

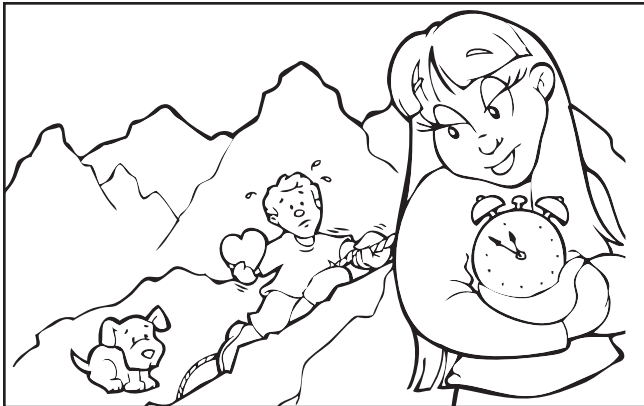
Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| How to Use This Book | 4 |
| Standards | 4 |
| Part I—What Is a Graphic Novel? | |
| Graphic Novels Versus Comic Books | 5 |
| Graphic Novel Vocabulary | 6 |
| Parts of Literature | 7 |
| Symbols, Colors, Balloons, and Boxes | 8 |
| Character Emotions | 10 |
| Tension and Suspense | 12 |
| Movement and Sound | 14 |
| Perspective | 15 |
| Conveying Time | 17 |
| Part II—Graphic Novel Analysis in the Classroom | |
| Key Concepts in Literature | 19 |
| Vocabulary in Graphic Novels | 21 |
| Characterization | 22 |
| Conflict | 24 |
| Dialogue and Narration | 26 |
| Point of View | 28 |
| Historical Background | 29 |
| Plot Pyramid | 30 |
| Graphic Novel Themes | 31 |
| Persuasion Chart | 32 |
| Cause and Effect | 33 |
| Sensory Details | 34 |
| Graphic Author Biography | 35 |
| Review of a Graphic Novel | 37 |
| Dramatizing Literature | 38 |
| Writing a Script | 39 |
| Body Language and Facial Expression | 40 |
| Conveying Tone and Building Tension | 41 |
| Part III—Writing a Graphic Short Story | |
| Brainstorming | 42 |
| Graphic Short Story Plot | 43 |
| Writing a Script and Editing | 44 |
| Character Study | 45 |
| Setting the Scenes | 46 |
| Your Graphic Short Story | 47 |
| Bibliography | 48 |
| Answer Key | 48 |

Symbols, Colors, Balloons, and Boxes

Graphic novels use symbols, colors, balloons, and boxes to help tell a story. **Symbols** are objects that represent something else. For instance, a snake in a graphic novel can symbolize danger. An owl might be a symbol of wisdom.

Study the frame below. To the right, describe what each symbol might mean:



1. heart _____
2. eyelashes _____
3. mountain _____
4. dog _____
5. alarm clock _____
6. sweat drops _____

Colors can also be symbols. Certain colors make us think of certain things. Here is a list of what colors may symbolize in a graphic novel:

purple: royalty or magic

red: danger or excitement

yellow: warning or happiness

green: the environment or money

orange: attention! Look at me!

blue: tranquility

white: innocence or mystery

black: mystery

pink: femininity

Balloons and **boxes** in graphic novels let you know who is talking, and who is narrating the story.

A **balloon** in a graphic novel indicates speech. The character's words appear inside the balloon.

A **burst** shows speech that is anxious, surprised, excited, or angry.

WOW!

To be or not to be—
that is the question

Pretty silly question,
if you ask me.

Often, a character's thoughts appear in a **cloud** above his or her head.

A **box** in a graphic novel shows narration. The narrator tells the story within small boxes in the frames on each page.

And so Hamlet moved on to the question of what he would have for dinner that night.

Conveying Time

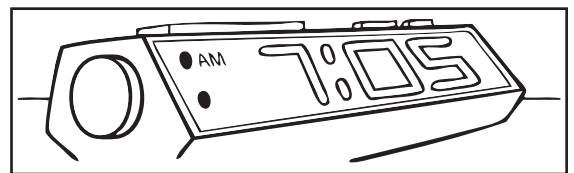
Time can mean many things in a graphic novel. It might mean the day of the week. It could mean morning, afternoon, evening, or midnight. It can mean winter, spring, summer, or fall. It might mean the Stone Age, the 1800s, today, or the year 2099. It could even mean an hour, a minute, or a second before the school bell rings.

How do graphic novelists and artists show time, and the passing of time, in graphic novels? On the previous two pages, you learned about perspective. Often, graphic novelists rely on perspective in a frame to give readers information about time. Here are some examples:

To show morning, an artist might draw a wide-angle frame of the sun just peeping up above the horizon line.



To show time in hours, minutes, and seconds, an artist might show an extreme close-up of an alarm clock.



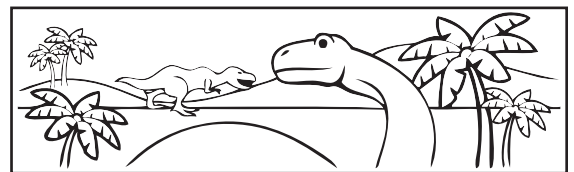
To show midnight, the artist may draw a long-shot of a crescent moon high up in a black sky.



To show winter, the artist might show a close-up of a character in mittens, hat, and scarf, with chattering teeth and icicles hanging from his moustache.



To show a prehistoric era, the artist will likely draw a wide-angle frame showing ancient trees, along with dinosaurs.



To show a contemporary era, the artist has to pay attention to what people are wearing, eating, and driving. He or she has to be aware of today's technology, as well.



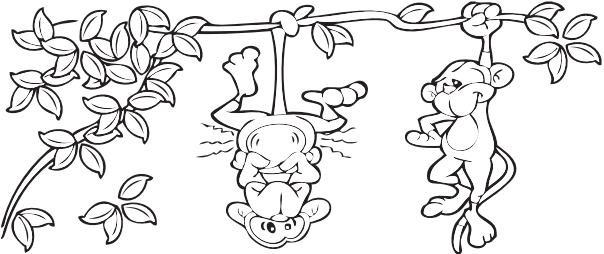

There are many ways to show the passage of time in a graphic novel. The easiest is to draw one frame with the words “one day later,” “Monday morning,” or “the year 2009,” for example. But the artist might also draw characters getting older, with new wrinkles, grey hair, and hunched body posture. The artist might also show a change in seasons by drawing bare tree limbs that have leaves in a later frame, or characters bundled up against snow and then wearing shorts and tank tops on another page of the novel.

Dialogue and Narration *(cont.)*

Directions: Now it's your turn. Below, study the writing from the traditional novel on the left side of the chart. On the right side, draw a picture and write just a few words that convey the same ideas as the longer piece of writing.

| Excerpt from a Traditional Novel | Excerpt from a Graphic Novel |
|---|------------------------------|
| <p>Lyra wasn't sure what to do. Ms. Smith expected her to care for her cat, but Lyra had lost the key to her house. If she didn't break a window, Ms. Smith's cat might starve to death. "If I break a window," she thought, "I might get hurt. And I'll have to pay for the damage. What should I do?"</p> | |
| <p>Simon and Jacob had planned a surprise party for their best friend, Mouse. But Simon's little sister told Mouse about the party. "I wish she wasn't my sister," Simon told Jacob.</p> <p>Mouse smiled. "It's okay," he said. "I don't really like surprises. It's more fun knowing I'm going to have a party next week!"</p> | |

Now, study the graphic novel selection on the left side of the chart below. On the right side, write out the action you see, along with dialogue and/or monologue.

| Excerpt from a Graphic Novel | Excerpt from a Traditional Novel |
|---|----------------------------------|
|  | |
|  | |

Writing a Script and Editing

Many graphic novelists write a script for their story before transferring dialogue and narration to the balloons and bursts on each page. After they've written a script, they may edit so that the words fit in each frame. They also carefully check their spelling, punctuation, and grammar before transferring the words from the script onto the graphic novel page.

Here is an example of a sample script from a graphic short story.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Narration: | Once, there were two brothers who loved to ride bicycles. |
| Damien: | Someday, I'm going to ride in the Olympics. |
| Nate: | Someday, I'm going to bicycle across the country. |
| Narration: | Damien and Nate rode together every day after school. Sometimes, they bicycled for two hours! |
| Damien: | Whoo. I'm tired. |
| Nate: | C'mon—let's pedal up just one more mountain. |
| Narration: | Nate was a strong rider. He could bicycle all day. |
| Damien: | I'm faster on my bike, but after a few hours, I'm exhausted. |
| Nate: | That's why you're perfect for the Olympics! |
| Narration: | But one day, Damien hit a rock and fell. |
| Damien: | I broke my leg and couldn't compete in the Olympic trials. |
| Nate: | That's okay. I'll compete for you. Whoopee! |
| Damien: | Oh, wow! He took first place. My brother is going to the Olympics! |
| Narration: | Damien tried to be cheerful, but he felt sad. As his leg healed, he rode his bike long, slow distances and thought about his Olympic dream. |
| Damien: | I'm not a fast rider anymore, but look! I rode 100 miles today! |
| Nate: | I wish I could bicycle across the country, but I'm too busy now. |
| Narration: | The brothers looked at each other. Then they had an idea. |
| Nate: | I'll ride in the Olympics for Damien. |
| Damien: | And I'll bicycle across the country for Nate! |

After a writer has completed a script, he or she decides which lines will appear in speech balloons, which will appear in thought clouds, which will be in bursts, and which will be in boxes. The writer may note this right on the script. See the sample, below.

| | | |
|-------------------|--|------------------|
| Narration: | Once, there were two brothers who loved to ride bicycles. | ← box |
| Damien: | Someday, I'm going to ride in the Olympics. | ← speech balloon |
| Nate: | Someday, I'm going to bicycle across the country. | ← speech balloon |
| Narration: | Damien and Nate rode together every day after school. Sometimes, they bicycled for two hours! | ← box |
| Damien: | Whoo. I'm tired. | ← burst |
| Nate: | C'mon—let's pedal up just one more mountain. | ← speech balloon |

Directions: Now it's your turn. On a separate sheet of paper, write a script for your graphic short story. Then decide which lines will be in boxes, and which lines will appear in speech balloons, thought clouds, and bursts.