A toon-o-matic tool debuts online

Let's say you have very strong views on a variety of subjects: George Bush, American Idol, Obesity, School, Teenagers, IPods, the Wii shortage -- you name it. And you just know these ideas would make for some great cartoons. Unfortunately, if you're like most of us, you can't draw worth a lick. Now there's help! The Funny Times recently launched a Cartoon Playground online and outfitted it with some nifty tools to help you realize your dream! Drag-and-drop portraits, backgrounds, text balloons in a very easy to use interface will have you tooning in no time. **Teachers**: Create your own blank cartoons at the site for your class to help stimulate discussion about current events.

**Get out your newspaper**

Scan your newspaper for a current event topic that catches your interest. Are you outraged by it? Amused by it? Imagine a scene that will get your point across. Use the tools in the Cartoon Playground to render a cartoon on the topic. Print it out and share it!

---

**Cartoons from the Cartoon Playground Gallery**

Find the Cartoon Playground online at http://www.funnytimes.com/playground/

Cartoons for the Classroom is available through Newspaper in Education programs. Copyright Online Publications Inc. and NIEonline.com