

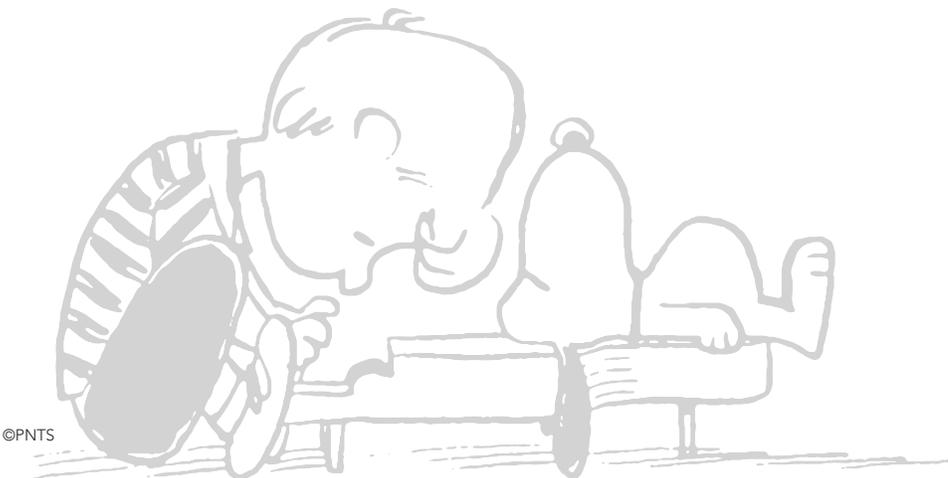
HIDDEN TREASURES IN THE COMICS

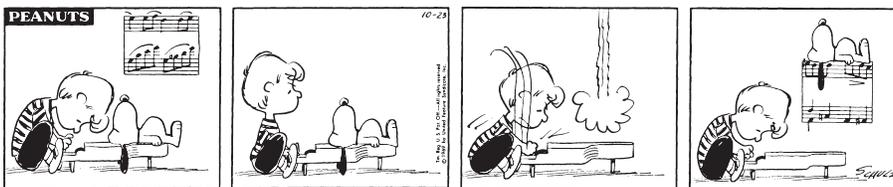
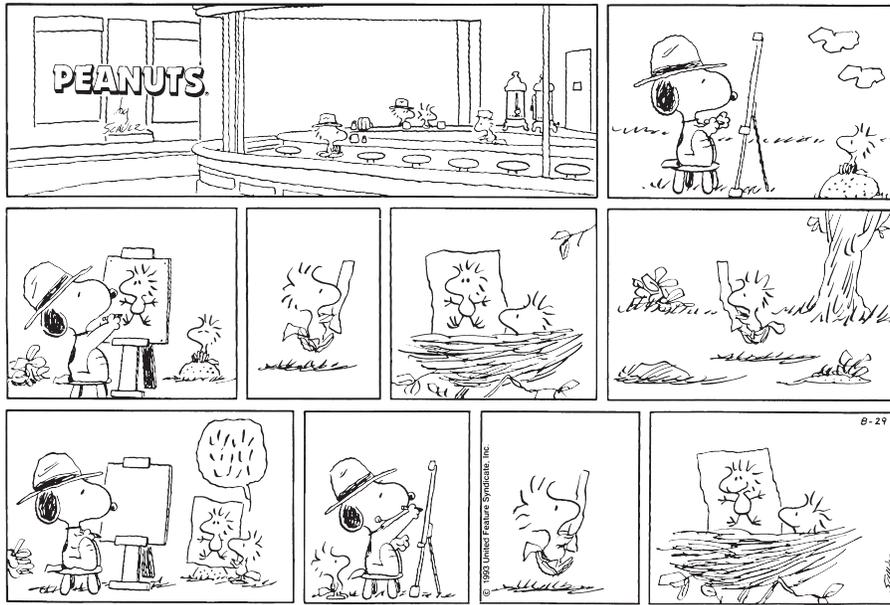
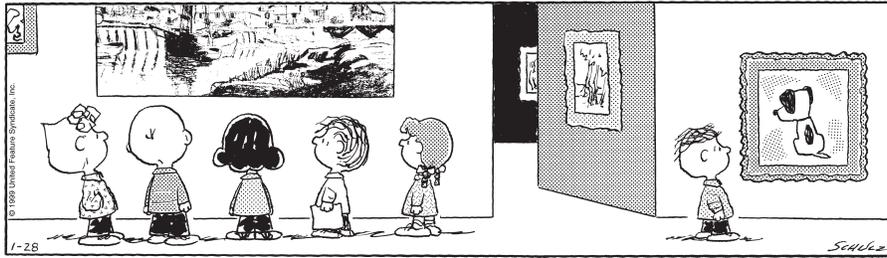
With millions of fans around the world, *Peanuts* is one of the most popular daily comics ever. From 1950–2000, Charles M. Schulz created 17,897 *Peanuts* comic strips and drew inspiration from the world around him, sometimes hiding references to friends, colleagues, favorite books and movies, and nods to his idols in the strips.

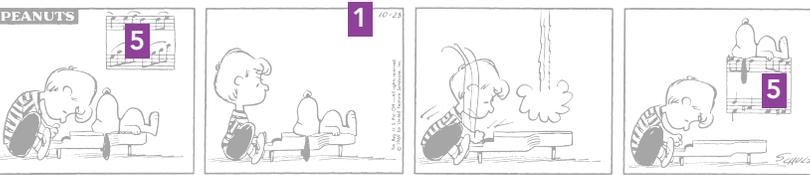
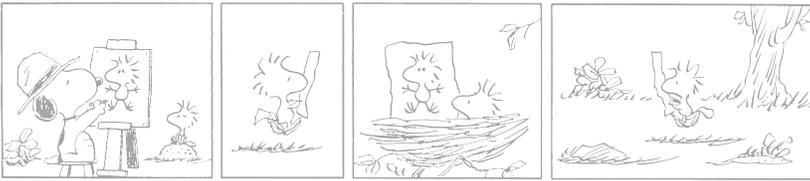
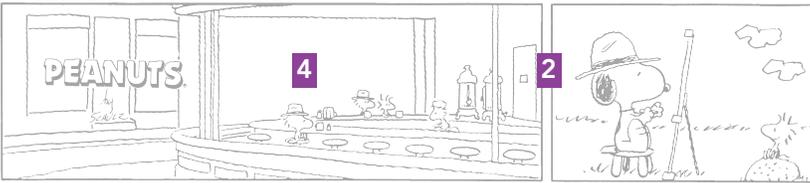
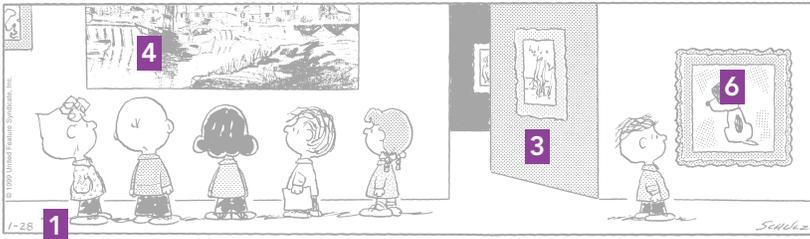
Look at the *Peanuts* comic strips provided on page 2. Find and circle the following references, nods, and conventions which might appear in more than one strip. Check your answers using the answer key on page 3.

FIND AND CIRCLE:

- 1. The original publication date of the strip.** Although Charles Schulz drew his strips six-to-eight weeks in advance, he hand-lettered the month and day of each strip's publication inside one of its panels. For example, a strip published on April 14 would be dated 4-14 or 4/14.
- 2. Throw-away panel on a Sunday strip.** Sunday comic strips, printed in color in the Sunday newspaper, were larger with more panels of artwork. The top third of a Sunday strip is called the "throw-away panel." Depending upon the amount of space each newspaper has for its Sunday comics, they might print only the bottom two-thirds of a strip. Knowing that the throw-away panels might never be published allowed Schulz to get especially creative with them.
- 3. Zip-A-Tone.** Many cartoonists including Charles Schulz used Zip-A-Tone, a brand of transparent adhesive film covered with patterns of dots that would add shading, dimension, and gray tones to artwork. The adhesive film was placed over the portion of the strip to be shaded and the remainder of the film was cut off with an artist's knife.
- 4. References to authors and artists.** Charles Schulz was inspired by many great artists and authors. Some of his favorites were author Eudora Welty and artist Andrew Wyeth. Find written and illustrated references to authors and artists in the comic strips provided.
- 5. Facts in the funnies.** Charles Schulz was meticulous when he tackled a new topic in *Peanuts*, from making sure every sports pose was just right to conferring with lawyers to get his legalese correct. This also included making sure musical scores were depicted correctly. Find excerpts from Beethoven's Opus 13/III, Rondo from Sonata No. 8 (Pathétique) in the strips provided. Also, find the shorthand once used by secretaries that reads, "Take a letter. Do this. Do that. Get me this. Get me that."
- 6. References to other cartoonists.** Charles Schulz knew he wanted to be a cartoonist from a young age and read the newspaper comics with his father every day. Find visual references to fellow cartoonists Patrick McDonnell and Walt Disney in the strips below.







THINGS TO NOTE:

Regarding the first strip:

- Schulz includes cartoon dog Earl from Patrick McDonnell's popular comic strip, *MUTTS*. In the book *Peanuts: A Golden Celebration*, Schulz said, "At different times I have included in the strip names of people I admire. Names such as General Eisenhower, Billie Jean King, Joe Garagiola, Bill Maudlin, Ernie Pyle, and so forth. Sometimes I even like to pay a special tribute to another cartoonist like Patrick McDonnell. I imagine there were readers who may not have understood this strip, but Patrick was well aware of the tribute I was paying him."
- Some people believe the artwork that the other kids are looking at is a tribute to artist Andrew Wyeth, one of Schulz's favorite artists, although it is likely not intended to be a direct copy of one of his paintings.

In the Sunday strip:

- The first panel is a nod to American artist Edward Hopper's famous painting, *Nighthawks* (1942).

In the last strip:

- Schulz shows Woodstock speaking shorthand in the last panel, which is a joke on several levels. Shorthand is a written, not spoken, method of rapid writing that uses abbreviations and symbols, used especially for taking dictation. Schulz's secretaries used shorthand and translated the shorthand in this strip for the Museum, as noted on page 1.

Now that you've found these hidden treasures, look for others the next time you read *Peanuts*!



For more *Peanuts* fun,
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