

PICTURE IT! A CELEBRATION OF COMICS, COMIC BOOKS, AND GRAPHIC NOVELS

TEEN READ MONTH

iCREATE

SO YOU WANT TO WRITE A GRAPHIC NOVEL?

All writing starts with an idea. The ideas can come from your own life, observing others and taking about what you see around you. Graphic novel writers and artists share their personal vision with the world.

It's not the idea that is hard; it's translating it into a story. Writers have to believe in their idea in order to write the story. In the world of graphic novels, it's not just the words but also the art that tells the story. "Show, don't tell" is absolutely critical to graphic novels.

DO YOUR RESEARCH:

Read as many graphic novels as you can. Notice the use of space and bubbles and how the words are used to portray spoken words and thoughts. Notice the use of artwork to display thoughts and feelings, action and inaction. Notice the use of color and shading and the different ways panels are drawn to convey a mood or tone.

LET YOUR IMAGINATION FLOW:

Take 10 to 20 minutes each day to brainstorm ideas. Do not edit yourself, but write whatever comes to you. Great ideas can start from the smallest thought.

WRITE WHAT YOU KNOW:

Use your own experiences. Write down conversations between friends. Notice the use of tone, inflection and language. Having a good ear will help you when you write your own graphic novel. Also, write down physical characteristics and the behavior of people that interest you. You can take these traits and use them for characters.

KEEP A JOURNAL:

Fill your journal with ideas, drawings and photos. This way, you can refer back to them later. You will notice a pattern beginning to emerge of what interests you the most.

WRITE YOUR SCRIPT:

Once you have a pattern, start writing. Writers of graphic novels use scripts to communicate with the artist. Scripts gives the artists a description of what each panel will include on every page, including the dialogue and captions.

ADD ART:

As you're writing your script, sketch a layout. Most graphic novels are done with several persons each doing one particular task in the development process (writing, illustrating, inking or coloring). Others are conceived from idea to final product by just one person. Consider partnering with another person for the artwork. Remember, the most crudely drawn artwork has received critical acclaim because of the storylines and creativity.

GIVE IT THE FINAL TOUCHES:

Once the penciling is finished, add ink. Inking helps when you make copies of your work or scan into a computer. Pencil line sometimes will not be picked up correctly when copied or scanned. Hand lettering your words will give the panels a unified look. Add color if you desire.

PUBLISH IT!:

You have several options when publishing your graphic novel. You can self publish by paying a printer to produce and bind it into book format, which has a high cost for most self-publishers. You can photocopy and fold the pages and bind them together with staples. You can load it online by scanning the pages onto your computer's hard drive and uploading to a free or low cost website.

"TOM
SAWYER'S
COMPADRE"



"THE BOY
WHO LIVED"



"THE GIRL
ON FIRE"



"DRAGON
RIDERS"



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