Using Cartoons and Graphic Novels to Teach Elementary Writing

Courtney Cleghorn

Introduction

We write something daily, whether it is an email, text, a scribbled note, a list of things to be done, and even detailed doodles on papers, but when we sit down to write a story suddenly our minds go blank. When you ask students what their least favorite subject in school, they will usually say math, but in fact it is writing. I think that this event is because we, as teachers, have failed to make writing fun, entertaining, or something that a student wants to do. Some arguments against writing often hear are; "I don't know what to write!" or "I am not good at this, so I am not going to do it.," "Details? I already wrote all I can write." In this unit, I want to take some of the anxiety out of writing a story. I have found that with the students that I teach 5th grade Special Education Students, have no desire to put words on paper, but if you give them a piece of paper to draw on the paper will be filled swiftly.

In the book *Writing Down the Bones* by Natalie Goldberg, she states, "Learning to write is not a linear process. There is no logical A-to-B-C way to become a good writer. One neat truth about writing cannot answer it all. There are many truths. To do writing practice means to deal ultimately with your whole life. If you receive instructions on how to set a broken bone in your ankle, you can't use those same instructions to fill a cavity in your teeth. You might read a section in this book that says to be very specific and precise. That's to help the ailment of abstract, general meandering in your writing. But then you read another chapter that says lose control write on waves of emotion. That's to encourage you to really say deep down what you need to say."[1] What Goldberg is saying is that often we tell students to do something one way, and then we tell them to do something else, which contradicts the previous direction, that being said she is also talking about having different ways of doing things to help with creativity. Creativity is not a set way of doing things, sometimes you must have a complete lack of structure to be able to create. There are times when you are trying to create that you must be unstructured or take a break from the process, but there are other times where a very structured environment is best for creativity. As teachers we must think about our

students and how we require them to create, there are very few times where they are allowed to just sit and think or get up and take walk so they can clear their heads, so maybe we should think more about how students create and adjust our teaching to incorporate different types of creative thinking.

This unit will focus on getting students to not only write a story but will also help them to develop their writing through drawing a comic to support the story. I think that they will see that by drawing the setting and actions they will have to put fewer words on the page. To get students to develop their characters, I am going to use the Stanislavski system for acting to help students get their characterization. Dialogue is also a problem when my students are writing, they don't get the idea that dialogue is talking between two characters and that it is important for story development. By drawing a comic, they will also be forced to add dialogue between characters so that the panels have more meaning. They will also have to think more about the settings in their stories, because they will be drawing it. It is important to use examples of writing when teaching students to write, in the book *The Writing Thief*, by Ruth Culham, this quote sticks in my mind "I am always on the hunt for mentor texts, and because I'm a reader and a writer, I find great stuff. I look at the world of print and non-print through the eyes of a writing thief because I search for models of good writing that can inspire students to look at writing from a fresh perspective."[2] I think using mentor texts are important when teaching students to write because they need examples to model their writing after, until they are able to write using their own style.

Why should teachers encourage students to read a graphic novel in the classroom? In the article "*The Research Behind Graphic Novels and Young Learners*" by Leslie Morrison, Leapfrog Coordinator at Northwestern University's School of Education and Public Policy, there is research that focuses on how the brain processes the images and text in a graphic novel. "When students read visual narratives, the activity in the brain is similar to how readers comprehend text-based sentences. However, when students learn to read graphic novels with an analytical eye, depth and complexity are added to the reading process. With graphic novels, students use text and images to make inferences and synthesize information, both of which are abstract and challenging skills for readers."[3]

"Before children are ready to read text, sequential art can give them practice in making meaning from material printed on a page, tracking left to right and top to bottom,

interpreting symbols, and following the sequence of events in a story. Sequential art provides plenty of opportunity for connecting a story to children's own experiences, predicting what will happen, inferring what happens between panels and summarizing, just as you would do with a text story. The advantage of sequential art is that children don't need to be able to decode text to learn and practice comprehension skills. Once a child begins to decode text, the comic format enables them to read much more complex stories than is possible with traditional text and illustration."[4]

The ultimate goal of this unit will be to have a short graphic novel/cartoon about a science fiction story. The science fiction story will be a made-up story that goes with the 5th grade ELA unit on science fiction. The science fiction, writing is not easy, but many students embrace the genre. They have fantasies about being on a rocket ship going to the outer edge of the universe and encountering strange beings. Many are obsessed with superheroes and Star Wars. Recently, my students were given a writing assignment where they were supposed to write about a character that was aware of their surroundings. Almost all, the stories had something to do with an alien, a blue blob, Power Puff Girls, or Superheroes. Each story had a theme, where the character comes to Earth and sees that there is a lot of trash they must clean up. Another way to get students to write is to use Rory's Story Cubes, sets of six-sided dice featuring graphic images as opposed to simply dots. There is a set called "Astro Cubes" that will fit well with the Science Fiction writing. The students will use the cubes to help them start their story. The "Astro Cubes" have pictures which have to do with space, aliens and intergalactic battles.

Andrea Heckner, the author of the article, "*Writing Our Way to Success*," written for the National Writing Project writes, "The project I created contained seven writings and a culminating exercise to pull them together. I would write beside and with my students, share my writing and thoughts with them, and enlist their help with my story. I talked about my writing struggles, so the students could know that even teachers wrestle to find the right words."[5] I like to use mentor texts when I teach writing, because it gives the students an example of good writing. The students are also engaged in the text awhile and are able to ask questions and get clarifications before they go and write on their own. I will also be writing and drawing my own story with the class, by doing this, we can talk about the story, and they can see the different parts of writing. We can see how the picture shows the details in the story, without the student having to put the words on the paper."

Demographics:

Red Clay Consolidated School District is located in Northern New Castle County in Delaware, a district that includes urban and suburban settings within its borders. The district has 28 schools that service about 17,000 students. 14.97% of the students in Red Clay Consolidated School District are Special Education Students.

Cooke Elementary is the newest school in the district and has about 680 students. Demographics for the school year 2018-19, 5.64% of students were African American, 0.3% of students were American Indian and Hawaiian, 8.7% of the students were Asian. Hispanic/Latino, students account for 14.2% of students and Multi-Racial Students comprise 4.7% of the student body. 66.5% of the students in the school were White. Other student characteristics include 12.2% English Language Learners, 13.4% Low-Income students, and 7.4% Special Education students.

I am a Special Education Teacher and primarily teach students in 4th and 5th grades. For the 2019-20 school year, there are 30 special education students in those grades. Approximately 60% of students are African American or Hispanic/Latino. I pull students out of their regular education classroom for small group instruction to work on their IEP goals. I also collaborate with the grade level teachers so I can teach many of the same concepts that are being taught in the general education classroom.

Rationale:

Many of these students fight when it is time for writing because they believe that they cannot write. They also have problems with reading because it is more difficult for them, and by 5th grade, many of them have given up trying to get better at reading and writing. One reason, that has contributed to the student's lack success is that many of them move into the school during the year, or they move out, so there has not been consistency with reading and writing instruction for these students. When a student is pulled out of one classroom or thrown into another classroom during the year, it is a difficult adjustment. The adjustment is not just making new friends, it is also difficult because they have moved and now have to catch up to what the new class is learning. If they are moving to a different state, they may even have a different curriculum, so they will be playing catch up for the rest of the school year. The students become frustrated and have no desire to succeed.

One of the reasons that I feel that students will benefit from using comics in the classroom to help them to write is that they love to read comics or graphic novels. Some of the students have only been successful at reading when they have read a graphic novel. One of the best examples of graphic novels that students want to read is the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* book series, by Jeff Kinney. The students like this format of writing because there are not a lot of words on the page, so the text is not so overwhelming. So, should we be using graphic novels and comics to teach writing? Josh Elder, founder and president of Reading with Pictures, sums up the strengths of comics as educational tools with his "Three E's of Comics."

Engagement: Comics impart meaning through the reader's active engagement with written language juxtaposed with sequential images. Readers must actively make meaning from the interplay of text and image, as well as by filling in the gaps between panels.

Efficiency: The comic format conveys large amounts of information in a short time. This is especially effective for teaching content in the subject areas (math, science, social studies, etc.).

Effectiveness: Processing text and images together leads to better recall and transfer of learning. Neurological experiments have shown that we process text and images in different areas of the brain: called the Dual-Coding Theory of Cognition. These experiments also indicate that pairing an image with text leads to increased memory retention for both. With comics, students not only learn the material faster, they learn it better." [6]

　　Shouldn't, we as teachers make writing more fun, by upping student engagement, efficiency, and effectiveness? Students may want to write instead of becoming frustrated because of the types of things that we are asking them to write. Typically, we are asking them to write what we want them to write, but what they need is to be allowed to imagine a story, and then draw it. One thing they like is that drawing comics need not be as detailed as writing a personal narrative, because each panel is a short moment in time. Each panel is a different moment that flows together to tell a story, and each panel is separated by time. Most people prefer a story that flows sequentially, from A to B and so on. It can also be non-linear and flow from A to Z, Z to B and so on. This method can incorporate more flashbacks and memories of the characters. Jean-Luc Godard states, "A story should have a beginning, a middle and an end, but not necessarily in that order."[7]

　　According to Neil Cohen a comic strip always starts with an Establisher panel where

the characters are shown in a passive way that sets up a situation. An Initial panel is next and is the start of the sequence of events. The next panel is the Peak panel that shows the climax of the sequence, this is followed by a Release panel that show the resolution of the situation.

By writing and drawing a linear and/or non-linear science fiction, narrative the students will have more ownership over their writing and will care more about what they are writing, because it is their fantasy story and artwork. The students will draft a science fiction narrative. They will start the writing task by listening to and deconstructing mentor texts, mini-lessons, and graphic organizers. Students will listen to or read mentor texts together, so that they can understand why the use of details is important when writing and drawing. I will use mentor texts as models of graphic novels and will model the different parts of writing. Students will use graphic organizers, to organize their story and to think about what pictures they will need to draw to help tell the story. Students will also read and ask questions about each other's work; this will help the students edit their writing.

Writing Strategies:

With the Special Education students that I teach, I have only had minor success with getting the students to write. When they are given a writing prompt, they have difficulty getting started and will give up before they have written anything. If they are given the option to write what they want they have more success, this is about the student being more engaged with the project and taking ownership of it. This goes back to Elder's, "Three E's of Comics." The student will be more engaged in the activity so they will be more likely to take the time to do the assignment correctly. They will also see that there is efficiency with using comics as a form of writing, because the details are in the pictures and not in their words. The students may even be able to recall more of what they have learned, because there is a correlation between having pictures and writing and memory recall, this is effectiveness.

I have tried giving them a picture and having them describe what they see, usually with this method I get a list of items in the picture. I have also tried giving the students a quick write and having them write for only 5-10 minutes. I have had better success with this because the students see that there is an end in sight. The only problem with this

method is that I get more words on the page, but it makes no sense, and there is no character development or details. Graphic organizers are useful but need a lot of instructions on using them. After reading the book *The Writing Thief: Using Mentor texts to Teach the Craft of Writing*, by Ruth Culham, this quote sticks in my mind, "We should teach children that writing is thinking and, as such, that it's never easy, always messy, yet ultimately satisfying to get right. It's satisfying because the writing they do matters to them. Students should always know and embrace the relevance of what they compose from the onset."[8] Trying to get students to buy into what they are writing is the key to getting them to write.

I like to use mentor texts when I teach writing, because it gives the students an example of good writing. The students are also engaged in the text awhile and are able to ask questions and get clarifications before they go and write on their own. I will also be writing and drawing my own series of comic strips with the class, by doing this, we can talk about the story, and they can see the different parts of writing. We can see how the picture shows the details in the story, without the student having to put the words on the paper.

I want to change the way my students think about writing and drawing and make it more fun for them to do. To do this, I will use mentor texts, *Ralph Tells a Story*, by Abby Hanlon, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* book series, by Jeff Kinney, *Let's Make Comics!: An Activity Book to Create*, Write, and *Draw Your Own Cartoons*, by Jess Smart Smiley, and *What Do Illustrators Do?* By Eileen Christelow, will be the main stories that I will use.

In the book *Ralph Tells a Story*, Ralph can never think of anything to write, until he has to stand up in front of the class and read his story, of course, he has nothing on the paper but tells the class that he went to the park and saw an inchworm. The students start asking him questions about the inchworm and suddenly he has a story. This story mirrors the students in my class, they feel they have nothing to say or that what they say is unimportant. I want to make them feel like they matter, and what they write about is important because they are important. This sentiment also follows along with my use of Fay and Funk's *Teaching with Love and Logic* in my classroom, where you make every child feel like they are important and cared for.

The *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* books are interesting because the students love to read them. They are written in a diary format with illustrations which add to the setting and

actions of the characters. These books are the first books that students ask for when looking for a book to read. These books were also the first ones that my son read from cover to cover without complaining. I will have them keep a drawn and written diary, for a few days. It will be only one image and one thought per day. Hopefully, this will show them that everyday things can make for an interesting story. This may help them to see that our lives are not made up of interesting or exciting experiences but are made up of many of little experiences that when put together make our stories. Their diaries can and should include such mundane topics as: what they ate for lunch, whom they sat next to on the bus, what did they talk to the person on the bus about, whom did they play with at recess, what did they play, etc. All of these ideas and more can become interesting in the context of a story. They will see that their lives are stories, that when all the everyday things are put together, there is an interesting story.

Let's Make Comics! An Activity Book to Create, Write, and Draw Your Own Cartoons, by Jess Smart Smiley, is an activity book that can be used for examples of how to add dialogue, and make timelines. There is a section on how to draw facial features to make a character look mad or happy or any other emotions just by changing the way the eyebrows and mouth look. Ivan Brunetti also has an activity that follows this same pattern of changing the appearance of the eyebrows or where the eyes are positioned on the face to show different facial expressions.

What Do Illustrators Do? By Eileen Christelow tells the reader about how an illustrator goes about drawing or illustrating a story. It also illustrates the use of thought bubbles, so they can get an idea of how they are used. The illustrators in the book are demonstrating how Jack and the Beanstalk could be illustrated in comic form. The book gives them an outline of the steps for illustrating a story. First, the student must decide what parts of the story should be illustrated, then sketch out the pictures which are needed. Think about what the characters will look like and draw clothing and features. Also, what point of view will the pictures focus on? Will it be from Jack's perspective or from the perspective of the giant? Finally, what style of color will be on the finished pictures? Will they be colorful, will they be black and white, or will there be a little color?

Teaching Strategies:

Questioning

To get students to develop their characters, I am going to use the Stanislavski system for acting to help students get their characterization. His system uses ten questions an actor gets into a character. For this writing unit there are four of those questions that will be used. These questions can be used by writers to help them figure out who their character is and what they want it to do. His questions start with who and I? The first thing that a writer must do is ask themselves who the character is, and to figure out what the character likes or dislikes, what they look like and how they behave. The next question is, where am I? This question tries to get the student to think about their surroundings and describe them. Since this is a graphic novel or comic the student will have to look more at what they will draw in their settings. Will the background be all black because it is in outer space or will it be a sunny day? What else is there in the surrounding area? When is it? Is the next question, this is about getting the author to decide is the story happening in the future, the past, or the present? Or in the case of a non-linear story the story can be all three in any order. The question, what must I overcome, addresses the action in the story, and it is important for us to have a clear idea of what he wants his character to overcome.

There are other questions that I will use when meeting with students or having other student's conference with them. I ask the students these questions when I conference with them to help them add more details to their writing. All the questions that I use when clarifying content and ideas are open-ended. Some examples are: I don't understand this part, what are you trying to say? What was, this person doing... when you were…? Who else was there? Where does the story happen? Describe person, place, or thing. What else do you remember? What happened before…? What happened next? How did you feel when this happened? What was going on around you when…was happening? What were the characters saying to each other? I also have the students' pair with each other and ask each other to clarify questions. They can use the same questions that I do, or they can make up their own. I have found that it is easier for the students to think of the questions if there are some questions written out for them in advance. While the pair is talking, they should be recording the answers to the questions, so they can go back and add in the information.

Setting

Setting is an important part of writing, because it helps the reader to visualize where things are happening. My students read and think about where stories are taking place, daily, but when it comes to writing a description of a place, they are only able to come up with a couple of sentences. Since they will be drawing a graphic novel/comic, it is more important for them to figure out the setting before they get started. I think it is important for them to draw what they see in their minds as they read or write, this will help them be more descriptive.

Characterization and Dialog

In the book *Bird by Bird* by Anne Lamott, she says that it takes time to get to know your characters when writing a story, and that you may not like them. "Bad things happen to good characters, because our actions have consequences, and we do not all behave perfectly all the time."[9] I think it is important for students to understand that they must develop all the characters in a story and to think about what it is about them that make them interesting. In class, we spend often talking about character traits when reading stories, and how important it is to understand each character, so this is not a new concept, but it is very difficult for students to do on their own. The Stanislavski system, from above, will also be used to help the students to think about characterization.

My students tend to write one-dimensional characters. To make the characters more dimensional, I think it is best to add a dialog to the writing. The students will be encouraged to write like they talk with slang, contractions or the dialect that they use. They may like this form of writing better than the formal writing that we usually make them write. When writing and drawing a comic, using the questioning techniques above will help the student to figure out what dialogue there needs to be to make the story more believable and interesting.

Objectives

Students will draft a science fiction story. They will draw the setting and character(s) in either comic or graphic novel form. I will give the students some guidance on this, so that they are writing a science fiction story that follows the 5th grade writing prompt. They

will start the writing task by listening to and deconstructing mentor texts; mini-lessons, and graphic organizers.

The first thing that the class will do is that we will listen to or read mentor texts together, so that they can understand why details are important when writing. I will also be using the mentor texts as models of creative nonfiction, texts that illustrate a diary type story, and graphic novels will be used to model different parts of writing. The texts will be used to model how to use a graphic organizer, and how to use questions to improve your writing. The mentor texts that I will be using are *Ralph Tells a Story*, by Abby Hanlon, and *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* book series, by Jeff Kinney, *An Activity Book to Create, Write, and Draw Your Own Cartoons*, by Jess Smart Smiley, and *What Do Illustrators Do?* By Eileen Christelow.

After reading the books and recording ideas on a graphic organizer the students will organize their ideas using the words First, Next, Then, and Last on one side of the paper in big type, and there will be lines underneath, so the students can write. I will tell the kids a synopsis of my story that I am going to write. Using the same graphic organizer that the students will be using, I will fill it in as I tell them the story. I will leave out a lot of details, so the story doesn't make a lot of sense. The class will then have to ask me questions so that I can fill in what happened and why. I will record the questions as they ask them, so that I can give them a list of questions to ask later. After the class has asked questions, I will fill in more details on the graphic organizer. Then, I will begin to write my story as a model. While I am writing, I will be modeling how to write an introduction and a conclusion, and I will also be editing as I go along so that the students can see that it is acceptable to have someone look at their writing and change it. After each draft, I will read my story to the class and have them ask me more questions about the events.

As I record my story and write it out for them, I will be able to pick apart what I have written, and show the students that it is okay to have someone look at your work and to question things that they don't understand. While I am writing my story, I will be talking about the setting, character development, voice, and dialog.

Then, I will have the class start their stories, on paper. They will be given a graphic organizer to follow and once they have that filled out, they will be given a story board to fill out and plan the pictures that they will draw. As they are telling their stories, they

should be filling in their graphic organizer, with what happened. First, Next, Then, and Last. By taking this approach, the students will have a place to start from and they will be able to expand their stories. The class will be broken into pairs and will meet on a regular schedule to discuss what is happening in the stories. The students will again ask questions to try to get more details about the story. As the students read and ask questions about each other's work, they will be editing the writing. There has been research on using peer mentoring when writing. "In 2017, the National Mentoring Resource Center released a review of the research base related to cross-age peer mentoring for children and adolescents."[10] The research showed that, "The strongest effects for mentees appear to be increases in school attitudes (e.g., connectedness), relationships with adults (both teachers and parents) and peers, and improvements in internal affective states (e.g., self-esteem). The most significant moderators of program effectiveness appear to be the mentors' attitudes and motivations, and the degree of clear programmatic infrastructure and fidelity of its implementation. Involvement of parents in programs also seems to yield larger benefits and securing support from school administrators and teachers can directly influence effectiveness. The means by which programs have positive effects on mentees appears to be largely through the consistent and affirming presence of mentors, and the clarity and predictability resulting from a clear program structure."[11]

After having peers review their work the culminating activity will be that the students will illustrate and publish their story in a book. The book will include pictures on each page to illustrate the setting and to show what the characters are doing. The book will be several pages in length but will be stapled at the edges for a finished product.

Teaching Activities

Activity One

Reading Mentor text: *Ralph Tells a Story*, by Abby Hanlon

Before reading the story, discuss with class what makes it difficult for some of them to write stories? What would make it easier for the students to write a story? What are some ideas of things to write about? Write down their ideas before reading about Ralph.

Read the story about Ralph and discuss how he has the same problem as many students. He doesn't know how to get started writing and feels he has nothing to say. When the class has finished reading the book make a list of questions, they can ask each other to help them get more details in their writing. After completing the list make a copy for each student to put in their writing folders.

Have each student make a Sequence of Events list of all the things that Ralph went through before he got to tell his story about the inchworm at the park. Give them a graphic organizer with the words First, Next, Then, Last to use for making their list.

Activity two

As a whole class, you will start this activity by telling the students a very basic science fiction (with no details). Next, choose something that is funny and easy to add details to later. After telling them the story, get out the big paper and use the same graphic organizer that they are using to graph out my story. Then you will fill in the basics of the story on the organizer and then have the students ask you questions about your story. As they ask questions add the details to your graphic organizer, add only a few details to the graphic organizer on this day, so that the students can witness going back to add more details later in a story.
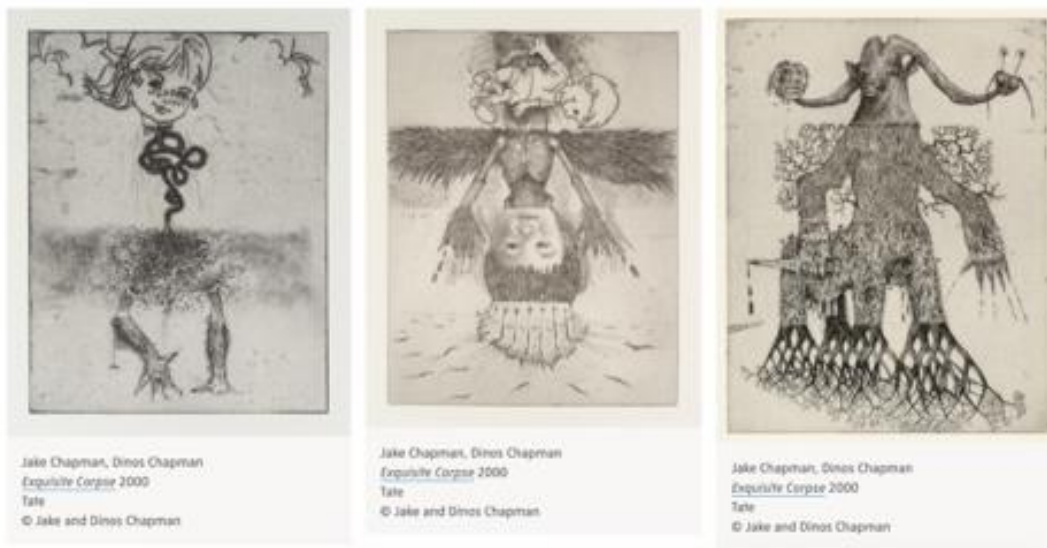
Using the graphic organizer that you made the day before start to draft your introduction to the story. While writing the introduction focus on "voice" and how your writing sounds like you are talking and telling a story.

Reading the introduction and starting the body of the writing piece. This part can be done in advance of class and can just be discussed, so the students have more time to write. Using the graphic organizer, you made with the class, start to draft the body of the story. While writing the body of the story, focus on "voice, setting, and characters." Try to add as many details about the setting as possible, so that the students can visualize the scene. At this point with your Special Education Students, have them draw a picture of the setting of the story.

What Do Illustrators Do? By Eileen Christelow is another resource that should be used as a mentor text in this lesson. The book discusses with illustrations what parts of a story should be illustrated and what doesn't need to be illustrated.

Since everyone has a different level of drawing capability, the first thing you should have the students do in to have them play the Exquisite Corpse or Cadavre exquis game. The game is played by each student taking a piece of paper then they draw something on the paper. The paper is then given to the next person and that person draws more on the paper. In the original game, the people drawing draw body parts and some interesting drawings are the result. Cadavre exquis as a drawing approach has been used by other artists since the surrealists notably the YBA artists Jake and Dinos Chapman.

Figure 1:[12]

Jake Chapman, Dinos Chapman
Exquisite Corpse 2000
Tate
© Jake and Dinos Chapman

Jake Chapman, Dinos Chapman
Exquisite Corpse 2000
Tate
© Jake and Dinos Chapman

Jake Chapman, Dinos Chapman
Exquisite Corpse 2000
Tate
© Jake and Dinos Chapman

This an example of what Jake and Dinos Chapman drew but the students should be starting to draw their settings, then the next person adds to the picture.

Activity three

Next, use the graphic organizer, to start to draft the conclusion to the story. While writing the conclusion of the story, focus on "voice, setting, and characters." write a very basic conclusion, so that you can edit it later, to show they students how important it is to rewrite and edit their writing. Editing and rewriting will continue for several days, at this point the class should be writing and then having someone look at their paper to edit and ask them questions so they can remember more details.

The answers to these questions should be written on a separate piece of paper. The students can write a number beside the section that they are questioning, and that number will correspond to the section that has the answer to the question. As needed, for Special Education Students the teacher will need to meet with them to do this part of the editing.

Activity four

Once the students have collaborated on drawing, it is time to go over the parts of a comic. We will look at different examples of comics, and how they all come together to tell a story. The first thing that you need to do is get examples of comics from the newspaper or other sources. Then look at the parts, how are the frames shaped? Does it make a difference in the story if they are square or another shape? What does it tell you when they are another shape? Is it possible that the author is showing you something that came before, or is it a dream? In the case of this Garfield comic strip the speech bubbles are all written in the same type of script and are all capital letters, why might this be? Why does Garfield have a different type of speech bubble?

Figure 2:[13]

Basic Parts Of A Comic
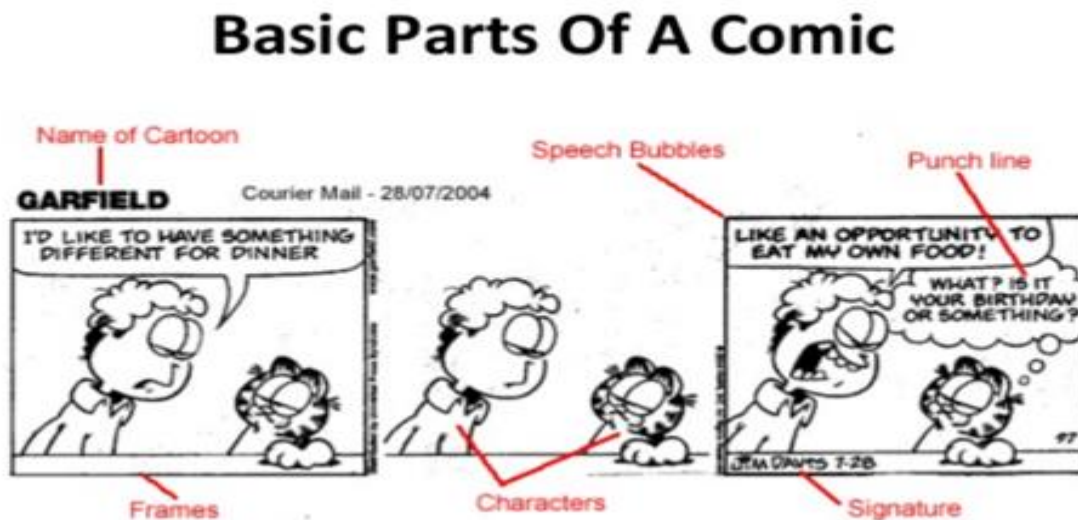
During this activity you will also need some other examples of comics. The best place to get comics s to get them from the daily newspaper. Have the students look at each comic and describe what they see. What is the setting? Who are the characters? Is it funny, or sad? What makes you think that the comic is funny or sad?

Activity five:

Pick a chapter of any of the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* book series, by Jeff Kinney, what is different about the way that he writes and draws his illustrations? His type of writing is an illustrated diary. For some student this type of writing may be easier, because it is something that they are familiar with.

    For the next several days have the students write a diary entry and then draw a picture to go along with their entry.

    The last phase of the project will be that, once students have a completed editing, have them publish their writing pieces. They should illustrate it and make a book, but if time does not allow for them to illustrate, color, and bind the book; they can either rewrite the piece in their best handwriting, or type it on the computer. Once the pieces are written and illustrated and ready, the students should present their writing to the class. Have students stand in front of the class and read their finished writing piece to the rest of the students or this would be a great time to invite parents in to have an author's "tea."

Bibliography

Alverson, Brigid. "Teaching with Graphic Novels." School Library Journal.
     Accessed October 13, 2019. https://www.slj.com/?detailStory=the-graphic-
     advantage-teaching-with-graphic-novels.

Barrett, Lindsay. "Graphic Novels Should Play a Bigger Part in Your
     Classroom. Here's Why." WeAreTeachers, October 24, 2017.
      https://www.weareteachers.com/graphic-novels-in-the-classroom/.

Brotchie, Alastair, and Mel Gooding. A Book of Surrealist Games Including the
     Little Surrealist Dictionary. Boston: Shambhala Redstone Editions, 1995.

Christelow, Eileen. *What Do Illustrators Do?* New York: Clarion Books, 2007.

Culham, Ruth. The Writing Thief: Using Mentor Texts to Teach the Craft of
    Writing. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, 2014.

Edwards, Betty. The New Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain. London:
    HarperCollins, 2008.

Fischer, Craig, and Charles Hatfield. "Teeth, Sticks, and Bricks: Calligraphy, Graphic
    Focalization, and Narrative Braiding in Eddie Campbell's "Alec"." SubStance
    40, no.1 (2011): 70-93.

Gardner, Lyn. "Character Building and What Makes a Truly Great Actor." The
    Guardian. Guardian News and Media, May 9, 2009.
    https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2009/may/09/character-building-great-actor.

Hanlon, Abby. *Ralph tells a story*. Las Vegas, NV: Amazon Childrens Publishing, 2012

"Jean-Luc Godard Quotes (Author of Godard on Godard)." Goodreads.
    Goodreads. Accessed October 13, 2019.
    https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/179794.Jean_Luc_Godard.

Goldberg, Natalie. Writing down the Bones: Freeing the Writer within: Wild
    Mind: Living the Writers Life. New York: Quality Paperback Book Club, 1991.

Lamott, Anne. Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life. New York:
    Anchor Books, 2019.

Kinney, Jeff. *Cabin Fever*. Amulet Books, 2011.

Manno, Michelle, "Comics in the Classroom: Why Comics?" Teach, August 4,
    2014. https://teach.com/blog/why-comics/.

McDermott, Jason E., Matthew Partridge, and Yana Bromberg. "Ten Simple Rules
    for Drawing Scientific Comics." PLOS Computational Biology. Public
    Library of Science. Accessed October 13, 2019.
    https://journals.plos.org/ploscompbiol/article? id=10.1371/journal.pcbi.1005845.

Nelson, Brooke. "Comic Techniques." LinkedIn SlideShare, March 25, 2013.
      https://www.slideshare.net/bthemuck/comic-techniques.

Palmer, Zachary. "LINEAR VS. NON-LINEAR STORYTELLING." The
      Odyssey Online. The Odyssey Online, August 30, 2017.
      https://www.theodysseyonline.com/linear-vs-non-linear-storytelling.

"Peer Mentoring." National Mentoring Resource Center. Accessed December 15,
      2019. https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/index.php/component/
      k2/item/152-peer-mentoring.html.

"Rory's Story Cubes Astro." Story Cubes. Accessed December 1, 2019.
      https://www.storycubes.com/en/games/rorys-story-cubes-astro/.

Smiley, Jess Smart. Lets Make Comics!: an Activity Book to Create, Write, and Draw
      Your Own Cartoons. California: Watson-Guptill Publications, 2018.

Tate. "Cadavre Exquis (Exquisite Corpse) – Art Term." Tate. Accessed December 1,
      2019. https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/c/cadavre-exquis-exquisite-corpse.

Morrison, Leslie. "CTD Blog." CTD Blog | Northwestern Center for Talent
      Development. Accessed December 15, 2019.
      https://www.ctd.northwestern.edu/blog/research-behind-graphic-novels-and-
   young- learners.

"Using Comics and Graphic Novels in the Classroom (The Council Chronicle,
      Sept.05)." NCTE Comprehensive News. Accessed October 13, 2019.
      http://www.ncte.org/magazine/archives/122031.

Using Graphic Novels in the Classroom. Accessed October 13, 2019.
      http://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780199380046/res/using/.

"Visual Language Lab • The Website of Neil Cohn." Visual Language Lab
      The website of Neil Cohn. Accessed October 13, 2019.
      http://www.visuallanguagelab.com/P/2018.ESiC.NC.pdf

Appendix A

Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts-Literacy-Writing that are covered in this unit are for 3rd through 5th grade. There are several standards that are covered in this unit, and some of the standards are the same for all three grades, so they are grouped together. The standards that are for 3rd-5th grade include: ELA-W.3.3,W.4.3,W.5.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. ELA-W.4.3. A, W.5.3.A Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally. W.5.3.B, W.5.3.C Use a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses to manage the sequence of events. W.5.3.D Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely. W.5.3.E Provide a conclusion that follow from the narrated experiences or events.

Under *Production and Distribution of Writing:* ELA-W.3.4, W.4.4, W.5.4 With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

ELA-W.4.3.C, W.5.3.C use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events, ELA-W.4.3. D, W.5.3.D use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely, ELA-W.4.3. E, W.5.3.E provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events. ELA-W.4.5, W.5. with guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing, and ELA-W.5.3.B use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.

Notes

1. Goldberg, Natalie. Writing down the Bones: Freeing the Writer within: Wild Mind: Living the Writers Life
2. Culham, Ruth. The Writing Thief: *Using Mentor Texts to Teach the Craft of Writing*

3. Leslie Morrison, Morrison, Leslie. "CTD Blog"
4. Manno, Michelle, "Comics in the Classroom: Why Comics?"
5. Andrea Heckner, the author of the article, "*Writing Our Way to Success*,
6. Comics in the Classroom: Why Comics?" Teach, August 4, 2014. https://teach.com/blog/why-comics/.
7. Jean-Luc Godard Quotes (Author of Godard on Godard)." Goodreads. Goodreads. Accessed October 13,
8. Culham, Ruth. *The writing thief: using mentor texts to teach the craft of writing*
9. Lamott, Anne. *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life.* New York: Anchor Books, 2019.
10. https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/index.php/component/k2/item/152-peer-mentoring.html
11. Ibid.
12. https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/c/cadavre-exquis-exquisite-corpse
13. Basic Parts of a comic Nelson, Brooke. "Comic Techniques." LinkedIn SlideShare, March 25, 2013.