

FIRST STORY

TEACHING RESOURCES



“Stories are essentially about having empathy – about being able to put yourself in other people's shoes”

RAM V
GRAPHIC NOVELIST



**INSIDE the
WRITER'S MIND**

STIMULUS

Think about travelling into school today. Picture the steps of your journey.

Now, imagine a point at which something unexpected could have happened — the bus goes the wrong way, or a meteor crashes nearby, or you see the last person you'd expect.

How might that lead to an adventure?

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IDEATION



Using these ideas, you are going to write the script for a four-panel page from a comic or graphic novel. This is a bit like a film script, with each of the four panels being a scene that adds to the story.

Write what is depicted in each panel to start this story... Imagine what the artist who is going to illustrate this needs to know – the aim is to give a visual sense of the place, characters, movement and so on without being overly descriptive.

You can have speech and thought bubbles too, but remember that space is limited – so choose your words carefully!

DRAWING & EDITING

1 You are going to collaborate with a partner to turn your script into a page from a graphic novel or comic.

Swap your scripts, and read your partner's to yourself. When you are ready, start drawing each panel.

You might want to check in with your partner that you're on the right track. Remember that you are equal collaborators, so share in the creation of each panel!

2 Once you have finished, come back together with your partner to give feedback and notes.

Does the flow of the story make sense as you read through it?

Are the important elements of the script present in the drawing?

Redraw any panels that need further work – you could even start to add colour too.

RESOURCE AUTHOR

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This resource is by Dan Simpson, an accomplished writer, performer, producer, educator, and First Story Writer-in-Residence.

Dan has been Poet-in-Residence at Glastonbury Festival, Waterloo Station, National Trust Stowe, Imperial College London, and St Albans Cathedral. His two collections of poetry are *Applied Mathematics* and *Totally Cultured* (Burning Eye Books).

Dan delivers primary and secondary school classes around the UK. He also runs both creative writing and professional development sessions for adults.

Find out more at dansimpsonpoet.co.uk.



DAN'S RECOMMENDED READING

The DC Comics Guide to Writing Comics
by Denis O'Neil

Writing for Comics
by Alan Moore

The Art of Comic Book Writing
by Mark Kneece

This resource is one of six published in 2022 by First Story, in partnership with BBC Teach.

These resources complement a new collection of short films about creative writing, *Inside the Writer's Mind*, produced by BBC Teach.

Featuring fantastic contemporary writers and packed with tips and insights, discover all eight of the films among the English Literature resources on the BBC Teach website, [here](#).

Explore all six of our accompanying free resources at firststory.org.uk/bbc-teach.

FIRST STORY

England's leading creative writing charity for young people, equipping students with the confidence and skills to tell their own stories.

Find out more at firststory.org.uk and follow our story @FirstStory

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