

a storyboard project

Comics offers tremendous resources to all writers and artists: faithfulness, control, a chance to be heard far and wide without fear of compromise... It offers range and versatility with all the potential imagery of film and painting plus the intimacy of the written word.

— SCOTT MCCLOUD

Create a comic/storyboard

This project asks that you combine many of the skills you've been developing as a story writer so far throughout this semester. You will have to consider the larger arc of a story beginning with the essential story goal or motivation of the protagonist, introducing complication, and pushing the matter to a moment of crisis or climax that results in some significant change. Other elements you have learned about may also come into play—characterization, setting, significant detail, and temporal duration, among others. This visual storytelling project also asks that you challenge yourself with a new set of skills as well. You will have to consider and experiment with implication and suggestion in written text as well as through pictures.

For this project, I want you to create what amounts to a comic strip story. While it should be able to stand alone as a representation of a story, it might also serve as a kind of storyboard for a longer story that you could possibly develop in either verbal or visual form later on. See the essential requirements for this project below.



Scott McCloud's Carl

Essential requirements

I want you to feel free to experiment here with this project and, of course, exercise your creativity as best as you can; however, there are just a few requirements that I will hold you to.

The comic/storyboard project should include:

- five to fifteen frames, which may include visual and/or verbal elements
- frames that represent the key scenes of the narrative you wish to show (think about what scenes are essential, necessary to dramatize, and worth showing)
- a thoughtful use of the “gaps” between frames; think about what these gaps suggest, imply, or require of the reader (consider how temporal duration works here)
- a one to two page written reflection on the final product

Useful resources

You are free to use your visual illustration skills (i.e. drawing, painting, etc.) if you'd like, but if you are not comfortable in these media, no problem. There are lots of ways you could put this together (and I won't judge you on the technical quality of your visual art). Here are a few resources that might help:

- **Comic Creator:** <http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/comic>
This link is to a Flash program that allows you to create layouts, place characters and dialogue bubbles, and even create captions (the narrative) for your comics
- **Strip Creator:** <http://www.stripcreator.com/make.php>
This link is to a similar program as the Comic Creator, but it doesn't seem to have as many options. It offers funkier characters though.



wait, wait, there's more

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- **Cartoonography:** <http://members.ozemail.com.au/~denyss/indexa.htm>

This site offers graphic files of cartoon characters (with various facial expressions) drawn by the site's creator. You could drop these graphics into your layouts.

The above resources may be helpful to you, but of course you do not need to use them. You might find others that are better, and if you do, please share. Also, as I said before there are other ways you could go about creating images for this visual project. Photography is an option too. Think about how you might be able to tell the story through a series of photographs.

How this project will be assessed

First of all, remember that this assignment (as with any assignment in this course) will not be assessed in a traditional letter-grade-fashion; however, as an initial draft that will be reviewed by members of the class and may form the basis for work that is to come in future projects, completing it on time is essential to stay on track toward at least a B in this course. Refer to the grading contract on the syllabus for more information about the importance of meeting all deadlines, and for general information on what makes for exemplary writing in this course.

Having said that, in creating your visual project, be sure to address the following as they are the basic requirements of this assignment and will hopefully result in a compelling piece of work.

This project will be assessed by asking the following questions:

- How well does the project addresses the essential requirements outlined above?
- How thoroughly and thoughtfully does the reflective essay consider the choices made in the comic/storyboard
- Is the overall project wellcrafted and carefully edited, rather than a rough collection of thoughts?
- Does it strive to original, insightful, and thoughtprovoking?

Due date

This work must be posted to the course “Scribbler” site and categorized properly as “work for review” by the scheduled due date. If you are having technical challenges with this, it is your responsibility to seek assistance from the instructor as soon as possible. Given the visual nature of this project, if it proves not practical to post this compositon electronically, it can be turned in as a hardcopy, but this should be arranged in advance. Be sure also to keep your own copy of your draft, so that you can easily return to it for revision at a later time. Consult the schedule for a complete list of due dates.