Pop Art Background: Pop Art is a subject in art that deals with popular culture, celebrating it, critiquing it, or investigating it. An easy way to think about it is that artists always reflect the times that they live in. While an artist in ancient Egypt would produce art as a tribute to the Pharaohs, for example, Pop artists in the 1950's and 60's would produce art that is a tribute to products, brands, and/or celebrities that define their culture.
So, instead of this ancient sculpture of the Egyptian Pharaoh Amenhotep III from the year 1350 BC, with Pop Art you get Andy Warhol's Double Elvis silkscreen painting from 1963. Both reflect the "leaders" of their day.

The Egyptian sculpture is incredibly labor intensive and skillful, made as a tribute to the ruler. The Warhol is quickly made using a commercial art process, silkscreen, blurring the boundary between Fine Art and Commercial art. Is it art, or just a product to be sold? The same process used to produce a cheap Elvis T-shirt is used to create this painting. The Elvis T shirt wouldn't be worth much, but the Warhol painting is worth millions. Why? Partially because of Warhol's celebrity…an idea that he helped bring to the forefront of American culture by featuring it heavily in his life and works.

Here's a short video to explain more: https://www.tate.org.uk/kids/explore/what-is/pop-art

Project Background: Pop Artists Roy Litchstenstein's idea was simple but revolutionary. He would take a frame or two from cheap comic books and reproduce them, sometimes massively, on museum grade canvas with paint. He turned something that at the time was cheap, disposable and not serious, into something to contemplate and reflect on as one does in a museum. In the 60's comics were considered cheap, fun…kid's stuff. Not serious. But Roy would often choose images that were very heavy, like this girl dying of a broken heart.

To me, this is not much different from "sampling" in music a few decades later…taking someone else's work and changing the context to create something new.


Here's more about Roy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AG6M1uo2PVY

FINALLY…YOUR PROJECT!

Very, very simple.
1) Based on the ideas behind Roy's work, choose a cartoon character or frame of a comic to draw. Feel free to add details or to simplify them. Using the sketching technique to start, draw very lightly looking for simple shapes to copy.
2) Fix any errors you make BEFORE using any dark pencil lines. Once you are reasonably happy with your drawing, darken it up and add color if you wish, using any materials you have access to, even if it is only pencil or pen.
3) Lastly, and here's the fun part: Add a thought or speech balloon, and change what the cartoon originally said, or what the character would normally say to a famous quote, line from a poem, advertising slogan, or song lyric. It will change the meaning of the original cartoon dramatically, as Roy did in his works.
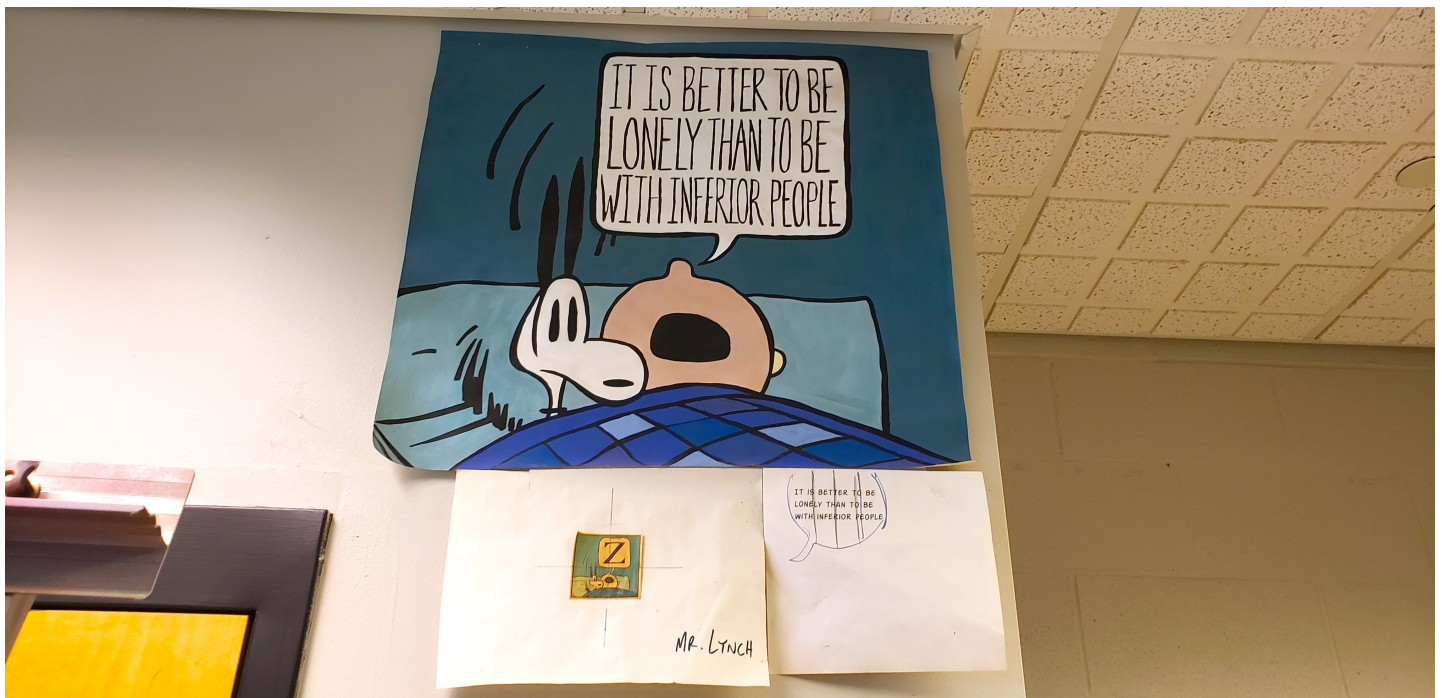
In my example above, the original "Z" snoring sound is replaced by Charlie Brown saying "It is better to be lonely than to be with inferior people." Snoopy sure doesn't like that! How rude, haha!

Notice how I spaced out the lettering by planning it out on the sheet of paper in the bottom right hand corner. I also used a very simple four square grid to help enlarge the drawing in proportion. This may help you. But you can certainly work much smaller…or MUCH BIGGER!

Send me a picture of your work in the remind app on May 22nd, in two weeks.
HAVE FUN! MAKE ART! NO STRESS!

Mr. Lynch