

Handout 4.4. Creating Digital Info Comics: A Quick Reference Guide by Andrew D. Adams

Brainstorm & Storyboard

Before you start creating your info comic, brainstorm different ways that will allow you to share the information in your essay with an audience your age using Comic Life.

Think about different scenes, locations, and characters you could use.

Once you have established how you want to share the information in your essay, storyboard your comic by drawing a rough version of it.

There are a few things to keep in mind when preparing your info comic: the moments you want to show, the frames you use, what is shown in your image, the words that you select to advance your story and give information, and how your comic will flow and guide the reader through the pages.



Figure 1. Example of a storyboard.

Moment

Which moments will be best for passing information on to your audience?

Will you show your character in the process of doing something? Will you move from one character back to another? Will you go from a character to an object or from object to object while you pass on the information in your info comic? What moments will fill your panels?



Figure 2. On this digital comic page, a variety of moments are being shown. One character confronts a group. (Middle left) There is a one-on-one conversation (Middle right). (Bottom left) In this frame, you see the reaction of one character.

Frame

When we describe camera positions (or shots), we use different terms to show the amount of subject matter contained in the frame, how far away the camera is from the subject, and the perspective of the viewer. Each different shot has a different purpose and effect.

The Establishing Shot

The establishing shot is a long shot in which you establish the setting. Often you will see this used in comic books.



Figure 3. The top photo is usually the establishing shot.

Close-Up Shot

The close-up focuses on detail or emotion. The subject of the picture is the only material in the picture. There is no other material to define the subject. If the close-up is of a person , you will see only the face or some other body part.

Medium Shot

The subject of the picture has some other material around it which gives it further meaning or context. If the medium shot is of a person, you will see the upper body with background material around it.

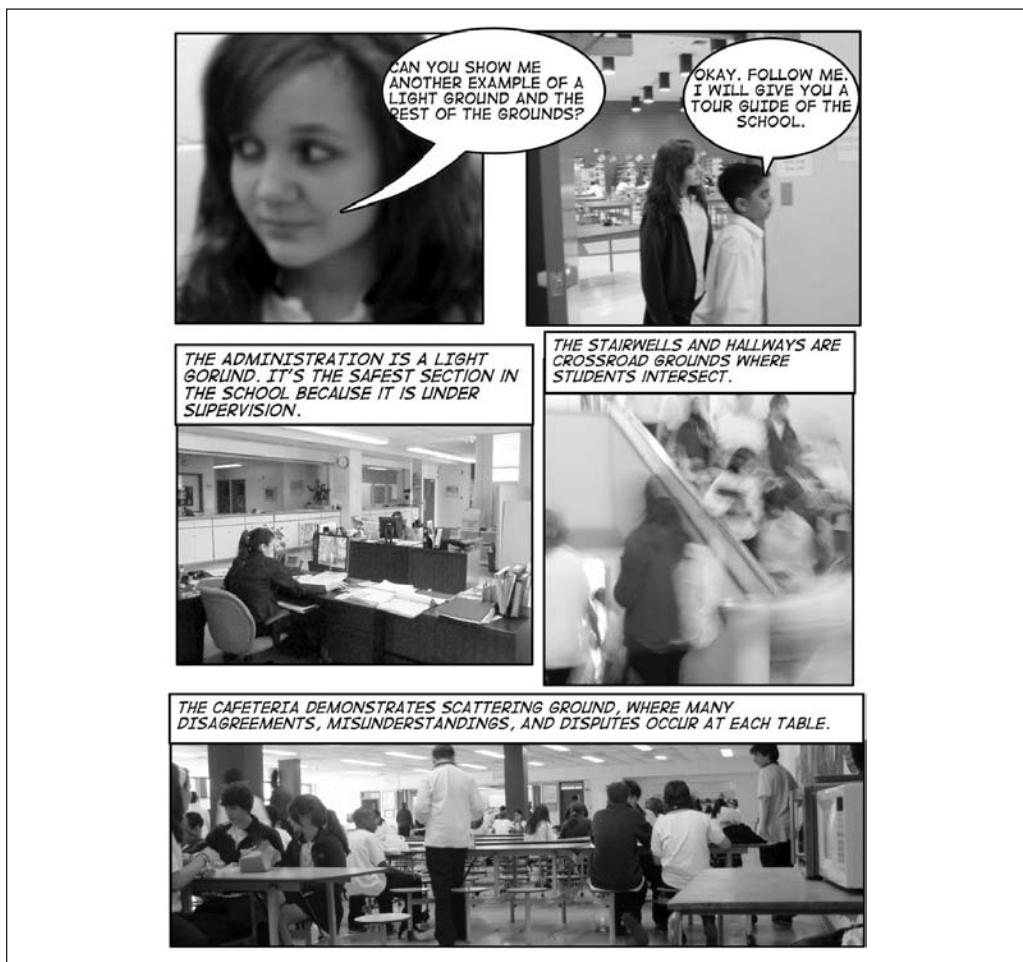


Figure 4. Top left is a close-up shot; top right is a medium shot.

Image

In order to convey emotions, feelings, and attitude, the people posing in your photographs will need to act. Body language and facial expression will convey the proper image required to get the message across to the reader.

For some shots the subject will need to be “natural” so that he or she is captured in a real context.

Word

The goal of the info comic is to inform the reader about an issue that you have become an expert on. This will make word selection very important on two levels.

Readers must learn about the subject that you researched in your essay. Therefore, the most important information must make its way into either the dialogue or the narration boxes.

Any story that you create with your info comic will need careful word selection to get across what characters are saying and thinking in dialogue and thought bubbles and allow narration boxes to compress time or change a scene.



Figure 5. Middle shot depicts the attitude of the group toward the lone character.

Flow

Readers will need to be able to read your info comic without being taken out of the story to figure out where their eyes should move next on the page. It is very important that panels, as well as narration boxes, thought bubbles, and dialogue bubbles, move from left to right and top to bottom.

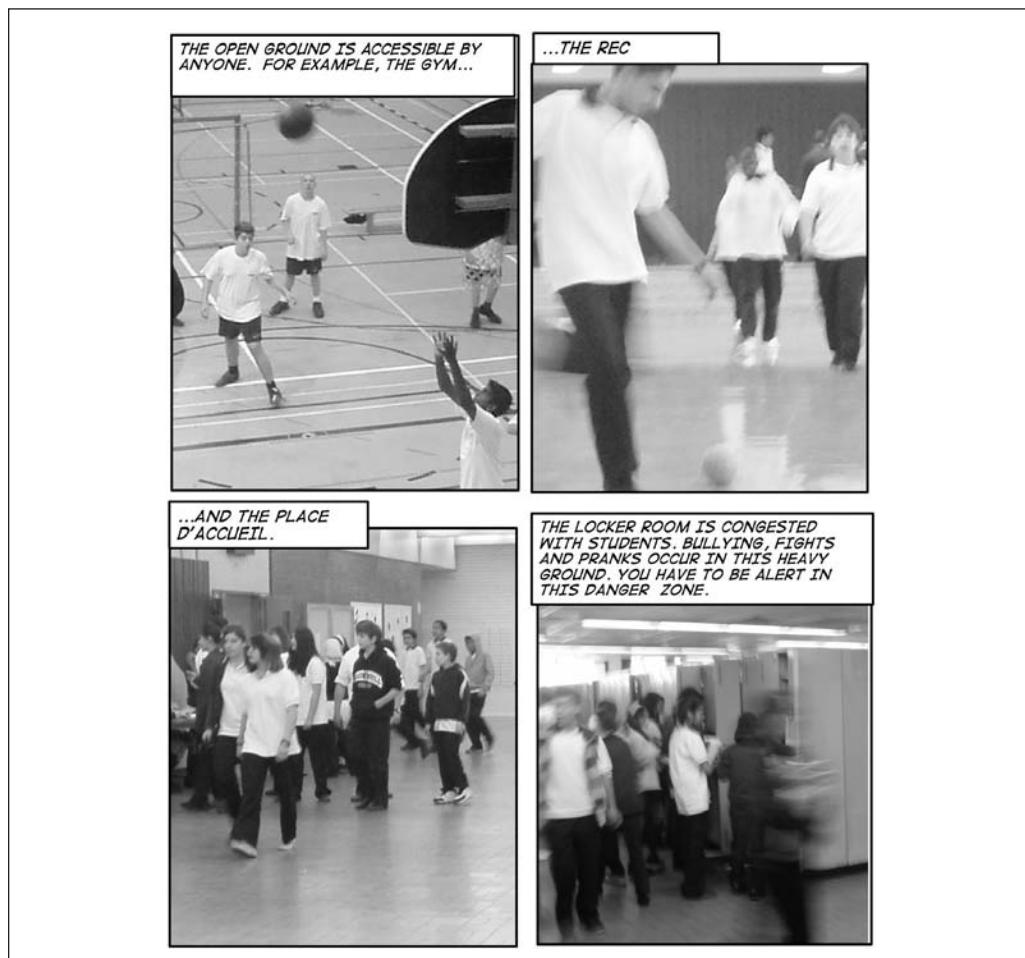


Figure 6. All four frames capture subjects that are natural.