



SATURDAY ENRICHMENT ONLINE SPRING 2022

Graphic Novel Studio

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Course Description

How do artists and writers make graphic novels come to life? What makes comics so appealing and so different from any other art form? In each session, we'll learn new techniques in writing and drawing and put them into practice. Using materials as basic as pencils, erasers, and paper, we'll design characters, give them facial expressions, place them in action poses, and begin to create stories, tell jokes, and write poems in graphic novel form. Students will gain a better understanding of visual communications, both as readers and writers. Prior drawing experience is not as important as a desire to communicate one's ideas.

Learning Outcomes

Students will learn to create characters, use them to express emotions, and place them in short comic strips and stories. They will also learn elements of graphic novel storytelling: symbols, composition, lettering, and pacing. These skills have the potential to take students beyond just drawing comics and graphic novels, into the visual communications world of the 21st century.

Instructional Strategies

Each class will begin with a short "hello" check-in and a quick warm-up exercise. I will lecture for a few minutes, using slides and a document camera, and then assign the main activity. In the last few minutes, students will have the option to share their work with the class by holding it up to their webcam or sharing their screen.

Resources and Materials

- Materials from home:
Drawing pad (approx. 9"x12" or larger, I like the Canson XL Mix Media Pad) **or** loose drawing paper
- Pencils (regular No.2 pencils are what I use to draw comics)
- Eraser (I prefer white plastic erasers)

(Optional supplies: Rulers, drawing pens, and scissors may come in handy but are not required.)

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	Topics and Activities
Week 1 - April 2	Introductions Creative character design: Using 9 basic ingredients to create any character we can imagine.
Week 2 - April 9	Facial expressions: Making small changes to facial features can have a big effect on emotions expressed. Four-panel comic strip using facial expressions.
Week 3 - April 16	Action poses: Using the “cartoon skeleton” method to put your characters in any pose you might need. Four-panel comic strip using poses.
Week 4 - April 23	Symbols: Graphic novels have their own visual language that we will explore and make use of in a comic strip.
Week 5 - April 30	Panel composition and shots: What goes where in a comics panel? And how can specific shots tell a story more effectively?
Week 6 - May 7	Lettering with care: Clear lettering is important to any graphic novel, and it’s more fun than you might have thought.
Week 7 - May 14	Poetry comics: Anything you can write with words can become a graphic novel, including poems! We’ll give this a try.
Week 8 - May 21	The one-pager: Tips for creating a complete short story in a single page and going beyond that to plan multi-page stories in the future.