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Can you doo Toondoo?

Application Toondoo, www.toondoo.com; lets you and your students create very appealing cartoons in a very short time.

Similar applications Toonlet, www.toonlet.com; WittyComics, www.wittycomics.com; Pixton, www.pixton.com (for schools!); Make Beliefs Comix, www.makebeliefscomix.com; StripGenerator, www.stripgenerator.com

Focus Creating cartoons

Level All levels

Age 13+ only; see Do It Yourself Step 2

Time 60–80 minutes

ICT skills Browsing, typing, copying & pasting, uploading

Equipment Computer lab OR single computer, pictures of cartoon characters, projector

Do It Yourself

- 1 You can watch a tutorial on how to create cartoons at www.helbling.com/mindtheapp
- 2 Sign up for a free individual account at www.toondoo.com. For full information about the age restriction, see <http://www.toondoo.com/privacypolicy.jsp>
- 3 Click 'Toons' in the left top control bar, then from the dropdown menu, 'Create Toon' (see Image 1).



1: creating a Toon

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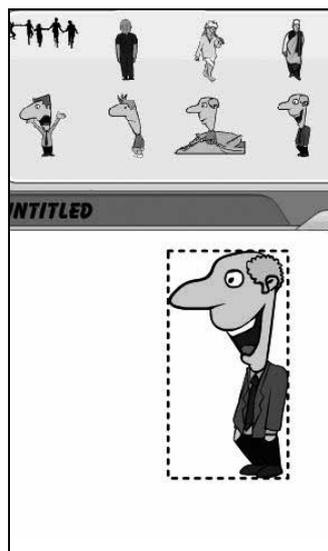
Can you doo Toondoo?

- 4 Then choose the three-frame horizontal layout (you may find that loading this takes a few minutes).
- 5 In the top control bar you can choose characters (see Image 2), settings, speech bubbles, etc.



2: choosing a character

- 6 Pick a character you like and drag it into the frame (see Image 3). To put a second character in the same frame, repeat the procedure.

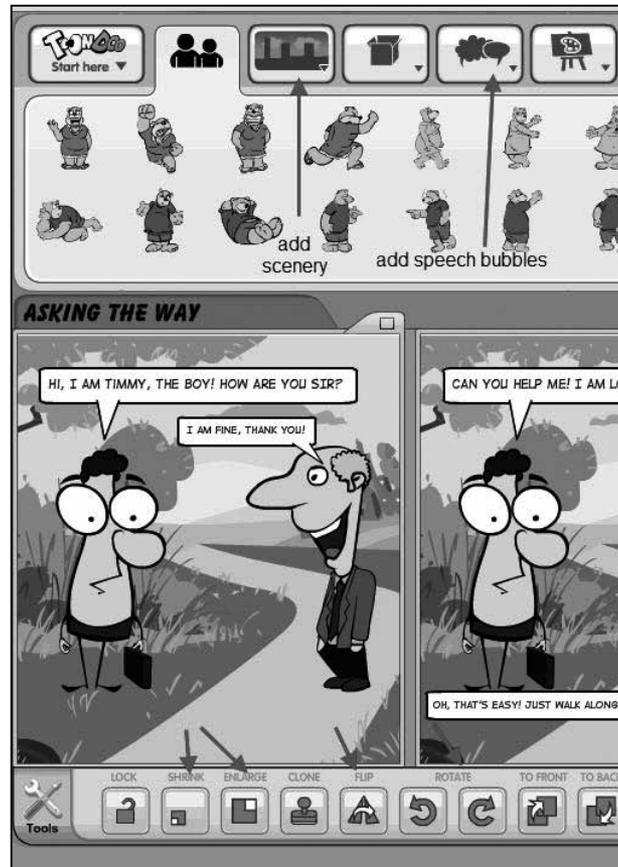


3: dragging your character into the frame

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- Now you can add scenery, speech bubbles, etc. by dragging them into the frame. Click on the top control bar, select one of the options that pop up below it, and drag it into your frame (see Image 4).



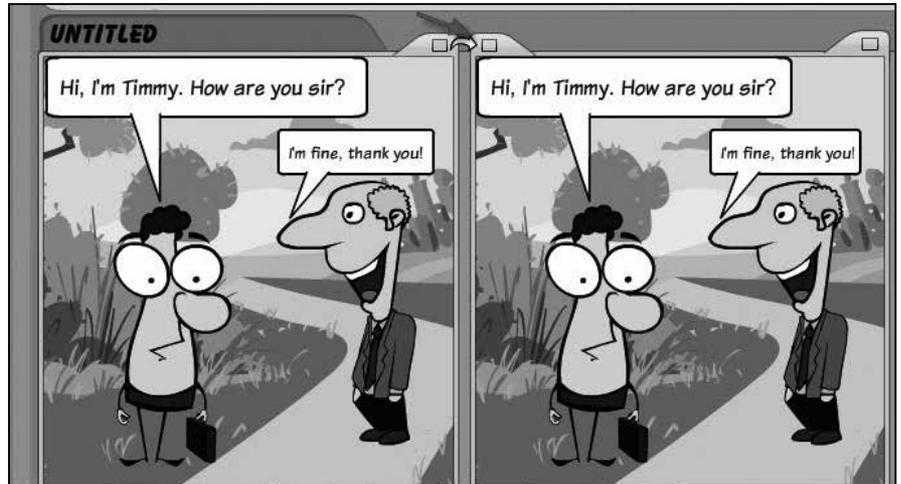
4: maximising speech bubbles

To minimise/maximise/flip/rotate speech bubbles, characters, etc., use the bottom control bar (see Image 4).

Top Tip 1: If you want to copy an image into the next frame, click on the little box just above the frame (see Image 5).

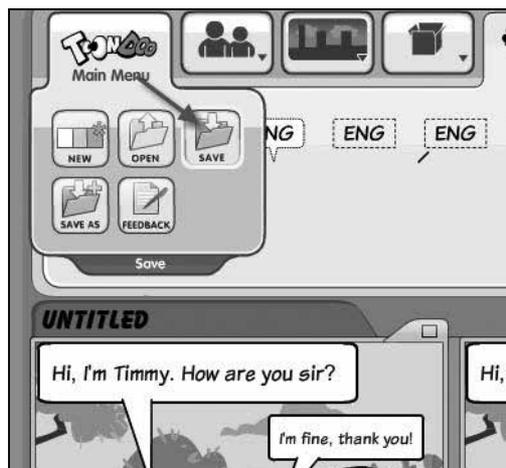
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5: copying the contents of one frame into the next

- 8 When you have finished your frames, click on the Main Menu tab and click 'Save' (see Image 6). Give your toon a title and description, then scroll down to click on 'Keep it Private!', undo 'let others redoo' and 'allow others to purchase this toon', and then go back up again to click on 'Publish'.



6: saving

- 9 Go back to www.toondoo.com. On the homepage click 'Books > Create Books'.
- 10 Now drag one of the frames you created into the book (see Image 7).

Note: Vertical frames cannot be dragged into the book.

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7: dragging a frame into your book

- 11 Then start to drag another set of frames upwards. As you do so, the picture will change to let you insert frames before or after the set you've just inserted (see Image 8). Drag your set into the 'INSERT AFTER THIS PAGE' field. Click 'PUBLISH' and give your book a title. Then click 'VIEW IT NOW'.



8: dragging another set of frames into a new page in your book

- 12 To save this cartoon to show to your students later, copy the URL.

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In class

Lead-in

- 1 Put some images of well-known cartoon characters such as Homer Simpson, Popeye, the Powerpuff Girls, onto the board. Elicit more names from your students and write them down on the board (if you have an IWB/a projector and Internet connection, you may look for the pictures and place them on the board as well). You can ask the following questions:
 - Who are they?
 - What is the name of their cartoon?
 - What makes them so special/famous/popular?
 - What are their character traits?
 - Why are cartoons so popular?
 - Which cartoons do you read/watch? Why?
 - What makes a good cartoon?

Online

- 1 Show your cartoon to the students. Tell them that they are going to produce one as well.
- 2 Show them how to create a cartoon with Toondoo.
- 3 After your tutorial, let students form groups (depending on number of students and computers).
- 4 Depending on the level, they should produce a cartoon based on a certain text type/topic you did in class. Possible text types are:
 - Action story
 - Fairy tale
 - Interview
 - Detective story
 - Vampire story
 - Satirical cartoon
- 5 Walk around in the lab and help your students with technical and linguistic questions.
- 6 After your students have finished, let them present their stories by presenting them on a projector.

Top Tip 1: You can also tell your students to post their links on a backchannelling application like Backchannel Chat or Padlet (see Activities 3.2 and 3.6).

Top Tip 2: Your students can give feedback on their classmates' cartoons by visiting their URLs and posting a comment. They could give feedback on:

- Layout
- Plot

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- Language
- Creativity

Top Tip 3: If you do not have enough time in the computer lab, let students finish the cartoon at home; it's important that students get the idea of how Toondoo works.

Variation – Target vocab

These cartoons can be helpful for practising target vocabulary. For instance, at beginner level, students can create comics with common greeting expressions and phrases. At more advanced levels, you could provide specific vocabulary, language chunks and idioms, and ask your students to create comics that include the target lexis.