

Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center Educator Resource Packet

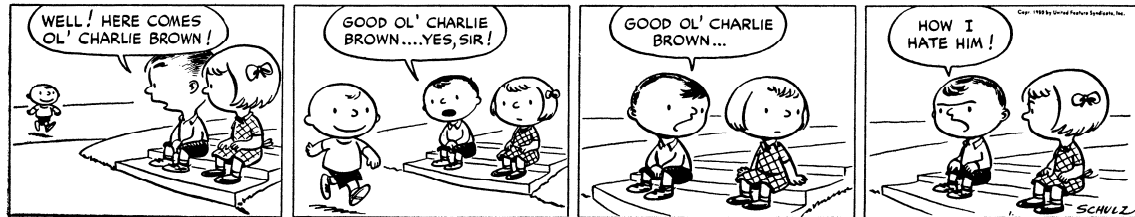
Charles Schulz was beloved and admired throughout the world by comic fans and artists alike. His work has been viewed by, and has had an impact on, millions of people. What made **Peanuts** so popular? What is it about Schulz's work that rocketed **Peanuts** to one of the most widely circulated comic strips in history? And, most importantly, why dedicate an entire museum to **Peanuts** and its ambitious creator?

Charles Schulz was not simply a comic artist, but a commentator on the human condition. As children, we perceive the **Peanuts** characters as funny little kids who get themselves into silly situations. As adults we realize that contained within the classic humor of Schulz's comic strips are messages and observations about life. The characters' reflections—at once sophisticated and child-like—address the entire range of human emotions, introducing themes of rejection, anguish, depression, and alienation in a humorous context. **Peanuts**' world-wide popularity stems from the fact that its meanings are universal and translatable into almost any language and culture. In fact **Peanuts** is published in 75 countries in over 40 different languages. Charlie Brown, Snoopy, and the rest of the **Peanuts** gang populate the page, the screen, and the hearts of many.



About Charles M. Schulz

Charles Monroe Schulz was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on November 26, 1922, to Dena and Carl Schulz. He took an interest in drawing and comics at a young age and was proud when Ripley's newspaper feature, *Believe it or Not*, published his drawing of the family dog in 1937. The first **Peanuts** strip (below) was run on October 2, 1950 by seven newspapers, and by 1958, **Peanuts** appeared in 355 U.S. and 40 foreign newspapers. It was also in 1958 that Schulz left Minnesota and moved with his wife and five children to Sebastopol, California. Schulz continued to draw **Peanuts** until 1999 when he retired. The final strip ran on February 13, 2000.



Peanuts — October 2, 1950

Some interesting facts about Charles Schulz and **Peanuts**:

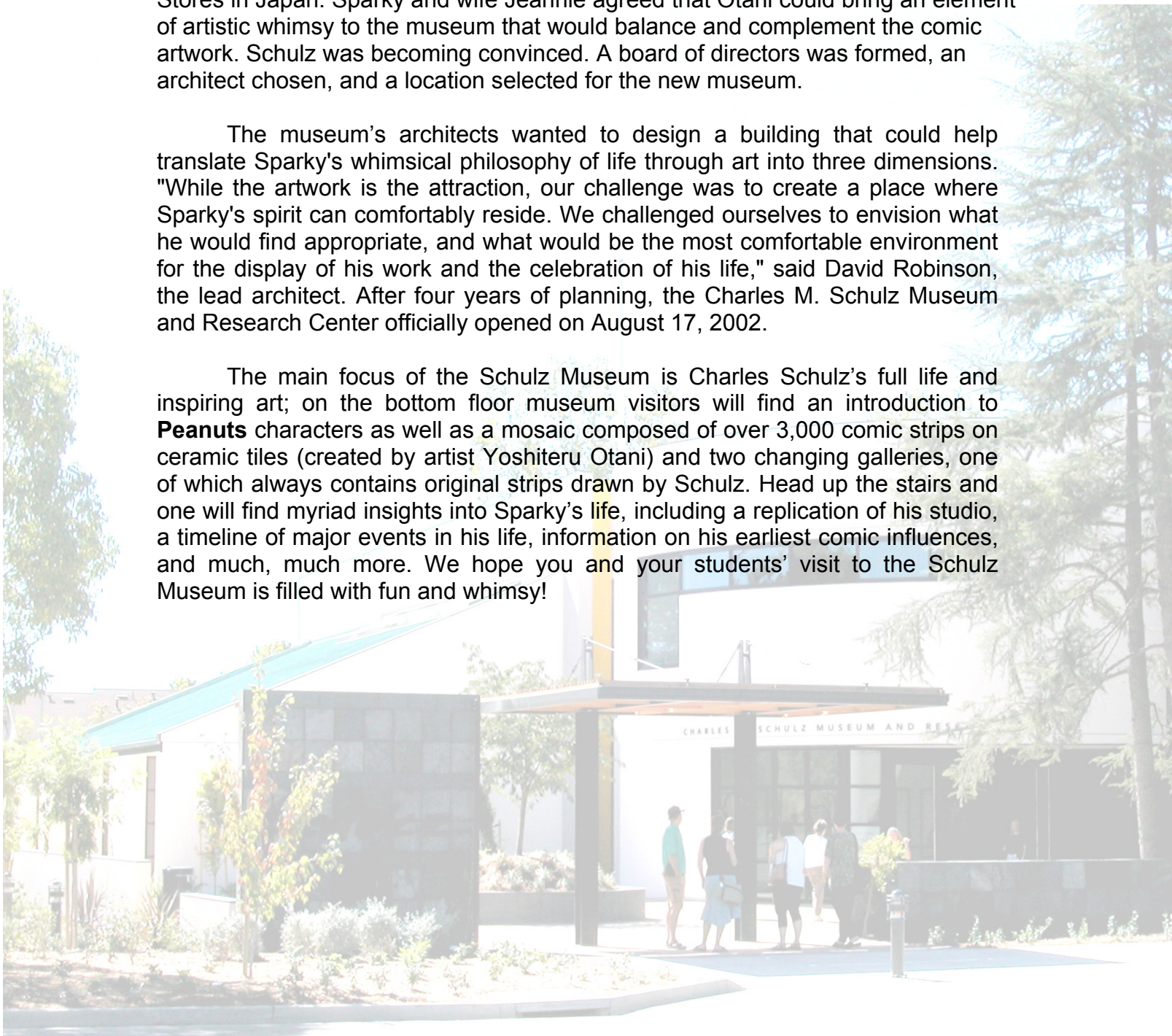
- ❖ Throughout his career, Charles Schulz drew over 18,000 comic strips.
- ❖ From birth, comics played a big role in Schulz's life. At just two days old, an uncle nicknamed him "Sparky" after the horse Spark Plug from the *Barney Google* comic strip.
- ❖ Schulz's kindergarten teacher told him, "Someday, Charles, you're going to be an artist."
- ❖ In the 1930s, Schulz had a black-and-white dog that later became the inspiration for Snoopy; his name was Spike (this is the same dog that Schulz drew for Ripley's *Believe It or Not*).
- ❖ **Peanuts** is not the name Schulz chose for his strip; in fact he didn't even like the name. In 1950 when Schulz sold his strip, originally titled *Li'l Folks*, to United Feature Syndicate, they renamed it **Peanuts**.
- ❖ The first **Peanuts** animated special, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, aired in 1965 and won both a Peabody Award and an Emmy for outstanding children's programming.
- ❖ Charles Schulz earned a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 1996.
- ❖ **Peanuts** qualified for a place in the *Guinness Book of World Records* after being sold to the 2,000th newspaper in 1984. Today **Peanuts** is circulated in almost 2,600 newspapers.

Museum Overview

For many years, people flocked to exhibits in the United States and around the world to see the work of Charles M. Schulz, but his original comic strips had never had a proper home in Sonoma County, where Schulz lived for almost forty years. As the 50th anniversary of **Peanuts** drew closer, Schulz's friends and family tried to convince Schulz that there must be a museum dedicated to him and his life's work. Schulz (nicknamed "Sparky") did not think of himself as "a museum piece," but his enthusiasm for the museum increased in 1997 after seeing the **Peanuts**-inspired work of artist and designer Yoshiteru Otani for the Snoopytown Stores in Japan. Sparky and wife Jeannie agreed that Otani could bring an element of artistic whimsy to the museum that would balance and complement the comic artwork. Schulz was becoming convinced. A board of directors was formed, an architect chosen, and a location selected for the new museum.

The museum's architects wanted to design a building that could help translate Sparky's whimsical philosophy of life through art into three dimensions. "While the artwork is the attraction, our challenge was to create a place where Sparky's spirit can comfortably reside. We challenged ourselves to envision what he would find appropriate, and what would be the most comfortable environment for the display of his work and the celebration of his life," said David Robinson, the lead architect. After four years of planning, the Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center officially opened on August 17, 2002.

The main focus of the Schulz Museum is Charles Schulz's full life and inspiring art; on the bottom floor museum visitors will find an introduction to **Peanuts** characters as well as a mosaic composed of over 3,000 comic strips on ceramic tiles (created by artist Yoshiteru Otani) and two changing galleries, one of which always contains original strips drawn by Schulz. Head up the stairs and one will find myriad insights into Sparky's life, including a replication of his studio, a timeline of major events in his life, information on his earliest comic influences, and much, much more. We hope you and your students' visit to the Schulz Museum is filled with fun and whimsy!



Activity Ideas

These activities can be used to prepare your students for a visit to the Schulz Museum or to extend your museum experience into the classroom after your visit. The following are aligned with California content standards. Find specific standards for your museum tour included with this packet.

Pre-Visit Activities These activities have been designed for a wide age range and will need to be adapted to fit the needs of your students.

I. *What Do You Know About Charles Schulz?* (pre k – grade 6)

Objectives:

- To get students thinking about their trip to the Schulz Museum and what they will learn there
- To encourage students to ask questions while on their tour

Instructions:

Have students write down one thing they know about Charles Schulz and **Peanuts**, or spend time coming up with things as a group and having one person/the teacher record all of them. Also have the students come up with questions they would like to ask during their visit. After returning from the museum, try the same exercise and compare how many things students were able to think of before and after their visit. Were all of their questions answered?

II. *Discovering Peanuts* (pre k – grade 6)

Objectives:

- To familiarize students with **Peanuts** and its characters, as well as comic strip art in general

Instructions:

Up to a week before your visit to the Schulz Museum, have students cut out the daily **Peanuts** strip and bring it to class. Using the suggestions below, spend some time each day discussing the strip. If you have younger students (pre k – grade 2), you may want to simply read the strip or a **Peanuts** book aloud with your students to familiarize them with **Peanuts** characters. An alternate way to go about this activity is to show one of the many animated **Peanuts** specials to your class (find a list of animated specials in the **Resources** section of this packet) and adapt the following discussion points.

- Is the strip funny? Why or why not?
- What are some words you could use to describe the personalities of the characters in this strip?
- Have you ever experienced anything similar to what's happening in the strips?

After viewing a few days worth of strips, who is your favorite character and why? Least favorite? Are there some characters that appear in the strip more often than others?



III. *What's in a Comic Strip?* (pre k – grade 6)

Objectives:

- To help students discover that one comic can have a broad range of people and places, but that they are not all put into every strip

Instructions:

Have each student cut out an example of his or her favorite comic strip from the newspaper, **Peanuts** or otherwise, and have each present their chosen strip to the class. Students may want to use the following discussion points.

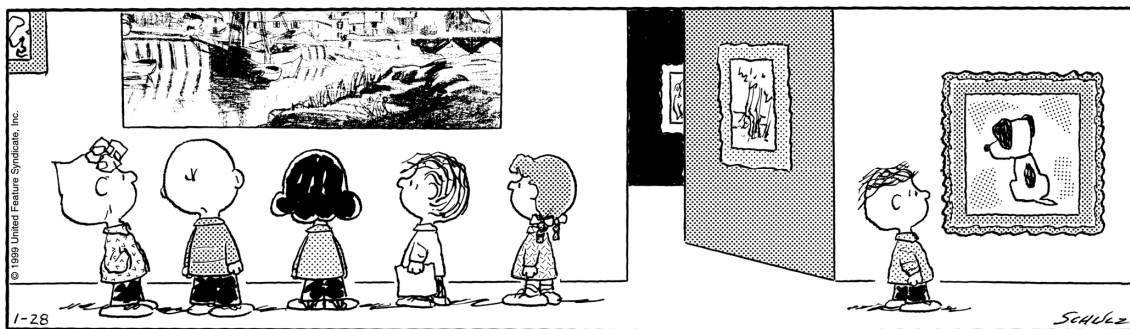
- Why do you like this strip?
- How many characters are in this strip? Who are the main characters?
- Describe some of the characters: What are their names? How old are they? Do you have anything in common with them?
- Where is this strip taking place? Does it ever take place anywhere else?

Post-Visit Activity Ideas These activities can be used after your museum visit to integrate what your students have learned about Charles Schulz and comic art into the classroom.

I. *Make a Museum at School* (pre k – grade 2)

Objectives:

- To reinforce students' knowledge of the function of museums



Instructions:

Now that your students know what a museum is for—displaying artwork, artifacts, etc.—it's time for them to create their own classroom museum. First decide what your museum will be about; it can be an art museum with students' original paintings and drawings, or students can bring things from home such as household objects or things they find fascinating/unusual. Display the art/objects in places all around the classroom and be sure to create labels for each piece with the contributor's name and possibly a short description. You can even arrange for parents to come visit the "museum."

II. Illustrate a Story (pre k – grade 2)

Objectives:

- To get students to use their imaginations about what is happening in a story

Instructions:

Children are familiar with the method of combining pictures and words to tell a story; comic artists like Charles Schulz do the same basic thing to tell their stories. Read a short story or poem to your class without showing them the pictures. Afterwards, ask students to draw a picture or pictures of one thing that happened in the story.

III. Crayon Rubbings (pre k – grade 2)

Objectives:

- To create a multi-dimensional piece of art and then transform it back to two dimensions

Instructions:

Go to www.snoopy.com and print out one or more of the images for coloring under Fun and Games. Give a copy of a character to each student and have them trace the lines on the page with glue. Let the glue dry (you may want to do this as the last activity of the day so that students can leave their glue to dry over night). When dry, place another piece of paper over the character (tape down if necessary) and have students use crayons to color the entire page. The image of the character should come through as the crayon passes over the raised glue.

IV. Create a Mosaic (pre k- grade 2)

Objectives:

- For students to create a work of art using a variety of colors and textures

Instructions:

Remind students of the tile mosaic they saw at the Schulz Museum. Cut or tear construction paper, cardstock, magazine pages, even tin foil into little pieces and have students arrange the pieces on a piece of white paper. Challenge students to cover up as much of the white space as possible. They can glue as they go or arrange all the pieces and then glue them. Another option is to have the students arrange their mosaic and then lay a piece of clear contact paper over it to hold the pieces in place.



V. Comics Reflecting Life (grades 3-6)

Objectives:

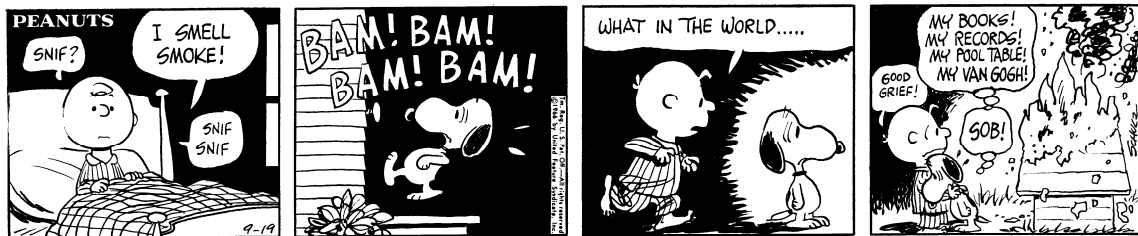
- To help students learn to use their own experiences to shape their creative work

Instructions:

Make copies of the blank comic strip template (included in this packet) for each student—since there are two to a page, you may wish to give each student a full page so that they can use one strip as a rough draft. Use the examples below to discuss how Charles Schulz used so much of his own life in his strips—even painful experiences like those of rejection and loss—and have students brainstorm something that happened to them at home, school, on the playground, etc. Once they decide on the story they want to tell, have them draw it into four panels. Remind students that a story must have a beginning, middle and end, and encourage them to use color. Compile all of the finished student strips and create a classroom publication.

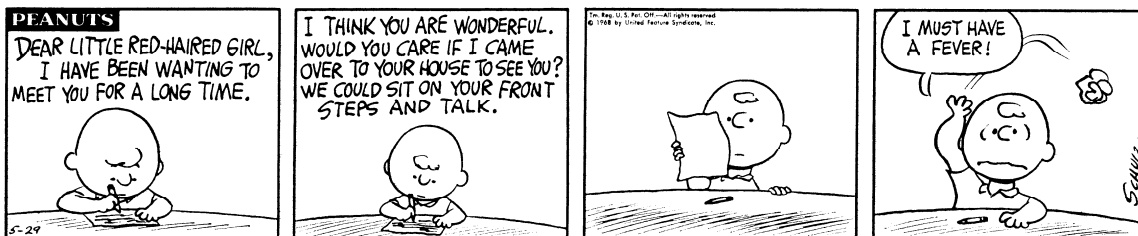
Examples from Schulz's Life

In 1966, a fire destroyed Charles Schulz's Sebastopol studio. He translated his feelings into a strip about Snoopy's doghouse catching fire.



Peanuts — September 19, 1966

In the late 1940s, Schulz proposed to a woman named Donna Mae Johnson, who had red hair, but she chose to marry another man who had also proposed to her. In the strip, Charlie Brown is forever in love with the little red-haired girl, but he never has the courage to talk to her.



Peanuts — May 29, 1968

VI. Make an Animated Flip Book (grades 3-6)

Objectives:

- To teach students the basics of animation
- To show students how closely comic art and animation are related

Instructions:

Movement and flow are important to the successful interpretation of a comic strip. A comic artist must learn to emphasize some motions while eliminating others. On the other hand, an animator must capture a broad range of movements in order for a cartoon to look continuous. Film and animation are possible because of a phenomenon called “persistence of vision” (when a sequence of images moves past the eye fast enough, the brain fills in the missing parts so that the subject appears to be moving).

For students to make their own animated cartoon, pre-cut strips of paper for students or ask them to bring their own to class (alternate materials that can be used are index cards or post-its still stuck together). Each student should plan on using at least 20 strips and they should be fastened together with a staple or a brad. Have each student pick a subject—anything from a bouncing ball to a flying butterfly or a growing tree. They should draw three key images first: the beginning on page one, the end on page twenty, and the middle on page ten, then fill in the strips between the key images.

To take this activity a step further, give each student a copy of the blank, four-panel strip template included with this packet and have each student reduce the number of images from their flip book to fit into the four panels. The action should still make sense even though it’s no longer animated. Encourage students to create a story by adding speech bubbles or captions to their strip.

VII. Create a Labyrinth (grades 3-6)

Objectives:

- To teach students about labyrinths, how they are made, and why they are unique

Instructions:

Remind students of the *Snoopy Labyrinth* in front of the museum. Labyrinths are found around the world and throughout history. They come in many shapes and sizes, but are generally square or circular in shape. The *Snoopy Labyrinth*, created by artist Lea Goode-Harris, is a means for Schulz Museum visitors to feel connected to nature. Talk about the Snoopy Labyrinth with your students and use the following handout to help students create their own **Peanuts** labyrinth.



Make a Charlie Brown Labyrinth

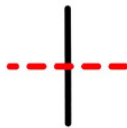
Did you get a chance to walk through the *Snoopy Labyrinth* on your visit to the Charles M. Schulz Museum? Labyrinths come in all different shapes and sizes and they usually have just one path that goes to the center and back out again. That characteristic makes labyrinths different from mazes, which have false starts and dead ends. Use the directions below and the Charlie Brown outline on the back of this page to create your own labyrinth inside of Charlie Brown.

First, practice on this sheet of paper following the steps below.

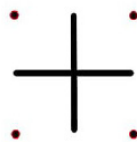
Step 1-



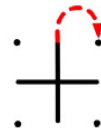
Step 2



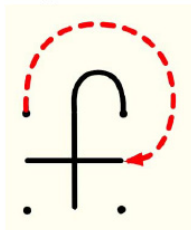
Step 3



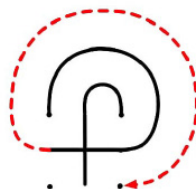
Step 4



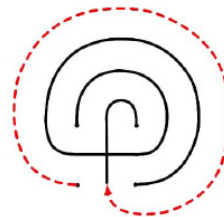
Step 5



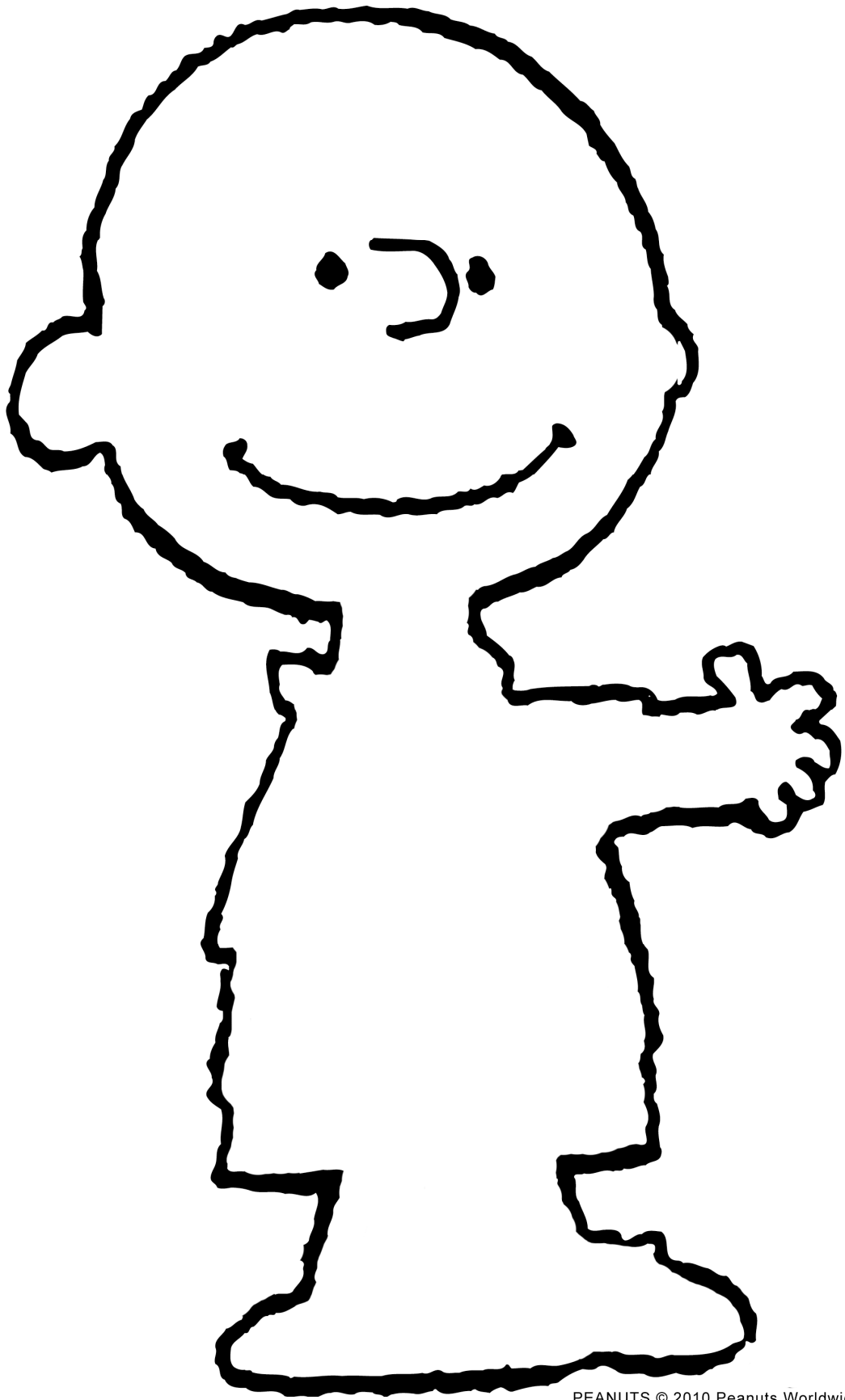
Step 6



Step 7



Now, using what you just learned about making a labyrinth, turn this paper over and create a labyrinth inside the outline of Charlie Brown!



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VIII. Create Your Own Cartoon/ Comic Character (grades 3-6)

Objectives:

- To provide students with insight on what it takes to create a cartoon character

Instructions:

Cut up the descriptions on the following page and place them in a hat/container (there are 70 descriptions below, so if you have a large class, make an extra copy and cut a set out for each half of your class). Have each student choose three or four words from the hat and draw a character with those features (if any of the traits they select conflict with each other, let them put a word back and choose again). After drawing their characters, each student can write a short story about their character, create a comic strip about their character, or create a short biography of their character including name, hobbies, favorite color, etc. Ask students to share their work with the rest of the class.

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The above activities are meant to serve as a springboard for you and your students to incorporate your Schulz Museum experience into your curriculum. We encourage you to utilize the **Recommended Resources** section of this packet to explore more information and to create your own classroom activities around Charles Schulz, **Peanuts**, and comic art.



|                |                |                  |               |                  |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| green pants    | ready to jump  | jewelry          | plugged in    | headlights       |
| clenched fists | snarl          | large biceps     | wheels        | old              |
| x-ray vision   | blue lips      | scaly            | spiky         | lumpy            |
| fishy          | bushy eyebrows | tear drops       | tree leaves   | computer screen  |
| dog collar     | frog legs      | spotted          | painted face  | tie-dyed         |
| freckles       | glasses        | big paws         | pig snout     | gooey            |
| turtle shell   | dirty          | knight's armor   | baseball cap  | square           |
| smile          | large jaw      | long fingernails | snake skin    | cape             |
| three legs     | fire breathing | horns            | drooling      | feathers         |
| elephant trunk | curly beard    | crossed eyes     | whiskers      | long tongue      |
| bird beak      | long eyelashes | shark fin        | robot arms    | untied shoelaces |
| pointy ears    | crazy hair     | wide             | stretchy      | short            |
| five eyes      | webbed feet    | big belly        | dinosaur tail | striped          |
| wings          | crooked teeth  | skinny           | round nose    | strong           |
| sneaky         | frosty         | eight toes       | fangs         | hammer head      |

## **Recommended Resources**

These additional sources will be helpful if you wish to learn more about Charles Schulz, **Peanuts**, or the art of cartooning.

### **Web Sites**

[www.schulzmuseum.org](http://www.schulzmuseum.org)

- Official website of the Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center

[www.snoopy.com](http://www.snoopy.com)

- Thirty days worth of **Peanuts** strips
- Character profiles
- Timeline about the strip (different from the timeline at the Schulz Museum)
- Character print-outs for coloring
- Info on fellow cartoonists' tributes to Schulz after he passed away

[www.peanutcollectorclub.com](http://www.peanutcollectorclub.com)

- Recent news articles and press releases on Charles Schulz and **Peanuts**
- Links to other **Peanuts**-themed websites
- Info on **Peanuts** products

[www.augh.com](http://www.augh.com)

- Info on **Peanuts** books, DVDs, and videos and where to find them

[www.rcharvey.com](http://www.rcharvey.com)

- Mr. Harvey is a leading cartoon historian—find his “Age of Schulz” piece in his archives

[www.toonopedia.com](http://www.toonopedia.com)

- Info on **Peanuts** and many, many other comics—it's an “encyclopedia of ‘toons”

[www.teachingcomics.org](http://www.teachingcomics.org)

- Suggestions on how to integrate comics into your curriculum
- Links to other educational resources concerning comics

[www.comics.com](http://www.comics.com)

- Access to popular and lesser-known comic strips, as well as editorial cartoons

[www.reuben.org](http://www.reuben.org)

- Official website of the National Cartoonists Society
- Info on how to become a professional cartoonist
- Info on awards given for cartooning

[www.kingfeatures.com](http://www.kingfeatures.com) and [www.amuniversal.com](http://www.amuniversal.com)

- Newspaper syndicate web sites
- Learn more about the distribution of comics to newspapers



## **Books**

Bang, Derrick, and Victor Lee. *50 Years of Happiness: A Tribute to Charles M. Schulz*. Santa Rosa, CA: Charles M. Schulz Museum & Research Center, 2002.

Schulz, Charles M. *Peanuts: A Golden Celebration: The Art and the Story of the World's Best-Loved Comic Strip*. New York: Harper Collins, 1999.

Klingel, Cynthia and Noyed, Robert B. *Charles Schulz (Wonder Books, Level 2 Reader)*. Chanhassen, MN: The Child's World, 2002.  
~very basic information (24 pages, about 200 words)

Schuman, Michael. *Charles M. Schulz: Cartoonist and Creator of Peanuts (People to Know)*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, 2002.  
~suitable for ages 10-15 (128 pages, about 20,000 words)

Whiting, Jim. *Charles Schulz (Real-Life Reader Biography)*. Bear, DE: Mitchell Lane Publishers, Inc., 2003.  
~suitable for ages 8-11 (32 pages, about 3000 words)

## **Abbreviated List of Peanuts Shows and Movies**

(Adapted from "The Peanuts Animation and Video Page" web site by Scott McGuire: <http://mit.edu/smcguire/www/peanuts-animation.html>).

For a complete list of **Peanuts** shows and movies, or for more information on those listed here, please visit the web address above.

### **Prime-Time Specials**

**A Charlie Brown Christmas** Charlie Brown becomes the director of the gang's Christmas pageant. Can he overcome their preference for dancing instead of acting, find a good Christmas tree, and discover the true meaning of Christmas?

**A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving** Peppermint Patty invites herself and friends to Charlie Brown's for Thanksgiving dinner, so with Snoopy and Linus' help, he decides to cook his own version of a Thanksgiving meal.

**It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown** While the gang goes trick-or-treating, Linus waits in the pumpkin patch for the Great Pumpkin; Snoopy plays the World War I Flying Ace and is shot down over "no man's land."

**It Was a Short Summer, Charlie Brown** Returning to school, the gang has to write a 500-word essay about their summer vacation. They recall going to summer camp, where the "boys' camp" and "girls' camp" compete against each other in swimming, softball, and other events.

***It's the Easter Beagle, Charlie Brown*** Peppermint Patty tries to teach Marcie how to decorate eggs, Snoopy gets a birdhouse for Woodstock, and Linus convinces Sally that she doesn't need to color eggs because the Easter Beagle will bring them.

***Be My Valentine, Charlie Brown*** Charlie Brown hopes for Valentines cards in his mailbox and at the school Valentine's Day party; Linus buys a present for Miss Othmar, and Sally hopes Linus will notice her.

***Snoopy's Reunion*** Charlie Brown decides to cheer up Snoopy by hosting a reunion party with his brothers and sisters; we learn about their first days at the Daisy Hill Puppy Farm and how they came to leave it.

***Lucy Must Be Traded, Charlie Brown*** Charlie Brown trades Lucy to Peppermint Patty's baseball team in hopes of getting a better player and winning a few baseball games.

***This Is America, Charlie Brown*** This eight-part series, advertised as "the first animated miniseries ever," was broadcast in prime-time on CBS during the 1988-89 season. Meant as both education and entertainment, the shows find the **Peanuts** gang witnessing and participating in historic events and discoveries. In addition to the animated characters, historical pictures and footage are used. The series includes:

***The Mayflower Voyagers***  
***The Birth of the Constitution***  
***The Wright Brothers at Kitty Hawk***  
***The NASA Space Station***  
***The Building of the Transcontinental Railroad***  
***The Great Inventors***  
***The Smithsonian and the Presidency***  
***Music and Heroes of America***



### **Documentaries and Live-Action Shows**

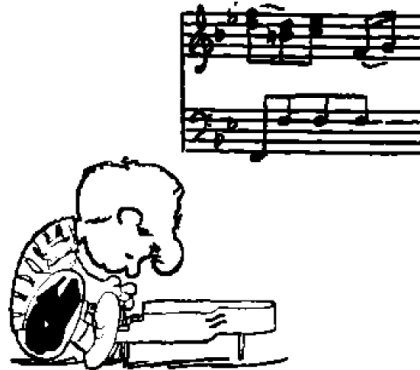
Although definitely part of the **Peanuts** television canon, these shows are either not primarily animated, or are a blend of interviews, archival footage and retrospectives that incorporate sequences from earlier specials.

***A Boy Named Charlie Brown*** A gentle and informative examination about Charles Schulz and the comic strip; featuring Charles Schulz driving his children to school while he discusses where he gets his ideas, answering his fan mail, at work in his studio, drawing his famous creations, and more.

***Charles M. Schulz... To Remember*** A documentary starring Charles Schulz with reflections on his youth and on parenthood, and how they inspired events and characters in the comic strip, especially his recollections of Spike, his real-life childhood dog that was the inspiration for Snoopy. Also includes segments filmed in France and clips from the animated movie, "Bon Voyage, Charlie Brown".

**A&E Biography—Charles Schulz: A Charlie Brown Life** An overview of Charles Schulz's life and career, including snippets from animated shows.

**The Making of A Charlie Brown Christmas** This 17-minute documentary hosted by Whoopi Goldberg focuses on the creation of the first **Peanuts** TV special, including interviews with some of the original voices; an example of the earliest **Peanuts** animation, (a Ford Falcon TV commercial); and a tribute to Vince Guaraldi, composer of the **Peanuts** theme.



## Movies

There have been four theatrically released feature-length **Peanuts** movies.

**A Boy Named Charlie Brown** After winning local competitions, Charlie Brown competes in a national spelling bee.

**Snoopy Come Home** Snoopy decides he must return to his previous owner.

**Race for Your Life, Charlie Brown** The gang goes to summer camp and competes in a whitewater race.

**Bon Voyage, Charlie Brown (And Don't Come Back)** Charlie Brown, Linus, Peppermint Patty, Marcie, and Snoopy travel to France as exchange students and confront a mystery surrounding their hosts.

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If your students have additional questions, they can write them to the address below. Make sure to include a return address so that we can mail back the answers.

Charles M. Schulz Museum
2301 Hardies Lane
Santa Rosa, Ca 95403

