



Visual Storytelling

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WCWP 2023

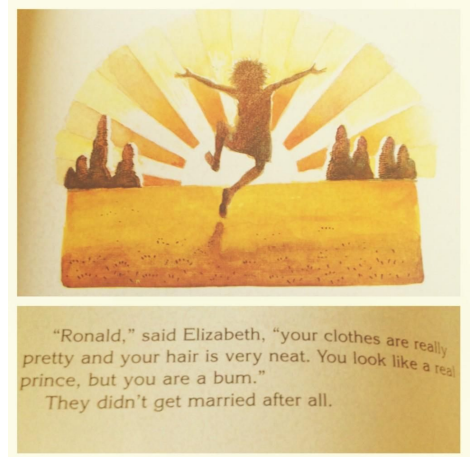
Objectives

- Define visual storytelling
- Explain how visual storytelling can be used when reading and writing in the classroom
- Tell a narrative through images—either a photo essay or comic



Visual Storytelling

- Art of using images to tell a story
- Can include videos, infographics, comics, maps, data visualizations, illustrations... even GIFs or memes (Meier, 2021)
- Expanding the view of what constitutes a text and finding similarities
 - Fictional and informational texts could be articles, novels, or poems, OR they could be plays, graphic novels, movies, documentaries, TV shows, or artwork (Bryan, 2019)



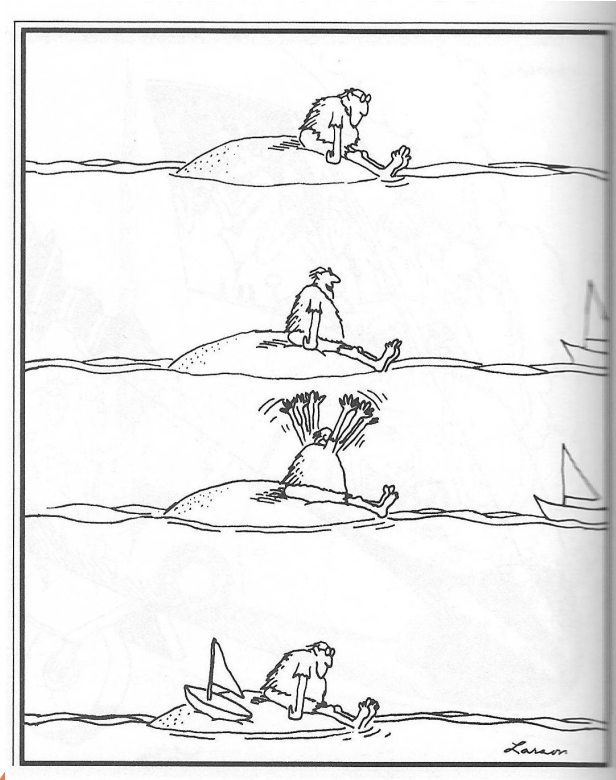
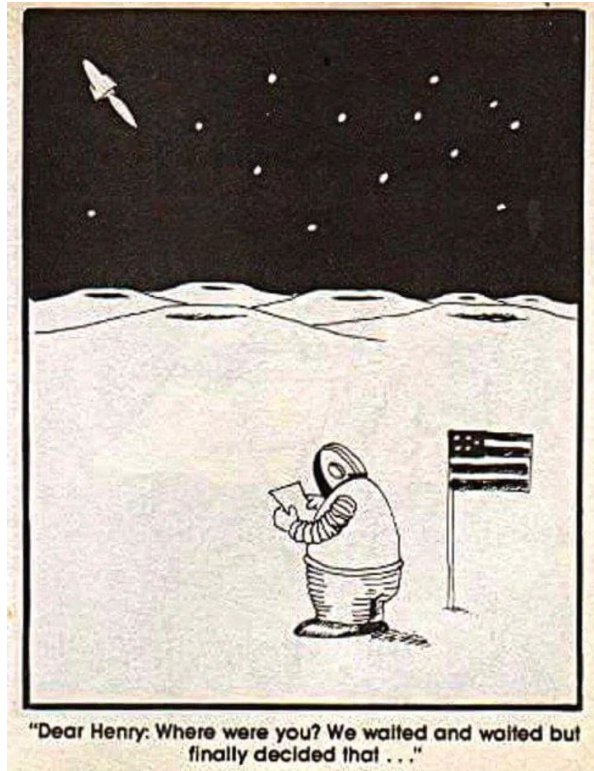
"Ronald," said Elizabeth, "your clothes are really pretty and your hair is very neat. You look like a real prince, but you are a bum."
They didn't get married after all.

Visual Literacy

- “[Students] learn that they can use their imagination to see and think between and beyond the lines to draw inferences and conclusions. Visual literacy encourages student reflection, analysis, and evaluative thinking skills” (Minor, 2021).



Close Reading Images



Films/Film Stills

The camera can, at any given moment...

- Focus on the speaker
- Focus on the primary listener(s)
- Focus on the secondary listener(s)
- Use a wide lens to include speaker and listeners
- Use deep focus to bring both into the frame with relative clarity
- Use shallow focus to include both but focus primarily on one over the other
- Use shallow focus but change from one to the other
- Cut quickly or slowly from speaker to audience
- Focus on any portion of the speaker's or listener's anatomy – the object of contemplation can be a foot just as well as a face, you know
- Alight on some creature or thing that is not part of the dialogue – a passing cloud, gathering storm, or donkey in a pasture
- Any combination of these
- None of these

(Foster, p. 21-22, 2016)

Films/Film Stills

Where and how you see a scene matters a lot:

The Hamlet/Gertrude chat scene with Polonius behind the arras

- As a play, the audience sees everything all at once (Hamlet, Gertrude, and the lump of Polonius, and then the ghost)
- Films change the way we're invited to see things:
 - Hamlet speaks (long shot)
 - Gertrude reacts, speaks (medium close)
 - Hamlet says something outrageous (close shot)
 - Gertrude looks horrified (close shot)
 - Etc...
- Quick takes and frequent cuts create a feeling of being unsettled
- Jumpy switches further the feeling of estrangement

(Foster, p. 19–20, 2016)

Another example of the same scene

Using Art to Write

- **Photo Essays:** Using a series of images to take the reader on an engaging journey; can be thematic or narrative (“scrollytelling”)
- **Comic Strip/Graphic Novel Page:** Using a series of images in panels to tell a story with written dialogue or brief captions

Organize ideas visually using a mood structure to create plot

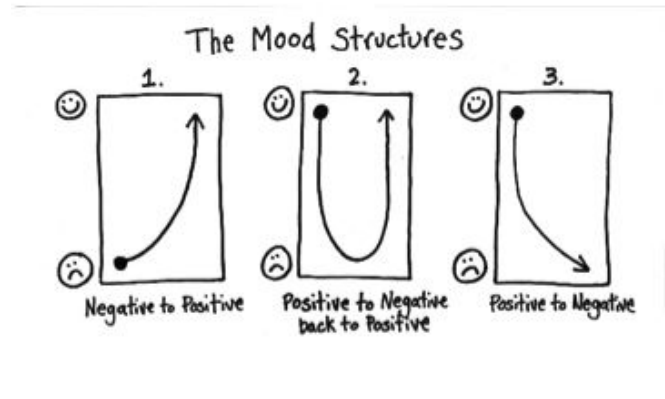


Photo Essays

Vev

Student Essay Ideas



“Iran Before the Revolution”- a photo essay to use with
Persepolis

Students can use Google Docs/Slides, Canva, or try Vev or Shorthand for scrollytelling

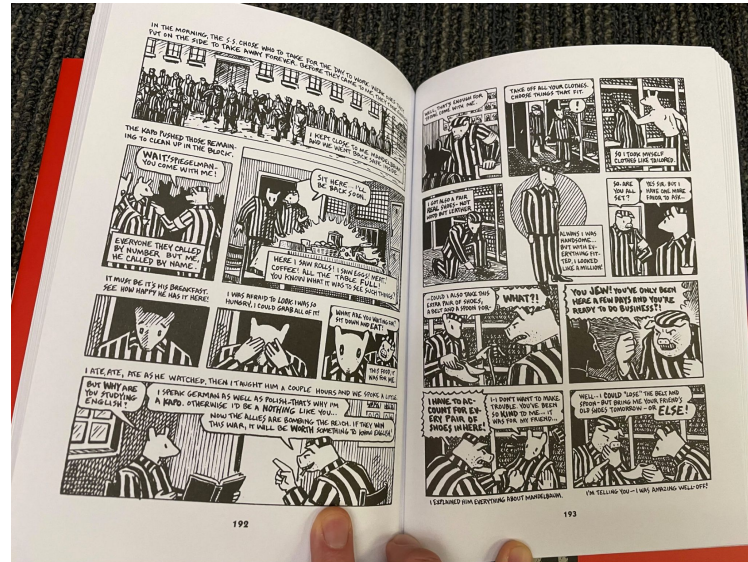
Comic Strip Templates for Graphic Novels

Storyboard That!

Pixton

Make Beliefs Comix

Canva





Create a Visual Story of your own!

Maybe you have some pictures on your phone that you can upload, or you can find some stock images to practice with for now.

I recommend that your story have a mood structure to guide it if you're telling a narrative through photographs.

For example, I might include a picture of my coffee to represent exhaustion, or I might include a picture of a messy classroom after an activity to show the chaos I experience daily. :)

Using Visual Storytelling in Your Classroom

- Close reading mentor texts
- Collaborative discussions
- Narrative writing
- Narrative planning (storyboards)
- Summaries
- Film analysis
- Poetry – visual interpretation
- Book to movie comparisons or write out a key scene as a script
- Zines as graphic novels or picture books
- Peer review with images as symbols of feedback
- Compare Chat GPT scripts to actual films

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