Rube Goldberg Biography...

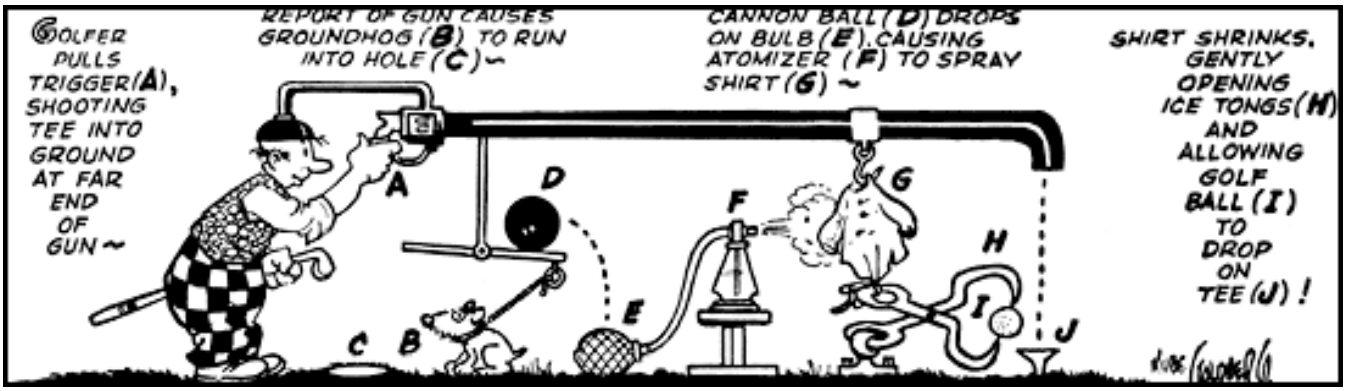
Rube Goldberg (1883-1970) was a Pulitzer Prize winning cartoonist, sculptor, and author.

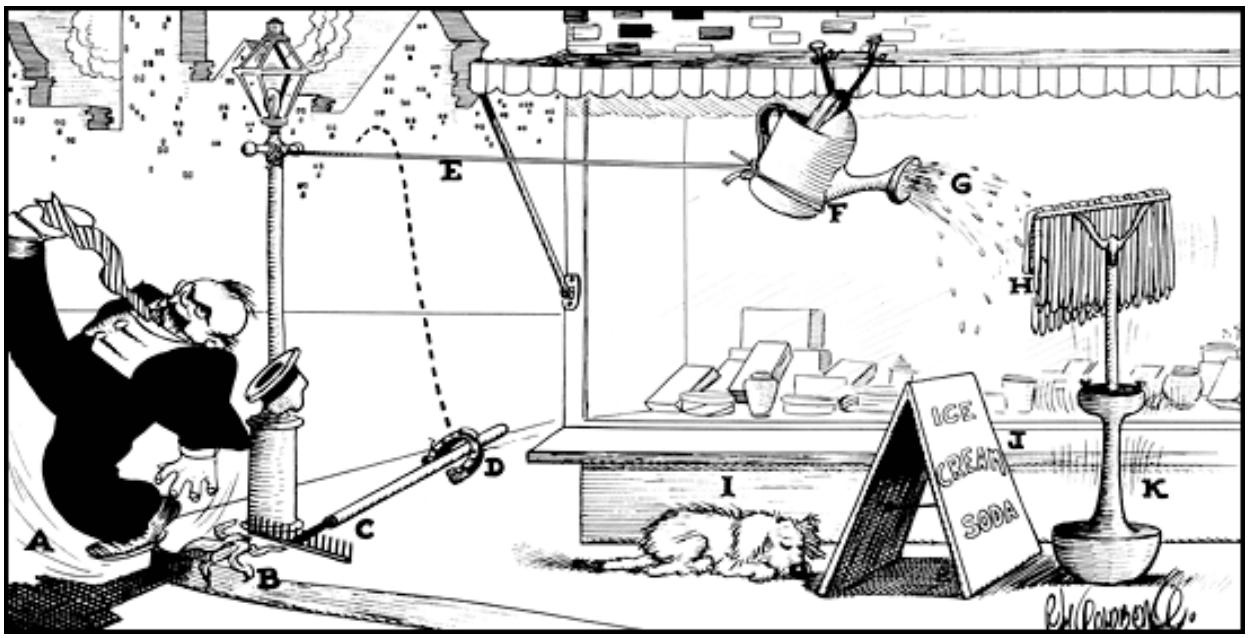
Reuben Lucius Goldberg (Rube) was born in San Francisco. His father, a practical man, insisted he go to college to become an engineer. After graduating from University of California Berkeley, Rube went to work as an engineer with the City of San Francisco Water and Sewers Department.

He continued drawing, kept submitting drawings and cartoons, until he was finally published. An outstanding success, he moved from San Francisco to New York drawing daily cartoons for the *Evening Mail*. A founding member of the National Cartoonist Society, a political cartoonist and a Pulitzer Prize winner, Rube was a beloved national figure as well as an often-quoted radio and television personality during his sixty-year professional career.

Through his "INVENTIONS", Rube Goldberg discovered difficult ways to achieve easy results. His cartoons were, as he said, symbols of man's capacity for exerting maximum effort to accomplish minimal results. Rube believed that there were two ways to do things: the simple way and the hard way, and that a surprisingly large number of people preferred doing things the hard way.

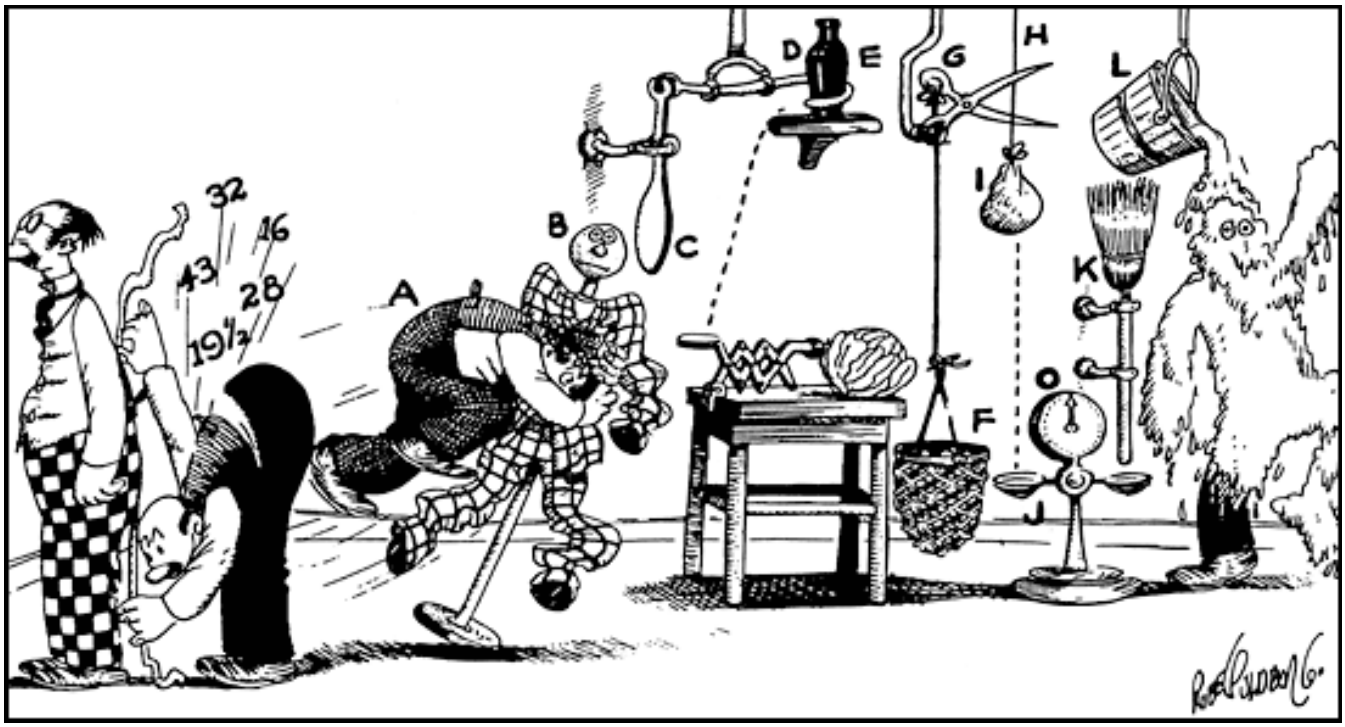
Rube's drawings depict absurdly-connected machines functioning in extremely complex and roundabout ways to produce a simple end result; because of this RUBE GOLDBERG has become associated with any convoluted system of achieving a basi



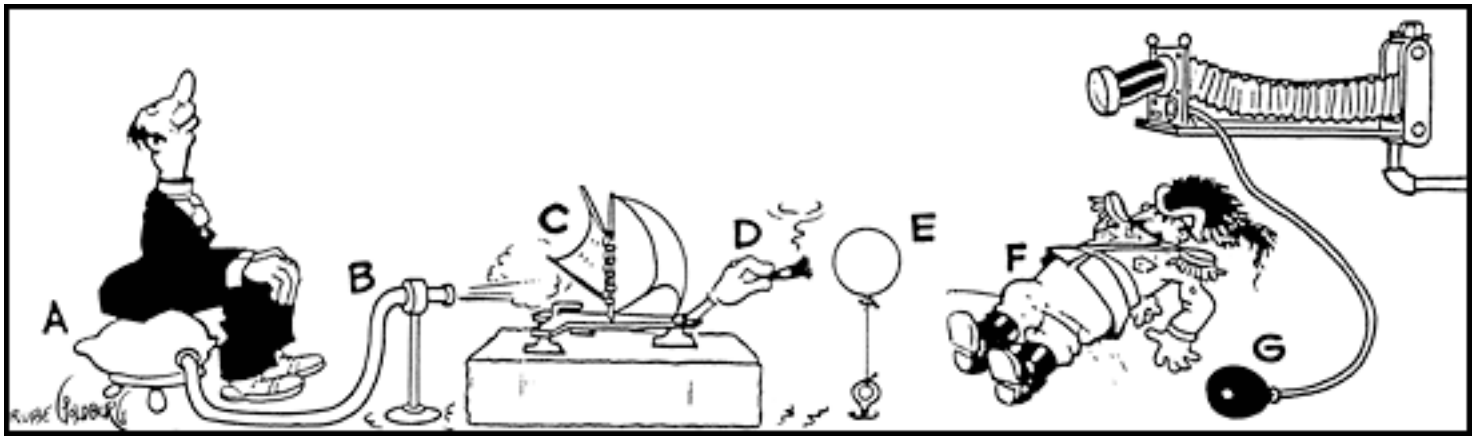


Rube Goldberg stands in front of an x-ray and sees an idea inside his head showing how to keep shop windows clean.

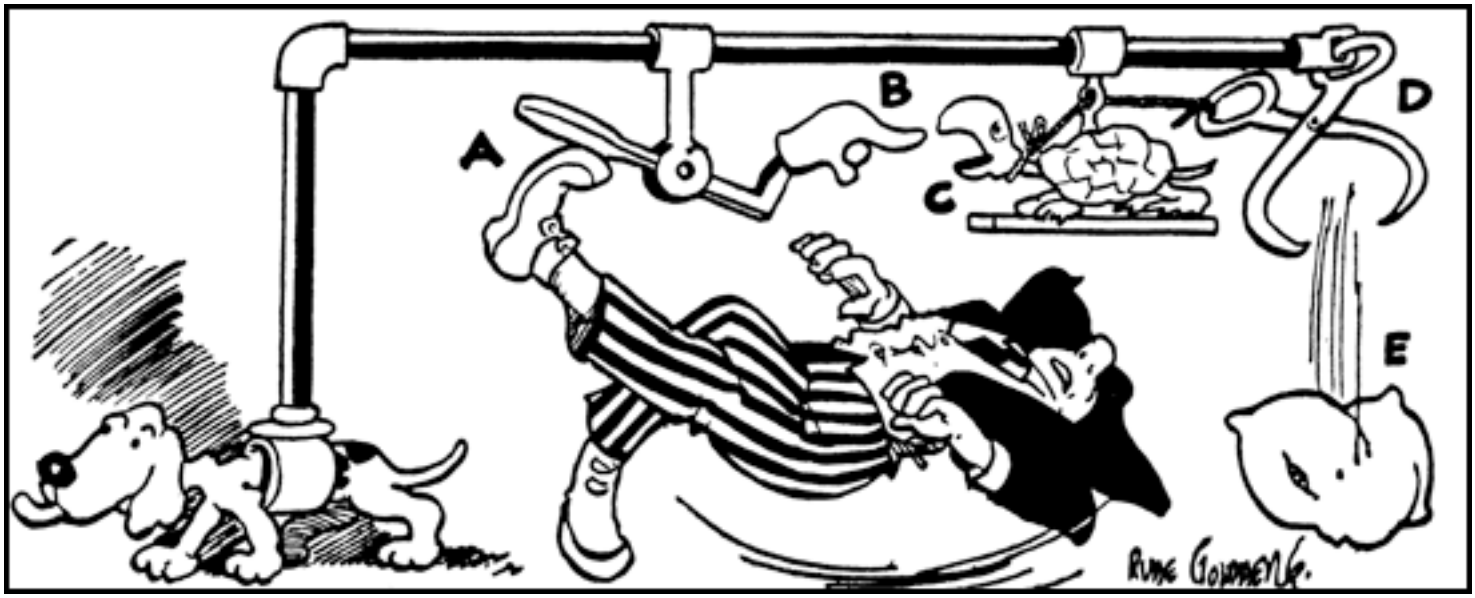
Passing man (A) is tripped up by banana peel (B) causing him to fall down and land on rake (C). As handle of rake rises, it throws horseshoe (D) onto rope (E) which sags, thereby tilting sprinkling can (F). Mop (H) soaks up water (G). Pickle terrier (I) wakes up and runs into house and upsets sign (J) throwing it against non-tipping cigar ash receiver (K) which causes it to swing back and forth and swish the mop against window pane, wiping it clean. If man breaks his neck by fall move off before cop shows up.



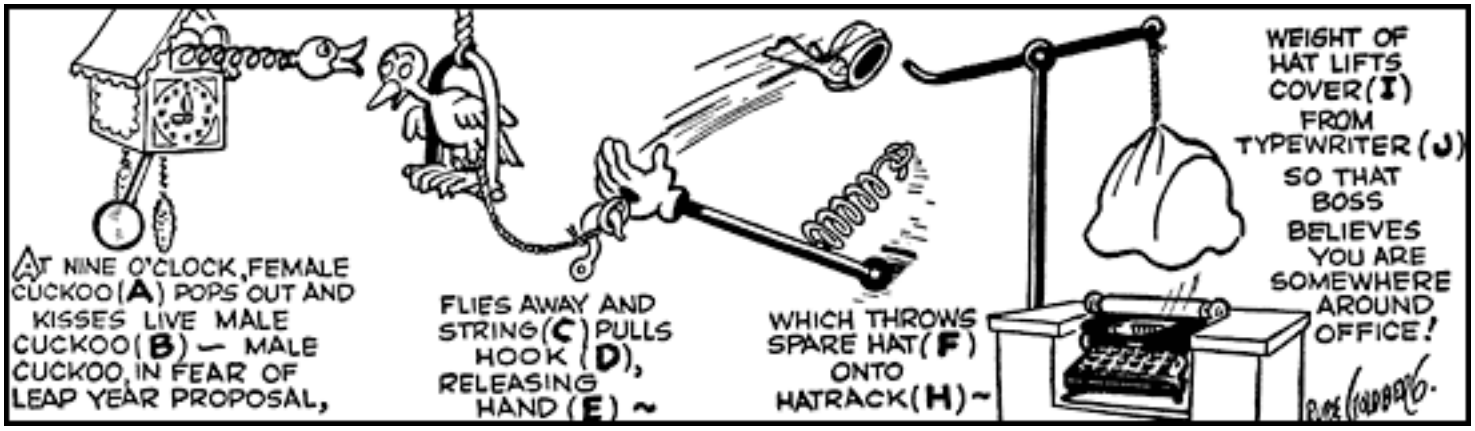
As Tailor (A) fits customer (B) and calls out measurements, college boy (C) mistakes them for football signals and makes a flying tackle at clothing dummy (D). Dummy bumps head against paddle (E) causing it to pull hook (F) and throw bottle (G) on end of folding hat rack (H) which spreads and pushes head of cabbage (I) into net (J). Weight of cabbage pulls cord (K) causing shears (L) to cut string (M). Bag of sand (N) drops on scale (O) and pushes broom (P) against pail of whitewash (Q) which upsets all over you causing you to look like a marble statue and making it impossible for you to be recognized by bill collectors. Don't worry about posing as any particular historical statue because bill collectors don't know much about art.



As you sit on pneumatic cushion (A), you force air through a tube (B) which starts ice boat (C), causing lighted cigar butt (D) to explode balloon (E). Dictator (F), hearing loud report, thinks he's been shot and falls over backward on bulb (G), snapping picture!



When you slip on ice, your foot kicks paddle (A), lowering finger (B), snapping turtle (C) extends neck to bite finger, opening ice tongs (D) and dropping pillow (E), thus allowing you to fall on something soft.



Listening Comp

1. What prizes and awards did Rube Goldberg win?

_____

2. Where was Rube born?

_____

3. What did Rube's father want him to do?

_____

4. What did Rube do before he worked as a cartoonist?

_____

5. What are Rube Goldberg machines?

_____

6. Why do you think these machines are so popular?

_____

About the Worksheet
This is an example of how you can make an extended activity about a celebrity or famous person or in this case a common concept based on a particular person. The images and the information are from: **rubegoldberg.com**

I'm sharing these things here only as an example of how things like this can be adapted for your ESL classroom.

Using the worksheet
1. Have the students talk about a subject related to the story like technology or phones or computers.

2. Use the story either as a listening or reading activity.

Options
- Introduce the story of Rube Goldberg with a video of one in action.

- The illustrations should be copied to another, LARGER piece of paper and handed out to pairs or small groups, depending on the size of the class. The groups can label the machines and explain how they work.

- If possible (depends on their level) the groups can create a machine of their own. It doesn't have to be real and it can do anything they want it to do. Even just a drawing on the board is enough.