



Art Gallery
of Guelph

#MUSEUMATHOME



Storytelling through Comics, Graphic Novels and Zines

Inspired by artworks in the AGG's permanent collection by Seth

Storytelling through Comics, Graphic Novels and Zines

In comics and graphic novels, stories are told using a combination of words and pictures in a sequence across a page. While they share the same types or “genres” of stories found in other publications, the format is what makes it a comic or graphic novel – usually including text, images, word balloons, sound effects, and panels. One of Canada’s leading graphic novelists and comic artists is Seth. Based in Guelph, Ontario, his novels and artworks tell stories of ordinary people doing everyday things like walking, talking, thinking, making, and collecting. Using simple designs and colours, he transforms these everyday thoughts and activities into interesting stories that have been published as graphic novels and in publications such as *New York Times Magazine*, *Best American Comics*, and *McSweeney’s Quarterly*. His illustrations have also been featured on the cover of *The New Yorker*, *The Walrus*, and *Canadian Notes & Queries*.

Discussion

Let’s talk about comic storyboards, graphic novels, and zines. A comic storyboard is a sequence of drawings or “panels” that show how an action happens, moment by moment. Filmmakers use storyboards to plan each scene or shot in a movie. Graphic novelists like Seth use storyboards to show thoughts and actions of characters as they walk, talk, and think, and they use things like speech bubbles to illustrate characters talking, and thought balloons that show what characters are thinking. A graphic novel is a book in comic-strip format, allowing a writer to develop their story further.

A “zine” is short for “magazine” and refers to a self-published or “Do-It-Yourself” booklet. Artists use very simple materials to make zines, including paper, pencils, pens, markers, and recycled magazine clippings. A photocopier is the method of choice for making inexpensive copies. Zines allow artists to share thoughts and ideas quickly and without expensive art materials.



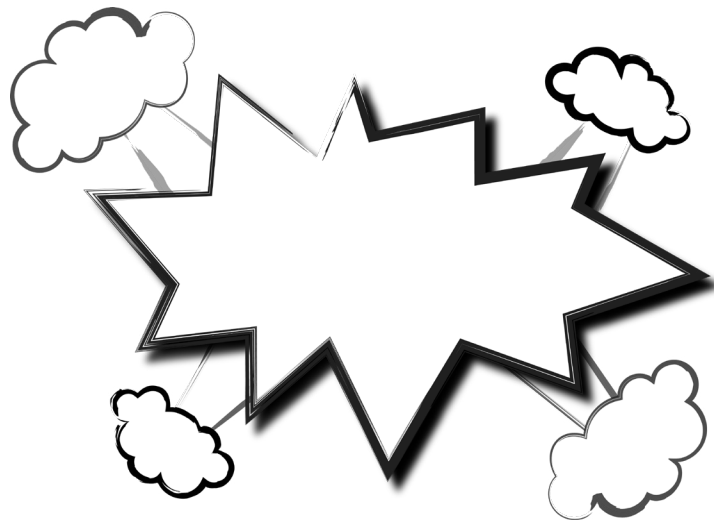
Materials

- Paper
- Pencil
- Coloured pencils, markers, crayons, or paint
- Scissors
- Optional: Papers such as coloured construction paper, scrapbooking paper, recycled magazines and newspapers, and photographs; fabric including felt, foam, and lace; adhesives including stickers, tape, and glue

Instructions

To begin this activity, use the comic storyboard template to breakdown a story into 7 scenes or panels. What story would you like to tell? Is it a story you heard or read, or a memory or dream? Think about how who your characters are and how they will change from one panel to the next. Where are they located and how will the setting change from panel to panel? If they are talking or thinking, you can use speech bubbles, thought balloons, action words, and symbols. Also consider your timeline: will your story be told second by second, day by day, or year by year? Once you have planned your story, start to draw and colour it using the comic storyboard. If you would like to create a longer comic or graphic novel, you can just use more pages! Try designing your own comic storyboard pages for variety.

To create a zine, follow the instructions on how to cut and fold a blank piece of paper into a zine. When your blank zine is ready, you can write, draw, colour, or collage each page. Create a cover for your zine and then fill each page. Zines can be about anything, so be creative! If you have access to a photocopier, try making colour and black and white copies of your zine. Continue to draw, colour, or collage on the photocopied pages. You can repeat the process to make more complex zine pages.

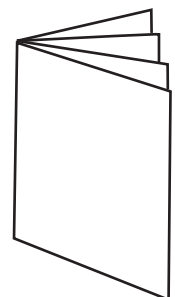
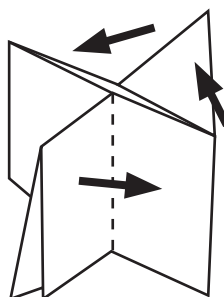
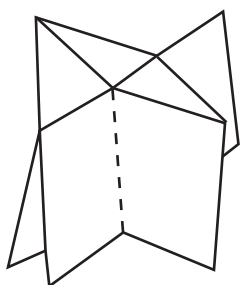
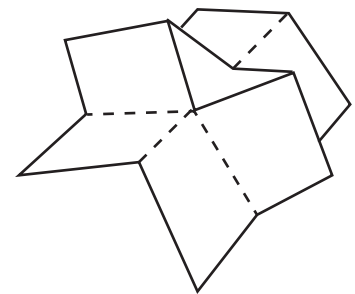
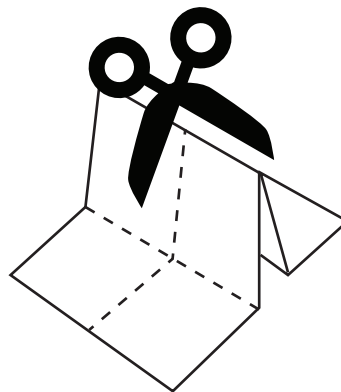
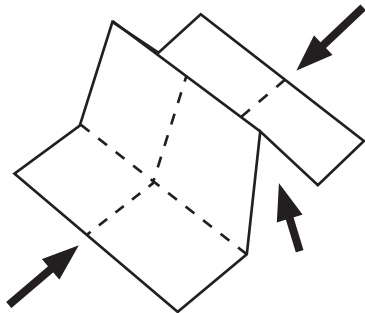
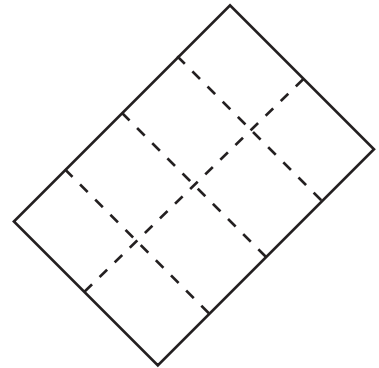
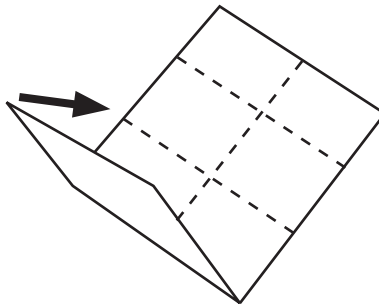
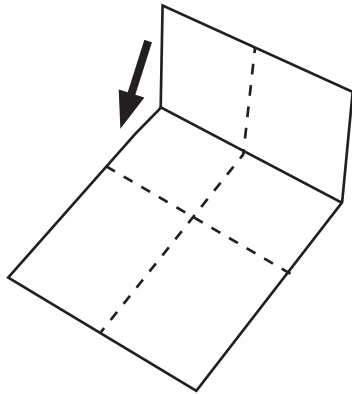
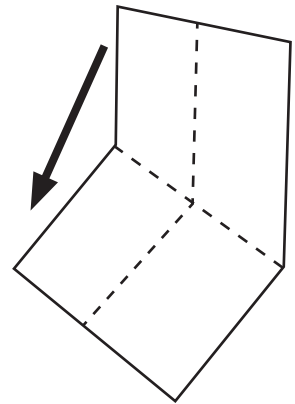
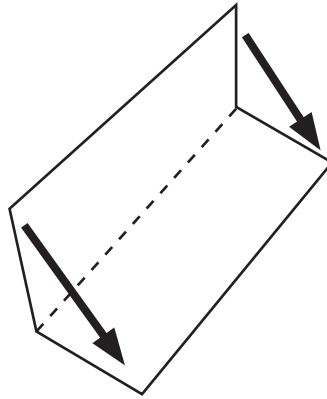
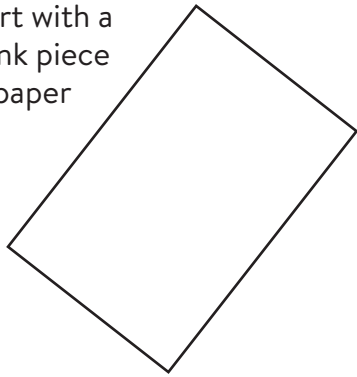


Comic Storyboard

1	2	
3	4	5
6	7	

How to Fold a Zine

Start with a
blank piece
of paper





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Cover (left): Seth, *Page 116 from It's a Good Life, If You Don't Weaken*, 1993, ink and grease crayon on paper
Gift of the artist, 2007, Macdonald Stewart Art Centre Collection at the Art Gallery of Guelph

Cover (right): Seth, *Page 132 from It's a Good Life, If You Don't Weaken*, 1993, ink and grease crayon on paper
Gift of the artist, 2007, Macdonald Stewart Art Centre Collection at the Art Gallery of Guelph

Detail: Seth, *Page 128 from It's a Good Life, If You Don't Weaken*, 1993, ink and grease crayon on paper
Gift of the artist, 2007, Macdonald Stewart Art Centre Collection at the Art Gallery of Guelph