

Stories With Art: **Creating Comics With Arpita Singh**



Every painting by Arpita Singh tells a story – some real and some imaginary. In her paintings, she never completely reveals what the story is, because that is for the viewer to imagine. In her career as an artist for over fifty years, she experimented with all kinds of materials and styles. At some point, she started to include letters and numbers in her works. Slowly they grew to become words, phrases and then full sentences. They also became central to her art.

Here's a quote from her on the subject:

"My choice of words come to me organically, I can't explain how or why I write certain lines or phrases, because they are not directly connected with what I have painted. But somehow, till the time I have not written the text, I cannot connect myself fully to my artwork. Text is the only way I can connect to my artwork."

Comics 101

Comics are a popular artform that most of us might be familiar with. They basically use illustrations (or visuals) and text through various panels to show different scenes and tell a story.

Comics allow us to tell stories in so many ways, and like Arpita's work may not always spell everything out for the reader. The artist might choose to use colours, composition and symbols to insert clues about the characters, story or even the timeline, without writing it out. Can you think of any other artforms that use visuals and text together?

Creating Your Arpita-Inspired Superheroes

Let's try creating a superhero comic panel today using characters from Arpita Singh's world. Look at these figures closely, observe their features and imagine an appropriate superpower and weakness for them. Don't forget to give them a name!



Name _____

Superpower _____

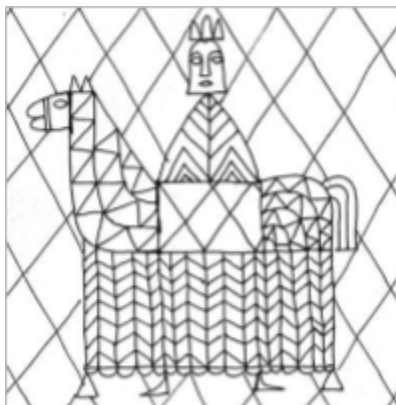
Weakness _____



Name _____

Superpower _____

Weakness _____



Name _____

Superpower _____

Weakness _____

Drawing Your Comic

When you have your superheroes ready, try creating a comic panel including all or some of them. You can invent other characters or take inspiration from other Arpita Singh paintings and include them in your story too.

Here are four easy steps to help you create your comic panel:

- 1** - Take an A4 sheet. Position it horizontally and draw four rectangles on it. They can be of equal sizes or vary in size and you can play around with the gaps between each box too.
- 2** - Think of a simple short story including your superheroes. Decide how to tell your story in four scenes using the four panels you've drawn. Now start drawing!
- 3** - Give your characters both dialogues and actions, and put them in appropriate settings. One way to do this is to imagine if your story was to become a TV show and if each of your rectangles on the paper is one scene from this show. How will you make the story progress?
- 4** - Use imaginative speech bubbles and font styles, play around with the shapes and the layout of your panels. There are really no rules as long as your story can be understood – so you can be as imaginative as possible!

Pro Tip: Use words to represent sounds. Splash! Bang! Whoosh! Thump! Zap!



We'd love to see what you created! DM it to us on Instagram @mapbangalore.
You can also email your images to us at education@map-india.org