

BALLOON KNIGHT

Bring Comic Creation Into Your Classroom

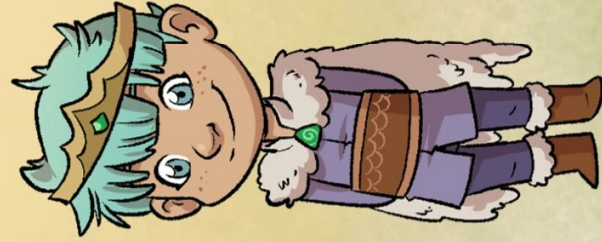
What is Balloon Knight?

Balloon Knight is a new fantasy adventure comic packed with strange creatures, floating castles, magical disasters, and the kind of problem-solving that never goes the obvious way. It follows **Ry**, a strong, silent knight with a gentle heart, and **Lire**, his sharp-tongued, book-loving partner who carries an encyclopedia bigger than she is. Together, they face plant monsters, invisible bridges, enchanted lakes, and villains whose plans only grow stranger. The series blends action, slapstick humor, puzzles, and expressive storytelling to surprise readers on every page.

Why Schools?

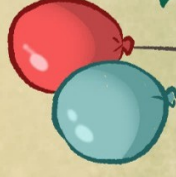
Classrooms are invited to participate in a creative design challenge related to the creation of **Balloon Knight**. Students learn how comic creators turn ideas and personality into visual designs... then collaborate to invent a plant-based monster of their own. Selected class creations may be featured in the series, with teacher guidance and parent permission.

Learn more about this project at <https://balloonknight.com/garden-party>



Who's Making Balloon Knight?

Balloon Knight is created by a team with over 20 years of experience producing and publishing comics. We also operate one of the world's largest webcomic listing platforms and run **Fables**, a creator-empowering digital publishing network that supports thousands of writers and artists. This classroom project is part of our ongoing work to share how comics are made and to celebrate young creators, with teacher-led participation.



BALLOON KNIGHT

Dear Educators,

We are reaching out to invite your class to participate in a creative design activity connected to the making of **Balloon Knight**, a new middle-grade comic series currently in production by our professional creative team.

This classroom project introduces students to how comics are created, from translating personality traits into visual designs to conveying emotion without words, while encouraging collaboration, imagination, and visual storytelling.

Participating classes will work together to design an original plant-based monster inspired by the world of **Balloon Knight**. Through guided discussion, students will explore how character traits, habits, and abilities can be expressed visually, just as professional comic artists do.

The activity is well-suited to **Grades 2–8** and fits easily into art, literacy, or media studies units. It can be completed in one or two class periods, depending on classroom needs.

After completing the class monster with their teacher, students will be invited to design their own individual plant monsters, preferably in class, to encourage peer-to-peer brainstorming.

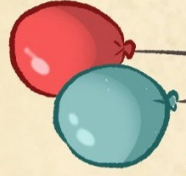
Submitted entries will be reviewed by our creative team, and selected designs may be featured in the series. One winning student creation will be adapted into a monster that appears directly in the story, while additional entries may be included as honorable mentions in the book or shared on our official project pages, with parental permission.

Teachers who choose to participate will submit a photograph or scan of the completed class monster, along with its name and description, and the individual student designs, using the instructions provided later in this packet.

Thank you for the important work you do, fostering creativity and confidence in young learners. We look forward to seeing what your students imagine.

Sincerely,

Mar-10 & Alison



Meet RY – the Balloon Knight



Ry is the hero of **Balloon Knight**.

He is a strong, quiet knight whom many people underestimate. He does not speak, but that does not mean he has nothing to say or that he is any less important than the people around him.

In the comic, Ry communicates through his actions, posture, and expressions.

A slumped stance can show **doubt**.

Clenched fists can show **anger**.

Wide eyes can show **surprise**.

A steady stance can show **courage**.

This is how comic artists help readers understand characters without using words.



happy



sad



surprised



disgusted

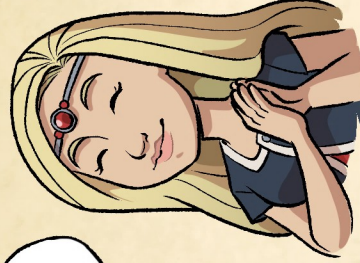
What We Can Learn From Ry

In real life, people use body language every day, often without noticing. The same words we speak can mean different things depending on how we move or look while saying them. Sometimes our nonverbal signals can even cause misunderstandings. We might mean one thing, but the way our face or body looks can lead someone to hear something completely different.

For example: The words are the same. The message is not.



Great job!



Great job...

How Artists Turn Feelings into Pictures

Comic creators design poses, faces, and movement lines to make emotions easy to read, just as we all do in everyday life. Because Ry does not speak, these visual choices become even more important. Readers understand what Ry is trying to say by watching what he does.



Class Activity: Showing Feelings Without Words

Before students begin designing their own monsters, try this short classroom exercise inspired by how Balloon Knight communicates emotion. In the series, much of the storytelling happens through visual clues rather than dialogue. This activity invites students to explore the same techniques comic artists use when deciding how a character moves, reacts, and holds themselves in a scene. Students will practice expressing ideas through posture, facial expressions, and gestures, and will notice how different people can communicate the same feeling in different ways.

Activity Setup

Ask a few volunteers to come to the front of the class. Explain that they must not speak; instead, they should use their face, posture, and body to communicate an idea.

Give them one of the following prompts:

- Show that you are thirsty
- Show that you are scared
- Show how you would say thank you to a good friend

After each student performs, ask the class: What clues did you notice? What helped you understand what they were trying to say?

Try More Than One Student

Repeat the same prompt with different students to point out the key differences between the performances.

Even though the message is the same, the way people express it can look very different. This is exactly how comic artists think when designing characters.

Expand the Exercise

Encourage students to suggest additional prompts such as:

- Being confused
- Feeling proud
- Asking for help
- Being nervous

Remind them that there is no single correct answer. The goal is to notice how many creative ways people can communicate without speaking.

Class Activity: Designing a Plant Monster

Now that students have practiced showing emotions without words, they will use the same ideas to design a creature from the world of **Balloon Knight**. In the series, monsters are built around personality first, then appearance. This activity asks students to invent an original plant-based monster as a class.

Step 1: Choose Traits

First, let the class choose which type of plant to use in the design. Then, decide as a class what the monster is like. Discuss whether it is friendly or scary, sneaky or clumsy, fast or slow, clever or silly, protective or greedy. Write the final traits on the board.

Step 2: Show it Visually

Talk about how those traits could appear in the design. Consider body shape and size, leaves, vines or thorns, eyes and mouth, and how the monster stands or moves. For example, a sneaky creature might crouch low, a proud one might puff out its chest, and a clumsy one might lean sideways.

Step 3: Draw Together

Create one shared monster design as a class. Give it a name, one special ability, and one weakness.

Step 4: Individual Designs

Now that the process has been explained, students may sketch their own plant monsters using the same process. Encourage creativity, various plant types, such as roses, cactus, maple tree, or the venus flytrap.

Goal of the Activity

Our goal is to inspire creativity and confidence in every student.

Strong characters begin with ideas, not perfect drawings. Every shape, pose, and detail helps tell a story.

There are no wrong answers. One idea leads to another, and imagination is what matters most.



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How to Submit Your Class Creations

Thank you for taking part in the **Balloon Knight** classroom project. We cannot wait to see what your students create. To help us review and properly credit each design, please follow the steps below when submitting your class materials.

What to Send

Please email the following to: marty@bastomedia.com

You may also use Dropbox or Google Drive, should you prefer.

1. A clear photograph of the completed class monster. We encourage teachers to capture the full design, as it represents the results of a collaborative brainstorming session.
2. Scans of individual student monster drawings.
3. The monster's name and a brief description for the class design.
4. Student credit information using **first name and the first initial of the family name** only.
5. A class identifier such as: Mrs. Lire's Grade 6 class, Balloon Knight School, Halifax, Nova Scotia

This allows us to properly credit the creations and celebrate the imagination of students across communities everywhere.

Using Student Work

We plan to include as many student designs in the **Balloon Knight** publication as space allows. Some creations may appear directly in the story, while others may be featured as honorable mentions or on our official project pages, all in accordance with school and parental guidelines.

Parent Permission

If your school requires parent approval, please refer to the permission slip provided on the next page of this packet.

Thank You

We deeply appreciate the time and creativity your classroom has shared with us.

We look forward to showcasing just how powerful young imaginations can be.



Parent or Guardian Permission Form

Balloon Knight Classroom Creative Project

Your child's class is participating in a creative classroom activity connected to **Balloon Knight**, a fantasy comic series currently in production by a professional creative team.

The purpose of this project is to encourage imagination, confidence, visual storytelling, and collaboration. Students will design original plant-based creatures as part of an art and literacy exercise.

With permission, selected class and student creations may appear in the Balloon Knight comic series, in related printed materials, or on official project pages.

Be sure to follow **@BalloonKnight** on **Facebook** and **@BalloonKnightSeries** on **Instagram** to see your child's creation!

How Student Work May Be Used

If permission is granted, your child's artwork may be featured in the story, included as an honorable mention, or shared for educational promotion of the project. Credit will include only the first name and the first initial of the family name, along with the class identifier and school location. No personal contact information will be published.

All submissions are collected by teachers. There is no direct contact between our team and students. Participation is voluntary.

Our Commitment

Our goal is to celebrate your child's creativity, encourage confidence, and treat their submission with care and respect.

Permission

Please check one:

- I grant permission for my child's artwork to be submitted and used as described above.
- I do not grant permission for my child's artwork to be submitted outside the classroom.

Child's First Name: _____

Last Initial: _____

Teacher and Class: _____

School: _____

Parent/ Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



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