

Asterix and the Griffin

By Jean-Yves Ferri and Didier Conrad

CROSS CURRICULAR RESOURCES FOR KS2 TEACHERS

Explore themes of: ✓ The Romans ✓ Julius Caesar ✓ Mythical creatures ✓ Illustration
✓ Comics and graphic novels

Subject Checklist: ✓ Literacy ✓ History ✓ Geography ✓ French ✓ Art and Design

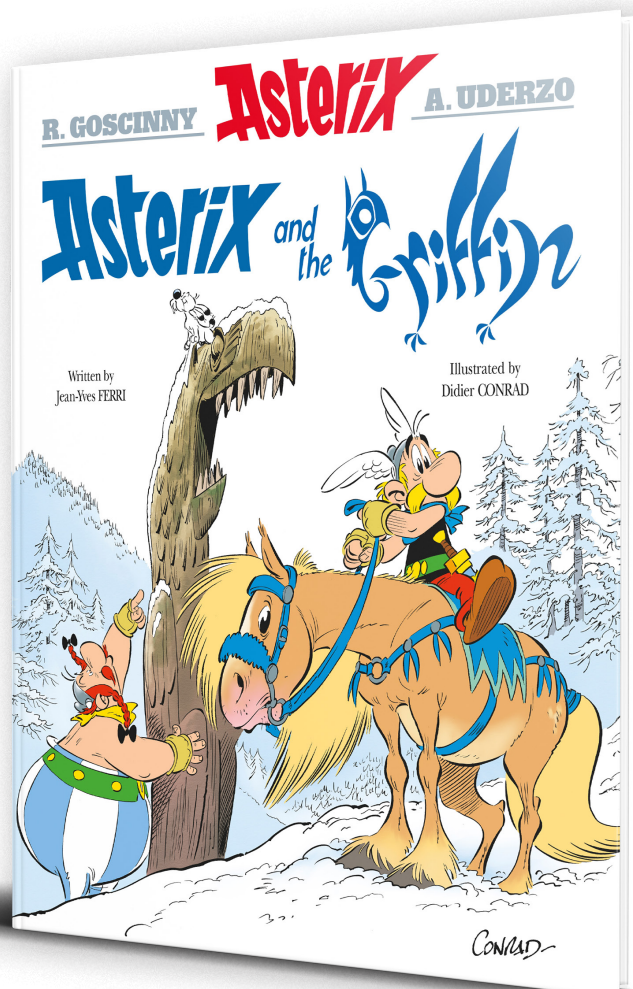
The activities included here are suitable for the classroom or library sessions.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Deep in the frozen plains of Barbaricum, the Sarmatians face a terrible threat. The Romans are approaching in huge numbers to capture the Griffin, a sacred and terrifying beast, and they've kidnapped the beloved niece of the wise old shaman, Fanciakuppov, to lead them to it. Determined to stop them, Fanciakuppov seeks the help of his Gaulish friends but quickly finds himself in danger too.

Fighting alongside the fearless Amazon warrior women, can our indomitable heroes Asterix and Obelix rescue the prisoners and prevent the Romans reaching this formidable beast?

Loved across the world, this multi-million bestselling series is back with its 39th adventure. Filled with jokes, new characters and bravely fought battles, *Asterix and the Griffin* will delight fans old and new.



CONTENTS

INTRODUCING THE ASTERIX SERIES 3

LITERACY activities: Discuss the covers of different books in the series and predict their content.

Objectives: Predict what might happen in a book based on the title and cover design; make comparisons between books; participate in discussions about books.

ASTERIX AND THE GRIFFIN EXTRACT 1 5

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY activities: Locate the region of Gaul on a map; design a coin featuring Julius Caesar.

Objectives: Understand the impact Julius Caesar had on Europe; use maps to locate countries in Europe.

ASTERIX AND THE GRIFFIN EXTRACT 2 8

FRENCH activities: Match Asterix characters to French descriptions; create a mythological creature using French body and animal words.

Objectives: Understand simple descriptions of a character's appearance in French including use of the verb 'porter'; name some parts of the body in French; name some animals in French.

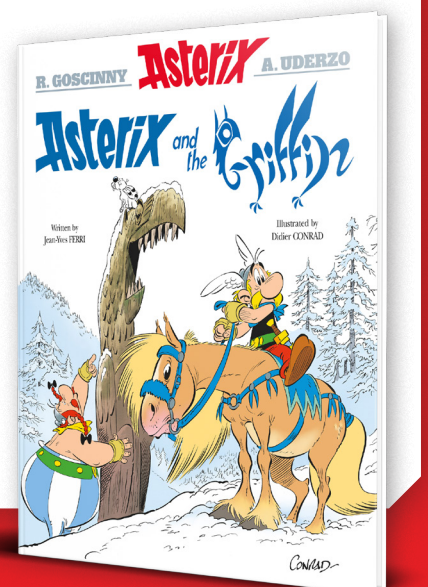
ASTERIX AND THE GRIFFIN EXTRACT 3 13

ART AND DESIGN activities: Design a set of panels and a front cover for a new book in the Asterix series.

Objective: Understand how comic book illustration techniques are used to convey meaning including motion lines, onomatopoeia, different perspectives and punctuation marks.



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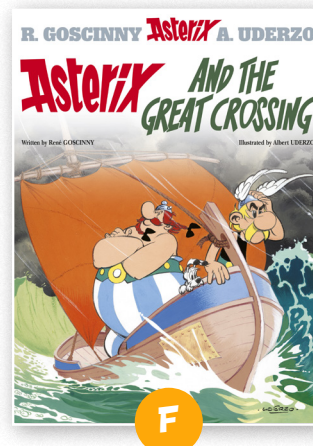
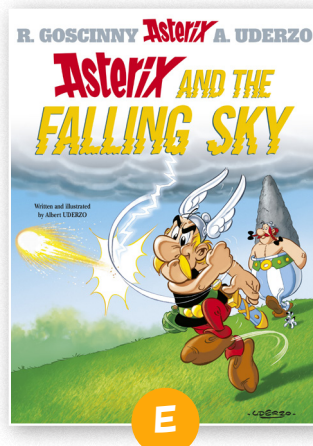
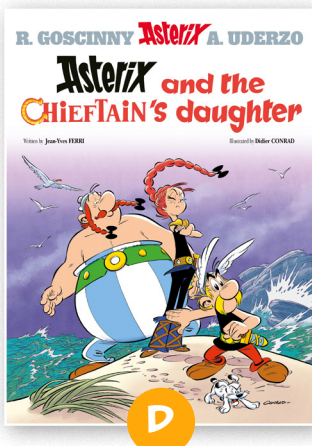
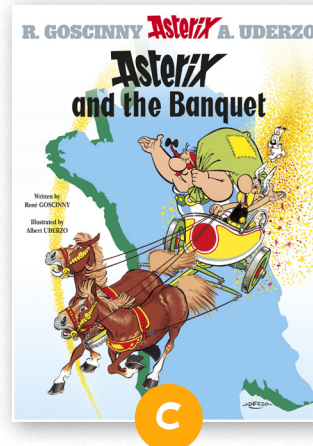
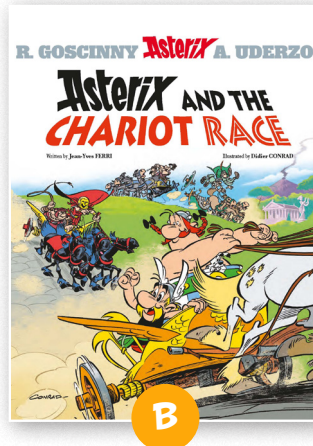
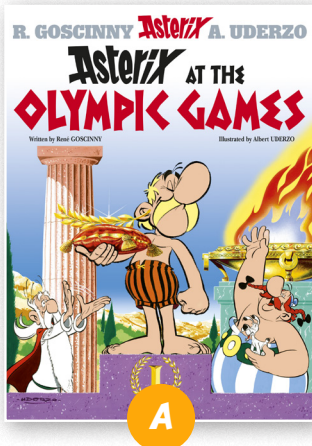
INTRODUCING THE ASTERIX SERIES

OVER 60 YEARS OF EPIC QUESTS.

380 MILLION COMIC BOOKS SOLD WORLDWIDE.

SOLD IN OVER 80 COUNTRIES AND TRANSLATED INTO 111 LANGUAGES.

Asterix was first published in France in 1959. Since then, 39 comic books have been released. Here are the front covers of 6 of the books in the Asterix series:



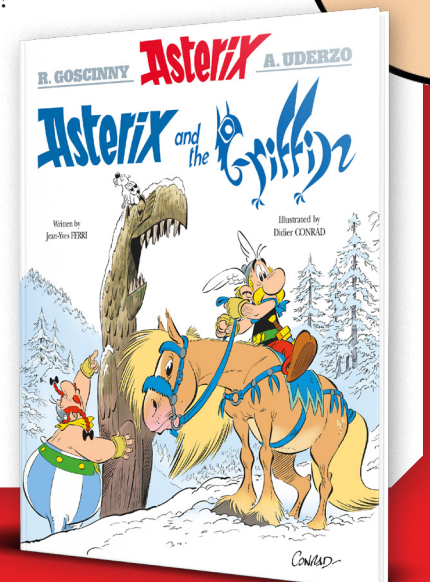
Which front cover do you like best and why?

In which of the books above do you think each of these events happens?
See the bottom of the page for answers.

1. Asterix is involved in a race against the Romans
2. Asterix meets chieftain Vercingetorix's daughter, Adrenalin
3. Asterix travels to Greece
4. Asterix and Obelix meet some pirates
5. Asterix travels around Gaul collecting lots of delicious foods
6. An alien spaceship appears above Asterix's village

Which of these books would you most like to read?

Answers: 1B, 2D, 3A, 4F, 5C, 6E.

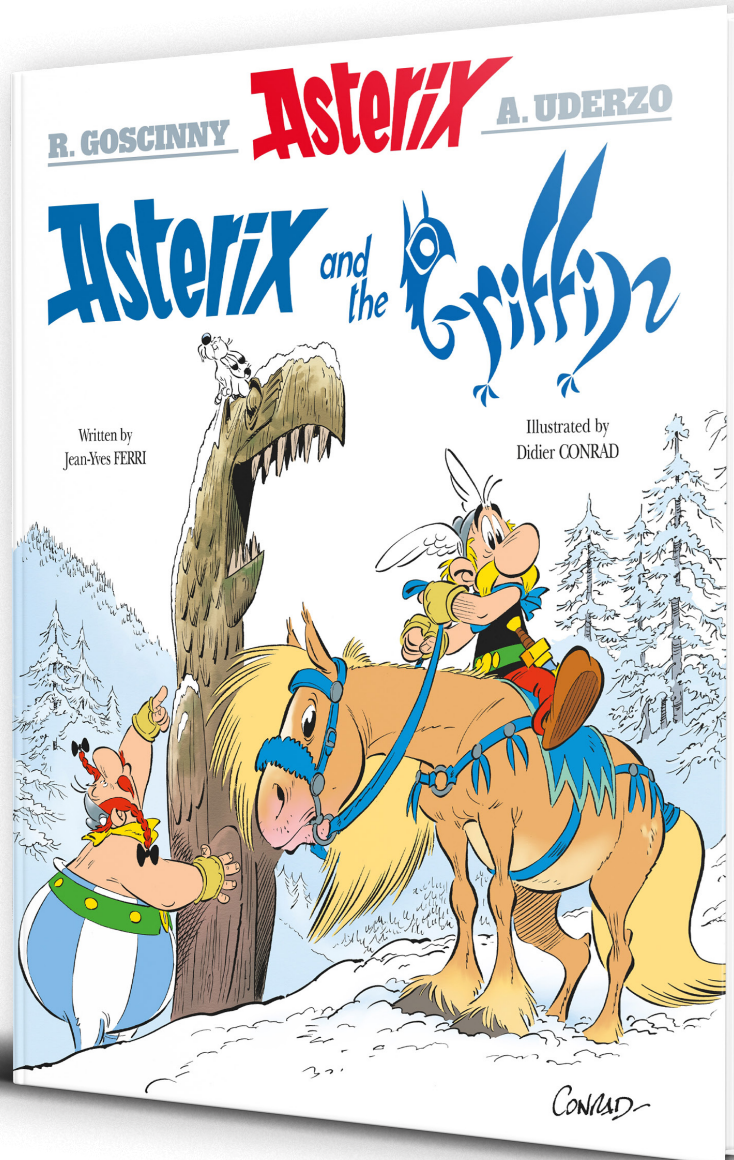


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ASTERIX AND THE GRIFFIN

ASTERIX AND THE GRIFFIN IS THE LATEST ACTION-PACKED COMIC BOOK IN THE ASTERIX SERIES.



Discussion questions

1. Where do you think this story might be set?
2. What do you think a 'griffin' might be?
3. What do you think might happen in this story?
4. Can you think of 5 questions you have about the book based on the front cover?
5. Have a read of the blurb on the back of the book. Can you find 5 strong adjectives?

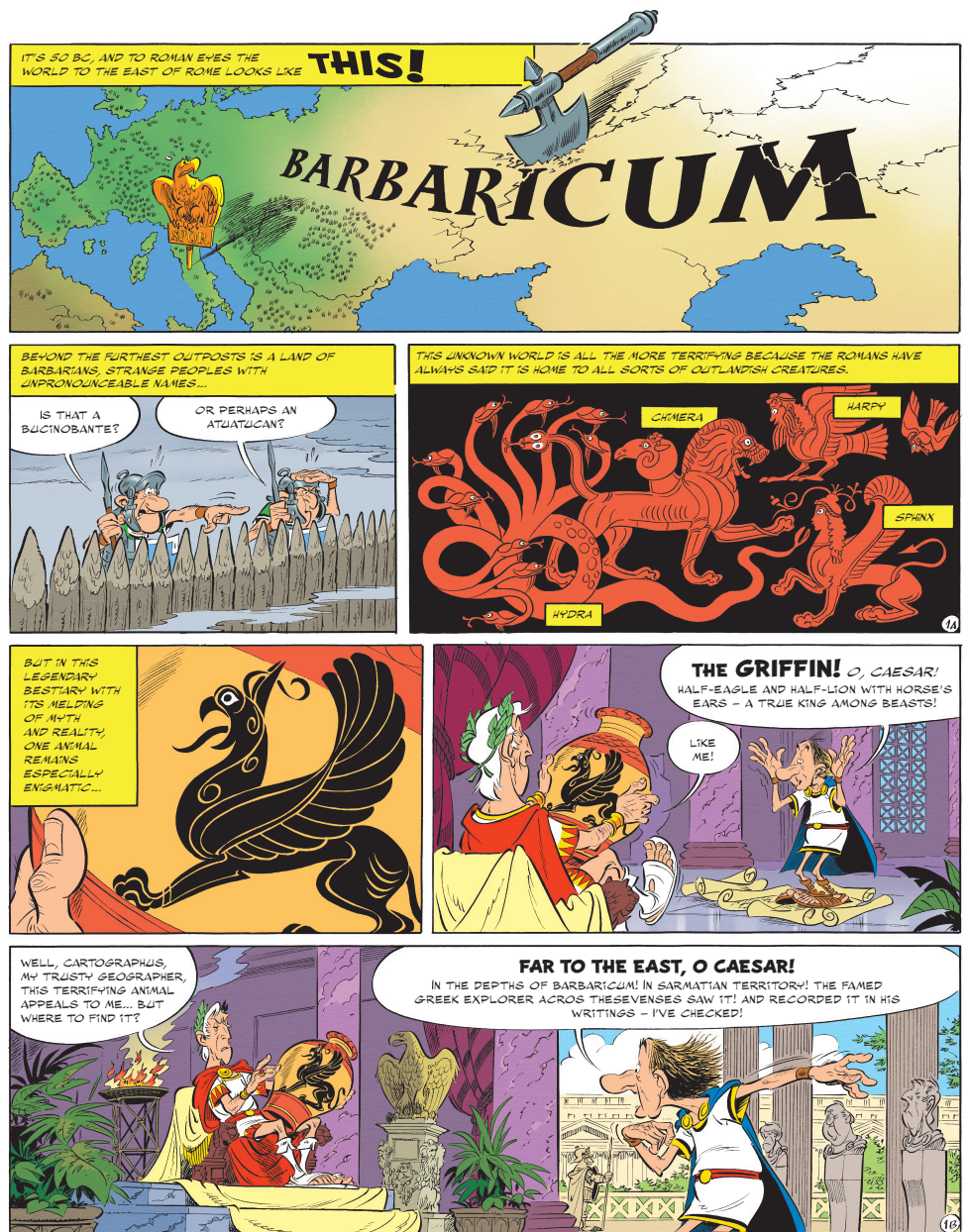


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ASTERIX AND THE GRIFFIN EXTRACT 1

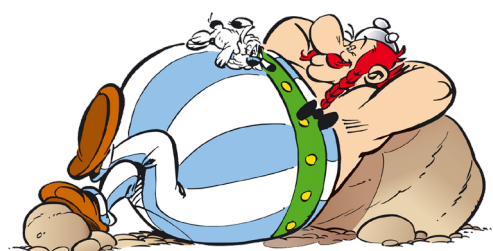
Discussion questions

1. People read comics in different ways. Some read the words first then go back and look at the pictures; others look at the pictures first then go back and read the words. Some read the words and pictures together. (There's no right or wrong!) How did you read the page on the right? Compare with a partner.
2. In what year is the book set?
3. Have a look at the first panel. What do you notice? Why do you think the illustrator has chosen to make this panel the length of the page?
4. How did the Romans feel about the unknown world that lies beyond their lands? Can you find evidence on the page to support your answer?
5. Why do you think some words are written on a yellow background and some written on a white background?
6. What does the word 'enigmatic' mean? What is it used to describe here?



Extract from Page 5

7. What is the name of the Greek explorer mentioned? How is this a play on words?
8. Where does Cartographus think the Griffin can be found?



HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

ACTIVITY 1: JULIUS CAESAR

Asterix and his friends are fictional characters, but Julius Caesar was a REAL person (and a very powerful one). Julius Caesar was born in Rome in 100 BC. He rose through the ranks of the Roman army to become a general. In 58 BC, he led an army of Romans into the region that was called Gaul. This region was made up of modern-day France, Belgium and Luxembourg, plus most of Switzerland and some of western Germany and northern Italy. Caesar and his army fought the people who lived in Gaul in a series of wars called the Gallic Wars. By 50 BC, Caesar had defeated the Gauls and taken control of the region.

Can you colour in the region of Gaul on the map below? You might need to use an atlas or online map to help you. Can you also label Rome?



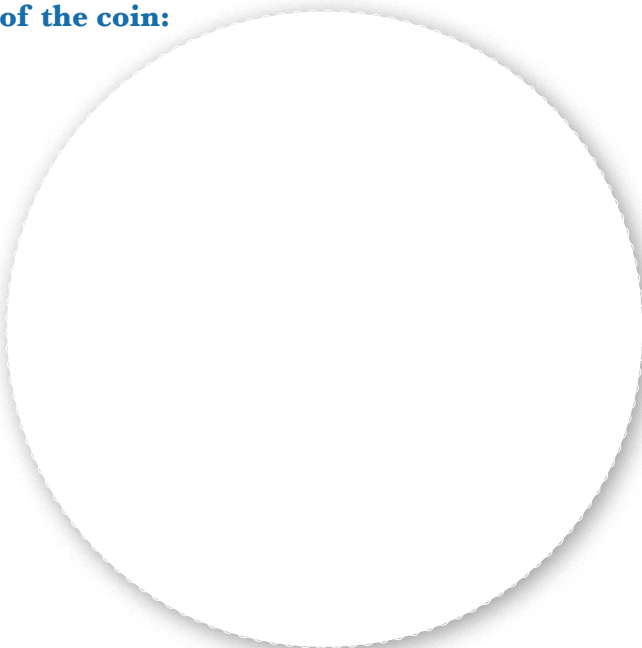
Fun fact: It's thought that the famous quote "veni, vidi, vici" (I came, I saw, I conquered) was said by Julius Caesar.

HISTORY AND ART

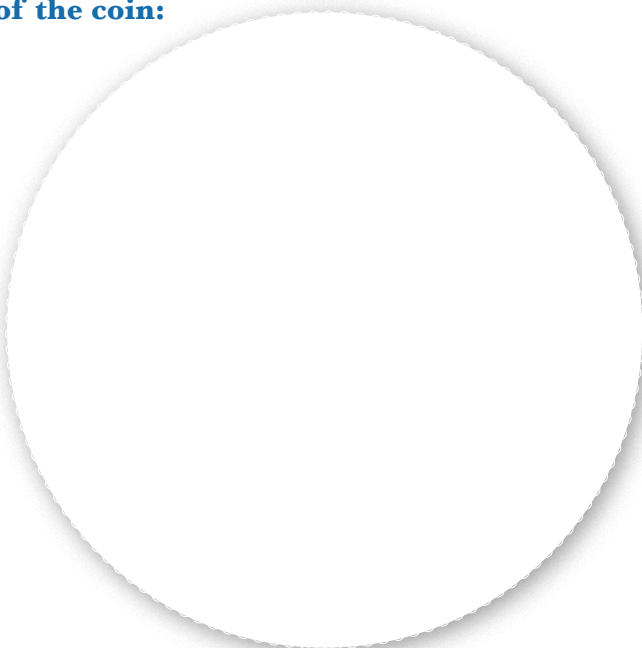
Activity 2: A Roman Coin

Roman coins often had the face of somebody powerful and important on one side and a picture or symbol to represent this person's achievements on the other side. Julius Caesar was the first living person to have his portrait on a Roman coin. What do you think this coin might have looked like? Can you draw it below? You might like to use the illustrations of Caesar in *Asterix and the Griffin* to give you ideas.

Front of the coin:

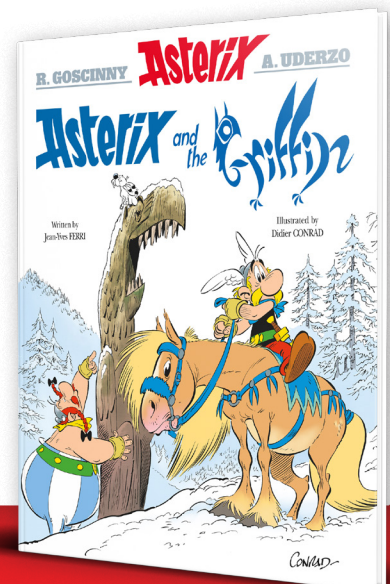


Back of the coin:



FUN FACT:

JULIUS CAESAR WORE A LAUREL WREATH ON HIS HEAD. SOME SAY THIS WAS TO SYMBOLISE THAT HE WAS A POWERFUL LEADER; OTHERS SAY IT WAS TO COVER UP HIS BALD PATCHES!



ASTERIX AND THE GRIFFIN EXTRACT 2

Discussion questions

1. What is the shaman's name?
How is this a play on words?
2. Why does the writer reverse the letter E in the shaman's speech?
3. How did the shaman contact Druid Getafix?
4. What does 'foreboding' mean. What does it mean in this context?
5. What threat are the shaman and the other Sarmatians facing?
6. Can you name the three characters leading the Romans into Sarmatian territory?
7. What is a Venator?
8. Can you find one panel in which the illustrator has drawn the picture from a distanced perspective (like a 'long shot' in a film)? Can you find one panel in which the illustrator has drawn a close up? Why do you think the illustrator has used these different perspectives?



Extract from Page 9



FRENCH

Activity 1: Character Descriptions

French vocabulary:

Clothes

un pantalon – trousers
des chaussures – shoes
une cape – a cape

Hair

cheveux – hair
une barbe – a beard

Colours

bleu/bleue(s) – blue
blanc/blanche(s) – white
blonde(s) – blond
rouge(s) – red
roux – ginger/red
marron – brown

il/elle porte – he/she is wearing

il/elle a – he/she has

Here are some of the characters you have met so far in the story...



Asterix



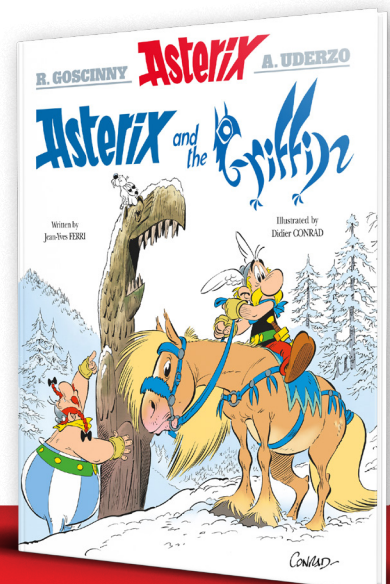
Obelix



Druid Getafix



Cartographus



Read the descriptions below and see if you can work out which of the characters each one is describing

- il a les cheveux roux
- il porte un pantalon bleu et blanc
- il porte des chaussures marron

.....

.....

- il a les cheveux blancs
- il a une barbe blanche
- il porte des chaussures bleues

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- il a les cheveux blonds
- il porte un pantalon rouge
- il porte des chaussures marron

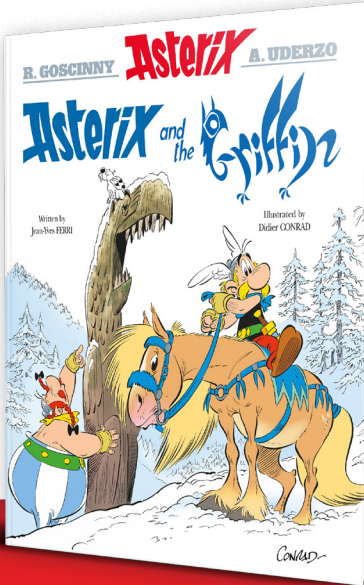
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- il a les cheveux blonds
- il porte des chaussures marron
- il porte une cape bleue

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FRENCH

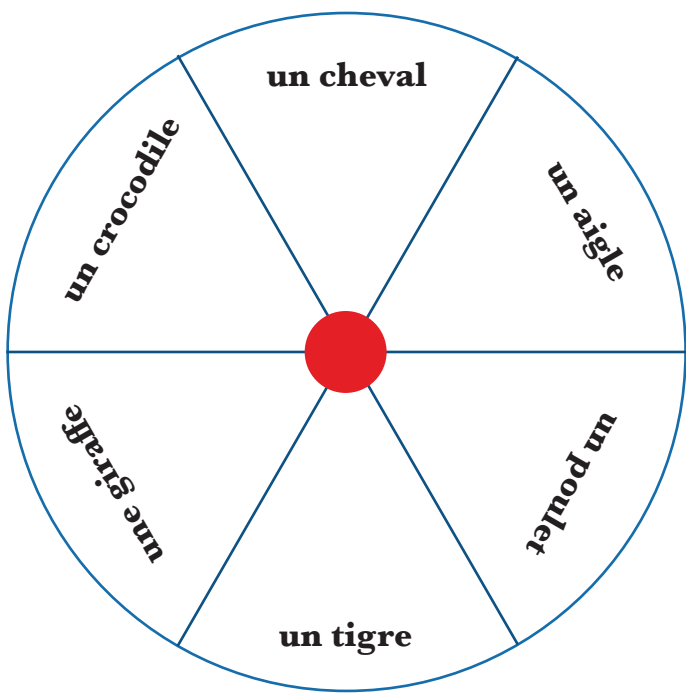
ACTIVITY 2: MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES

The Romans are searching for a mythical creature called the Griffin. The Griffin has the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion. You are going to create your own mythical creature! Your mythical creature will be made up of different animals, just like the Griffin.

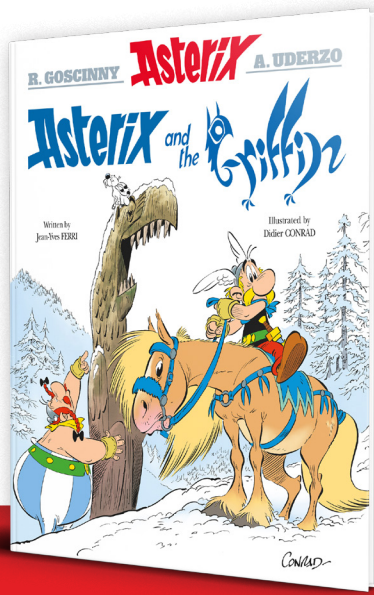
French vocabulary:

Body parts	Animals
la tête – the head	un cheval – a horse
le corps – the body	un tigre – a tiger
les jambes – the legs	un crocodile – a crocodile
les pieds – the feet	un aigle – an eagle
	une giraffe – a giraffe
	un poulet – a chicken

To begin, spin the spinner below to select an animal. Your creature will have the head of this animal! Draw the head top box on the next page. Now spin the spinner again to select a different animal. Your creature will have the body of this animal! Draw the body in the next box down. Continue until you have a complete mythical creature!



Tip: To use this spinner, put the tip of a pencil through a paper clip and place it on the centre of the circle. Now, flick the paper clip and see which animal it lands on!



Ma Créature Mythique

La tête

Le corps

Les jambes

Les pieds

Make up a name for your creature. Can you introduce it in French?

Ma créature s'appelle

(My creature is called)

Read this description of the Griffin:

“Le griffon a la tête d’un aigle et le corps d’un lion.”

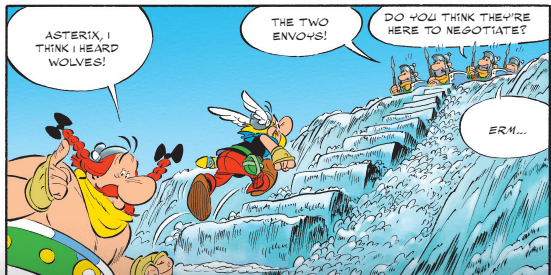
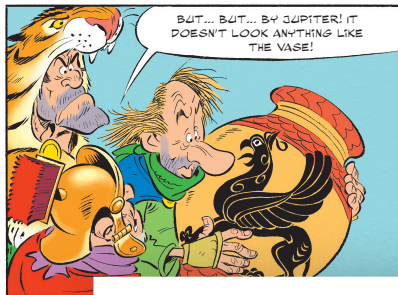
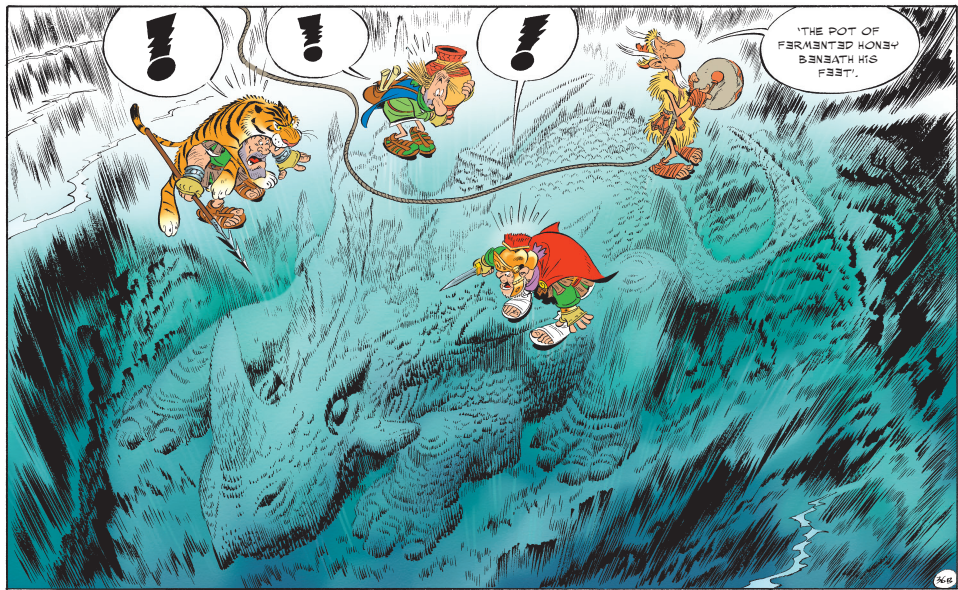
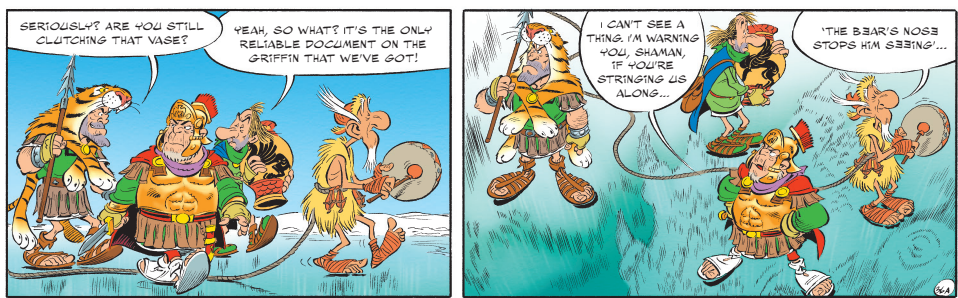
Can you describe your creature in French? Perhaps you could describe it to a friend and see if they can draw it based on your description?

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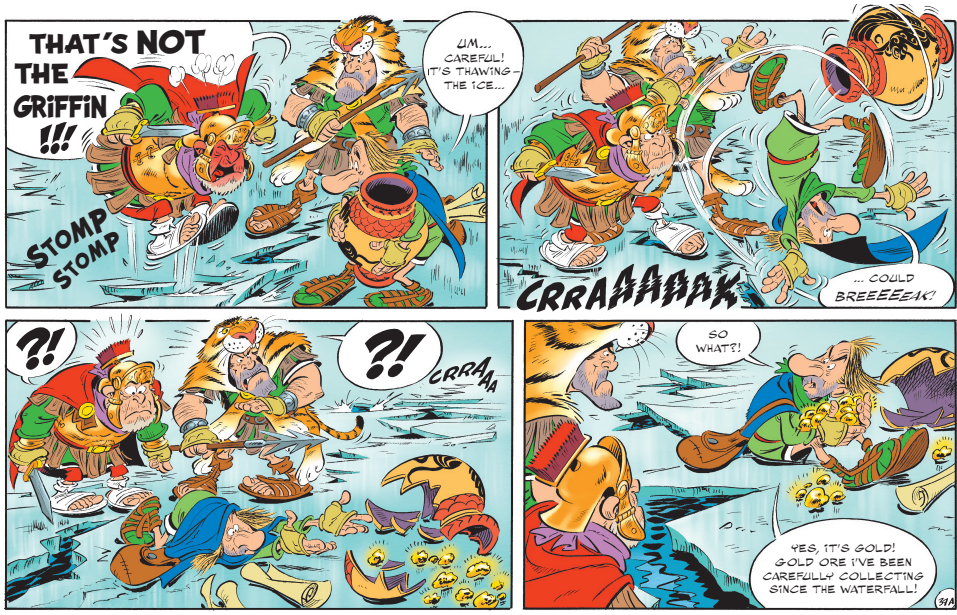
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ASTERIX AND THE GRIFFIN EXTRACT 3

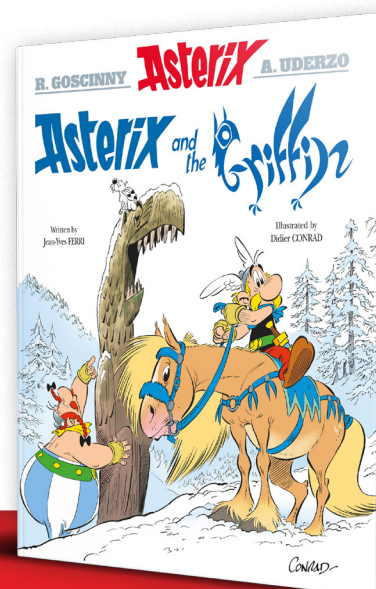


Extract from pages 40-41



Discussion questions

1. What do the characters see under the ice?
2. How do they know this is not the Griffin?
3. Why do you think the illustrator chose to write some words in large, bold font?
4. Can you find an example of onomatopoeia?
5. How do you think the Centurion feels when he realises it is not the Griffin? How can you tell?
6. Comic book illustrators sometimes use motion lines to show how a character or object is moving. Can you find any motion lines in this extract?
7. Why do you think the writer has included speech bubbles containing only exclamation marks and questions marks?
8. Can you find a picture which makes you feel you are looking down from above? Can you find a picture which makes you feel you are on the ground looking up? Why do you think the illustrator has chosen to use these different perspectives?



ART AND DESIGN, LITERACY

ACTIVITY 1: COMIC BOOK PANELS

Congratulations, you are the next author-illustrator of the famous Asterix comics! You have been asked to create a brand-new comic book about Asterix and the mythical creature you created on page 12. What might happen in your story? Where will your story be set? Will Asterix and his friends find your mythical creature? Draw an action scene from your comic in the panels below. See if you can use the following features:

- Onomatopoeia
- Motion lines
- Pictures from different perspectives
- Punctuation marks in speech bubbles

What will the front cover of your new Asterix album look like? Look back at the covers of different books in the series on page 3 for ideas. Can you design your own?



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