

READER CONTRIBUTION

How all of us are Perry the Platypus

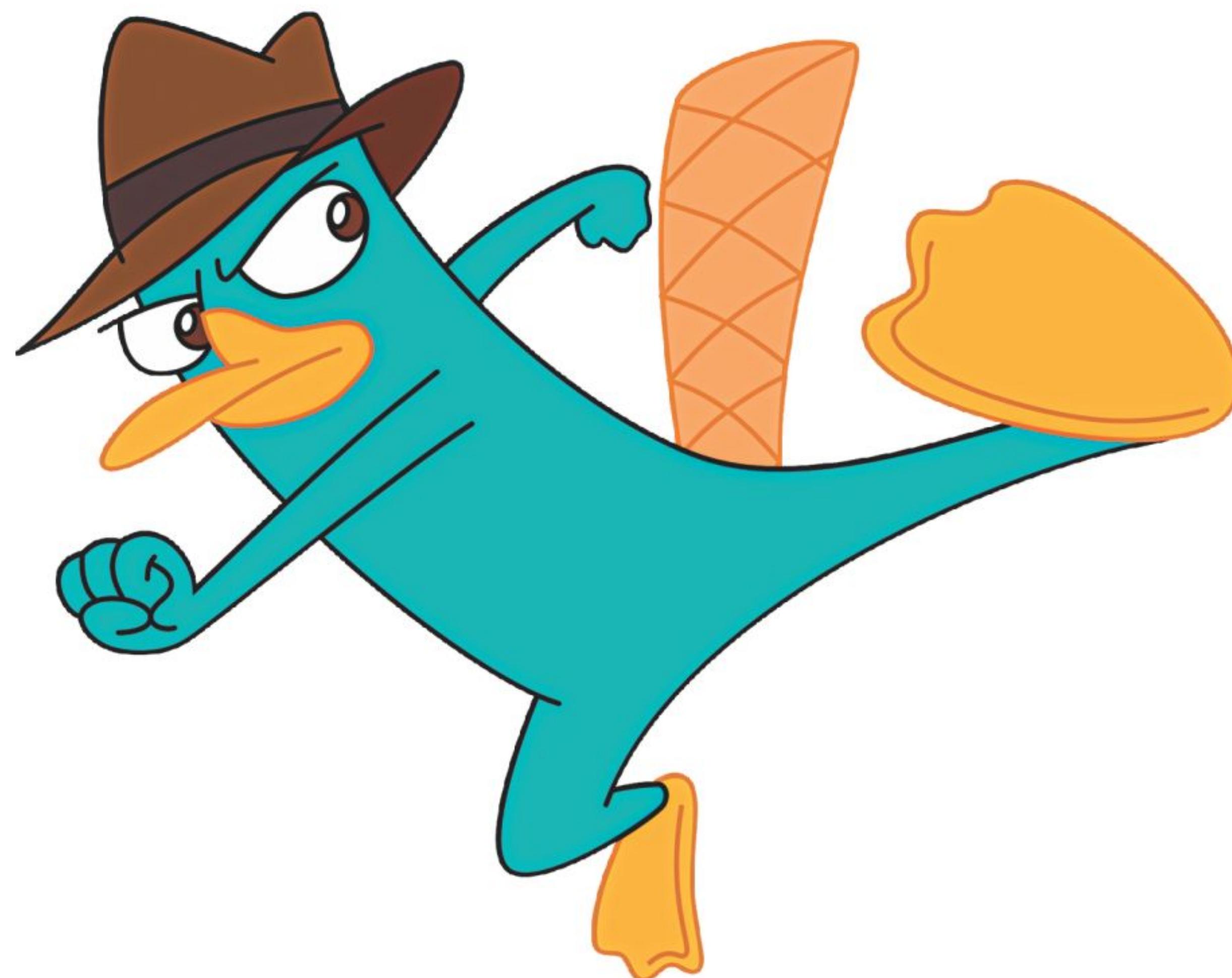
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Remember Perry? Perry the Platypus? Yep, I'm talking about the oh-so-amazing mammal from Phineas and Ferb whose successful missions against Doofenshmirtz foiled the plans of Candace to show mom what the boys did.

Let's feel a little better about the fact that we are all a bit like Agent P. because with exams going around and what not, having the likelihood of someone who enjoys the 104 days of summer vacation will give you something to look forward to.

HE DOES NOTHING AT ALL

As much as that is a misconception of the boys, he also sits idle until there's a mission. It's still a shame that we weren't the inspiration to a toy that does nothing, but hey, at least our moms have found out another similarity between Perry and us. Yes, claiming that we lay eggs is a hobby horse of the ways our moms try to inspire us to be productive. Little does the outer world know, that we have read enough quotes on Facebook to believe that one day, we'll make ourselves great, because only inspiration and determination are two thirds of the way to success – application just accounts for the last 33%. You pass anyway if you think like that.



WE HAVE A SECRET LIFE

Ever thought what your extended family would think of you if they saw you doing what you actually do? *dundundun* Exactly. Perry also has a secret life that he doesn't want his family to know about. The

consequence? He gets sent off to a platypus pound, and we are sent to the *gram er bari*, where your strict relatives would put you in your place. Or you know, if the exaggeration is removed, you're just gonna be grounded but no one minds being a bit extra.

THE EFFORTLESS ABILITY TO DESTROY BEST INVENTIONS

About the time you were playing football indoors? Or just throwing your bag off of your shoulders and baam! you hear a crash – the crash of a peaceful weeknight. You just broke your mom's favourite vase, even though it was remotely useless, but welcome a session of listening to a directory of all the things you did wrong in your life coming from the lady of the house. Isn't that exactly what Perry does? He goes into Doofenshmirtz Evil Inc., and brings his inventions to doom. The only difference? Doofenshmirtz at least says "Bless you".

LIFE OF A SECRET AGENT

Remember the time your best friend called you up saying there might be a potential interest in their dynamic love life? Well, can you recall what you did next? Wi-Fi connected, names searched, and a complete list of pros and cons made, along with the list of places he went to ever since they met, the name of his pet, his favourite Momtaz song, so on and so forth? Even though there is a thin chance that the guy will be as cool as Doof with an equally catchy tune, we can call ourselves secret agents, after all, you don't always get an antagonist – sometimes all you need is social media to save the world [grateful reacts only].

How the rumor mill churns

SAMIN SABAH ISLAM

The rumour mill is the whimsical fifth grade game of Chinese whisper that could start with "Jenny flushed the tiny sea creature" and potentially end at "Jenny has a crush on the new English teacher". And it spreads, oh how it disperses faster than a destructive Australian wildfire. Here's how.

WORD OF MOUTH

"I'll tell you something I haven't told anybody, but you have to promise not to tell a soul. I'm not one to start rumours."

"Yeah yeah you have my word, now give me the gossip."

See gossip is like a bad case of diarrhoea. It feels amazing to take all those spicy, reputation-crushing details in. But once you've got it, you can't hold it in. After thirty whole seconds of secrecy pledges and pinky swearing, you'll eventually tell Raju, who can't hide anything from Meena, who'll be manipulated to spill the beans to Mithu, who's a weakling and tell the entire football team.

Before the end of last period, the news is in every whisper, every passing note in school. Even the teachers are laughing about it in the faculty room.

Everybody is as untrustworthy and weak as you are. Trust nobody.

THE HATER AND SOCIAL MEDIA

See Jenny has that one hater, perhaps an ex-boyfriend she dumped with the excuse of, "Ammu jene gese", who has it out for her. And social networking sites are home delivery services throughout the globe, serving the cold vengeance he seeks. One

and possibly Googling witty comebacks and retorts to further provoke the rumour.

THE DRAMA LEECH

Are you bored with your dull, drama-less, dispirited excuse of an existence? Here's a thought, why not feed off the scandalous



misleading photo caption, a devious subtweet, or even the old status update can spread a rumour at a rate of 13 shares, 23 likes, 9 comments and about 50 arching eyebrows per minute.

Social media is a hater's best friend. They'll be hiding behind a laptop screen

spectacles of other people's lives?

Drama leeches are the kerosene to the wildfire of rumours that is about to engulf everything. They'll be sitting with a safe distance from the fire, keeping their clothes safe. But close enough for a front row view of the rumour tarnishing people,

wrecking friendships and causing catfights while they burn their marshmallows and enjoy the show. They'll throw in the occasional subtweet and whispers, creatively exaggerating the rumour further more.

Why they do it? That's like asking why the kid eats cake.

AUNTIE GOSSIP

It'll start with a simple, "Bhabi janen?" outside the school gate.

In the words of a wise soul, gossip is neither created nor destroyed - it is transferred from one auntie to another. This rumour dispersal service is just as efficient to any social media site, if not more. Before you know it, Jenny is victim to not-so-hushed whispers and judgmental glances from every auntie there is and you're not allowed to go over to her place anymore since classified information from the inner bhabi circle firmly advises against it.

Now that you know exactly how a rumour may spread, your life is about to be enhanced in no possible way whatsoever. There is no escaping the rumour mill. Maybe you should go check what you're friends are whispering about in that corner.

Samin Sabah Islam believes there are very few problems in life, if any, that a good nap can't fix. If she isn't asleep, your queries may be answered at sabahsamin11@gmail.com