddhists, we are reborn after death. Life-after-life.**

He told us that we have to believe in Karuna (compassion) and Ahinsa (non-violence). He explained that when Tibet was invaded by

China, he experienced no anger or hatred, but sadness for them as they were short-sighted for invading Tibet.

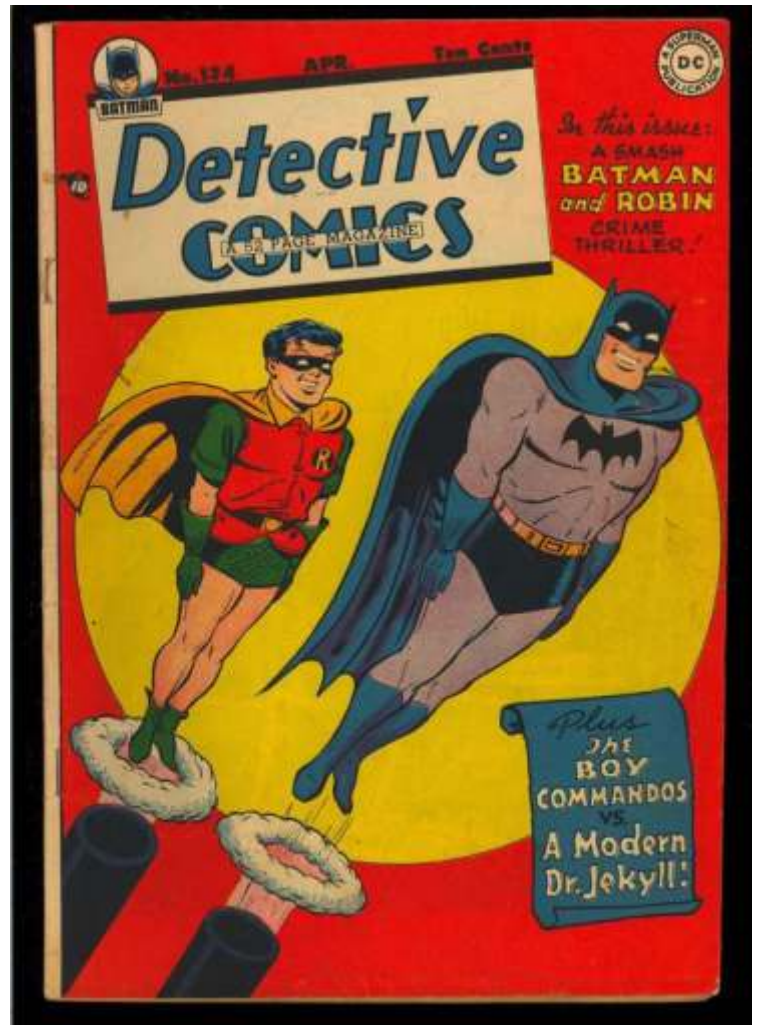
The Dalai Lama has been living in India for the past 63 years! "My body is Tibetan but my knowledge is Indian," he said.

He was ready to answer another question. A friend of mine stepped up and asked, "How do I talk to God?". He smiled and replied "God is just the creator- Buddha teaches us how to act and behave. You are your own master, you decide how you behave and act."

He was really kind and sweet and he held our hand lots of times. **He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989 and he spoke way more than we expected, even though he was 86 years old and not in the best of health.** He laughed with us and cracked jokes. I was so happy that we were some of the very few people who got to meet him since it's a once in a lifetime opportunity!

The Madness of Batman in The 90s

By Atharvva Raheja, Grade 6, SNS Gurugram



We all have seen the movie 'Batman'. This wonderful movie is loved by many people. It also directs us towards our theme 'Between the Gutter: Comics', as Batman is



arguably the best example of a movie adaptation from the comics.

Unlike most comic adaptations nowadays, Batman is a true adaptation of the comic book. The Batman comics are published by DC Comics. The character 'Batman' was created by Bob Kane and Bill Finger.

For the ones who are unaware of his superpowers, I would like to throw light on some of his strengths which include his great capacity for holding his breath under water and surviving in an airless environment.

He is also well known for his humanity and desire to fight for justice. I wish I had the strength to run as fast as Batman. I believe he is the most powerful superhero in the DC world.

Today DC has emerged as the biggest madness for our generation as we eagerly wait for the

movies to drop in theatres. Little do we know that these characters are sometimes sourced from some simple comic books which we read.

The creative hands that make the comics are the reason why some characters become special to us. Batman comics was the source for the movie Batman and the character was very much loved by its audience. Not only kids but adults also love Batman.

Apart from Batman, Doctor Strange movies also originated from the comics. Dr. Stephen Strange who recently appeared in the Multiverse Madness is a fictional character of American Comic Books published by Marvel Comics.

It is fascinating to know that this character first appeared in a comic published in 1963. Doctor Strange is also the most loved character in these movies. The recent movies although not true adaptations of the comics, however, have the characters taken from them.



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The response of the audience must be taken into consideration while introducing new characters into these movies.

Comics also inspire toy-making businesses. Children of my age love having collectibles of our favourite superheroes. Thus, comics inspire many different expressions of art.

The creativity shown in the comics is such a pure form of art that must be appreciated by different age groups.

Like Batman, we will surely have more superheroes who certainly would not beat the purity of this character but will take a place in our hearts with their unique qualities. **We need more such adaptations from the universe of comicbooks.**



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The Mirror

By Aanya Roy, Grade 6, SNS Gurugram



I play with a mirror, all alone

I play in the attic of my home

It is rusty and shattered, and it leans by the shelf

The mirror shows me, a reflection of myself

I sit in front of it, and play rock, paper, scissors

I chant the words over and over, while I stare at the
mirror

It mimics what I do, what I say, and hear

And even at times, I wonder if it feels my fear

I chant the words again, "rock, paper scissors",

I landed on rock, the mirror landed on paper,

My face is a neutral expression,

my reflection's face is grinning,

I can't escape now...

for she is coming.



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