



Cartoons

An Introduction:



What is a Cartoon?

- A cartoon is usually a **humorous drawn picture** of a situation, well-known personality or story.
- Cartoons are used to **express ideas** or to **draw attention** to a situation or a well-known personality.
- They often highlight a **current social or political issue**.





When Analysing a Cartoon:

- Characters: Are they stereotypes or caricatures?
- Background & Setting: Where & when is the scene taking place?
- Language: Is formal /informal register used? How are the sentences structured?
- Punctuation: used to portray emotions.
- Actions: Look at facial expressions and symbols or lines used to portray movement/emotion.
- Objectives: Is the aim to inform, educate or entertain?

Stereotype:

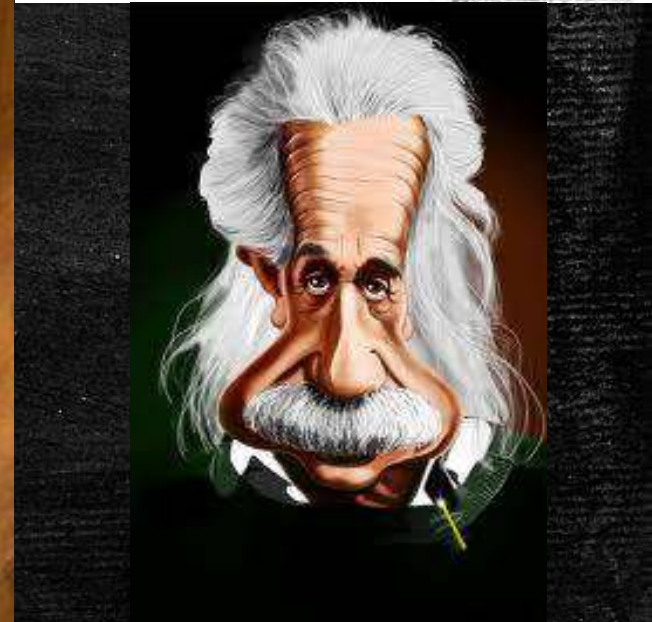
- This is a fixed, exaggerated and preconceived description of a specific type of person, group or nation.
- For example, the Italians are said to be emotional and the British cold.



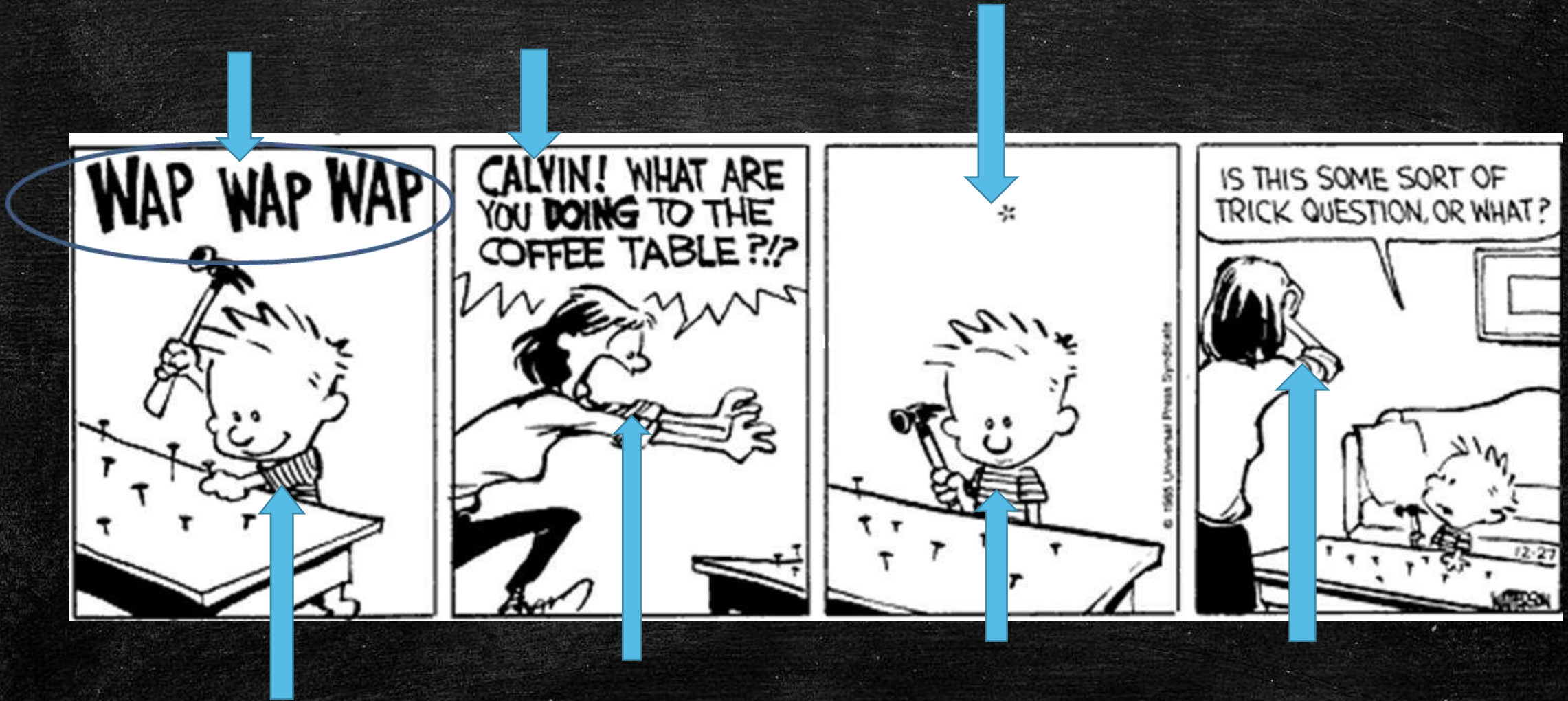
Caricature:

- This is a drawing in which a person or action is shown with exaggerated features.
- Features are exaggerated to help with identification or to ridicule.





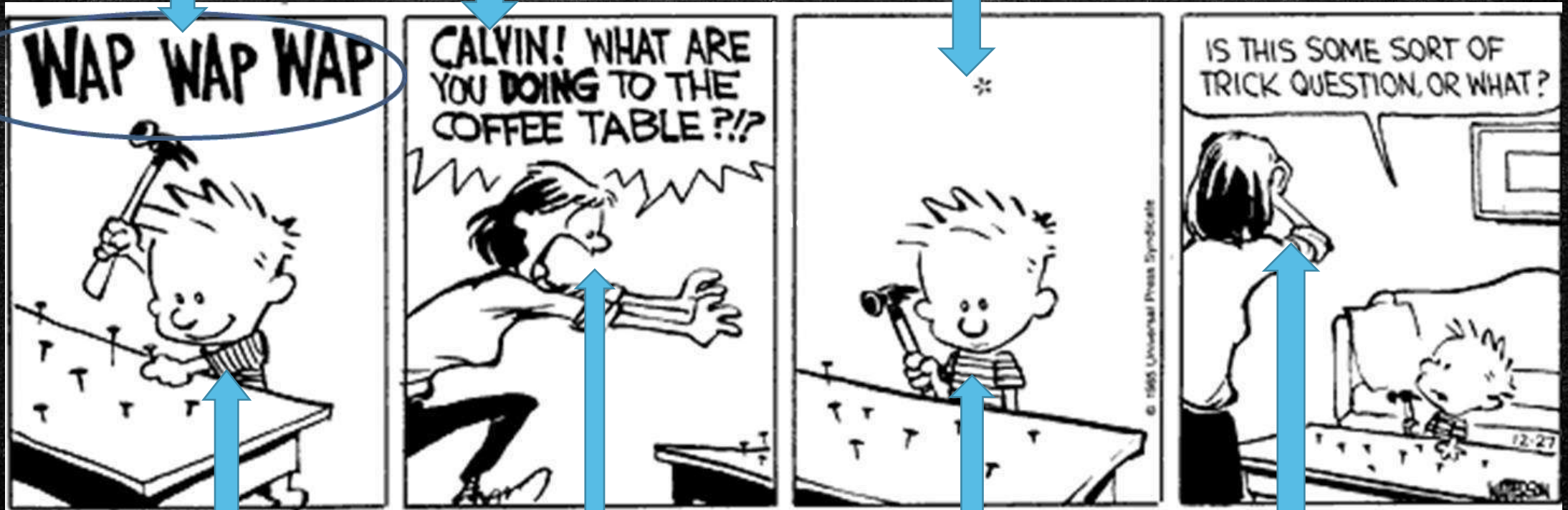
When Analysing a Cartoon:



Words in bold = loud

Jagged speech bubble, bold print and question/exclamation marks indicate shouting.

The asterisk indicates confusion or a thought process.



Smile = happy

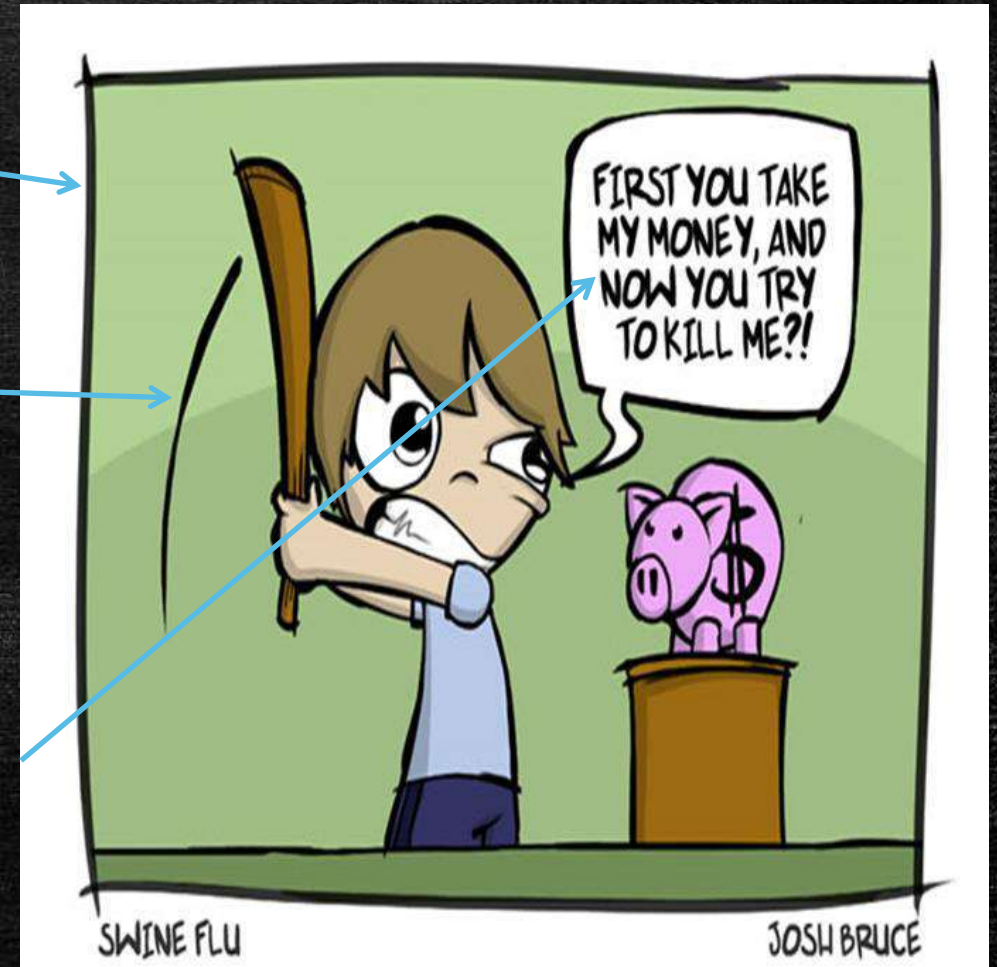
Mom is hysterical: wide open eyes and mouth.

Blank expression emphasises confusion

Hands on head = despair!

When Analysing a Cartoon:

- A cartoon can be a series of frames or a single frame.
- Movement is indicated by vertical, curved and diagonal lines.
- Speedy action is indicated by streaky lines or the action leaving the frame.
- Fonts are also changed for emphasis.



Frame:

- The “border” around the picture, to create an area in which the action happens.
- It is not always necessary to have a frame, usually if one is omitted it is to show that the action is not restricted.



Commenting on Cartoons:

- All answers should be substantiated with close reference to the cartoon.
- Pay careful attention to the body language of the characters and refer to visible features.
- Remember that cartoons make use of puns, satire, sarcasm and irony that need to be explained by referring to the cartoon.



You will NEVER be awarded marks for saying "facial expression" or "body language" without discussing the details of these visual clues.