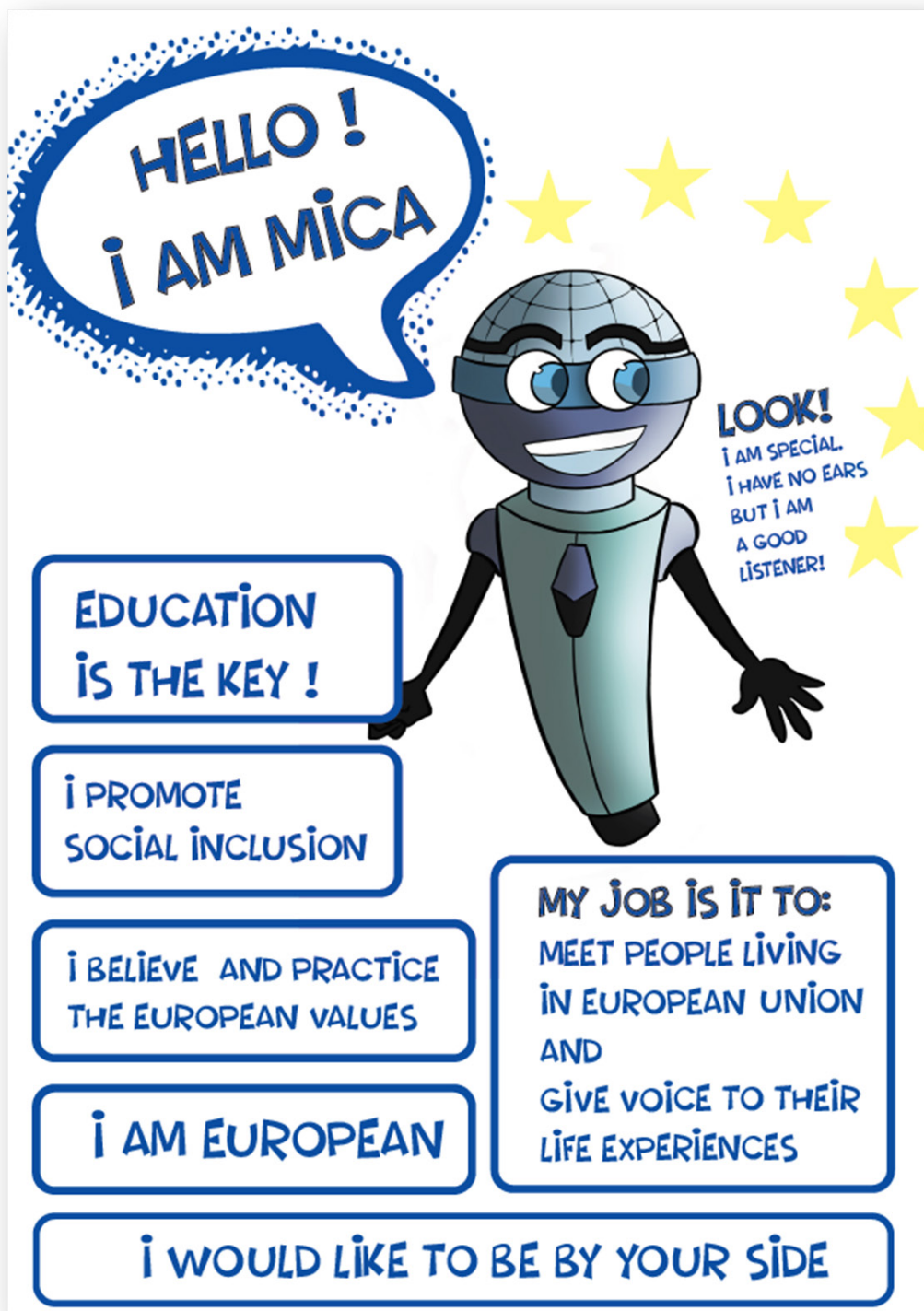


# Graphic Story Telling: A Teaching Manual





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## Preface

Hi All,

I am Mica and I am very honoured to introduce you to this manual but first let me tell you a little bit about myself. I have no wings, but I can fly to different European countries. I have no feet, but I can walk your students through different life experiences that can help them understand European and universal values. I can also dive deep into their personal stories and fish out the beauty within them. I have no ears, but I can listen to what they wish to share with me. BUT I am a microphone, and I want to give voice to your students' feelings, their dreams, their worries and their questions. Even the origin my name is has an interesting international history. In some countries Mica means rocks that sparkle like the sun, in others it refers to the one who is like God. Obviously I wouldn't claim to be god like. All I hope to be is your creative partner in the development of graphic novels designed to help all people living within the European Union share a happy and caring life.

This manual is meant to guide you through various creative projects aimed at the development of graphic novels. As an educator you can use this manual in a practical and student friendly way, while understanding the rationale behind the Erasmus+ project, called 'SOUNDWORDS'.



Mica as a name is common worldwide. It is unisex and has no gender. Mica is European but has no nationality. Mica has no one religion and it does not for part of any ethnic group. Mi-ca is also an Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin and Russian surname which means "the one who is like god". This means that Mica wants the best to all people through the sharing of Euro-pean values.

## MICA'S RATIONAL

### The What

Soundwords was an Erasmus+ funded project involving 6 countries and nine institutions which took place between September 2017 and February 2020. Its overarching aims were to:

- promote social inclusion
- develop an artistic aesthetic approach via the vehicle of the Graphic Novel
- enhance the literacy, digital and artistic skills of students
- provide easily used tools for teachers to download
- produce two final products: a European graphic novel contributed to by all six participating countries, and a compendium consisting of a manual for teachers and accompanying background papers.

The Graphic Novel format has the potential to be a key learning tool for all the students of all ages and abilities throughout the European Union

### The Who

The project was led by Willi Shakespeare from the Vienna Board of Education. It involved more than 60 colleagues from Austria, Germany, Italy, England, Malta and Spain who represented all phases of education with students ranging from age 7 through to college and university level. In excess of 2500 student hours were used. Against an agreed brief, each country worked in their discrete institutions coming together ten times over the two years to exchange information and insights, work on the collective outputs, and finalise on-line materials.

## The Why

Why is the graphic novel a good educational resource?

The graphic novel is a resource with a great potential given the visual and technological culture that surrounds us today. The 21st century is strongly determined by the use of visual language as a means of communication. The population in general, and especially the younger generations, are digital natives who 'master' and enjoy manipulating the imag-



es. The visual impacts are communicated via many channels. Social networks, the use of smartphones and the influence of advertising, are some of the aspects that shape our way of thinking, organizing our lives and scaling our personal and social values. At present, the world is explained through images which can be easily manipulated.

Texts, however, can be both linear and sequential, exhibited in traditional ways through books, magazines and newspapers. Nowadays, however, there is a multiplicity of means and ways of presenting, which challenge young people to develop criteria, and a critical spirit in order to choose according to their own tastes and needs. They can employ digital options which permit multimodal variables allowing images, text, and sounds to be presented via blogs, videos, video games.

The graphic novel is a tool, to not only decode a single code (such as the alphabet), but also to interpret images. Often the image provides more information than the text itself as the text and the drawing complement each other, and facilitate reader understanding. Thus, this becomes a tool to discover the iconic and linguistic language.

The graphic novel is a good resource because:

- It aids reading development, especially for reluctant readers
- It supports development of self-expression and the creative extension of linguistic development
- Encourages critical enquiry, analysis, interpretation and evaluation
- It helps to improve expressive and affective language which supports emotional literacy

- It is an ideal vehicle for the development of universal human values
- It promotes social inclusion for vulnerable and other groups by engaging them in creative and motivating activities centred on social acceptance
- The young find the combination of pictures and words easier to understand, which supports the development of their visual literacy
- Evidence shows that complex and difficult issues can be successfully transmitted via narrative and graphics
- It has the potential to combine digital and analogue techniques
- It utilises young people's love of films, of comics, of art and craft forms and support: development of their creativity
- It promotes creativity and imagination
- It enhances ways to express oneself through body language and figures of speech, like onomatopoeia
- It is an ideal vehicle for the development of universal human values
- The project's aims and activities are consistent with the basic principles of compassionate education.



## The How

The material presented below is split into two sections. In the Research Document Abstracts section, one finds the Abstracts of the research papers conducted by different universities and institutions that took part in this project. These research papers, found in the appendix, are scientific or empirical studies that were the inspirational tools for the art educators to implement their graphic novel classes. Sample of these class exercises or entire units are found in The Manual section. These examples are all practice based and one can find a mix of ideas and techniques that cover educational pedagogies that suite students of different ages and abilities.

## Research Paper Abstracts

### Communicating via Graphic Novel – A Workshop Series

*Hans Krameritsch, Rolf Laven*

University College of Teacher Education Vienna

The graphic novel, a creative literary and artistic development of the last decades that now stands as its own independent art form, is presented here in the context of a workshop series on the form's educational potential. The term "graphic novel" is often defined as a graphic telling of a story, referring to the narrative as expressed through illustrations that can be carried out in a variety of design options that cover everything from black and white drawings to multi-colored pastel pictures. The range of publications includes, among other things, reports, life stories, converted works of classic literature, and travel narratives. A Graphic Novel Workshop Series will be presented here as an example, an event that took place within the framework of a teacher training held in the Sahrawi refugee camps in Algeria. Taking advantage of the extensive potential offered by the graphic novel form, participants took material from their own occupational fields and creatively engaged with it through visual arts education, in the process reflecting upon their own work experiences as well as the relationships between themselves and others. Participants came up with their own stories about their daily professional routines and developed them in detail in the form of sequences of images with occasional supplemental writing. Through nonverbal and playful means, the participants' realities were realized in picture. One's own field of experience was used as a source for creative output, underlining the notion that one's own original and personal experience should receive the strongest possible appreciation. The workshop series intended to create alternative forms of communication that could be used as mutually-effective educational processes.

### The importance of belonging to positively valued social groups

*Unimore*

In this chapter, we provide the theoretical basis to use graphic storytelling as a tool for social inclusion. In the first part of the chapter we review psychological literature showing the importance of group belonging and the importance to provide them with positive social identities. We then move to an extremely effective prejudice-reduction strategy, based on positive contact between members of different groups. Recently, intergroup contact has been used indirectly in interventions, focusing on its potential even in absence of face-to-face interactions. Especially relevant indirect contact forms are represented by extended, vicarious, and imagined contact, and graphic storytelling can allow simultaneously the benefits of these three types of contact.



## Empowering Students in Inclusive Aesthetic-Artistic Workshops

*Prof. MMag.art Dr.phil Rolf Laven*

**University College of Teacher Education Vienna**

The notion of 'inclusion' implies an awareness of diversity amongst people that, these encounters will come in with separate prerequisites, goals and needs, leading to staggered foundational levels and varying forms of inclusion. The ethically and morally motivated implementation of inclusion leads to a theoretical as well as a practice-oriented artistically investigation into the opportunities offered by implementation. The widening awareness of the heterogeneity of learning conditions calls for respectful attitudes and appropriate responses towards these various forms. This can be further supported through the concept of 'empowerment', the notion of which is presented in the context of an inclusive aesthetic-artistic workshop.

The concept of empowerment refers to specific, process-based forms of action and support that explicitly build upon the aptitudes and potentialities of the students. This entails a visualization of the resources so that participants may overcome any shortfalls in their focus. Empowerment, in particular, is conducive to developing personal strategies, skills, and resources, as well as acquiring new skills and knowledge. This perspective is an encouragement and extension of the subject's self-reliance and self-determination that focuses on open-minded processes supporting exploration and discovery.

## Graphic and digital storytelling: A research perspective

*Loris Vezzali*

**University of Modena and Reggio Emilia**

Graphic narratives are a flexible medium of storytelling that come in numerous forms. Amongst these, comics are a familiar and recognized entertainment medium, that can educate and at the same time entertain. In this chapter we review two forms of non-traditional storytelling. We first focus on graphic storytelling, graphic novel and comics, which have been studied with an interdisciplinary approach and have been shown to have relevant strengths, like engaging and participatory nature and ability to model behavior, in addition to fostering reading motivation and comprehension. We then focus on digital storytelling, developed following the recent diffusion of digital multimedia tools. Digital storytelling also presents many advantages like fostering interest and motivation of teachers and students, promoting narrative and reading skills and collective and cooperative work, empowering the learning of foreign languages, and can be used to empower skills of disadvantaged groups like people with dyslexia.

## Developing a methodological model of introduction to the Graphic Novel in the special education school

*Diego Ladrón de Guevara Anaya*

**Esola Vida Montserrat**

**ACIDH (Associació Catalana d'integració i desenvolupament humà )**

The work presented in this document comes from the need to base the graphic novel in the school as an element of social inclusion. The conceptual activities of graphic novels as well as their subsequent procedural development through the proposed inclusive models are fully loaded with the most representative values for the EU. These values have been worked on the school population with special educational needs, who are a vulnerable to social exclusion.

## Teachers' Manual

### Structure

Divide your project in 3 parts (see structure).

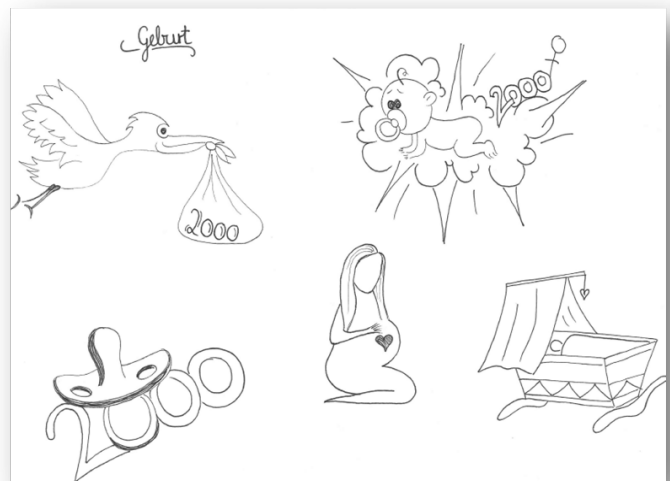
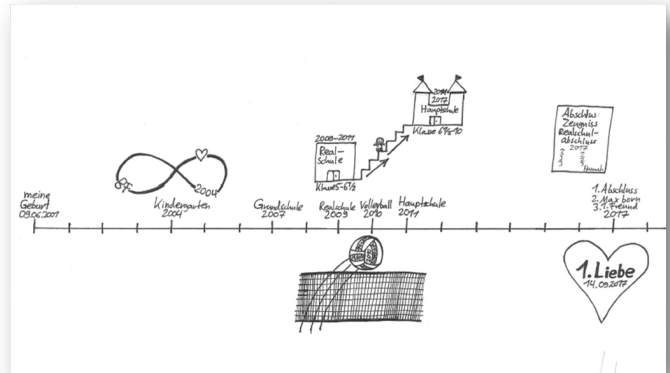
- First part: How do you start your graphic story-telling- project?
- Second part: The realization/implementation. The way to the results...
- Third part: How do you/the pupils present/reflect the realized works? Do you work cross-curricula/together with other teachers/institutions/ artists?
- Bonus/part 4: Here we want to collect stuff for the teachers like work-sheets, lists with movies, books, internet-links

#### 1. Starter Activities

2. **Main Work:** Narrative, Techniques & Methods

3. **Evaluation and further Development:**

4. **Resources:** Work Sheets, Information, Support



## Example 1

Contributed by Germany

### 1. Starters: Appetizer, Starting Points

TOPIC: Present yourself / self-presentation

Create a timeline in which you visualize 5 main situations / happenings / aspects that have been important / life-altering for you.

2. **Main Work:** Develop and make your Story; Techniques & Methods

WORKSHOP: Sketchnotes

TOPIC:

You in Europe / Europe and you

Create a leaflet/booklet with at least 4 pages that visualize how European values influence your life.

Research: European values

Research: drawing techniques and comic styles

3. **Evaluation and Development:** Presenting, Cross-Curricula, ...

Evaluation of creative process: scribble, sketch, final version

Evaluation of presentation of final version

How it is presented in itself

How the student presents it to an audience

Cross-curricular: different artistic subjects, social studies, (language)

4. Resources: Work Sheets, Information, Support



Introduction of Mika



## Example 2

*Contributed by Austria*

Co-opted by the Education board of Vienna

Special school, Quellenstraße 52-54,

1100 Vienna

Teacher: Silvia Hubmann

### 1. Starters: *Appetizer, Starting Points*

The appetizer of our comic project was some artworks inspired by the street artist Mark Jenkins. He creates wonderful packing tape sculptures and installs them in cities around the world. He uses common tapes.

A teacher in our school also created some figures of our kids and placed them in our schoolhouse. One was standing in front of a table, two were hanging from the lamps in the staircase like superman and so on. So I used these great figures as basis for our comic project.

### 2. Main Work: *Develop and make your Story; Techniques & Methods*

I made some photos from the artworks and presented them to my class. The pupils could choose by their own which picture they like to use for their comic. In groups of two or maximum three they now started with the story. Everything was allowed – real stories, fantastic stories, love stories.

After some time the words began to flow. First time they wrote their ideas on some blank papers. Then they mixed up the pictures or part of the pictures with their written ideas. The next step was to create a real comic. We used the program comic life3. The kids could choose by their one which set-ting, type-face, colour, etc.

### 3. Evaluation and Development: *Presenting, Cross-Curricula, ...*

The pupils had some really good ideas and worked concentrated on their comics. In the beginning they had some difficulties to understand that they can follow their one idea, that their figures can do everything or have special skills. In the end they were very proud about their comics.

I used the artworks of another teacher.

### 4. Resources: *Work Sheets, Information, Support, comic creator program*



## Graphic Novel Brief

*Contributed by Malta*

### Task 1: Research

*This task should focus on the collection, collation and critical analytical annotations reflecting your visual research directly related to graphic novels:*

As part of your learning experience, you are to keep a visual journal in A4 size. You are to conduct a contextual research about drawings and illustration. In this research you are to include at least 3 graphic novels done by 3 different artists. While writing some notes about drawing styles, techniques and media, you also need to include information about how the artists communicate the story.

### Task 2: Development Of Drawings And Ideas

*You are introduced to the concept of the graphic novel we are to create. The story or theme can be of a personal choice.*

Through the use of primary and secondary sources, you are to create 3 proposals.

These proposals should include:

- Environmental drawings
- Character designs
- Use of media and technique
- Story board

Present your drawings with full annotations (notes about materials and techniques used) in a labelled portfolio. Write your name, medium and date on all work. All work needs to be presented in A4 format.

### Task 3: Producing Final Illustrations

During this task, you will be developing the best proposal finalised in task 2. The story will unfold in not more than 10 A4 sheets. Therefore, by the end of this task you must present the illustrated story of your graphic novel in 10 A4 pages.

NB: While producing and completing the work, you are to select appropriate media and use them competently and well and finalise the artwork to professional standards.

### Task 4: Presentation

You are now asked to produce a Presentation not longer than 3 minutes in which you need to discuss and evaluate the following points:

- works, medium used and techniques of an artist of your choice which has inspired you throughout your artistic process.
- your works done throughout this unit making reference to the Formal Art Elements, Art Principles, different media used and also the techniques used, while giving a detailed account of the development of work.
- You also need to present:
- Present your sketchbook and all your work with the necessary annotations in your portfolio.

Week	Lesson 1	Lesson 2
Week 01	Introduction to Drawing and illustration. Explanation of Brief.	Explanation and discussions on Task 1: This they will also develop with the English teacher so they can get help with citations.
Week 02	Task 2: Explanation. Start drawing from observation: THEIR LUNCHBOX.	Task 2: Understanding different materials and techniques through drawing. Continuation of task through class based task to be further developed at home.
Week 03 - 06	Task 2: Continuation.	Task 2: Continuation.
Week 07	Task 2: Finalizing drawings requested to satisfy this task.	Task 2: Finalizing drawings requested to satisfy this task.
Week 08	Task 3: Explanation of Task 3. Starting to explore and experiment with images developed from previous task.	Task 3: Development of task 3.
Week 09 - 13	Continuation (level of work expected is proper project development)	Continuation (level of work expected is proper project development)
Week 14	Task 3: Continuation (level of work expected is proper project development) Concluding all work for illustration.	Task 3: Continuation (level of work expected is proper project development) Concluding all work for illustration.
Week 15	Task 4: Explanation and start developing task 4.	Task 4: Working and developing presentation
Week 16	Task 4: Peer and process Presentations	Task 4: Peer and process Presentations
Week 17	Presentation of work/Final Hand In Week	Presentation of work/Final Hand In Week

## Story Telling Brief

*Contributed by Malta*

### Task 1

Choose two different Media, and for each media, in the form of an illustrated (with picture) document research and discuss how the chosen Media has developed and effected Narrative and Story Telling in the last few decades.

In the form of an illustrated document, find two different Case studies for each media discussed in task 1a and discuss:

- The Genre
- How the Media affects the way the Narrative is communicated
- How the piece of work effects and interact with the user/viewer
- How is it presented to the Audience/Viewer/ User? Which senses are affected? Which emotions does it target?
- Define and Draw out in detail the structure of the Narrative and Characters for each case Study.

*During Class we shall start to research and understand the mechanism of storytelling by using a range of different narrative told with different media. We shall deconstruct and reconstruct the narrative to better understand the elements that come into play. It is extremely important that you take your own notes and ultimately present your understanding in your sketchbook.*

### Task 2

From the previous Four different case studies, In the form of an illustrated document, choose two and explain further in detail their narrative structure and elements:

- What kind of narrative structure does it follow? Does it follow a standard linear Structure?
- Is it interactive?
- Does it follow the three-act structure?
- What is the Rising Action?
- What is the Climax?
- Does it have a Suspense?
- Does it follow any hero or villain Archetype?
- Any Character/s Development? How is this explored and developed?
- Elements: refer to characterisation, environments and scenarios, backstories, player/user/viewer perspective, AI in games, plots, dialogue, setting, sound.

In the form of an illustrated document, choose one specific Narrative, that is driven by interactivity (your choice could be one of the previous examples used in task 1 and 2) and define how the interactive aspect effects the story. (you can have a look at games, interactive movies, websites, books, art installations etc.)



### Task 3

*In this task you are to create your own narrative & story. Select a medium (or mix media) and write a short narrative sequence (of 2 minutes if it is time-based) with the theme given. You may choose any form of sketchbook for this task, physical, digital or both.*

From the previous Tasks you should have grasped well how narrative and storytelling function, the structure and what key elements you need to follow to create an effective Narrative.

- Start constructing your own narrative and story. Make sure to explore the Narrative Structure: Draw it out in the Graph or other visual methods to help you explore the base of your narrative. Visually explain and help yourself structure out the story.
- Generating ideas for the theme
- Do not worry if it is nonlinear or have an abstract narrative. Just justify your reasons and explain your choices. Most of the times it is ideal to draw out the Narrative in a linear format and change it up to nonlinear after. Always find the best way to explore and communicate the narrative itself.
- Run your idea by your friends / classmates / tutor
- Feel free to make use of humour (start by research different types of humour first!)

*Please note that you are expected to carry out this Task at home. You are of course encouraged to ask for guidance and to show your progress during class.*

Using a range of different Media explore the best possible way to show and experience your narrative and story. Explore different materials, tools, techniques, interactivity etc. that are possible to fully communicate your story. During this Task you shall be compiling a portfolio of visual material. These materials can be but are not limited to:

- A storyboard for a short film
- Sketches / drawings / illustrations for an illustrated book
- A fine art project that involves storytelling
- A storyboard and animatic for a game intro
- A storyboard for a short animation Storyboards must cover the whole 2-minute sequence and an animatic can be created to show timing. If you are doing illustrations for a book (you must present thumbnails to show the story sequence, all sketches must be done and some of which may be coloured). For all other projects you will need as much info as possible to get the story across. You might wish to include:
  - Character design and profiles
  - Environment sketches
  - Flowcharts
  - Putting your work up on a board will help you examine the flow of the story / any missing links / any jump cuts / any strange timing.

#### Task 4

Compile your material and pitch your project to an audience through a formal presentation. Include an evaluation of your narrative sequence at the end of your pitch. In the form of a class presentation you are to explain your narrative and explain the different media explored to communicate your story. Use the following points to guide you through the presentation:

- The story
- The Media explored
- Elements
- The User experiences
- The narrative Structure
- Any hero Archetype
- Character Development
- Dedicate a section in your presentation to discuss how you intent to further develop and explore your story.

Week	Lesson
Week 01	<p><b>Story Telling – Different Media</b></p> <p>Exploring different Media to tell a story</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Books</li> <li>• Images and Photography</li> </ul>
Week 02	<p><b>Story Writing – The Art of Narrative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three Act Structure</li> <li>• Exposition</li> <li>• Rising Action</li> <li>• Climax</li> <li>• Falling Action</li> <li>• Resolution</li> <li>• Structure</li> </ul>
Week 03	<p><b>Heroes and Villains</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hero's Journey</li> <li>• Rags to Riches</li> <li>• Underdog Sports</li> </ul>
Week 04	<p><b>Narrative in Images</b></p> <p>Discussion of Different Still images and their power to tell a story</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photography</li> <li>• Fine Art Paintings</li> </ul>

Week	Lesson
Week 05	<p><b>Mis En Scene</b></p> <p>Case Studies of Different Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Film</li> </ul>
Week 06	<p><b>Genre</b></p> <p>Different Kind of Genre</p> <p>Everything is a Remix</p>
Week 07	<p><b>POV</b></p> <p>Breaking the Fouth Wall</p>
Week 08	<p><b>Monolouges</b></p> <p><b>Non Linear Narrative</b></p>
Week 09	<p><b>Graphic Novel Discussion and in Class Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on Theme</li> <li>• Storyboards</li> </ul>
Week 10	<p><b>Storyboards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional</li> <li>• Digital</li> </ul>
Week 11	<p><b>Animtic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing Files</li> <li>• Putting them in sequence</li> <li>• Rendering</li> </ul>

Week	Lesson
Week 12	<b>Graphic Novel in Class Practice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tutorials</li><li>• Finalising Artwork</li><li>• Exporting to correct Format</li></ul>
Week 13 - 16	<b>Interpreting a Title - In class Tutorials and Practice</b>
Week 17	<b>Student Presentations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presenting Final Outcome</li></ul>

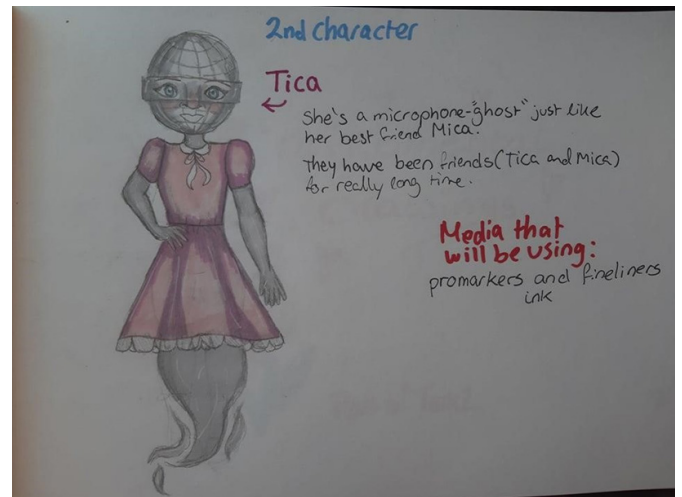
## Some Students' Work

### Example 1

I started off by doing some character design. In this case I had only 2 characters to design. I also wrote a quick biography of them + the materials that I'll be using for my comic which are promarkers and fineliners.



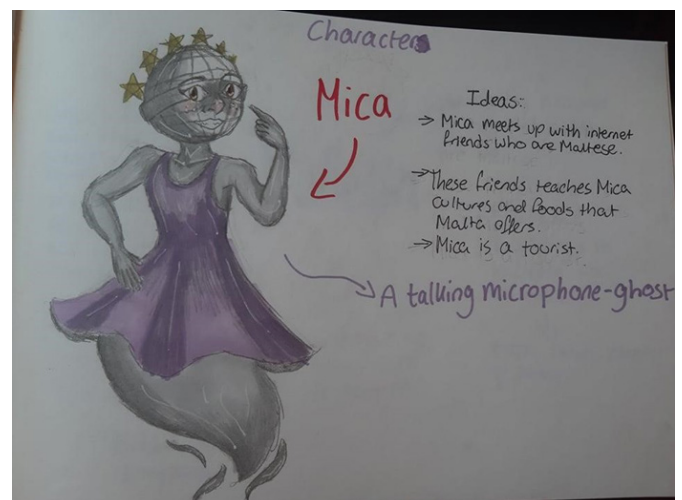
The first design of Mica



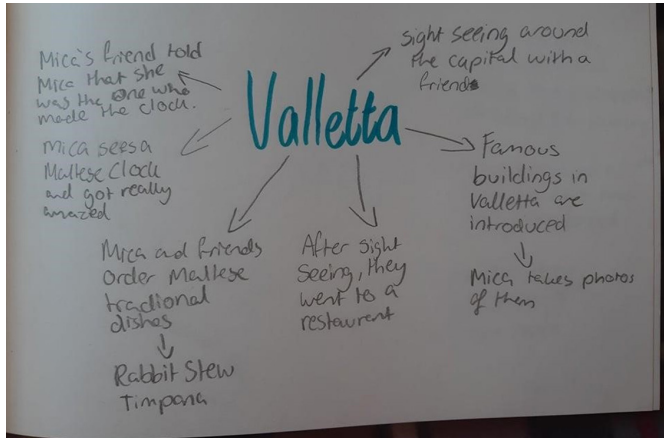
The second character: Mica

### Comic Ideas:

After that, I moved on from brainstorming some ideas that I had in mind. I had three ideas: Belt Valletta, Boat Tour and Carnival. All of these three ideas are based in Malta (of course!).



The Final design of Mica



My final idea

**Environmental drawing sketches**

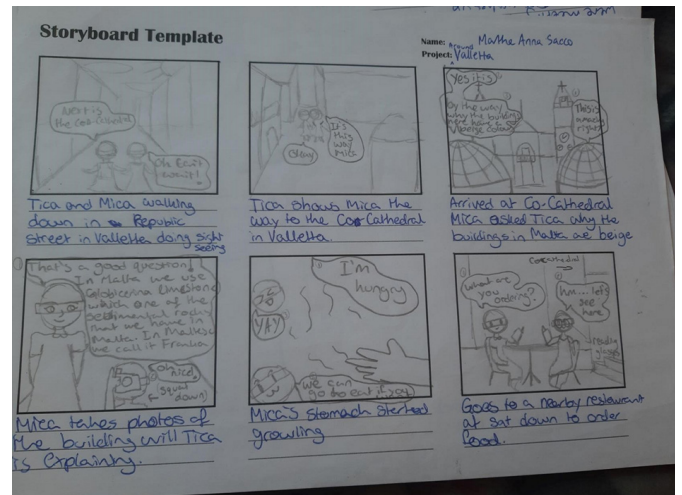
After that, I moved on from brainstorming some ideas that I had in mind. I had three ideas: Belt Valletta, Boat Tour and Carnival. All of these three ideas are based in Malta (of course!).



Environmental sketches

**Storyboard**

In my opinion, here is when my work started getting excited and coming to life. I did storyboards for all the 3 ideas that I had and when I finished the 3 ideas storyboards from there I chose my final idea to work on my comic.



The first parts of my final idea as a storyboard

**Drawing the comic**

Like I said earlier the materials that I used for the comic are promarkers, fineliners (black) and I also used white coloured gel pen in few scenes. The type of paper that I used was a sketchbook paper with the weight of 120gsm



Few scenes for the finalized comic



## 1. Presentation And Diagnosis

*Contributed by Barcelona*

### Activity 1

*Recognition Of A Graphic Narrative And  
The Elements That Compose It.*

**Specific Objective:** Recognize a graphic novel from the graphic and narrative elements that compose it

This activity has been carried out from a reading workshop. Here, through an explanation by the teacher and supported with a variety of resources (comics and graphic stories), a first approach to the graphic narrative is achieved, being able to determine the ability to extract the information present in these resources.



Individual reading of the comic and graphic novel. Students have the possibility to practice the search and selection of the relevant information. This task, due to the difficulties in the capacity of synthesis supposes a great effort within the group with special educational needs.



## Activity 2

### *European Union, The Geopolitical Situation*

**Specific Objective:** the students are able to place the work to be done geopolitically for the ERASMUS + project: Soundwords

Presentation of the countries involved working across the project the geography of Europe and the countries that participate in the project.



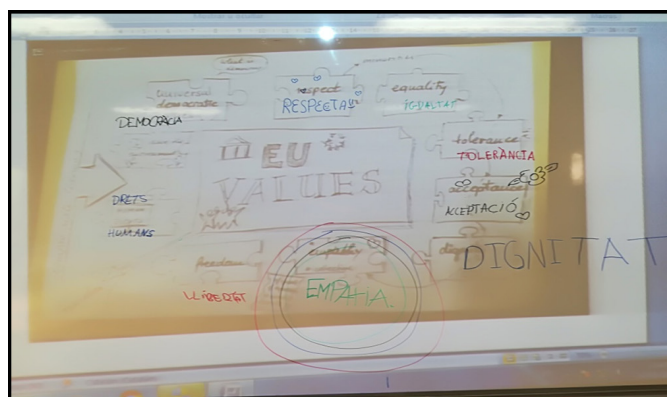
## Activity 3

### Universal Values And The EU

**Specific Objectives: Know and understand European values to work on the graphic novel.**

Initial evaluation of the values they know and, from these, a relationship is made with the universal values and those that are representative of the EU.

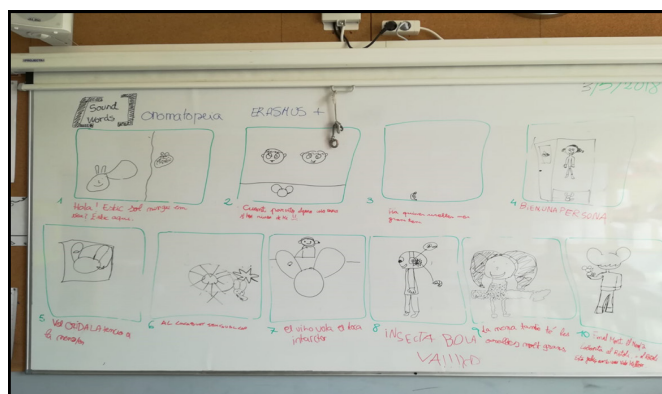
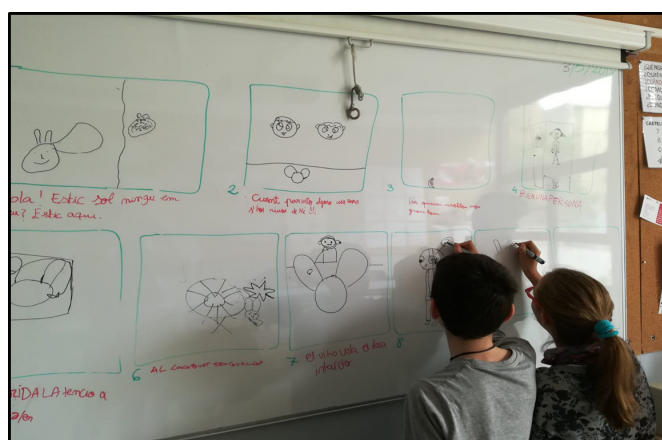
Of all the values worked, the EMPATHY value has been selected to be worked through the short film "Mouse for Sale" by Wouter Bongaerts.



Through this activity students are asked to be able to recognize situations of empathy and in turn be able to verbalize it. Next, the story is transferred to a sequence of images, thus introducing the graphic novel and basic concepts of sequencing, bullets, bubbles, etc.

In a first approach, students develop a graphic sequence based on the short film previously displayed, in which a situation appears whose value is empathy.

"Mouse for sale" by Wouter Bongaerts <https://youtu.be/UB3nKCNUBB4>



## 2. Development Of Activities: Applied Resources

### Working On The Adapted Techniques For Drawing

#### *Step By Step "The Mouse"*

**Specific Objectives:** Select and use graphic resources to structure a representation in their personal sketches

This technique is based on step-by-step sequencing so that in 6 stages the student can get to draw a simple model to perform and interpret that is previously taught, to achieve its subsequent automation. The adaptation of the technique lies in pointing out in another color the new line that corresponds to each of the 6 stages, which allows the student to focus their attention on the new line to be applied in their drawing to move towards the model chosen by themselves. The new strokes are all simple but nevertheless, they achieve in their totality a drawing very approximate to the model.

Students receive from the teacher, a battery of characters / objects collected in a small dossier, from which they can choose depending on the story or context in which they want to place their character / object. The development of his drawings is done in his own work sketchbooks and they are carried out according to the values chosen to work for the activity.

This technique allows to express as clearly as possible the different parts of which the object / character is composed. When these drawings are concluded, it is possible to clearly see the intentionality

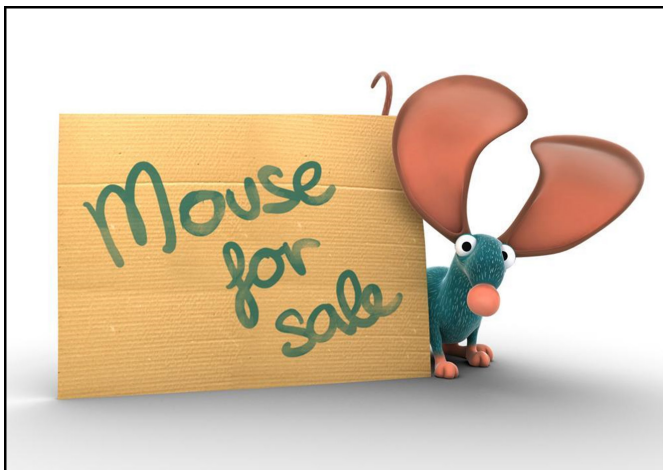
of the drawing (actions, emotions of the characters) that will be inked with a specific marker and the auxiliary lines will be erased. All the information (labels, sketch-notes, comments...) that is considered convenient for a better definition of the object and context will be added.

The idea of developing a source of graphic resources stems from the need to facilitate the process of elaboration by students. It consists of a compilation of simple drawings that are related to the stories that have been previously selected, adapting in this way to the cognitive and psychomotor needs of the students.

The working method leaves open the possibility regarding the selection of teaching resources (materials) such as watercolors, markers, etc. At the school curricular level, the great variety existing in the plastic arts allows a wide repertoire regarding the use of material resources to develop the illustration of this introductory activity to the graphic novel. The teacher in this sense determines and establishes the use of certain material resources according to the characteristics and needs detected in the group.

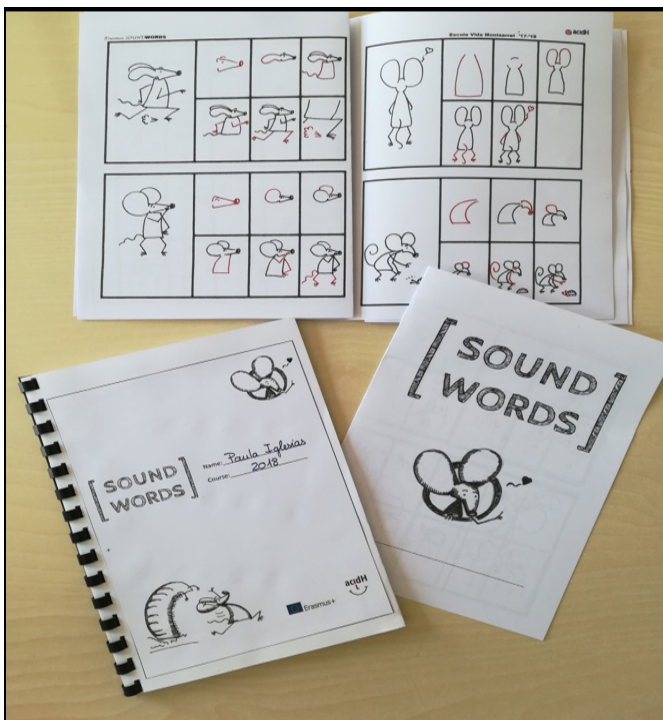
The methodological steps that have been carried out are:

1. A short film that reflects an EU value "Mouse for sale" by Wouter Bongaerts has been selected. The teacher selects a story and, by consensus with the group, is divided into parts or scenes. In this way each student can work in a certain section of the story individually and personalized. This work model favors the personal elaboration of the sketch, reflecting individually the values and emotions of the student on the paper.



“Mouse for sale” by Wouter Bongaerts.

2. A source of graphic development resources has been developed step by step in 6 stages and has been compiled into a small dossier depending on the story or short film selected.

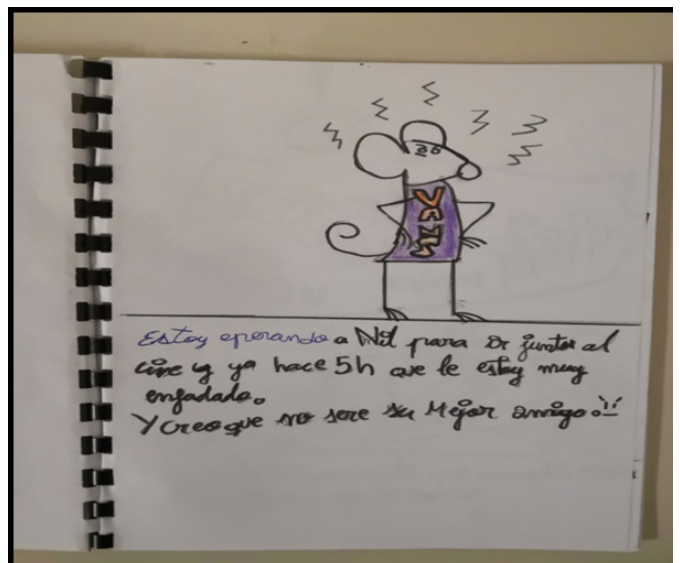
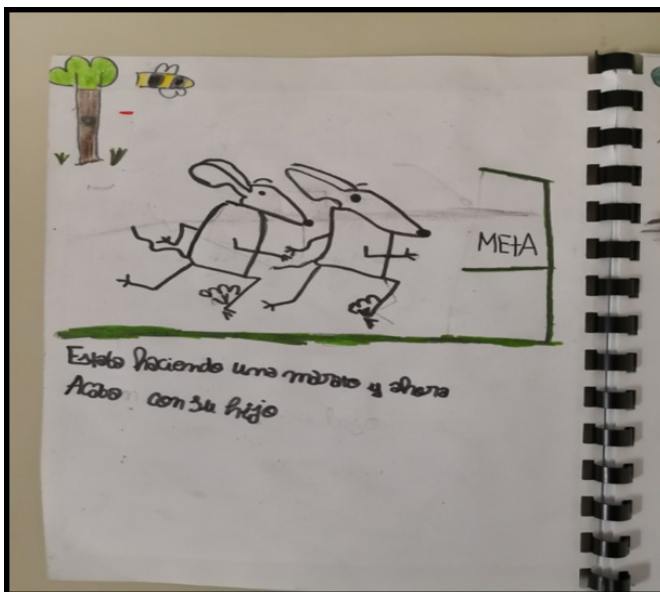


3. Sketch books have been given to students where they can graphically represent what they have seen with the help of drawing guidelines.



4. The students have been guided to the incorporation of support text or "sketchnotes" to the illustration.

Another proposal to be able to work with this resource is to divide the story into as many parts as students so that each member of the group works subjectively on a part of it through a conductive thread and then unite it to achieve a common history. This other option favors teamwork in the elaboration of a final graphic story.



## Photo On A Tracing Paper

**Specific Objectives:** Students are able to bring graphic emotional situations on a personal level and interpret those of others (semiotics) applying artistic techniques

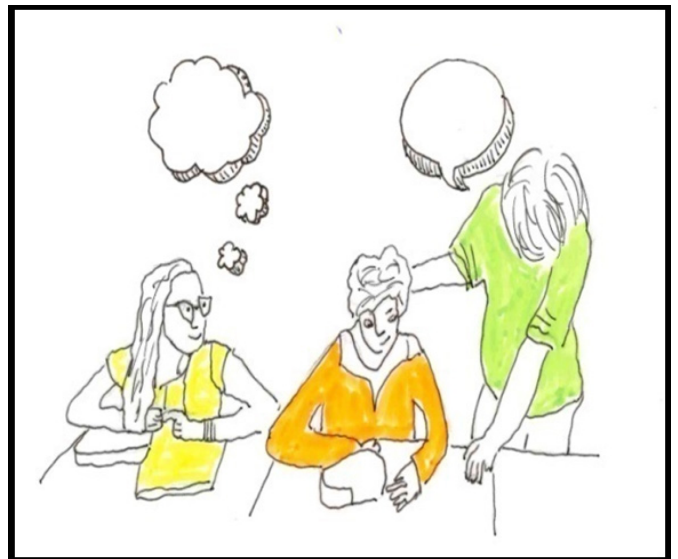
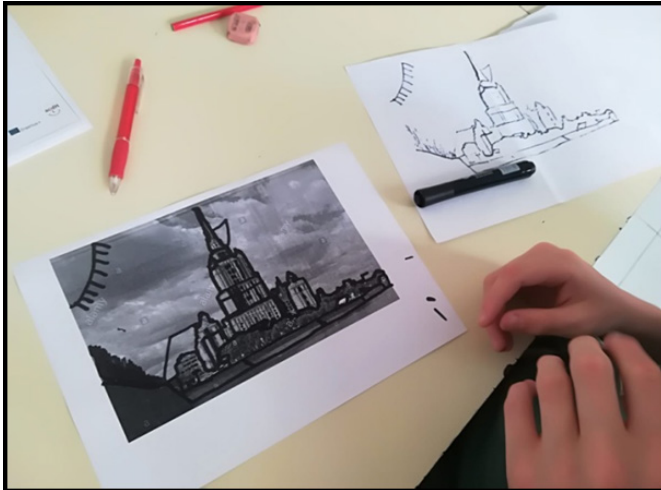
This technique is presented as a resource adapted to bring students closer to what a more advanced level of drawing can represent. This aspect favors, among other aspects, motivation due to the results they can obtain.

In this way, students carry out drawing activities to develop, on the one hand, body expressions linked to emotions and, on the other, various contexts that could form scenes of their own graphic stories.

Drawing the emotions. The representations obtained through this type of technique also act as an important motivational means due to the quality of the result.

The context in which students can place the development of their graphic stories





Creating new situations from a daily classroom life. The use of tracing plays a fundamental methodological adaptive role in reaching the objectives proposed for the activity.



## Working On The Emotions Through Body Language

*Facial expression and the emotions*

**Specific Objectives:** Promote the act of personal expression through physical exercises as a work in self-knowledge.

### Working On Individual Situations

Applying transversality, from the subject of visual and plastic education, photographs of students' facial gestures have been taken with emphasis on representing concrete emotions. As a support resource, the facial expression that determines the emotions is presented to the class from the Internet, with which they can identify and draw in a simplified way.



## Working The Context Of The Stories

### *Facial expression and the emotions*

**Specific Objectives:** the students are able to recognize the temporal logical sequence and its parts in a story

Different exercises have been done with the objective of practicing the temporal logical sequencing (approach, knot and outcome) and written expression of the students. This aspect has been worked for 4 sessions with the group in charge of building the graphic novel.

It has been proposed to work on the creation of several short stories from a photograph in a daily and real classroom situation. Through printed emoticons, the facial expressions of those who appeared in the photographs have changed, in this way the emoticons have been changed repeatedly to create new situations and new stories.

It has worked from a teaching method where "guided discovery" seeks to consolidate the educational objective of constructing the stories through a series of guide questions proposed by the teacher, in this way different stories arise depending on of modifying emoticons. These questions are formulated based on the interrogative pronouns WHAT, WHO, WHEN, WHERE, HOW and WHY.

- What could be happening to the characters in the original photograph? Why?
- Who are the characters that participate in the story?
- After placing the printed emoticons on the faces, what could have happened to them?
- What happens if we modify 1 single emoticon? How would history change?

Teachers also help to temporarily organize situations that appear by means of a time line drawn on the board. This help comes from the need for students' difficulty in sequencing the facts logically.

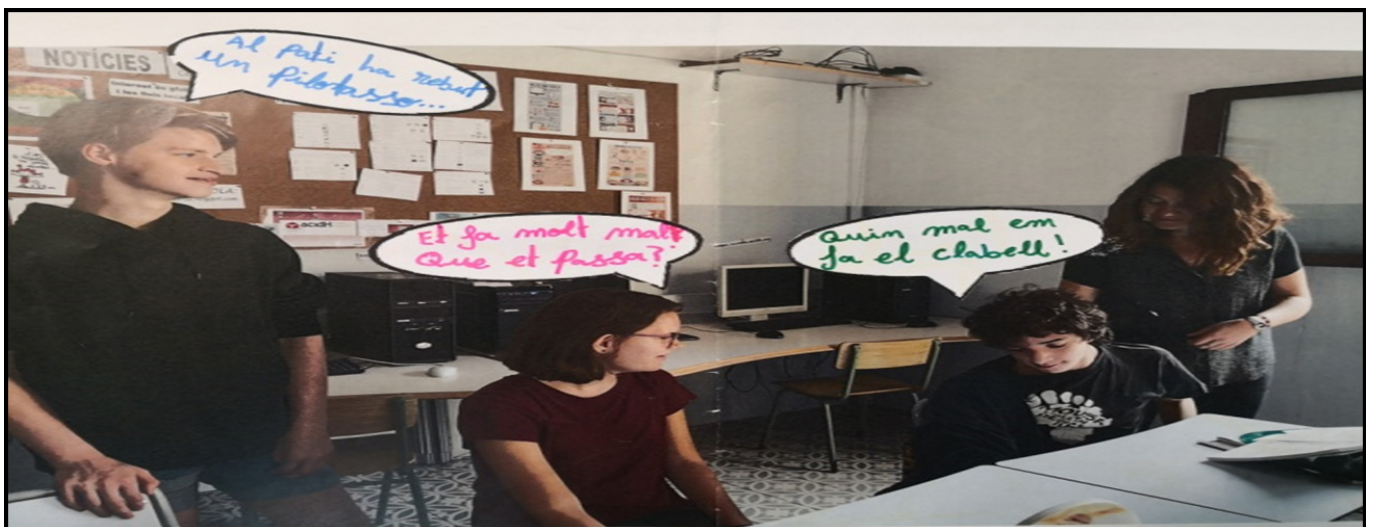


Based on this photograph, we work with different caricatured expressions which are hooked on the same photograph to create different situations that can happen in the classroom context.

The objective of the activity lies in the creation and interpretation based on the expressions identified. From here we work on creating different stories in relation to the facial expressions shown in the photograph.

Taking advantage of the photographs taken and the invented stories, the "bubble" element is introduced in the graphic novel and thus being able to relate the visual medium together with the verb-iconic narrative that will help to communicate stories of one or more characters

*This activity is carried out from the subjects of tutoring, Spanish and Catalan. Instead of drawing the characters, in the same photograph, they paste the bubble and write the text inside.*





## Communication through the own body

From the subject of expressiveness and, applying transversality on the project, work has been done on the content of body expression as a means of communication. Through these activities, students are expected to recognize and interpret gestures and postures they perform as a means of communication in a universal vocabulary.

### *Spacial Layout*

**Specific Objectives:** Students are able to recognize and experience the physical space as part of the development of a story

From the special education teaching team, it has been resolved that in order to understand a graphic narrative by the students, it was necessary to bring them as close as possible to this experience, therefore they have designed an activity where they are within a story. For this, experiential activities of practical recognition of the concept of physical space and stage where a story unfolds and how the characters are distributed have been oriented.



## The Body Gestural Language

**Specific Objective: Promote the act of personal expression as an exercise of self-knowledge**

During the development of this activity, a specific work has been carried out that seeks to make the communicative capacity of the face as well as the body in general conscious.

The activities of body expression presented below are aimed at allowing students to visualize and consciously experience communication through the face and body, however it is important to emphasize that teaching body expression is not the end of these activities, it is intended to discover it in the body and develop creativity.

## Global integration of body expression

**Specific Objective: Students are able to incorporate knowledge and experiences related to the construction of emotionally charged stories and their contexts**

### *Emotional Representations*

For this activity, each student work on a previously chosen emotion individually (joy, sadness, fear...) and tries to represent it using the whole body.

Then, they are led to represent situations that carry a great emotional load, such as: "we are happy because we have won the lottery; we are sad and angry because our partner has left us; we are afraid because we have a dangerous animal in front of us;

We are disappointed because we have suspended the subjects; we are surprised because we have received a great gift... "

Through open questions students are invited to raise awareness of the body's actions against emotions:

- "What does my body do when I smile?"
- "How does my body respond to various emotions?"
- "How does my body goes with my facial expression?"
- "What do my various body segments (arms, hands, legs ...) do?"
- "How we feel when these things happen to us?"
- "How does our body goes with this emotion?"
- "What is our first reaction to these situations? What do we do next? "...



## Representing Daily Situations

Students are invited to think and put in a brief representation of the situations that are everyday for them (playing football, getting up in the morning, brushing their teeth, dressing ...). Trying to interpret these everyday situations in classmates, visualize them are the components of body expression that indicate these actions. They work on the questions:

- - "How are your legs when you walk?"
- - "And when he jumps?"
- - "and when does it run?"

...making an observation of the actions among classmates, these and other questions are oriented to the various body segments...

The objective of this activity aims to become aware of the overall posture of the body and the gestures that accompany these emotions. For this, emphasis is placed on observing and examining their own and classmates bodies while performing those actions. Once these bodily actions are integrated into the students' cognition, they will be worked on a graphic level.



## Developing MICA

**Specific Objective:** know and reinterpret subjectively the main character of the ERASMUS + project: Soundwords

### *The Model (Part 1)*

After making a reminder of this character, since it had already been presented at the beginning of the project, it deepens explaining its attributes (it has no gender, can fly, its origin ...)

Then, the students are shown the different reproductions of Mica made by the artists of the Soundwords project, so that they then make their own representations. It is important that the Mica model remains present during the process of the new versions.





Methodologically, the basic geometric figures have been used to guide the students' work in order to facilitate the development of the drawing. The technique used has been free: colored pencils, markers, watercolors....



## Developing MICA

**Specific Objective: know and reinterpret subjectively the main character of the ERASMUS + project: Soundwords**

### *MICA Is A Super Hero (Part 2)*

The second part of the activity begins by reflecting on how you imagine a super hero. From here, the answers guide the characteristics of the new character, which is developed using the same free techniques used in the first part of the activity.

*The responses that guided these characters range from the super hero figure with supernatural powers, to a hero who acts through values ... even evil characters have turned out.*





TIPUS DE PANS



TIPUS DE PLANS



## Developing Visual And Plastic Technics

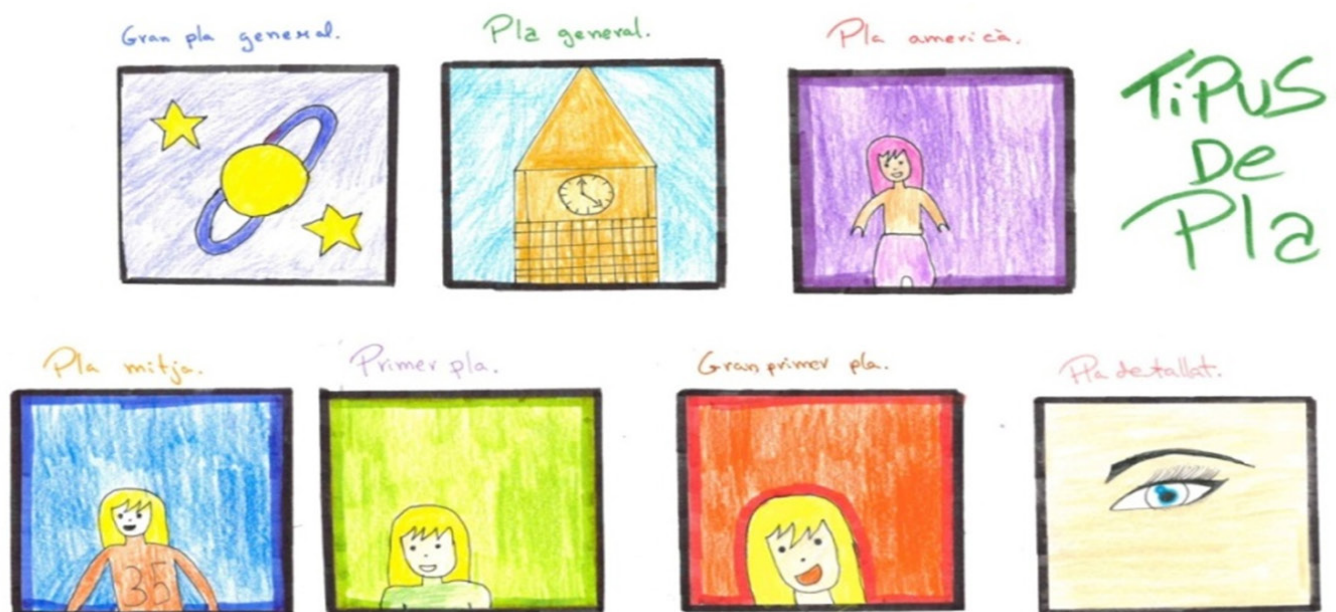
**Specific Objective:** Apply various techniques for the development of a graphic story aimed at contributing to the joint creation of the graphic novel ERASMUS +: Soundwords

### Types Of Shots

What is the message you want to convey an image? What elements do we need in an image to communicate what we want? Do we want to emphasize the emotion of a face? Or a great landscape? Based on questions such as these, work has begun on the types of plane in visual language.

The techniques used have been the students' choice, so some students have chosen the technique of drawing and others, the technique of collage from photographs they have searched online.

*Types of artistic shots worked with students for the development of the graphic novel: large general plan, general plan, American shot, medium shot, foreground, large foreground and detail shot.*



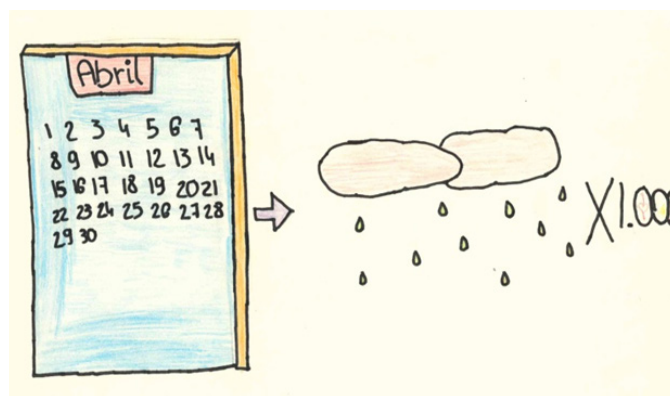
## “Picture Is Worth More Than A Thousand Words”

**Specific Objective:** improve the interpretative capacity offered by images in a graphic narrative.

From a workshop proposed by Hans Krameristch (Vienna) in a Soundwords meeting in Malta, an activity is carried out where each student chooses a proverb or proverb in order to later represent it in images. The technique that has been used has been drawing with pencil and colored markers.

In these types of activities the interpretative aspects highlight the difficulties that a special education teacher can find in his students. These difficulties in the teaching-learning process are given both by the understanding of the saying itself because of the low capacity for abstraction, and those that appear due to the low capacity for graphic representation.

During the development of the activity, one of the aspects that have been the most difficult, has been to recognize which were the indispensable graphic elements to be able to transmit the message, to be able to take it graphically to the paper has also represented a great difficulty.



Faced with the above, the teacher's guide becomes important and work is done on a method that is oriented to "guided discovery" through questions such as:

- What are the elements that appear in the saying?
- Is it possible to draw them?
- How can we relate these elements to deliver a message?
- How could the text help us to relate these images?



## Color Symbolology

**Specific Objective:** link, emotionally and cognitively, colors to the mood effects they can produce.

This activity has been geared towards the students being able to relate certain colors to certain situations found in a graphic narration, thinking that each color has an attributed cultural meaning. In this way it would be possible to properly apply the color to the drawings of the stories that would later be carried out to produce the graphic novel itself.

Starting with the classical symbology explained by the teacher, students are asked to reinforce the mood they want to represent in themselves by applying color.

The technique that has been used has been the tracing of his own photographs. Once the drawing is achieved, they are asked to apply color according to the emotion they have chosen to represent through watercolor.

*Two styles of working the representations made through the tracing of his photographs and the color applied in watercolor according to the mood.*



## The Final Narration. Building A Graphic Novel

### Activity 1

Reading Workshop "Arrugas" (Wrinkles).

**Specific Objectives:** Look and experience in a preliminary way the concept of temporal logical sequence, reading a graphic novel

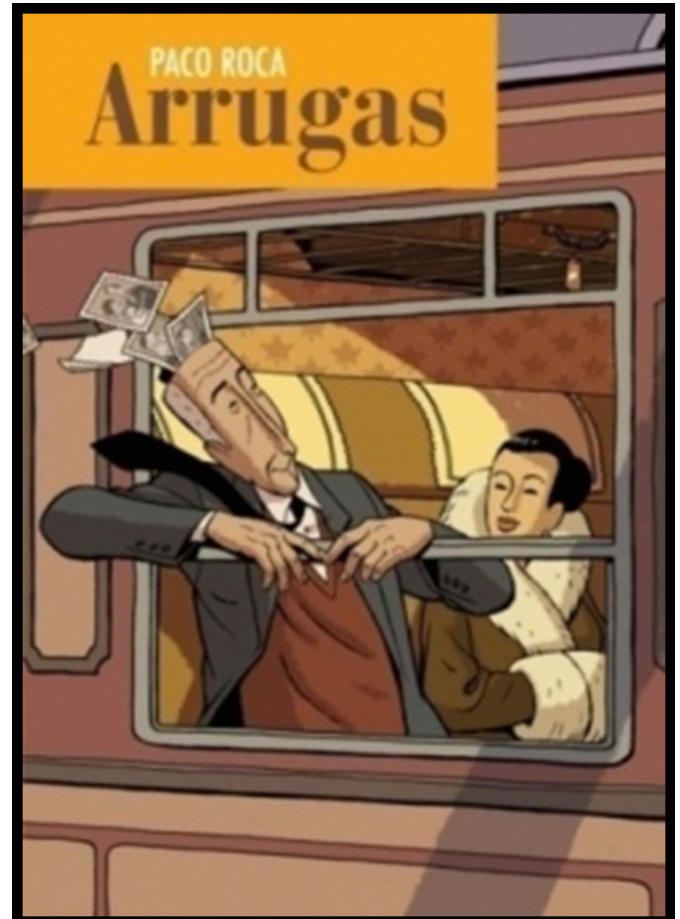
This activity was aimed at reinforcing in students the universal language of the graphic story exemplified directly in the graphic novel, understood as a story that is explained through a logical sequence of illustrations and that has a text that reinforces the graphic content.

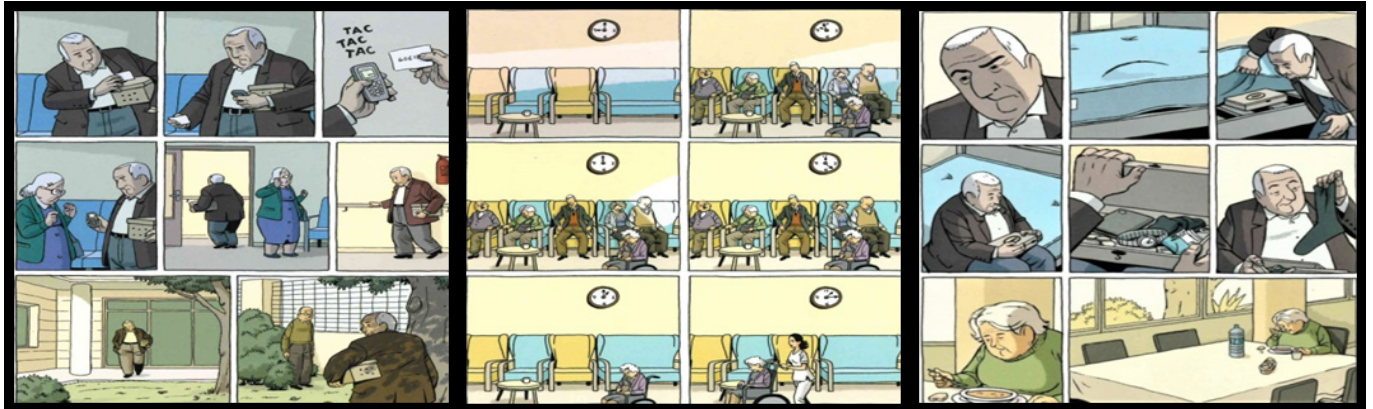
On the other hand, it seeks to stimulate motivation towards reading through this resource.

The graphic novel "Arrugas" by Paco Roca has been given to the students, so that they can go into this literary world individually.

After reading by the students, they are asked to identify the universal values present in the novel and their relationship with those most representative of the EU that have inspired the ERASMUS + project: Soundwords (tolerance, respect, dignity, empathy ...).

With the aim of beginning to practice narrative construction, the exercise of creating possible events from various vignettes that do not contain it is performed. Students are asked to explain it orally, with special interest in consistency with the images.





The graphic novel "Wrinkles", used in students to enter the narrative style and develop skills such as oral expression.

## The Final Narration. Building A Graphic Novel

### Activity 2

*Creative Workshop With Jordi Barba Sopeña*

**Specific Objectives:** Create a first short graphic story with all its elements that compose it.

A first specific work of elaboration of a graphic narration, will be guided by the artist, painter, illustrator and graphic designer Jordi Barba Sopeña. Together with him, students have had the experience of creating a story, the result of collaborative and cooperative work. As for the graphic part, the free-hand drawing technique has been used in conjunction with the collage technique.

**Panel 1:** En Marc i la Katia eren dos amics, que feien moltíssimes coses junts. Un dia qualsevol, en Marc i la Katia estaven fent la motxilla, quan de sobte van escoltar que la Laia i la Jèssica estaven discutint sobre el cementiri i van decidir anar-hi de nit.

**Panel 2:** - Anem al cementiri! - va dir la Kàtia, que intentava convèncer al Marc.  
- D'acord! - va dir en Marc, divertit.  
Al cementiri... Mentre el Marc i la Kàtia caminaven cap al cementiri van veure moltes tombes.  
- Mira, aquí ha mort molta gent - va dir el Marc interessat.

**Panel 3:** Van seguir passejant pel cementiri fins que van veure un cadàver. S'hi van acostar i la Kàtia va dir:  
- Marc, és normal que un mort estigui fora del seu lloc?  
Els dos amics es van espantar i van anar corrents a les seves cases.

**Panel 4:** Quan en Marc va arribar a casa, va trucar a la Kàtia per preguntar-li si el dia següent volia tornar al cementiri per investigar. La Kàtia li va dir que sí, però que els seus companys no tenien de saber res sobre la investigació en el cementiri.



## The Graphic Novel, Constructing Our Final Stories.

### *Stories Selection*

Two stories, among many others presented by students and in different literary genres, have been selected by teachers from a contest held in our school during the month of April. This annual literary event is held every year and is called "Jocs Florals" (Flowers Games). Here, is celebrated Sant Jordi's day, the day of the rose and the book in Catalonia and the students are motivated to perform guided and under certain narrative guidelines, stories that they then present at the school level and then the winners at the neighborhood level. The topics to work in school have been "Heroes and the values of the EU".

Because of the difficulties of reading comprehension and writing of our students, the two selected texts have had to be worked more thoroughly, which has required them to be read several times. The activity is adapted according to what the language teachers find, they are solving together with the student through guiding questions so that the story is consistent in terms of the outcome of the story and the development of the characters.

With this two stories selected, a 4 student commission is created. This student's team consisting that they are responsible for bringing the selected stories to the graphic narrative genre. Each one of them and, helped by teachers and the artist Jordi Barba, have assumed different responsibilities when making the graphic version of the stories: drawing, color assignment, mica role, reinforcement text to the cartoons....

## The Storyboard

The first step of the creative process begins by breaking down the text into possible cartoons, in this way an estimate of how many would be necessary for each of the stories can be made.

For this, the guide to the students is done through questions like

- Can you identify the presentation, the knot and the outcome of the story?
- What are the most relevant aspects that appear in each part of the story?

- Which of them are necessary to understand the story? Which ones can be ignored?

Of the proposals presented by the students, it has been agreed between students and teachers, which is the most appropriate and is advanced to the next step that consists in the realization of an outline of the "Storyboard".

*Storyboard creation. The story is broken down in its main parts and described in what will later be the cartoons of the graphic story*

### LA MEVA TOVALLOLA

V1: Estic prenent el sol a la platja

V2: llavors un lladre molt estrany comença a robar-me la tovallola.

V3: Es normal que me la robi?

V4: La veritat és que sí, perquè està feta d'un material molt valuós ...

V5: Veig per la televisió que el lladre que m'havia robat, ha estat robat per un súper heroi.

V6: Em pregunto si els herois roben als lladres...

V7: La meua opinió és que si de veritat és un heroi em tornarà la tovallola.

V8: Toquen a la porta

V9: veig l'heroi que ha robat la tovallola al lladre.

V10: Em dona un paquet de galetes

V11: i se'n va.

V12: Em quedo pensant: On està la tovallola?

V13: Surto al carrer

V14: veig que el lladre està agafant una tovallola de la meua bústia.

V15: Agafo el telèfon i truco a la policia,

V16: quan arriba el lladre no hi és, però hi ha una tovallola bruta, negra i amb pols.

V16: Quan estic mirant la tovallola veig que la tovallola té una olor familiar.

V17: Se'm acut: "i si el lladre ha agafat la tovallola i li ha tret el material valuós?"

V18: Vaig a casa del lladre sense permís, òbviament,

V19: però vaig pensar que no passa res perquè ell m'ha tret la meua tovallola.

V20: Vaig trencar la porta i vaig entrar.

V21: Vaig descobrir que no havia tret el material més valuós de la tovallola, sinó un suc de serp verinosa que estava a la tovallola.

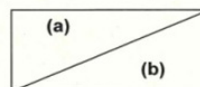
V22: El lladre m'ha salvat la vida.

V23: Quan vaig sortir, vaig veure a la policia que em volia fer pagar una multa per entrar a una casa d'un altre persona.

V24: Al final el lladre era un heroi que m'ha salvat la vida (a) i jo era un lladre per entrar a la seva casa sense permís (b)\*

V25: A vegades, no s'ha de jutjar a una persona pel seu aspecte perquè fins i tot els súpers herois es poden equivocar.

\* V24



## Characters

For the realization of the characters students are asked:

- As they are physically? Tall, thin, fat...?
- What physical features do they have?
- How are they dressed?
- What personality do they have?

From these answers ideas have been taken to be able to create them



## Vinyl Markers

The students have used the internet as a source of resources for different models of alphabetical in order to implement the letters and numbers, both for the title of the novel and for onomatopoeia and bubble text.

The techniques used for both the drawing of the vignettes and the text have been the freehand drawing with pencil and markers, later it has been digitized and edited in "Paint" and "Photoshop"



## Painting

The color profile of the characters has been manually applied with colored markers and then the background has been filled in digitally using the same programs mentioned above.

The entire creative process of the stories that will be part of the graphic novel Soundwords has been loaded with training content, so students are developing in parallel different attitudes and values that are in line with the same European values that inspire the project "ERASMUS +: Soundwords": Democratic decisions, the organization of work, equal opportunities when expressing ideas freely and providing work in the final result, responsibility based on the work requested by teachers, ability to solve problematic situations, respect for peer creations and by their own.



## Final Product

The following is presented by a few images, the result of a teaching-learning process that links various areas of knowledge. Beyond thinking about drawings embedded in a vignette, this work represents an inclusive experience for students with special educational needs.

They involve among many other formative aspects, motivation and confidence so that they themselves become protagonists of their own personal development. It makes them participants in the search for strategies so that they themselves are able to manage and thus favor their own social inclusion.

The result in detail can be seen as part of the graphic novel developed by the ERASMUS + project: Soundwords.



## Glossary

**ATTITUDE:** (cognitive) representation that includes the evaluation by a person of an attitude object, that can be represented by a person, a group, a thing/an object, an action, or an idea.

**DIRECT INTERGROUP CONTACT:** face-to-face interaction between members of different groups.

**EXTENDED CONTACT:** knowing about positive interactions between ingroup and outgroup members.

**IMAGINED CONTACT:** mental simulation of a positive encounter with an outgroup member.

**INDIRECT INTERGROUP CONTACT:** contact between members of different groups that is not face-to-face.

**INGROUP:** the group to which a person belongs.

**INTERGROUP ANXIETY:** uncertainty and anxiety at the prospect of meeting one or more outgroup members.

**INTERGROUP EMPATHY:** emotional response to the situation and emotions felt by outgroup members.

**OUTGROUP:** the group to which a person does not belong.

**PREJUDICE:** negative attitude toward a social group, consisting of an evaluation component, an affective component, and an action tendency component.

**REPRESENTATION:** Knowledge stored in memory about an attitude object.

**STEREOTYPE:** characteristic or trait that is attributed to a person because s/he belongs to a social group rather than because of his/her individual characteristics.

**VICARIOUS CONTACT:** observing positive interactions between ingroup and outgroup members.

**SOCIAL INCLUSION:** process aimed to integrate individuals in a society irrespective of their individual differences or belonging to different groups.

**VULNERABLE GROUPS:** groups that are stigmatized in the society and that can suffer consequences both at the level of individual (e.g., health consequences) and at the level of the group (e.g., unfavourable legislation).

**COMPASSIONATE EDUCATION:** a perspective, a way of seeing the world that places love in action at the heart of everything we do: it's based upon a vision and narrative which elevates collaboration above competition, and service above self-interest.

## Afterword

Over the two year period, amazing links and friendships have been fostered amongst all participating countries. What became increasingly clear as the project wore on, was a sense of shared values and purpose which was reinforced by the cultural visits to the 6 cities and access to some of Europe's most sacred places. For many the highlights were the churches of Bologna, the *Stephansdom* in Vienna, the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona and the Nishkam Sikh temple in Birmingham.

In addition, the excellent mix of colleagues representing teachers at all levels-illustrators, story tellers, and researchers- provided a range of inter-related disciplines which enhanced the knowledge and skills of all participants. Participant learning took place during the shared processes which resulted in excellent outcomes which can be replicated in any institution. Although representing a wide variety of specialisms, the final product has universal applica-

tion through the curriculum. It can be used with all ages and abilities, in all education environments.

This manual provides a simple roadmap that allows teachers to design and implement their own version of a graphic short story. It offers a straightforward step by step guide which every teacher can personalise for the benefit of their pupils. All the anecdotal evidence collected over the period demonstrated high levels of student interest, involvement and industry. In addition, a key benefit which the students themselves acknowledged was the reinforcement of shared European values.

The Graphic Novel format has the potential to be a key learning tool for all the students of all ages and abilities throughout the European Union and **must** be widely disseminated if its many insights are to be effectively built upon.



## Appendix

### **"Communicating via Graphic Novel – A Workshop Series"**

Position paper related to the topic "Graphic Story Telling"

Chapter "Milestone Manual"

2018

within the scope of the Erasmus+ project

Soundwords: Graphic Story Telling

Contributed by

Pädagogische Hochschule Vienna

Communicating via Graphic Novel – A Workshop Series

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## Abstract

The graphic novel, a creative literary and artistic development of the last decades that now stands as its own independent art form, is presented here in the context of a workshop series on the form's educational potential. The term "graphic novel" is often defined as a graphic telling of a story, referring to the narrative as expressed through illustrations that can be carried out in a variety of design options that cover everything from black and white drawings to multi-colored pastel pictures. The range of publications includes, among other things, reports, life stories, converted works of classic literature, and travel narratives. A Graphic Novel Workshop Series will be presented here as an example, an event that took place within the framework of a teacher training held in the Sahrawi refugee camps in Algeria. Taking advantage of the extensive potential offered by the graphic novel form, participants took materi-

al from their own occupational fields and creatively engaged with it through visual arts education, in the process reflecting upon their own work experiences as well as the relationships between themselves and others. Participants came up with their own stories about their daily professional routines and developed them in detail in the form of sequences of images with occasional supplemental writing. Through nonverbal and playful means, the participants' realities were realized in picture. One's own field of experience was used as a source for creative output, underling the notion that one's own original and personal experience should receive the strongest possible appreciation. The workshop series intended to create alternative forms of communication that could be used as mutually-effective educational processes.

### Keywords

- Graphic Novel
- Sequential Art
- Text/Picture Relation
- Learning Processes
- Communicative Competencies in the Teaching Profession

## Introduction

### *The Genesis of the Graphic Novel*

Firmly anchored in a long-running tradition of telling stories through images, the term “graphic novel” is currently widespread. The term is primarily used by the book market as branding, a marketing term that covers the variety of manifestations of graphic novels that are currently on the market. But what can graphic novels offer? What are their specific strengths, and what makes them attractive to young readers, and thus interesting to teachers? This article will discuss the milestones of the genre in order to demonstrate its potential, as well as offer a concrete example of its implementation in an educational setting.

## 1A. From Comic Strip to Graphic Novel

*"You can write stories in chapters, lines, words: that is literature in the true sense. You can write stories in sequences of graphically illustrated scenes: that is literature in pictures."*

(Rodolphe Töpffer, 1848)

Everyone knows comics; these picture stories make up a true mass phenomenon. Amongst experts, the neutral but somewhat cumbersome term "sequential art" was coined so as to avoid the more colloquial term "comic." Central to this text is a significant development of the last decades: the graphic novel. Through this development, comics have not only managed to reach new readers; they have also received their due recognition as an independent art form.

The term "graphic novel," was coined by Will Eisner (1917-2005) and represents a deliberate demarcation from the category of the "comic." The term is found for the first time in 1978 on the cover of Eisner's *A Contract with God*, a decision that the author explains in the novel's preface. Eisner made great demands of text and image in his works. His stories were drawn from the neighborhood, allowing readers to observe and follow ordinary people going about their lives. This element of Eisner's work was in stark contrast to most conventional comic books. Eisner carried on this approach in his work as a college lecturer, and as such, acted as an important motivator for this new development in the form.

After overcoming a few initial difficulties, graphic novels have been booming in recent years. Graphic novels now cover a variety of genres and a wide range of topics, some of which will be presented on the following pages. The boundaries between youth

and adult literature, as well as those between illustration and comic art, have become blurred. Today, however, "graphic novel" is above all a marketing term used to replace the term "comic" and thus suggests more artistic aspirations. (Grünwald, 2014).

The vast potential of this form of expression is particularly pronounced in the impressive two-volume work *Maus* by Art Spiegelman (born 1948). In it, the American author and illustrator describes the terrible and unfathomable events of the Holocaust, the basis of which was drawn from his own parents' experiences. The personal fate of these individuals is illustrated memorably and with compassion, also while incorporating references and information regarding the historical background. The framework of the action is based on memories of his father as well as thorough research that he completed on the subject. The pictures of his "graphic narrative" give the impression of being in the concentration camp and surviving it as witnesses. In addition to the unusual rendering of this material into the comic medium, Spiegelman also makes a bold move by dressing his protagonists with animal heads: Jews as mice, Nazis as cats. Luckily, the idea worked and the venture succeeded, helping to sharpen the characters of the story. In going through the novel, readers are spellbound as they follow the bewildering story as it eventually reaches into the present. The illustrations have a certain pull that makes it difficult

for the reader to stay with a single image for a prolonged amount of time. The drawings also manage to compact the story down to its essentials, all the while leaving room for the reader to project their own imagination (Spiegelman, 1986).

Spiegelman also addresses the fates of the survivors and the future generation using the coarse and direct imagery of underground comics, reflecting his own mood marked by feelings of guilt (his brother died in the Auschwitz concentration camp) and depression (his mother committed suicide in 1968). According to Spiegelman, it was thanks to the comics that he "buried the dead in small boxes," burying them between the panels. The graphic novel in this way served as a "therapy work," reflecting the creative process that went into its creation.

First published in individual installments in Spiegelman's avant-garde comic magazine *Raw*, the resulting book published in full in 1986 was an overwhelming success. Spiegelman would go on to win the highest award for literature in the United States, the Pulitzer Prize, and was the first comic book author to receive the honor. *Maus* is an international bestseller than has been translated into several languages, and Spiegelman's work has been honored with a solo exhibition at a major museum. Everyone was now waiting for the next major graphic novels. Surprisingly, however, little took place in the German-speaking world at first, and even after the success of *Maus*, the acceptance of graphic novels as an independent art form was not enough impetus to encourage the publication of other graphic novels.

The "comic" art form combines aspects of literature and the fine arts, but still it continues to fight for full recognition and respect despite having produced

award-winning masterpieces. Prejudice with regard to illustrated works with scant text offering shallow entertainment to an uneducated audience holds particularly stubbornly in German-speaking countries; in this mindset, it can never be a fully developed form of literature and art. Even the best-selling *Maus* did not make any initial substantial changes in the prevailing mindset. This prejudice, however, overlooks the incredible potential of picture stories: the collective enhancement offered by both text and image, as well as the filling of the empty space between the panels with the projected imagination of the reader.

Like *Maus*, the two-volume *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi (born 1969) also impressively demonstrates the special potential of the "ninth art form" (Laccassin, 1971) (Satrapi, 2004). The title calls to mind the great period of the ancient Persian Empire, but the book rather tells the story of Iran's recent past from the childish and naïve perspective of a little girl. Comparable to an abstraction, the contrasting black and white drawings (without any gray areas) depicting stories drawn from the personal history of the author render the work universal. Much like in woodcuts, the images are reduced to depict only the essentials, thus resulting in gains in expressiveness and conciseness. Typical Middle Eastern clichés were deliberately avoided in the images, and local color was also omitted. The narrative was constructed based on material that covered personal experiences and anecdotes describing the phenomena of everyday life, but never without losing sight of the greater political situation. It is always easier to identify with a complex, multi-layered heroine than with a perfect superhero. Satrapi herself found this boring, instead showing her readers a headstrong girl who is rough around the edges dealing with con-

flicts with her parents and her intimate relationship with her beloved grandmother. In the second volume, which partly takes place in Vienna (Satrapi's parents had sent her there in 1984), even though the heroine has personally experienced dramatic, revolutionary events, she still details her relatable, almost universal sufferings following a failed romantic relationship. *Persepolis* became a bestseller, which was later followed by its adaptation into a very successful animated film. It is also of great significance that the book and its author managed to make very important strides towards recognizing the achievements of women in a male-dominated genre.

Comics have long been considered literature in France, Belgium, and the United States. In the German-speaking world, however, there is still room for improvement in comics' recognition as a serious art form. The genre still carries the aftertaste of cheap "trash literature" partially forbidden to children and adolescents even today. Starting in the 1960s, stories were told in the aforementioned countries in "underground comic" formats, and today they are found in graphic novels. The boundaries between the two – comic and graphic novel – are fluid and should not be considered rigid.

Alison Bechdel (born 1960) is another example of a comic illustrator and author. In her multiple award-winning book *Fun Home*, Bechdel tells of her childhood and youth. The story revolves around her relationship with her father as well as his and her own sexual orientation (Bechdel, 2006). Along with the narrator, the small details of a family secret are revealed to the reader in gradual steps. The long-concealed mystery is finally broken with the coming out of the author. Thanks to Bechdel's

additions of strong doses of humor, the tragic story never reads too depressing. The book is divided into seven chapters that are named using allusions to classic literature. The work typically functions on three narrative levels: the lines above the pictures describe an event; the event is illustrated by a picture; and the picture is supplemented with additional information using speech and thought bubbles.

Cartoonist and journalist Joe Sacco (born 1960s) visits areas around the world in political crisis to research these sites for his reports. His travels in the search for clues usually do not take him to the decision makers, but rather to the so-called "simple people" who have to live with the consequences of the politics being enacted. Sacco describes everyday life as well as significant events from the perspectives of these contemporary witnesses. Historical contexts are brought in almost incidentally as a by-product. Sacco's perspective is subjective, and his concern is honest. Although he himself is always present in the stories, he holds back his own personal feelings, hiding behind his reflective lenses.

The visual language of these comic reports is clear and severe. Even in his large overview images, as compared with photographs, Sacco reduces the picture to the essentials, thus showing the advantages of his drawings; the artist is aware of even the smallest details that are presented to his readers in the set scene. Work for a report can take years, as in addition to the aforementioned research, they must discover and follow the ensuing structure of a dramaturgical plot (Sacco, for example, *Palestine*, 2009).

In 2012, the author and cartoonist Reinhard Kleist (born 1970) came upon the life story of Samia Yusuf

Omar as part of his research on the refugee crisis. He spoke with her relatives and gathered information, discovering that the young woman had been at the Olympic Games in Beijing (2008) as one of the few athletes that year representing Somalia. Despite her loss at the games, she was popular amongst the crowds. She drowned only a few years later off the Italian coast in an attempt to flee her home. Her dream to train in Europe for the next Olympic Games would never be fulfilled.

Kleist acts as her representative in describing her life under repressive fundamentalist rule, her adventurous odyssey through Africa on her way to Europe, and her many other untold fates. Several of the black, white, and gray pages are completely text-less, leaving room for our own projected imagination and interpretation. The drawings' strokes are short, strong and dynamic. The text is supplemented with real and imagined Facebook posts and messages.

The picture story has an immediacy that manages to "suck" its readers into the narrative with great strength. Readers easily become captivated but follow the story at their own pace. Visual information is absorbed as a side effect, and if it is too quickly read or seen, it can be viewed again later. Kleist worked on the research and realization of the project for roughly three years.

Around a century ago, the comic strips "The Funnies" were simply intentioned as mere entertainment.

*An Olympic Dream* also appeared in a similar format as a serial story in a German newspaper (Kleist, 2015). However, this graphic novel is much more

than a simple comic. This development demonstrates that certain stories can now be narrated using this illustrative medium, one in which the graphic novel serves as an access point to a topic that may have otherwise remained closed.

Reinhard Kleist has already found a large publishing house for his next work, a biography of the singer Nick Cave, and as such, a guarantee that his book will indeed be printed. Certainly this is a sign of appreciation for his work as well as proof of the increasing recognition of the graphic novel as an artistic form.

Kleist keeps an online blog that updates his followers on developments regarding his current projects. In viewing his material, it becomes clear that an enormous amount of time is invested in research and preparatory drawings. Kleist posts his preliminary sketches, ink and color pages, storyboards for individual pages, describes his thoughts and reflections, and even discusses his meeting with the real main character, including an illustrated "snapshot." The blog also contains information about the author, his other work, Nick Cave, and references to television programs and events.

*The publisher, who has provided an editor to perform a consultative (and sometimes corrective) function, is also named. In the commentary, a dialogue of questions and answers has unfolded between readers and the author, a thread that will only find its end with the completion of the publication (Kleist, 2017).*

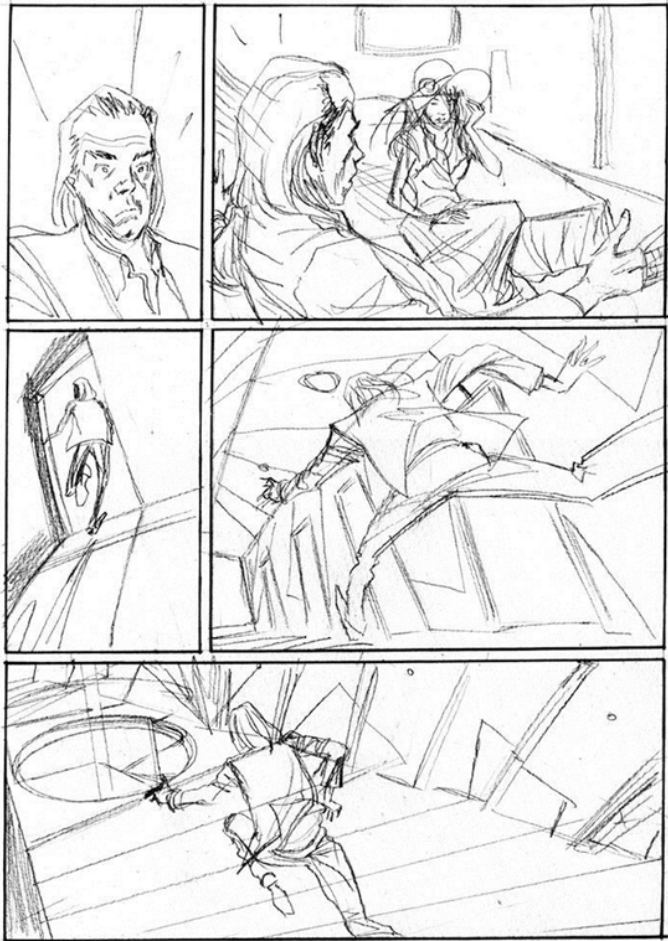


Fig. 1a

An example of the project's progress.  
*Reinhard Kleist's Blog, 2016*

Fig. 1b





Fig. 2a

Portrait sketch of Nick Cave and the author with Nick Cave on a sofa  
*Reinhard Kleist's Blog, 2016*



Fig. 2b

The range of books published as graphic novels has grown over the years, as well as their sales figures. This range includes the aforementioned reports, life stories, adaptations of classic literature, and travel narratives, as well as historical material and biographies of famous personalities. The variety of design options is just as broad, ranging from high-contrast black and white drawings to multi-colored works done with pastels.

## 2A. The Practical Implementation of Drawing Workshops

Concerning our present study, Rolf Laven led a graphic novel workshop series in February of 2017 with participants formed of schoolteachers in the Sahrawi region. The workshop series was overall part of the cooperative project "Improvement of Teacher Professionalization in the Sahrawi Refugee Camps Near Tindouf, Algeria," targeting the subjects of personal competency and implementing communicative methods in the teaching profession. This project was organized, initiated, and supervised by Dr. Eva Unterweger with the intention of being an exchange of educational delegates from the Ministry of Education of the Polisario, the Arbeiter Samariterbund, the University College of Teacher Education Vienna, and the Saharawi Assistance Association. Over a period of ten days, twenty-five Saharawi primary school teachers worked on the site of the Smara refugee camp.

## 2B. Procedure

The idea of communicating with teachers about their everyday teaching life through drawings initially arose after inspiring visits to the schools located at the refugee camps in the Western Sahara located near Tindouf, Algeria. Due to the pronounced differences in the culture's school and social systems, it was not assumed that there had been any previous engagement with the graphic or illustrated novel, or that participants would have an individualized drawing style. First, individual graphic expression was defined, actualized and practically developed into a drawn manuscript. The respective teacher-student image was agreed upon as a topic.



Fig. 3a

Teaching moment in an elementary school in Wilayah Smara, Feb. 2017;



Fig. 3b

View of the Aswerd Refugee Camp, Feb. 2015 © Laven

There are many different approaches to the task, including rough sketching, developing a narrative story, collecting ideas onto a page, creating a sketchbook, or writing a script. With the creation of a visualized story from one imagined, it became increasingly easier for the illustrators to create their characters. This came from outlining initial ideas through targeted preliminary markers and signs.

On this basis, teachers visualized their characters and/or heroes and, in the end, made their drawings using lead and ink in a multi-step process that worked in conjunction with creating a scripted narrative.

There were no restrictions with regard to form, color, or language, and every graphic was a creative form of expression that was directly integrated. No previous time was used for practice, and as such, each first draft was central to the development of the design's core. A variety of drawing materials were offered, including colored pencils, pastel and wax crayons, black felt-tip pens, fineliner pens, and markers.

Participants made numerous decisions in regards to choice of paper, composition, content, portrait or landscape format, and proportionality. The entire page was drawn using pencil. The participants would make either precise or vague sketches, and the text for each panel could be entered directly onto the page using pencil. As soon as the participants felt satisfied with their pencil drafts, they would begin the next phase of the process, which involved using ink of various weights, such as black felt-tip pens, fineliner pens, and markers. The option to use Chinese ink, which is optimal for creating deep, vivid, and powerful images using a brush, was eliminated

due to time constraints as well as the lack of sensible prior experience with its use.

The panels for the introduction of the script, as well as the texts in Arabic calligraphy, were traced using fineliner pens. It was possible to later colorize the drawing using colored pencils, and pastel and wax crayons. Unnecessary pencil lines were erased near the conclusion, and small corrections could be made by partially scraping out material using Stanley knives. Using white correction colors would have changed the quality of the drawings and added dimension to the paper, and also would have interfered with the immediacy and directness of the drawing. This directness remained evident in the work of the participants. Using various means of artistic expression, such as color, shade, line widths, and layout, precise atmospheric images and visual worlds were produced in an expressive manner, such to the extent that in some cases, participants deliberately chose to not include any textual input.



Fig. 4a



Fig. 4b

Moments from the workshop in the garden of the Smara Education Authority, Feb. 2017, © Laven

## 2C. Goals

The research activities in the refugee camps of the Polisario took place atop the cultural foundation of the predominately Muslim Saharawi, one that is primarily characterized by textual literacy. For these teachers, the realizing of visual images as a means of communication was a method that they had never previously encountered and was learned as a new educational approach. The focus rested on the role of visual expression in the process of personal, internal and broader, external appropriation. The resulting illustrated worlds thus illuminated the teacher's perspectives and worldviews. Artists negotiated everyday experiences with imagined material and implemented their vision through graphic means. The presentation, illustrative representation, and reception of the works were experienced at the intersection of teaching and learning processes at mutually effective meta-levels for the participants. Methods included participatory observation, qualitative empirical investigation, and phenomeno-

logical analysis (Marotzki and Stoetzer, 2006). The children's drawings demonstrated the conditions of original documents; complexity and focus were not limited to narrative content. The given topic and the resulting visual representations favored the reorganization of the job profiles and the living and working environment in the refugee camps in the Algerian Hamada.

A holistic approach was taken to uncovering the individual personalities of the teachers, whereby the focus was not on their weaknesses but rather their competences, interests, and social strengths, all of which were significantly explored and supported. This approach can be described by the term "empowerment," which is based on ensuring the appreciation of the participants (Herriger, 2014). It identifies processes in which people work out their own affairs and become aware of their individual strengths and abilities, thus gaining selfknowledge. In a

setting that fosters coexistence, participation, and creativity, social resources could also be developed that become available for reference in the future. As theorized by Hannah Arendt (1970/1993), the “power to design” is understood as a “power and ability”:

“Power springs from the human ability not only to act or to do something, but to unite with others and in agreement to act with them.” (Ibid, 45).

The “principle of the ability to act” takes the place of the empowerment that has already taken place. In the creative acts of the workshop series described here, empowerment and, as a consequence, the ability to act, are no longer theoretical options (Rachbauer, 2010, 76)

Coming to understand the various possibilities offered by the graphic novel was also a professional concern. The project intended to open the potential for telling personal stories, or working through challenging social and political issues. Spheres of activity should have been opened up for testing one’s own artistry, drawing competency, and decision-making in regards to materials, composition, content orientation, format, and proportionality. The individually-selected events to be represented as well as the content of the picture stories should have been immediately comprehensible to the observer. The directness of concept should have been in the foreground. For this benefit, any accuracy should have been purposefully neglected.

The depicted events in the graphic novel should have been directly related to the target group, which was made up of the teachers themselves. This was a matter of reflecting on one’s own work experiences and their working relationships. As such, one’s

own field of experience was used as the source for their creative output. Exchange and communication manifested in a nonverbal, playful manner should have been created; the reality of the participants lives was to be depicted. Thus, one’s own original, self-referencing narrative of their everyday professional life made up the experience. The creation of the connections between cultures, languages, and distances could be experienced and negotiated in the course of creative activity.



Fig. 5  
Workshop series, presentations of first drawings, Feb. 2017. © Laven

## 2D. Professional and Communicative Results

Ideas for the displayed content were at first unconnected collections of notations that were continuously developed and condensed into elaborate pictorial stories. This resulted in strings of well-illustrated characters with developed qualities, each with its own individual design vocabulary; emotions and facial expressions were also employed in various ways with these characters. There was not only a critical examination of the outer appearances of the respective characters, but also of the personalities portrayed in the background story. The heroes depicted in the images (i.e. teachers, pupils) were portrayed in their everyday environment, such as in the school yard, on their way to school, or in the classroom. Anecdotes were expressed graphically.

The graphic depictions, or, the graphic novel, contain individually-developed and spatially-effective picture divisions with occasional writing; different spatial formatting from rectangles to loose compositions; and often small-scale representations of people, buildings, school furniture, recreational facilities, and the roll call area by the flag. They are partially depicted in bird's eye view (or, Olympic observer) and show direct drawing styles with great expressiveness. Illustrated subject matter included, among other things, the resolutions of conflicts, working through children's enunciations with topics such as emotional situations, and playful themes such as sports.

The teachers formed six teams, and their work was created with great motivation in concentration and silence. There was a willingness, in the form of concern, to present one's own work to the whole group.

The participants were selected by the school board and were exempted from teaching during the time of this workshop. They were also financially compensated using resources from the workshop series and research project. Everything was made possible in a benevolent, engaged, and open-minded manner on the part of the school authorities and the representatives from the Ministry of Education of Poland, the employer representatives. The graphic story-telling results were also appreciated by our side.

All in all, the project made it possible to get to know oneself and others in a different way, now from a previously unknown perspective and with otherwise little-known creative means. Additional aspects, including competency communicative methods, were further developed by the teachers in the forms of scenic, descriptive performing games, or as performance presentation acted out in front of the whole group. The examination of the general design and drawing content, as well as the specific deepening and development of the characters to be portrayed, took place in conjunction. In addition, factors regarding complex deliberations and implementation were revealed.

The participants explored their own personal realities on their own terms in experimental ways. It was through the picture story that participants found a new, previously unfamiliar mouthpiece with which to comment through on their subjectively-experienced everyday life. The communicative form of the graphic novel made it possible to create something new by combining narrative styles.

The expressive images allowed deeper insights into various aspects of life. The graphic novel itself has the effect of building bridges, a function that is deepened by respectful coexistence and the ability to create and execute one's own ideas. Additionally, the project made it possible to focus specifically on one's own work background and thus encouraged appreciation for the individual experience. The individual experiences of these teachers were further designated as valuable sources for creative activity and expression, and as such were applied in various forms.

### 3. Conclusion

#### Results and Outlook

*"Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, 'and what is the use of a book,' thought Alice 'without pictures or conversation?'"*

(Alice in Wonderland, Lewis Carroll, 1865)

The impressive masterpieces that have been produced in the form of graphic novels have proved their visual power as well as their capacity to cover a variety of topics. Graphic novels are especially attractive for young people, who feel that the form offers a more accessible approach to engaging with difficult, challenging topics. In terms of practical classroom implementation, the endless possibilities offered by pictorial narration allow students to individually link their work to topics of their choice.

Drawings and illustrations have long played an

important cultural role as a form of communication. Visual expressions have been used for roughly 30,000 years, beginning with cave paintings and rock carvings. Since then, people have been intensely interested in deciphering these graphic messages, as they exist as visual manifestations of that past culture. By way of comparison, perhaps more attention and interest could be invested in analyzing and appreciating the current and emerging forms of graphic communication, as they too offer fundamental insights into a given culture and thus provide a wider capacity for understanding that culture.

The drawings and graphic notations created in this workshop series shed light on life in a refugee camp in the Western Sahara, particularly in the everyday school experiences lived out in Wilayah Smara.

Art and design unfortunately cannot directly prevent the conflicts that lead to flight and emigration, but it can be assumed that communicative potential and exchange contributes towards a small but very direct influence on quality of life. It is both touching and motivating learning to do so through the means of visual art, as motivated participants were able to take individualized expressions and explore them as related to their professional experience. The resulting ability to act in these hitherto unknown forms of education and communication, as well as the self-active use of decision-making and choice options in the design of the graphic novel, point to an expanded awareness, in addition to the actual image results themselves, including that of "action spaces"." (Rachbauer, 2010, 77)

Using the medium of a graphic novel enabled a reciprocal approach to educational processes and insights; on the one hand through action, and on

the other hand through the presence of graphic descriptions. This created another level in which to foster communication and understanding, one which serves as a bridge between cultures, languages, and spatial differences.



Fig. 6a



Fig. 6b



Fig. 7a

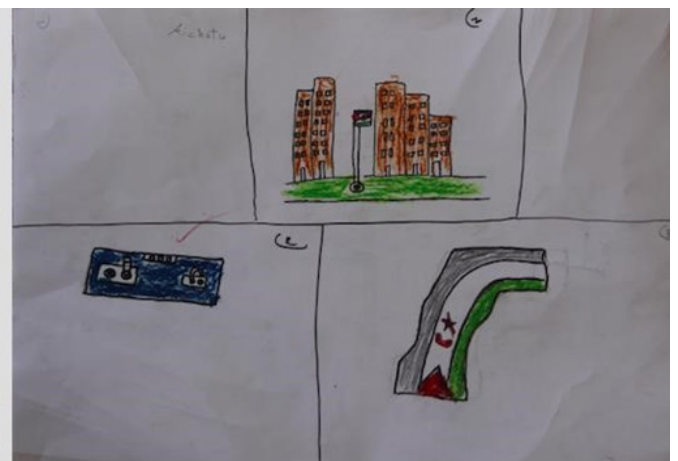


Fig. 7b

Presentations of the graphic novels by the participants. Smara, Feb. 2017





Fig. 7a



Fig. 7b

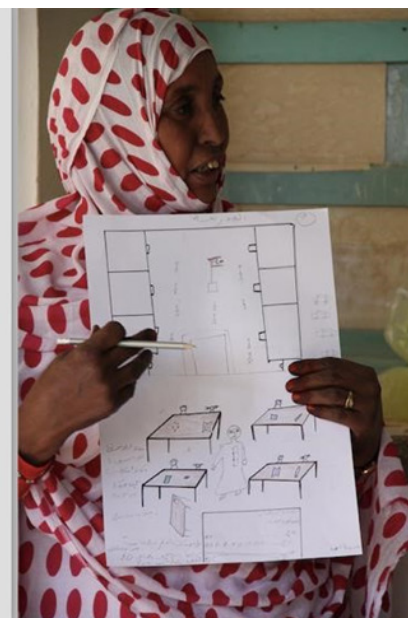


Fig. 7c

Presentations of the graphic novels by the participants. Smara, Feb. 2017



Fig. 8a



Fig. 8b



Fig. 8c

Presentations of the graphic novels by the participants. Smara, Feb. 2017

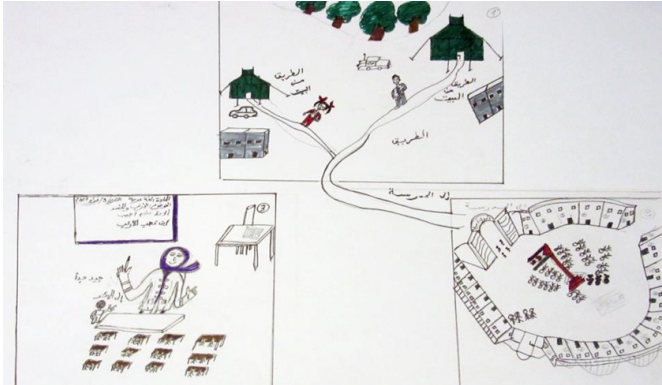


Fig. 9a



Fig. 9b

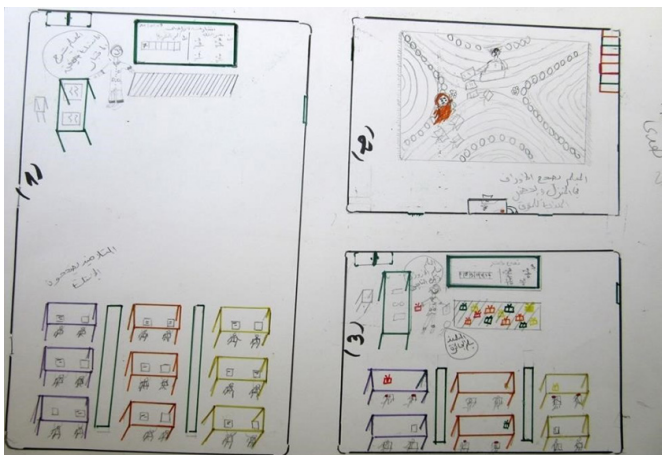


Fig. 9c

Graphic novels portraying the professional fields of the participants. Smara, Feb. 2017

The participants of the workshop were made up of primary school teachers coming from four different schools in Smara, a wilayah in the center of the Polisario refugee camp. The graphic illustrations and text fragments can be understood as information that illuminates the sociocultural environment of everyday life in the camp, thus leading readers and audience members towards a more authentic cultural description of what it is like living together in the camp. In these graphic novels, participants illustrated and wrote out stories and anecdotes that attempted to capture the experiences of their school life.

The graphic novels present the everyday social experiences lived out in the camp, as well as the professional profiles and duties of the teachers and their competencies in communicative teaching methods. Participants themselves evidently found themselves drawn to school- and education-related topic, and as such were frequently included in their work as meaningful and worth illustrating.

Topics of the graphic novels included, among other things:

- Scenes from the beginning of the lesson
- Dialogues between teachers and students concerning the social, political, and economic situation of the Western Sahara; for example, as found in the view of the panel showing the old borders of the Western Sahara
- Scenes from math lessons and Arabic lessons (see Fig. 10a, Fig. 8c)
- Scenes from religious lessons: "The Life of the Child Mohammed"

- A lesson about geography and history with a written test (see Fig. 10c)

Other graphic novels showed teacher's collaborative interactions in everyday classroom life, for example:

- Conflict situations (see Fig. 8b)
- The social behavior between teachers and students (see Fig. 9c)
- Gift giving from the teacher to the children, depicted with brightly-colored clothing, wrapping paper, and balloons, much in contrast to the monochromatic representation of everyday life in the camp (see Fig. 10b and Fig. 3b)
- Bullying situations (see Fig. 9b)
- A child's route to school
- Rituals and discipline; the beginning of a school day, classroom supervision, physical education, roll call (see Fig. 9a)
- Support activities for children
- Jumping rope, football, and basketball games
- References to future prospects, such as possible participation in secondary education in Algeria (see Fig. 8a)
- The coexistence of a teacher's strict comportment and a benevolent attitude: the image shows a child who regularly comes late to class, due to the fact that the student shares a school-bag with a sibling who attends a separate school in the afternoon

## Acknowledgements

This cooperative project, between the Ministry for Education and Teaching in the Democratic Arab Republic of Sahara and the support association of an Austrian tertiary teacher training institution, was created thanks to the commitment of many participants. The Ministry of Education of Polisario and its representatives, and the ministerial project facilitators deserve great thanks for their remarkable openness to the project, as well as for their intensive administration of the workshop so as to ensure that participants were working onsite in the best possible conditions. The teachers themselves deserve a special thanks for their open-mindedness, their motivated presence, and their willingness to experiment.

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## Short Biographies

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## Summary

The graphic novel, a creative literary and artistic development of the last decades that now stands as its own independent art form, is presented here in the context of a workshop series on the form's educational potential. The term "graphic novel" is often defined as a graphic telling of a story, referring to the narrative as expressed through illustrations that can be carried out in a variety of design options that cover everything from black and white drawings to multi-colored pastel pictures. The range of publications includes, among other things, reports, life stories, converted works of classic literature, and travel narratives. The article explores the origins of the term "graphic novel," as well as the various potentials offered by the literary and artistic form through examples of certain masterpieces such as *Maus*, *Persepolis*, and *Fun Home*, and works by Reinhard Kleist. The article also discusses current trends in graphic novel publications. Most importantly, it attempts to demonstrate the various strengths offered by creating illustrated narratives, thus exhibiting its educational potential in the classroom.

A Graphic Novel Workshop Series is presented here as an example, an event that took place within the

framework of a teacher training held in the Sahrawi refugee camps in Algeria. Taking advantage of the extensive potential offered by the graphic novel form, participants took material from their own occupational fields and creatively engaged with it through visual arts education, in the process reflecting upon their own work experiences and relationships between themselves and others. Participants came up with their own stories about their daily professional routines and developed them in detail in the form of sequences of images with occasional supplemental writing. Through nonverbal and playful means, the participants' realities were realized in picture.

One's own field of experience was used as a source for creative output, underling the notion that one's own original and personal experience should receive the strongest possible appreciation. The workshop series intended to create alternative forms of communication that could be used as mutually effective educational processes.

# **"The importance of belonging to positively valued social groups"**

Position paper related to the topic  
"Social inclusion – Vulnerable Groups"  
Chapter "Milestone Manual"

2018

within the scope of the Erasmus+ project  
Soundwords: Graphic Story Telling

Contributed by

Universita degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia

**Social inclusion**

**Unimore**

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Individuals have a fundamental need of acceptance by others<sup>1</sup> and strive to belong to relevant and positively valued social groups<sup>2, 3</sup>. There are several reasons why humans need to belong to social groups. Sherif and collaborators<sup>4</sup> argue that groups are in competition for material resources, and associating with others is strategic in order to increase chances to obtain those resources. Other scholars instead provided psychological reasons. Tajfel and Turner<sup>2, 3</sup> argue that individuals have a fundamental need to achieve positive self-esteem, and belonging to positively valued social groups helps achieving it<sup>5</sup>. According to Hogg<sup>6</sup>, individuals are motivated by self-uncertainty, and associating to groups represents a way to reduce uncertainty and consequently achieve a greater well-being. Brewer<sup>7</sup> states that individuals are driven by two fundamental needs, uniqueness and inclusion, and groups provide them with the possibility to feel included and at the same time to be different from others. Sidanius and Pratto<sup>8, 9</sup> focus on the role of power, and of favouring high power groups. According to these authors, individuals differ in the degree to which they support the maintenance of social hierarchies, and the greater is their desire for unequal social relationships, the stronger is their motivation to favour and belong to powerful social groups.

This brief review shows that there are several motives why individuals need to belong to social groups and want to be accepted by others. In fact, the costs of social exclusion are high. For instance, being socially excluded causes anxiety<sup>10</sup> and impairs self-esteem<sup>11</sup>, and in educational contexts can lead to lower academic achievement<sup>12</sup>. There may be more or less explicit forms of exclusion<sup>13</sup>. One typical form of social exclusion is intertwined with prejudice, and refers to individuals being excluded from others because

they belong to a stigmatized social group. Perceived discrimination stemming from prejudice directed at one's social groups also relates to stereotype threat, another phenomenon well-known by social psychologists, consisting in poorer performance in different types of tests when negative stereotypes concerning one's own group are salient<sup>14</sup>. Another related phenomenon concerns (negative) meta-stereotypes, consisting in the perception that one's own group is negatively stereotyped<sup>15</sup>. These perceptions, all referring to perceived discrimination, are extremely aversive for individuals, and are typically associated with lower physical and psychological well-being<sup>16</sup>.

Individuals can count on various strategies to counteract perceived discrimination stemming from their devalued identity, such as moving away from one's group, joining a positively valued group, directly entering in competition with high-status groups<sup>2, 3, 17</sup>. One important factor that can be used to buffer the detrimental effects of perceived discrimination is represented by intergroup contact<sup>18, 19</sup>. Intergroup contact has been shown to be a powerful strategy to reduce prejudice, improve intergroup relations and bring members of different groups together. In the next sections we will present evidence for its effectiveness and potential, also by explaining why graphic novel, which is at the core of the present project, can be an ideal tool to apply it in educational contexts.

## Intergroup contact

According to the contact hypothesis, formulated by Gordon Allport<sup>20</sup> more than 60 years ago, prejudice occurs because of lack of knowledge between groups. Therefore, contact between members of different groups can improve reciprocal attitudes, because it will foster reciprocal knowledge. Although this may seem obvious, Allport originally doubted of the effectiveness of intergroup contact, which may in fact have backward effects in some situations. The greatest contribution by Allport in fact is not his statement that it may improve outgroup attitudes, but that he clarified when this will happen. In particular, he argued that contact between groups will reduce prejudice only when optimal conditions are fulfilled:

- Contact should be between groups of similar status within the contact situation, in order not to reinforce stereotypes related to their different status (e.g., host nationals and immigrants within a class are students, therefore they have similar status)
- Contact should be cooperative
- Contact should be aimed to achieve common aims
- Contact should be sustained by formal and informal social norms.

Schools are therefore an ideal context where contact can occur and produce positive effects, since optimal conditions can easily characterize educational environments.

Several years of research have provided evidence not only that contact can reduce prejudice, but also that optimal conditions are not strictly needed. What really matters is the valence of contact; in particular, contact has to be positive<sup>21-24</sup>. In fact, negative contact experiences not only will worsen outgroup attitudes, but will also increase prejudice to a greater extent than positive contact reduces it<sup>25, 26</sup>. Importantly, contact is also effective in conflict contexts and for people most needing it, that is individuals who have more prejudice<sup>27, 28</sup>.

Research has also indicated why contact improves intergroup relations. The main reason is not that initially proposed by Allport<sup>20</sup>, based on the increase of reciprocal knowledge between groups, but resides in affective factors. In particular, individuals find contact with members of different groups aversive and anxiety-provoking, and have difficulty empathizing with people who do not belong to their group. Contact reduces prejudice mainly because it acts on anxiety and empathy, and precisely it lowers anxiety felt at the prospect of meeting outgroup members and fosters empathy towards them. In turn, reduced anxiety and increased empathy are at the core of the improvement of attitudes towards outgroup members<sup>21, 29, 30</sup>. To the extent that individuals have a natural tendency to favour their own ingroup, contact is maximally effective when people recategorize ingroup and outgroup members as belonging to a common superordinate group<sup>31, 32</sup>. However, to the extent that individuals may be unwilling or unable to relinquish their original identities, it is important that they continue to categorize themselves as members of their group, and at the same time as members of a common group with outgroup members. For instance, host nationals and immigrants at school can categorize themselves as "host nationals" and

“immigrants” and at the same time as members of the superordinate group of school members.

Maintaining the salience of the original identity is important, because this way people can associate members of the outgroup they encountered with the larger outgroup category, so that attitude generalization can occur<sup>21</sup>. In other words, the salience of the original categories guarantees a link between outgroup members encountered and unknown outgroup members, so that if contact is positive they can extend the beneficial effects to the whole outgroup, including people that were not encountered face-to-face. To make an example, if Marco (an Italian boy) meets Abbas (a Turkish boy), if the salience of identities (Italian and Turkish, respectively) is maintained and contact is positive, Marco will think that not only Abbas, but all Turkish people are nice, therefore reducing prejudice toward the Turkish group as a whole. In addition to reducing prejudice, positive intergroup contact has several benefits for individuals. For instance, it enhances creativity<sup>33</sup> and makes people more agreeable and open to new experiences<sup>34</sup>. Unfortunately, contact may often be unpractical, for organizational and/or practical reasons. For instance, contact is difficult to realize in segregated contexts, or when the ratio of ingroup to outgroup members is low (such as in a class with several ethnic majority members and only few minority members, or with all non-disabled children but one disabled child). In this case, theorists have found that contact can be applied indirectly. In other words, contact does not need to be face-to-face in order to exert its effects. In the next section we will present the main indirect forms of contact identified by research.

## Indirect Intergroup contact

Although direct, face-to-face contact proved to be extremely effective in reducing prejudice, it can also be implemented without a “real” face-to-face relationship. The forms of indirect contact identified by scholars are three: extended contact, vicarious contact, imagined contact.

Extended contact consists in knowing that one or more members of one’s own group have some types of relationships with members of an outgroup. Similarly, vicarious contact refers to the observation of relationships between ingroup and outgroup members<sup>35-37</sup>. There is large evidence that both knowing or observing positive relations between the ingroup and the outgroup is sufficient to reduce prejudice and foster more positive intergroup behaviours<sup>38, 39</sup>. There are various reasons why extended and vicarious contact are especially effective in improving intergroup relations. First, they capitalize on the valence of contact, which is the main factor driving prejudice reduction<sup>21</sup>, and specifically on the observation or awareness of positive intergroup relationships. Second, they are less anxiety-provoking than direct contact. In fact, knowing about or observing an intergroup exchange is likely to be a rather relaxed experience, compared to when one is personally involved in it. Since anxiety about meeting outgroup members can seriously dampen positive intergroup relations, extended and vicarious contact are by no means effective ways to combat this obstacle. Third, when one knows about or observes an intergroup relation, the identity of interacting partners is likely to be salient, and since salience of identities favours generalization of positive attitudes stemming from contact<sup>21</sup>, then extended and vicarious contact can

be maximally effective on prejudice reduction.

Extended and vicarious contact have various benefits compared to direct contact although they may be less effective, since direct experiences are more relevant to attitude formation than indirect experiences<sup>40</sup>. First, in order to extended/vicarious contact to work, it is sufficient that few people have direct contact, in order to spread these effects, via knowledge or observation, to several other people (whereas direct contact requires a one-to-one relationship). Therefore, they can be used wherever contact opportunities are lacking, such as in segregated contexts. Second, extended and vicarious contact require less resources to be applied, are more flexible and less costly, and can reach a wider audience<sup>41, 42</sup>. Third, extended and vicarious contact have powerful effects on social norms<sup>43</sup>, which are at the basis of group and individual behaviour<sup>2, 3, 44</sup>.

A third form of indirect contact is represented by imagined contact. According to Crisp and Turner<sup>45</sup>, simply imagining to have contact with a member of a different group can reduce prejudice. Importantly, the simulated mental encounter must be imagined in detail and positive. Mental imagery activates brain areas similar to those activated by actual perception, uses the same mental mechanisms utilized by memory, emotion, and motor control, and produces affective and motivational responses comparable to those elicited by real experiences<sup>46-48</sup>. There is now large evidence for the effectiveness of this prejudice reduction strategy, also when considering interventions conducted in naturalistic contexts<sup>49</sup>.

An important characteristic of imagined contact is that it is extremely flexible and it is not costly, therefore it can easily be applied in naturalistic in-

terventions. Moreover, it is totally independent from the level of segregation and contact opportunities, therefore it can be successfully used also when the ratio of majority to minority members is highly unbalanced. In addition, despite the effects of real compared to indirect experiences on attitude formation should be stronger, there is evidence that the effects of imagined contact are not weaker than those of direct contact<sup>50, 51</sup> and can last up to several months<sup>52</sup>.

Importantly, imagined contact proved to be an extremely effective strategy for improving attitudes towards marginalized groups in educational contexts, from pre-school to university, also when considering harsh forms of prejudice such as unconscious prejudice and dehumanizing prejudice, and when considering actual behavioural outcomes of effective integration<sup>53</sup>.

A potential limitation of extant indirect contact strategies is that in order to properly work they should be engaging and motivating<sup>54</sup>. However, at present interventions did not follow a precise protocol and were basically all "one-time shot." Identifying a specific strategy combining benefits of indirect contact strategies, that at the same time is engaging and motivating, represents a challenge but also an important opportunity on the path to prejudice reduction. Graphic novel may be such strategy, and testing it is at the core of the present project.

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## Empowering Students in Inclusive Aesthetic-Artistic Workshops

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Empowering Students in Inclusive Aesthetic-Artistic Workshops

Active Creation over Passive Participation

Empowerment im inklusiven ästhetisch-künstlerischen Werkstattunterricht:  
aktive Gestaltung statt passiver Teilnahme

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## Abstract

The notion of 'inclusion' implies an awareness of diversity amongst people that, these encounters will come in with separate prerequisites, goals and needs, leading to staggered foundational levels and varying forms of inclusion. The ethically and morally motivated implementation of inclusion leads to a theoretical as well as a practice-oriented artistically investigation into the opportunities offered by implementation. The widening awareness of the heterogeneity of learning conditions calls for respectful attitudes and appropriate responses towards these various forms. This can be further supported through the concept of 'empowerment', the notion of which is presented in the context of an inclusive aesthetic-artistic workshop.

The concept of empowerment refers to specific, process-based forms of action and support that explicitly build upon the aptitudes and potentialities of the students. This entails a visualization of the resources so that participants may overcome any shortfalls in their focus. Empowerment, in particular, is conducive to developing personal strategies, skills, and resources, as well as acquiring new skills and knowledge. This perspective is an encouragement and extension of the subject's self-reliance and self-determination that focuses on open-minded processes supporting exploration and discovery.

### Keywords

- Inclusion
- Empowerment
- Transculturality
- Aesthetic Experience
- Artistic Processes

## Introduction

"Inclusion" indicates an consciousness of diversity amongst people that, despite their differences, mutually enrich one another (Tiedeken, 2012). This such notion fundamentally opposes the strict categorization of people and supports a holistic conception of humankind.

In this way, inclusion aims to ensure the rights of individuals to engage in various pursuits in a dimension beyond passive participation to that of active participation in a cultural, structural, and practical capacity. It is inevitable that people entering these happenstances will come in with individual preconditions, targets, and necessities, leading to staggered foundational levels and varying practices of inclusion. However, the thorough continuance of a completely inclusive group form remains a long-term goal.

The inclusion imperative is founded on the basis of human rights, emphasizing the urgency of the realization of such processes as it aims to develop self and co-determination, as well as allow individuals to overcome categorical thinking.

## Methods

### *Workshop Instruction in Cooperative Settings*

The potential of aesthetic-artistic workshop teaching as self-initiated, independent learning processes in "subject, action, process, and experience orientation" opens up the possibility of witnessing the joys of action, exploration and discovery in each child (Kirchner & Peez, 2005, pg. 8).

The term "workshop" is understood not only as a geographical place where the work takes place, but also as a strategy for subject-related understanding (Bosse, quoted in Kirchner & Peez, 2005).

Through dealing with aesthetic materials and one's own ideas, a transformative and intellectual process of creative action can take place. In such an environment, the individual is comprehensively involved in a practical aesthetic activity defined not by external learning, but rather by the immediate process-based and experiential decisions made by the participating students themselves. The opportunity for self-guidance is common to the various manifestations of the workshop (Kirchner & Peez, 2005). Aesthetic-artistic education also includes the intensive study of procedures, techniques, and other insights into the field so that ideas can be clearly expressed (Kirchner 2011). Accompanying the entire process is the teacher's empowerment-led thinking and action that aims to make individual resources more accessible, including those of plenary meetings, dialogues, experimentation, and the visualization, appreciation, and presentation of the individual contributions. This proposal forgoes ready-made solution templates and instead offers open-ended implementation processes that enable the personal exploration of solutions. Workshop-oriented teach-

ing can thus be understood as a holistic process reminiscent of work in a studio, a workshop in which the environment inherently stimulates creative aesthetic activity.

The self-organized, process-driven, and self-directed learning process outlined here does not result in isolated action. In many cases, cooperative working methods are feasible in which, among other things, small group partnerships as well as mutual support services are offered. Diverse cooperative settings can facilitate solidarity networking; conversations about creative activity and the bringing together of the visualization of the individual contributions can be interpreted, within the concept of empowerment, as a successful execution of the commonplace micro-politics of everyday life. This entails overcoming the juxtaposition of a "willingness to engage in solidary communities" (Herriger 2014, pg. 20). The demands of the inclusion concept, as well as the empowerment concept, are equally taken into account as they find their broad implementation within the inclusive aesthetic artistic workshop lessons. As such, diversity is able to live through involvement in solidary communities, the experience of self-direction, the achievement of desired changes, the gradual awareness of one's own resources and skills, and the opportunity to apply critical thinking.



© Rolf Laven, Integrated and self-determined design of headpieces in a first grade class in a primary school in Vienna, 2015.

## Results/Perspective & Discussion

### *Practices and Synergies*

Implementing the empowerment concept in school systems is both possible and necessary. The degree of self-determination (or rather, group participation), the promotion of (design) accountability, and the guarantee of heterogeneity can be enhanced under the circumstances described here in the pursuit of overcoming categorical thinking and the enabling of exclusionary experiences.

Basic attitudes, characteristics, and reflections over the empowerment concept have especially been realized in the inclusive aesthetic-creative workshop instruction. It is essential for teachers to communicate what has been observed, reflected over, and successfully interpreted into other school subjects. Students can impede the harmful experiences that can lead to discrimination and obstacles against participation through their intensive involvement and use of specialized knowledge. Through this, students are able to explore their personal opportunities in a dialogue format as it has been necessitated by the parameters of workshop; out of this, solutions are developed. It is important to tap into the inside knowledge of the participants regarding the exclusion process and lines of differentiation drawn amongst individuals (Drexler & Buchner, 2017). This does not, by these means, enable students to improve their ability to act, practice communication, reflect, find solutions, and develop numerous other capacities for cooperation and reciprocal support; rather, it allows students to develop these competences through the broadening of their social relationships as made possible by the conditions set by the teacher. This achieves a heterogeneous as well as dialogue-rich teaching and learning environment

that has taken the existing conditions into account during the planning and implementation process. Exemplary lessons in this regard have already and will continue to be carried out on a large scale (Hawlik, 2017; Bitterli, 2016).

The venture to make heterogeneity more acceptable must have the goal of understanding that a fundamental part of the learning process is seeing things from multiple perspectives.

The development of solutions now not only relates to technical social aspects and conditions, but also increasingly to transparency and the aversion against exclusion and obstacles. Empowerment can be helpful in undertaking this challenging task as it aims to "contribute to a resource-oriented view, in addition to developing other perspectives on existing problems" (Pankofer, 2000, pg. 221). The individual, self-assessing experiences made possible in the context of inclusive workshop instruction can instigate progress that moves away from the "housing of dependence and paternalism" (Herriger, 2014, pg. 16). The empowerment perspective can therefore be understood as an opposing force against passivity in favor of total group participation. Such a concept should be approached through creative means that respond to the needs of the framework conditions; the resulting synergies need only be recognized and appreciated.

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## **Graphic and digital storytelling: A research perspective**

Position paper related to the topic "Graphic Story Telling"

Chapter "IO1 Compendium"

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Soundwords: Graphic Story Telling

Contributed by

Universita degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia

Graphic and digital storytelling: A research perspective

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## Abstract

Graphic narratives are a flexible medium of storytelling that come in numerous forms. Creators continue to innovate various ways to process text and images. The merging of pictures and words in sequences is a language with different rules of usage depending on the originating culture. A comic is still read like a book and maintains the mechanics of reading, where a reader must read through the panels and piece together the story using their own understanding and imagination in order to make each panel flow like a traditionally interconnected narrative. And, yet, the graphic elements of comics invite the inclusion of visual arts and filmic concepts because these are not normally associated with text-based works. Today, different cultures stand at the forefront of graphic narratives with their distinctive marks because the form of sequential art is greatly influenced by the culture of their creators. Across the world, graphic narratives have different names but, more importantly, the characteristics that make up the graphic sequences abide by different rules. In the US, a single panel taking up an entire page is commonplace; while in France, the comic sizes would not allow such formats (Vera & Arong, 2018). Marshall McLuhan once wrote, "it is misleading to suppose there is any basic difference between education and entertainment.

This distinction merely relieves people of the responsibility of looking into the matter" (1960, p. 3). McLuhan was not writing about comics in this instance, though he later wrote a great deal about comics (1964). However, the statement is especially resonant when considering the question of whether or not comics have a role to play in information

literacy instruction. Comics are a familiar and recognized entertainment medium, but their capacity to educate even as they entertain is, in academic circles, not yet universally understood.

For these reasons has been hard produce a unitary and coherent discourse on the use of graphic storytelling as a method of research and intervention, because this this technique and its application really changes a lot according to the cultural context. We focused on two forms of not traditional storytelling, because in the context of education, more than graphic storytelling, is emerging digital storytelling, that also includes use of images and visual techniques to tell stories.



Fig 1  
storytelling using graphic illustration



## Graphic storytelling, graphic novel and comics

Whereas comics and graphic novels were once derided as “debased” texts unworthy of consideration in the academic classroom, they have recently gained more acceptance as valid educational resources. In fact, graphic narratives have a long history of success in terms of instruction and engagement, stretching back millennia. Comics can be very effective in academic settings due to their engaging and participatory nature, as well as their ability to model behaviors and imbed lessons within a greater narrative. Many college and university instructors already utilize comics in their classrooms in a variety of manners, from examining existing comics as historical artifacts to intentionally creating comics for instructional purposes and even allowing students to produce their own comics (Upson & Hall, 2013).

The dismissal of comics as entertainment fit only for children, adolescents, and the illiterate is, globally speaking, rather unusual. In France and Belgium, the comic strip, is considered to be of importance equal to architecture, music, painting, sculpture, poetry, dance, film, and television, hence its nickname “the Ninth Art” (Pilcher & Brooks, 2005). Japan’s multi-billion-dollar manga industry produces more comics than any other nation; roughly 40% of Japanese publications are comics, catering to all ages and social groups, including children, teens, young adults, housewives, and middleaged professional men (Pilcher & Brooks, 2005). In Italy, the conception of comics as strictly children’s fare died off in the 1960s, with the rise of darkly-themed graphic novels created especially for adults (fumetti neri, or black comics) and the debut of the prestigious magazine *Linus*, which, in addition to featuring translations of

classic American comics and showcasing the work of Italy’s best cartoonists, featured scholarly articles on the subjects of comics and media (Pilcher & Brooks, 2005).

Some studies have applied these graphic methods to increase understanding and motivation of reading in young people, and in some cases also to try to help young students with problems such as dyslexia, but it is still few explored from the experimental point of view. Furthermore, another formative level of use of digital and graphic storytelling is cultural education.

From a theoretical point of view most of the studies that we found referred to the Scott McCloud analysis (1994) that describes in *Understanding Comics*, that focus on two characteristics of sequential art, color and publishing methods. Furthermore, the author explains that the cartoon image - the abstraction of reality which fills the two-dimensional page—is a symbolic representation of an idea. The simplification of imagery enables a process of identification in which the reader is allowed to see (or project) him- or herself into the comic (McCloud, p. 31), creating a reading experience which is both immediate and intensely personal (p. 42).

## Cultural education, reading motivation/comprehension

### *graphic storytelling and comics*

Comics are a complex interactive medium. The reading experience—because it involves the interplay of text and images, requiring the reader to draw complex connections to absorb meaning—is both engrossing and participatory (McLuhan, 1964; McCloud, 1994; Gillenwater, 2009; Smith, 2007). That said, the human mind seems to demonstrate a hunger for visual narrative, an almost intuitive desire to explore the form, and this propensity is key to understanding the potential for success of comics, cartoons, and graphic novels in the classroom. Duffy (2010) notes that since comics are - seen as outside of the imposed discourses of educational institutions, students feel a greater ownership of comics texts, and thus a greater investment in reading them (p. 204). Comics, by their very nature, long criticized for their debased content and focus on images, are seen by students as having value because of their typical exclusion from academic study. This attitude is changing amongst academics, but the outsider stigma is still strong enough to potentially encourage students to view comics as a little dangerous and even questionable in a way that a textbook might not be. The act of reading comics can be a demanding combination of processes that require both print and visual literacy skills to navigate successfully. Gillenwater (2009) notes that due to the multimodal nature of graphic novels, *“there is no either/or dichotomy because words can take on properties of images and vice versa. It is the reader, however, who must synthesize these elements to make meaning”* (p. 35).

A narrative also allows us to exaggerate reality. This narrative feature can help us with education in a few ways. In a study on the Graphic Storytelling in Library Instruction, Upson and Hall (2013) showed how this method can dispel stereotypes about the library and librarians. Again, the librarians featured in the author’s comics “are not dismissive residing in a dusty and unfriendly library. Our librarians are heroic and funny, helpful and encouraging. The libraries themselves are exciting venues where adventure happens alongside learning” (pag. 34). So, the author and the his colleagues have provided a context within which if become very easy to present library skills as especially vital. *“Somehow library instruction becomes more interesting if a posse of ghost cowboys is chasing you through the stacks”* (pag. 34). This sense of excitement and involvement in the story can provide motivation for reluctant library students and also reluctant in others context - as for example toward specific school subjects and engage their imagination - as well as increase their retention and recall skills (Negrete & Lartigue, 2004).

Outside of this work on library comics there are many examples of how comics are being utilized successfully in the college classroom, across a wide range of disciplines. In fact, comics have been created within teacher education classrooms in an attempt to “provide a symbol system for representations that are amenable to an active, hands-on study of practice” (Herbst, Chazan, Chen, Chieu, & Weiss, 2011, p. 101). For example, as reported in the study of Upson and Hall (2013) Aiken (2010) uses issue #1 of Captain America to look at opposition to and support for U.S. entry into World War II – the comic featured Captain

America punching Adolf Hitler in the face and was published nine months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Other examples are reported in the history classes have also examined fictional series, such as *Unknown Soldier* (set in war-torn Uganda) as a starting point for the examination of real-world events (Decker & Castro, 2012). Sociology courses have looked at superhero comics and how gender, race, violence, and other values are represented in popular culture (Hall & Lucal, 1999). The X-Men have been used to teach business ethics, leadership, diversity, teamwork, marketing and other business, related skills (Gerde & Foster, 2008), while an entire graphic novel textbook has been created to address management (Short & Reeves, 2011). Surprisingly, science courses frequently utilize comics in many ways. Hosler's (2011) findings showed that comics can improve the attitudes of young students toward biology. Roesky and Kennepohl (2008) discuss how the "single panel gag cartoon is an excellent vehicle to communicate ideas and connect with students using humor" (p. 1359) as a way to improve retention. Cheesman (2006) used comics as "attention getters" and starting points for instruction. Comics have also been successfully used as a means for public science education (Tatalovic, 2009; Silver, Archer, Hobbs, Eckert, et al, 2011). Furthermore, some studies showed that comics have the potential to engage learners who may not excel or exhibit interest in library instruction or information literacy. For example, Hosler and Boomer (2011) utilized a graphic novel, created by Hosler as an instructional text, in a series of undergraduate biology courses. They found that the attitudes of non-science majors and weaker students toward biology improved significantly after reading this graphic novel.

Another line of studies that recently focused on the

use of comics is medicine. Thanks in part to the Medical Humanities movement, many medical schools now encourage the reading of classic literature to gain insight into the human condition. Until recently, the medium of comics has received little attention from healthcare scholars, even though some authors argue that graphic fiction is, in fact, a form of literature (Williams, 2012). The American cartoonist Justin Green is often credited with inventing a new genre when, in 1972, he became the first

"neurotic visionary" to "unburden his uncensored psychological troubles' onto the pages of *Binky Brown meets the Holy Virgin Mary*, "an astonishing self-flagellation of catholic guilt and obsessive compulsive disorder" (Spiegelman, 1995). This represents a valuable document containing narrative untainted by expectations of what it is to suffer this condition drawn from popular media or medical description, in fact the way that Green ironically portrays himself is as hilarious as it is grotesque. In laying out the narrative of his suffering, Green has become an example of what Arthur Frank (1997) calls "the wounded storyteller": one who has lived through a profound experience and, by relating the story to others, has the ability, to heal. Autobiographical comics and graphic novels have since overturned the superhero of comics past "in favor of common man or woman" (Hatfield, 2005). This movement has generally happened at the more radical end of comics publishing, stemming from the alternative commix scene, but gradually flourishing to include many types of portrayal of the self.

Medical stories in comics are nothing new, but over the past decade become a recognizable genre within comics: the graphic memoir of illness or trauma. Many of these works are drawn and written by

skilled comics artists who happen to have had a personal experience with illness or with caring for a relative with medical problems. These authors are able to cogently articulate their experiences in an immediately engaging way. Through words and image, the world of the patient undergoing investigation or treatment is laid out. *Entering this world might help healthcare professionals to imagine themselves in the patient's place.* Much more work could be done in this area, many more threads could be teased out: comparing graphic narrative to film, poetry, literature, medical textbooks or medical photography.

Finally, we can argue that comics used in instruction can be any of the following: existing works whose content is simply utilized as an example or is adapted for instruction, works created explicitly for the purpose of instruction (such as our series of library comics), or even student-created comics (Williams, 2012).

Beyond medicine's context, another area has been explored, in terms of application of not traditional using of storytelling to increase the *reading comprehension in education*. Especially graphic novel (or also graphic storytelling) provides an attractive medium to communicate concepts with number of characteristics that may aid student learning in a more effective manner than traditional textbooks. Short and Reeves (2009), for example, provide an overview of the graphic novel format and use McLuhan's research on "hot" versus "cool" media as a theoretical base that highlights how and why this format can be a useful tool to present management content relevant for the current generation of business students. The authors provide examples of how the graphic novel medium could be applied to business concepts and conclude with an agenda for

future empirical research. One innovation in educational content delivery, as reported by the authors, the graphic novel format, has been successful in a number of academic settings that suggest this format may translate well to business communication and education. This format provides an attractive medium to accommodate practitioners and scholars who have recommended storytelling as an effective strategy for communicating business concepts (Barry & Elmes, 1997; Forman, 2007; Short & Ketchen, 2005).

Thus, the graphic novel has been proposed as an effective medium for management storytelling because this format allows for the integration of rich metaphor and expression of concepts that are difficult to convey or that otherwise might not maintain the reader's interest through text alone (Eisner, 1985, 1996). The use of graphic novels is in line with the ideas inherent in media richness theory that suggest individuals will have enhanced recall when visual elements are integrated into communications (Simpson, 2007).

In recent years, graphic novels have been incorporated by educators at the university level (Tabachnick, 2007). Short & Reeves (2009) assert that the inclusion of this format in a specific context - that is management communication pedagogy - could be advantageous for three reasons: 1) First, the graphic novel provides more visual representation of management and business concepts that aids student learning and reaches out to certain learning styles in a more effective manner than current textbooks alone; 2) Second, the graphic novel provides contemporary content delivery in line with recent trends and purchasing patterns germane to undergraduate business students; 3) Third, the graphic novel can

make application more tangible, increase interaction with students, and provide for rich conversation while minimizing efforts and optimizing the limited attention span of many undergraduates.

In the same contribution the authors have provided an overview of the graphic novel and use McLuhan's "hot" versus "cool" media to provide a theoretical basis to illustrate how this format can be an effective tool to communicate management content relevant for undergraduate students. McLuhan was particularly concerned with the intrinsic effect of communication media, such as their impact on users' habits of perception and cultural conditioning (McLuhan, 1962). The graphic novel provides an attractive medium to meet the high need for stimulation that may be required to best meet the needs of university students. Student learning is positively impacted by the incorporation of visual elements (Murphy & Smark, 2006), with the visual-verbal learning style being one of the primary learning types salient to business students (Hallock, Satava, & LeSage, 2003). Impact is a function of a medium's "temperature" some communication media are hot media, and some are cool (McLuhan, 1964): "A hot medium is one that extends one single sense in 'high definition.' High definition is the state of being well filled with data" (p. 36). Accordingly, "Hot media are, therefore, low in participation, and cool media are high in participation or completion by the audience" (p. 36). The value of distinguishing between hot and cool media is the assertion that cool media require more interaction than hot media; consequently, this level of engagement is likely to result in enhanced communications effectiveness (McLuhan, 1964). Graphic novels represent cool communication media that are high in participation because communication receivers must "fill in," or use their imaginations to complete

the communication. Hot media, in contrast, leave very little to be filled in by the media users. For instance, a photograph is much hotter than a cartoon or comic because a photograph provides a dense amount of visual information, whereas a cartoon or comic provides less visual information. A picture of a brick wall may be illustrated in cartoon form by a largely empty wall with only a few bricks actually drawn, and the reader's imagination and experience allow for an interpretation of a full wall. According to McLuhan (1964), "Hot media are, therefore, low in participation, and cool media are high in participation or completion by the audience" (p. 36). Although the lines in graphic novels or comics are not perfectly realistic pictures of people or movement, when we look at the lines, we "see" people who are moving because we participate in the medium using our imaginations to "fill in the blanks." Following this theoretical background appear clear that technical communication professionals can learn much by incorporating the design, layout, and communication principles found in comics (Opsteegh, 2008).

Another author that really well express the importance of graphic storytelling in educational context was Lavin that commented (1998) on the potential of the graphic novel format as follows: "*The sophistication of the American comic book/graphic novel may be the most underrated literacy movement in recent United States history. Many teachers, librarians, and comics professionals have commented on the particular suitability of comic books and graphic novels for the current generation of young adults, who were raised on television, video games, music videos, and other highly visual media.*" (p. 32).

Thus, the graphic novel is an appealing medium for educational content delivery with several attractive

features for business and management educators whose primary undergraduate market consists of young university students.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning the interest it has been generated in another context, the storytelling potential of data visualization. News organizations including the New York Times, Washington Post, and the Guardian regularly incorporated dynamic graphics into their journalism. Politicians, activists, and television reporters use interactive visualizations as a backdrop for stories about global health and economics (Gapminder, 2010) and election results (Farhi, 2008). An emerging class of visualizations aimed at combining narratives with interactive graphics. Storytellers, especially online journalists, are increasingly integrating visualizations into their narratives.

## Digital storytelling

Another direction of studies on storytelling has been recently developed following the diffusion of digital multimedia tools that in the last year has favored the birth and the fortune of a new declension of the narration, the digital storytelling (DST), which immediately appeared able to arouse interest and motivation of teachers and students (Robin, 2008; Sadik, 2008; Hunget al., 2012), promotes narrative skills in young people (Cassell and Ryokai, 2001), promotes attitudes to work collectively (Di Blaset al., 2012), empowering experience of learning foreign languages. Two fields of application for the DST that have quickly attracted the attention of the researchers are those of teacher training (Tendero, 2006; Skouge and Rao, 2009; Heo, 2011) and the education of pupils with special educational needs (Michalskiet al., 2005; Botturiet al., 2014).

## Reading comprehension, reading motivation digital storytelling

To encourage all students to become readers, some authors assume the importance of creative attitudes and literate behaviors of engaged readers. To be able to reflect on a reading event, engaged readers need to first decode, then comprehend, and finally transact with the text to construct meaning. However, less engaged readers are often unable to reflect on their reading as a result of lack of interest, poor reading skills, limited comprehension strategies, or a lack of personal experiences to use to construct meaning (Egan 1992; Hynds, 1997; Wilhelm 1995). A recent study of Ginger Malin (2010) try to analyze how nonengaged readers can become more engaged in what they are reading, looking for innovative solutions in this direction (describe a digital video reading aid that was created to help adolescent readers engage in texts that are typically assigned in high school English classrooms (Malin, 2006). Malin (2010), for the study featuring a dramatic reading of a short story, used a video through a combination of the text read aloud by an experienced *storyteller alongside subtitles and annotations that guided the comprehension of the text*. Especially, the annotations were either pictures or words that helped summarize key ideas being discussed in the text. By using this digital video, the readers in this study were able to experience the text independently, offering them the opportunity to fully engage with and enjoy the story. Although intended to help all readers engage with texts, the multimodal (i.e., visual, oral, and written) aspect of the video was primarily intended to help remedial readers, reluctant readers, and English language learners (ELLs) who needed various means of additional support and stimuli to connect with a text. To

further the meanings that the viewers could create from their reading experience, the video also included a short historical context section and a literature discussion section that featured teenagers describing their responses to the story's comprehension questions. Using data collected from and guided classroom discussions with high school sophomores and seniors, the author showed the educational and aesthetic value of this pilot digital video reading aid and noted that this video format helped students to comprehend, engage with, and ultimately enjoy reading an assigned text.

*The theoretical framework* behind this new use of storytelling is provided by Benton

(1983) that argues that in order to engage with a text, a reader must create a "secondary world" in which he or she imagines, experiences, and elaborates on the story from within it. In this way, the engaged reader is a participant in the drama of the story rather than simply a spectator. Without taking interest in the action of the story—that is, without being able to visualize particular settings or scenes or enact various character roles—a reader will not connect the story to his or her life and subsequently will not engage with the text or construct meaning from it. Therefore, students who are not engaged in the experience see reading as a passive transmission of information that does not evoke any sort of thoughtful ideas or feelings and thus serves little, if any, meaningful purpose in their lives (Enciso 1992; Wilhelm 1995). Enciso (1992) and others have posited, mental imagery or visualization of a story has many powerful and positive effects for readers

and is vital for comprehension, engagement, and response. Wilhelm (1995) found that many of his students did not “see” anything when they read, and that they therefore could not think about or experience the text. Purcell-Gates (1991) also found that less proficient readers did not have strategies for envisioning text available to them that would allow them to enter into story worlds. The Malin research (2010) shows that seeing or imagining the story world is necessary for engagement. As Eisner explains, “We cannot know through language what we cannot imagine. The image—visual, tactile, auditory—plays a crucial role in the construction of meaning through text. Those who cannot imagine cannot read” (1992, 125). Reading aloud to students may be one way to solve this problem. The reading guide can be conducted, orally within the reading of the story or, as in the case of Malin’s study (2010), using graphics while the story is being read. In his study Malin found that 88% of the students sampled believed that reading in this way was an enjoyable experience. Furthermore, the ultimate goal of all secondary reading programs was to “develop independent readers and learners” (International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English 2005), the results from this study imply that video read-louds, also with the graphic support, do offer some students some of the support and tools needed to help guide them toward independent reading and comprehension of a text. In using this type of digital reading aid, readers were encouraged to enter the story world and participate fully with a text by being able to envision the drama of the story and thus actively construct personal meanings.



## Cultural education & digital storytelling

Young adolescence is a critical period for conducting health promotion and risk prevention interventions to establish and sustain healthy behaviors. Strategies are available that help promote reflection and communication about issues that might otherwise be difficult for young adolescents to conceptualize and express (Drew et al., 2010). Projects using visual methods are available that allow young adolescents to document and reflect on their lives (Strack, Magill, McDonagh, 2004) and digital storytelling (Wexler, Gubrium, Griffin, & Difulvio, 2012), which have both been used to promote social competency and protective factors that prevent suicide. Engaging young adolescents in creative activities such as these can be effective in bringing out the complexities of their experiences (Nieuwenhuys, 1996) and encourage the expression of thoughts and opinions that may otherwise be difficult to communicate. Although effective strategies exist, few examples in the literature can be found (Hill, Laybourne, & Borland, 1996; Morrow, 2001), especially for the development of health interventions. Starting from this point of view, Hieftje, Lindsay, Duncan, Lynn Fielin (2014) in their study proposed - to elicit stories about adolescents' environments and risk behaviors- three different activity, the first that they called *Storytelling Using Graphic Illustration*. The illustration depicted a group of teens gathered together at someone's home, with characters engaged in a variety of benign activities such as talking to each other, having a phone conversation, and looking at something outside of the frame of the picture. The characters appear to be of indistinct ages and ethnicities. The ambiguous nature of the illustration was created intentionally to allow the adolescents

to identify with the picture and characters in order to construct relatable stories. To elicit discussion the authors simply asked the group to try to explain what's happening in the in the illustrated scenes or what is the characters thinking etc. From the Storytelling activity, the authors were able to gather important insights into the lives of young adolescents.

The adolescents provided with rich, descriptive stories that included topics such as risk taking, peer pressure, and relationships that resonated with their own lives. In their stories, the young adolescents described different types of risk behaviors, and the authors used this information to shape the stories, characters, and risk scenarios in the video game intervention to create a relatable, relevant experience. For example, adolescents described how peer pressure could influence the choices and actions of the characters in the illustration. The activities provided youth the opportunity to describe, or show to the authors, elements in their lives that were important to them in an engaging, creative way.

## Dyslexia graphic and digital storytelling

Improving motivation to read is an important step toward improving reading fluency among children with dyslexia. Children with dyslexia often have average to above average intelligence, but their specific disability in decoding words leads them to dislike and avoid text (Shaywitz, 2003). This avoidance can reduce their word decoding practice by as much as a million words per year (Cunningham, Stanovich, 1998) relative to normal readers. Dislike of text, therefore, contributes to the persistence of poor reading fluency among children with dyslexia, even after their individual word decoding problems have been remediated.

In a study of Ward, McKeown, Utay and colleagues (2012) the authors described the development of the Raft (Repeated Reading Adaptive Fluency Tutor), a tutor to remediate poor reading fluency among children with dyslexia. Because of the link between motivation and word exposure, it is important that the Raft tutor improve motivation to read.

Classroom studies often find that students feel more motivated to read when they can exercise some choice over their reading materials (Ivey, Broadus, 2001; Pitcher, Albright, DeLaney, Walker et al., 2006). Similarly, a meta-analysis of studies in the self-determination literature (Patall, Cooper, Robinson, 2008) found that many varieties of choice can improve motivational and performance outcomes, as well as perceptions of self-efficacy. In addition, the "serious game" literature has found that interactive games can keep students motivated and engaged (e.g. Johnson, Vilhjalmsson, Marsella, 2005). These studies suggest that the Raft tutor might

increase reading motivation by allowing students with dyslexia to make choices in a dynamically generated interactive story. In their work Ward and colleagues (2012) implement an interactive story generator in Raft, to test if interactivity leads children with dyslexia to read more. This paper has presented preliminary evidence supporting one of the fundamental assumptions underlying the Raft project, namely that dynamically generated interactive stories will improve motivation to read even in this population of impaired readers. These results suggest that a system with a sufficiently large generation repertoire could lure these children into reading significantly more, and so increase their exposure to connected text.

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# **Graphic story : Developing a methodological model of introduction to the Graphic Novel in the special education school**

Position paper related to the topic "Graphic Story Telling"  
Chapter "IO1 Compendium"

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within the scope of the Erasmus+ project  
Soundwords: Graphic Story Telling

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## Abstract

The work presented in this document comes from the need to base the graphic novel in the school as an element of social inclusion. The conceptual activities of graphic novels as well as their subsequent procedural development through the proposed inclusive models are fully loaded with the most representative values for the EU. These values have been worked on the school population with special educational needs, who are a vulnerable to social exclusion.

### Keywords

- Graphic Novel
- Special educational needs
- universal values
- lessons
- creative process

This document is presented as a methodological proposal that is framed within "ERASMUS +: Soundwords", a macro-project worked at European level that proposes the graphic novel (in his role of agreeing on a universal translation thanks to his illustrated narrative), as a vehicular tool to spread these values.

Thus, the work of introducing an educational content that points to the graphic story and that at the same time seeks to develop the values of the EU, necessarily requires a deep knowledge of the vulnerable group with risk of social exclusion for which it is directed, even more so if we talk about special needs in the teaching-learning process. Here, the knowledge of the teaching expertise is necessary to determine the elements that allow the facilitation of the educational process.

On the other hand, the chosen methods, as well as the resources and didactic materials, are selected according to the objectives proposed for said educational unit. Therefore, to think educationally and with future perspectives on the student population with special needs requires a work of conscious elaboration, which focuses primarily on these aspects: characteristics of the group to which it is directed and the didactic. In this way it is possible for teachers to visualize and capture the adaptive element in the method (sometimes the resource itself for its simplicity is already a facilitator, that is, it does not need to incorporate adaptation), which allows the achievement of the proposed objectives.

The choice of the graphic story as an introductory element to the graphic novel resides in the idea that due to its characteristics in terms of extension and complexity, they are shorter and simpler, which

makes it possible to make a methodological approach much more accessible for the teacher and the student. The advantage is that both, both novel and graphic story, enter the field of graphic narrative that uses both image (as the main inclusive resource for its universal interpretation) and simple text (in a complementary role), so that in as a whole they can explain a story or convey a message.

Due to the cognitive characteristics that characterize the work group, it is necessary to differentiate the educational process in 3 stages: **diagnosis, development of activities and final creative process.** In this way, dealing with the complexity involved in the development of the lesson plan with its objectives becomes more accessible for teachers and, content, for students.

## Diagnostic work

The cognitive deficiencies that are found at the level of students with special educational needs are evident: in relation to the age stage, cognitively they go well below due to the various difficulties in learning. It is for this reason that to detect those deficiencies, a diagnostic work is carried out which informs us what are the aspects that need more dedication by the teaching staff. From here, you can guide and establish work guides that are described in the "Development of activities" section.

### Diagnostic results

The difficulties shown by students to identify and express emotions, makes it necessary to enter into specific strategies to reinforce conceptually and procedurally the level of body expression and emotions.

At a conceptual knowledge, we find deficits in

- Meaning of a universal value
- Geographical recognition of the situation of the European Union and the constituent countries

At the level of procedural knowledge, there have been deficiencies in

- One of the great difficulties detected during the work of values (empathy) has been the recognition and representation of emotions. Aspects related to body expression in students with special educational needs, represents difficulties due to deficiencies in body awareness and psychomotor control of body segments.
- Lacks in the treatment of material and techniques.

- Ability in the perception of qualitative relationships between the forms observed and those produced in the work itself.
- Lack of viso-spatial perception, which represents difficulties in placing the elements that are part of the artistic exercise in space.
- Lack of spatial organization, aesthetic order and expressive capacity.
- Difficulties of gross and fine psycho-motor skills that result in the lack of maturity in the stroke.
- Different capacities and learning rhythms.

At the attitude level:

- Difficulty in managing emotions during the creative process: doubts, fears, insecurities, anger, feelings of aversion.

## Development of activities

Within this second general point mentioned, all those actions carried out by the teaching team are described so that in this way the objectives proposed for the project are satisfactorily achieved. As you can see, this general section will work analytically on the parts that are most interested in developing in students. The depth of intervention is determined according to the results obtained in the diagnosis.

It is important to point out that, although it is true all the activities are methodologically already adapted by the teaching staff, a first stage of adaptation is highlighted, a section of "adapted techniques for drawing". These represent in themselves some artistic drawing techniques that the student can develop independently as a "work assignment" delivered by the teaching staff and where no guidance is needed as deep as the method of "Discovery guided by questions" shown in other activities.

This type of adapted graphic activities allows somehow verifying and evaluating the effectiveness of the elaborated resource individually and, at the same time, aspects of personality that are essential in the work of self-knowledge can be addressed.

For the development of the tasks a form of action is adopted by the teaching staff that is related to the concept of transversality. This acquires an important role due to the multidisciplinary approach of the project.

## The final product

The two graphic stories that are made are the result of extensive methodological work where adaptive elements have been investigated, created and incorporated with the purpose of facilitating the teaching-learning process and approaching the ideal of the objective as much as possible.

### Methodological Resources Applied For The Development Of The Project

#### 1. Presentation And Diagnosis. European Project ERASMUS+: Soundwords.

Activity 1: Recognition of a graphic narrative and the elements that compose it.

Activity 2: European Union, the geopolitical situation.

Activity 3: Universal Values and the EU

#### 2. Development Of Activities: Applied Resources

##### Working On The Adapted Techniques For Drawing

Activity 1: Step by step. "The Mouse"

Activity 2: Photo on a tracing paper

##### Working The Emotions Through Body Language

Facial expression and emotions.

Activity 1: Working on individual situations

Activity 2: Working the stories and the context

##### The communication through the own body

Activity 1: Spatial layout

Activity 2: Body gestural language

Global integration of body expression

Activity 1: Emotional representations

Activity 2: Representing daily situations

Developing Mica

Activity 1: The model

Activity 2: Mica is a super hero

Developing Visual And Plastic Technics

Activity 1: Types of shots

Activity 2: "Picture is worth more than a thousand words"

Activity 3: Color simbology

3. The Final Narration. Building A Graphic Novel.

Reading Workshop. "Arrugas" ( Wrinkles)

Activity 1: "Reading a graphic novel. Arrugas"

Preparing A Graphic Story. First Approximation.

Activity 1: Creative workshop with Jordi Barba

The Graphic Novel, Constructing Our Final Stories

Stories Selection

The Storyboard

Characters

Vinyl Markers

Painting

Final Product

## Objectives Framed In The Project

### "ERASMUS+: SOUNDWORDS"

The document presented here is intended to provide various methodological strategies aimed at vulnerable groups of social exclusion (borderline intelligence), so that its application results in the joint creation of a graphic novel, which aims to act as a vehicular tool for those most representative values for the EU.

Thus, there are two aspects that are covered simultaneously: a general one directly related to the development of the compendium of the ERASMUS + project: Soundwords through the contribution of teaching expertise from the field of social inclusion and; an intrinsic aspect that is linked exclusively to the development of the Graphic Novel section through the direct participation of students with special educational needs and where mention is made of the educational method and the application of the necessary adaptive elements for the preparation of a graphic novel .

Therefore, for each of these aspects, some objectives that will be on the one hand and other objectives specifically oriented to the educational level can be defined. The general objectives are summarized in

- Research, create and apply teaching resources that facilitate the creative graphic development of students with special educational needs.
- Develop from the social inclusion and together to the ERASMUS + community, a graphic novel that is capable of transmitting the most representative values of the EU

## Specific Educational Objectives

We mention these objectives as specific educational as they will help to fulfill the general objectives and are characterized by their transversality. This means that they are based on theoretical lines that cross, impregnate, link and connect various subjects of the curriculum and, therefore, favor an overall vision within the teaching-learning process. Thus, you can see that the project is approached from subjects such as Spanish language, visual and plastic arts, history and geography and tutoring. The last one mentioned has been oriented to work on the concept of values that motivate the ERASMUS + project and also on those attitudes that will be necessary for the development of the project.

It can be seen then that the richness in the creative project development resides in the disciplinary variety from which it is approached and excludes its typecasting in a specific area or subject of the curriculum.

Thus, the Specific Educational Objectives are established as follows:

**At the end of the lesson plan using the methodological proposals, students will be able to**

- a. Apply various techniques for the development of a graphic story aimed at contributing to the collective creation of the graphic novel ERASMUS +: Soundwords.
- b. Recognize a graphic novel from the graphic and narrative elements that compose it.
- c. Select and use graphic resources to structure a representation in their personal sketchbooks.

- d. Represent graphic situations on a personal level and interpret those of others (semiotics)
- e. Know how to use text as a resource (support) for graphic representation (grammatical support ability).
- f. Look and experience in a preliminary way the concept of temporal logical sequence, reading a graphic novel.
- g. Recognize and differentiate the functions of drawing and narrative text in a graphic novel.
- h. Know and understand European values to work on the graphic novel.
- i. Promote the act of personal expression through graphic narration as an exercise in self-knowledge.
- j. Work the stroke and plastic skills

## Main Contents Soundwords To Be Developed

Content is understood as the set of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes that contribute to the achievement of the specific objectives of the project.

### Conceptual

- Media characteristics of the graphic narration: Comic, Graphic novel, story.
- Concept of temporality in the graphic narrative.
- Definition of body expression as a means of communication.
- Universal values.
- Geopolitical situation of the ERASMUS + project.

### Procedural

- Development of artistic-creative projects related to personal stories using photo-tracing graphic resources, step-by-step storytelling, collage.
- Interpretation of graphic resources.
- Experience body expression in the plane of emotions and everyday actions as a means of communication.
- Sequencing the invented stories to pass them to graphic novel format.
- Practical approach to visual language.
- Use of text as a grammatical resource to support graphic representation.

### Attitudinal

- Development of self-knowledge and management of one's emotions.
- Development of empathy and other representative values of the EU.
- Responsibility development regarding assigned tasks.
- Respect for the opinions and creations of others.