

An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí  
Junior **CYCLE**  
for teachers



# Graphic Novels - A Resource

# Why Study Graphic Novels?



- The graphic novel has depth of plot, character development, theme, etc.
- It has the classic areas of study found in a prose text. It also has the elements of film we study with students, allowing them to develop literacy in the interpretation of image for meaning. When students combine both aspects to investigate a text's effect on readers, they develop varied insights into how meaning is communicated and interpreted.
- They reduce the overall text load, therefore decreasing anxieties students might have regarding print-based reading

## Characteristics of a Graphic Novel

- Narrative work
- Usually in 1<sup>st</sup> person or autobiographical
- Story conveyed in sequential art
- Can use experimental design
- Usually in traditional comic format

# BASIC COMICS ANATOMY



GUTTER

# Panels

- A distinct segment of the comic, containing a combination of image and text in endless variety.
- Panels offer a different experience than simply reading text. They allow an immediate juxtaposition of the present and the past.
- Unlike other visual media, transitions are instantaneous and direct but the exact timing of the reader's experience is determined by focus and reading speed.

Source:

[http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson\\_images/lesson\\_1102/terms.pdf](http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson_1102/terms.pdf)



*This One Summer*, Mariko Tamaki (author) & Jillian Tamaki (illustrator) 2014



Graphic novels are  
read in the  
traditional way –  
left to right and top  
to bottom

*Jacob's Apartment*, Joshua Kemble

Source: <https://slideplayer.com/slide/7488751/>



Sometimes it  
can get a little  
more  
complicated...

*Palestine*, Joe Sacco

Source: <https://slideplayer.com/slide/7488751/>



But the basic  
left to right rule  
still applies

1

2

3

4



Palestine, Joe Sacco  
Source: <https://slideplayer.com/slide/7488751/>



# Word Balloon

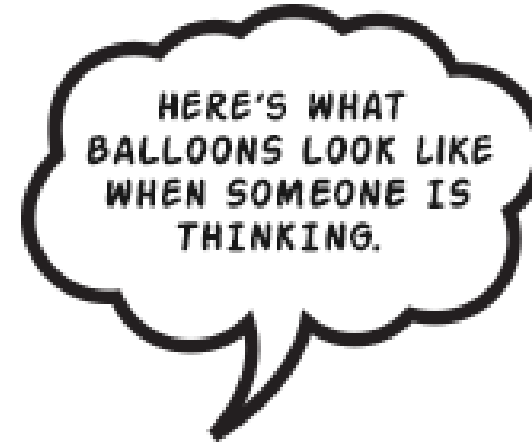
**TALKING**



**WHISPERING**



**THINKING**



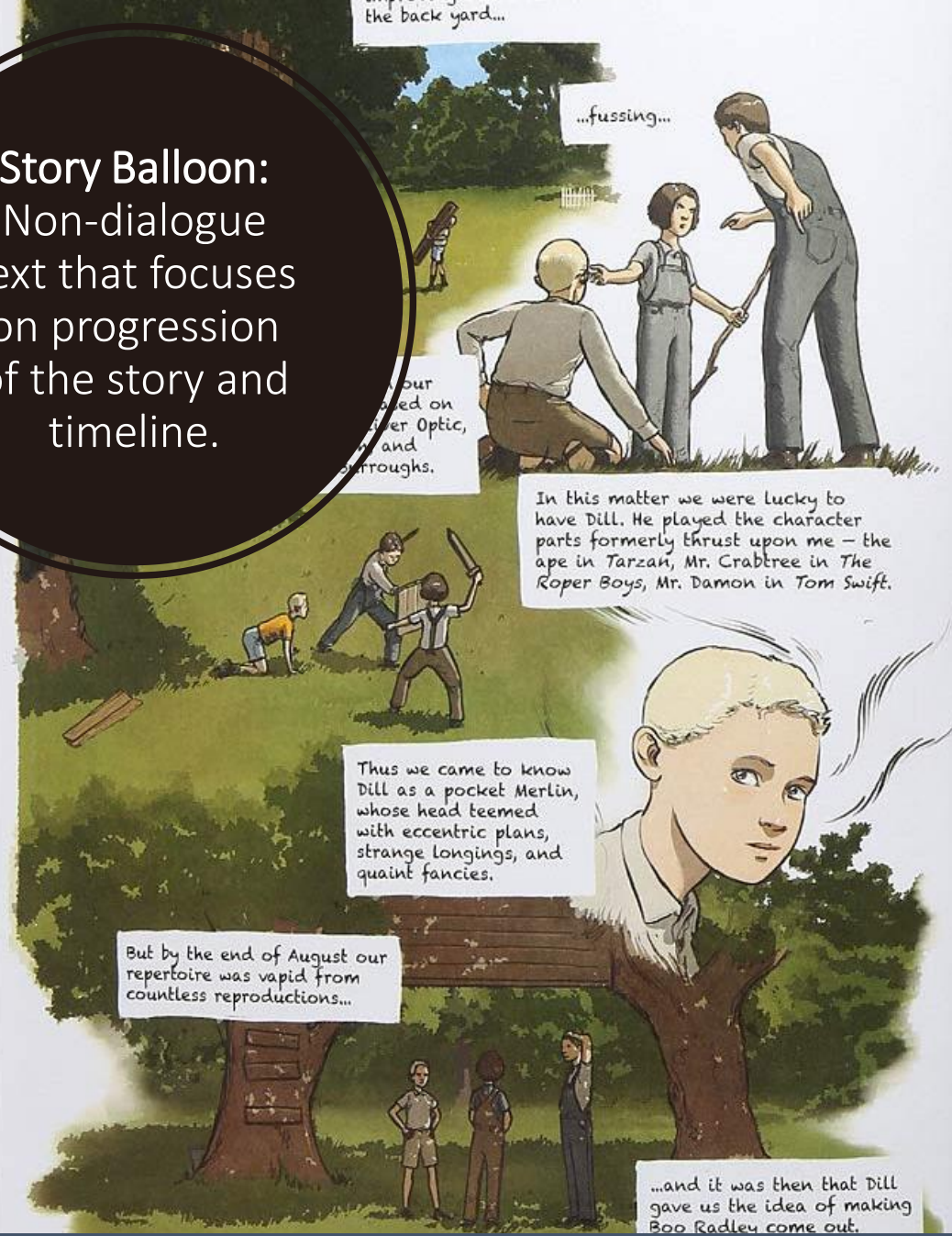
**SCREAMING**



Source: <https://community.articulate.com/articles/showing-conversation-and-messaging-in-elearning?page=2>

Enclose print-text and/or dialogue that divides artwork from printed text.

**Story Balloon:**  
 Non-dialogue  
 text that focuses  
 on progression  
 of the story and  
 timeline.



the back yard...

...fussing...

our  
 ed on  
 er Optic,  
 and  
 oughs.

In this matter we were lucky to have Dill. He played the character parts formerly thrust upon me - the ape in *Tarzan*, Mr. Crabtree in *The Roper Boys*, Mr. Damon in *Tom Swift*.

Thus we came to know Dill as a pocket Merlin, whose head teemed with eccentric plans, strange longings, and quaint fancies.

But by the end of August our repertoire was vapid from countless reproductions...

...and it was then that Dill gave us the idea of making Boo Radley come out.



...drew him as the moon draws water.

But drew him no nearer than the light-pole on the corner, a safe distance from the Radley gate.

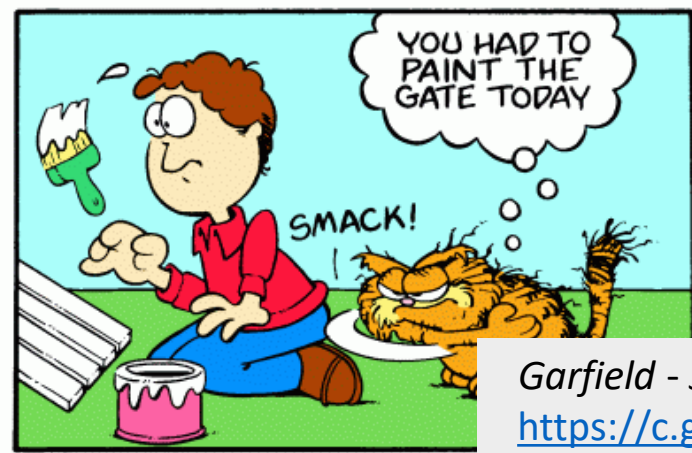
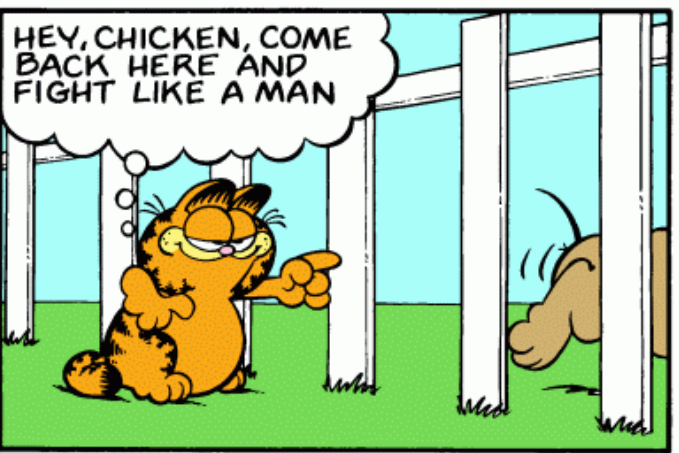
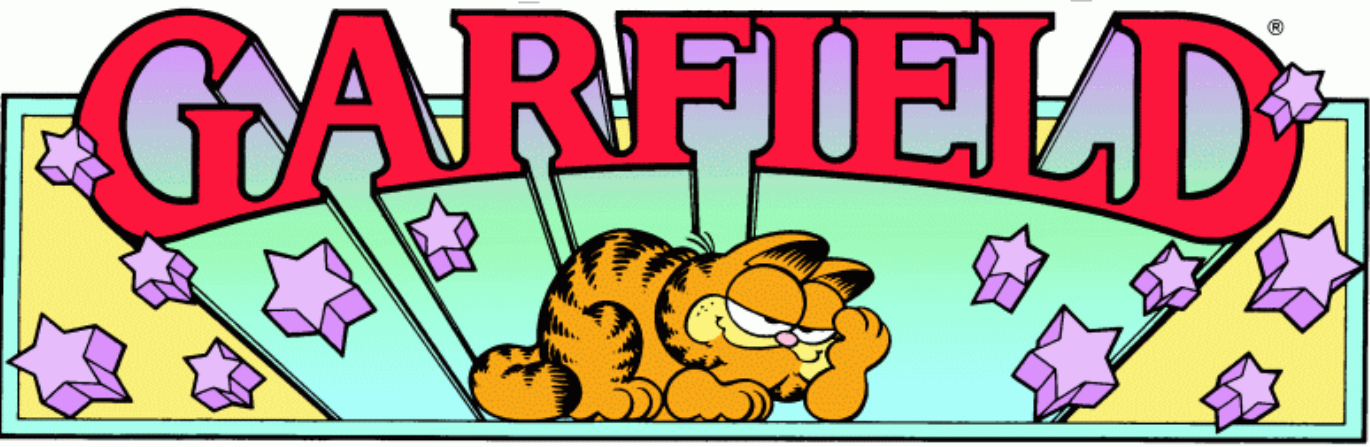
Inside the house lived a malevolent phantom.

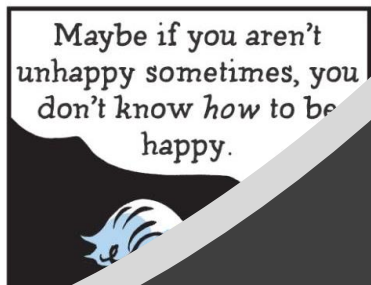
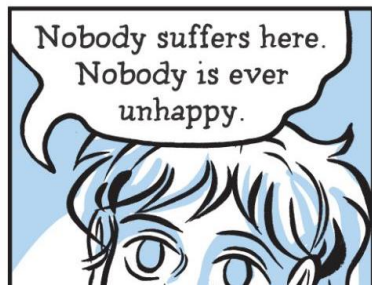
People said he existed, but Jem and I had never seen him.

People said he went out at night when the moon was down, and peeped in windows.

When people's azaleas froze in a cold snap, it was because he had breathed on them.

Thought Balloon:  
Focus on a  
character's  
thoughts and  
ideas.



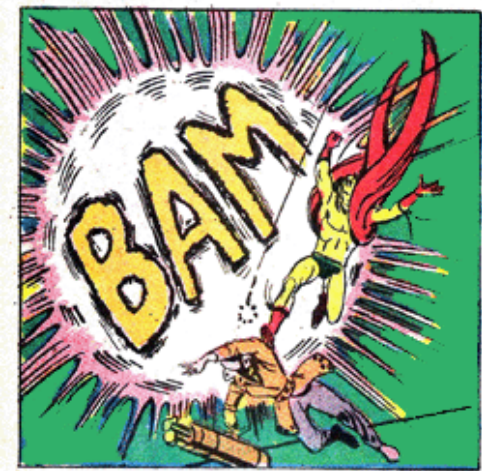
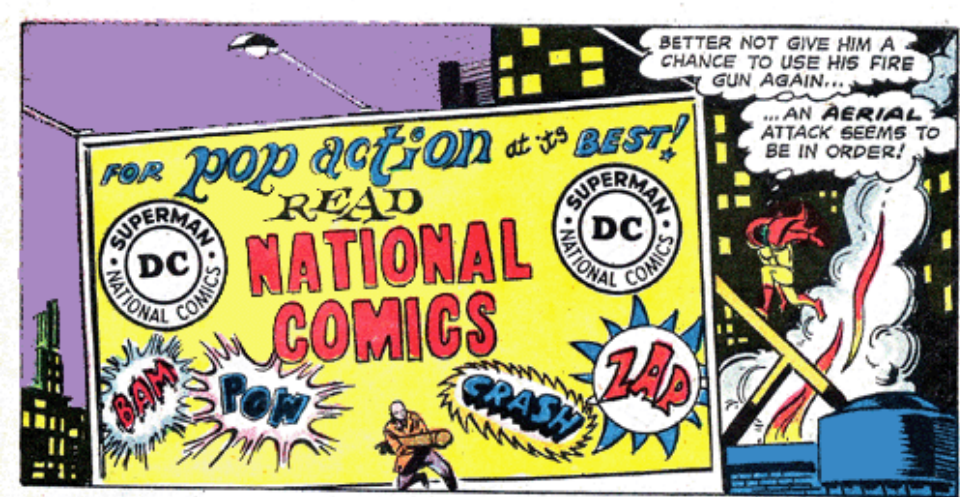


Dialogue Balloon:  
Focus on conversation  
between  
characters. This can be  
multiple characters  
speaking or one  
character speaking to  
themselves.

*A Wrinkle in Time: The Graphic Novel*  
by Hope Larson (Adapter, Illustrator),  
Madeleine L'Engle

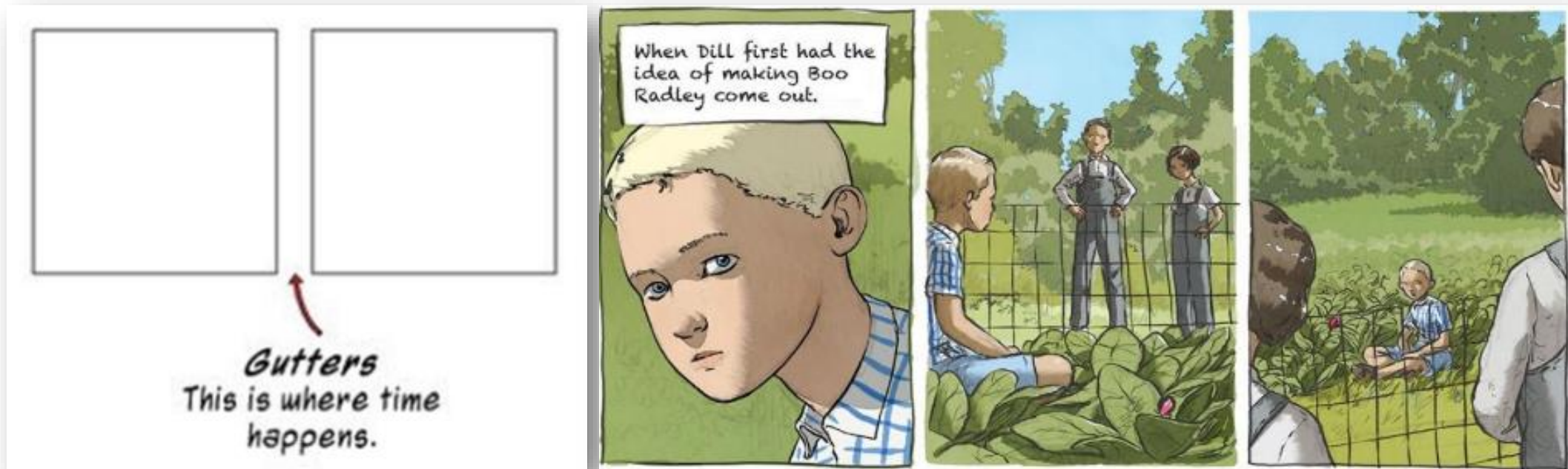
## Sound Effect Balloon:

Use text-onomatopoeia or images to convey sound in the story.



*Beware the Creeper* (1968 series) #2 by Steve Ditko  
<http://www.comicscube.com/2010/08/comics-techniques-and-tricks-steve.html>

# Gutters



TRAPPED ON  
THE EDGE OF A  
CLIFF, HIS  
MIND CAN  
ONLY CONCEIVE  
OF *ONE PATH*  
TO *SURVIVAL!*



*HE TAKES IT!*



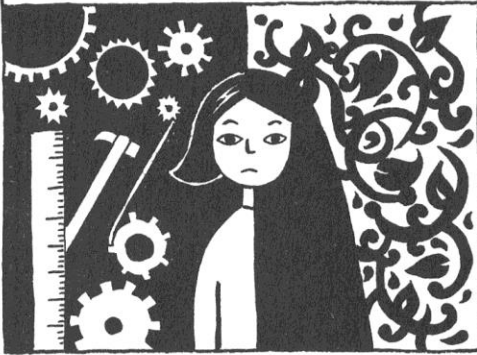
## Action to Action Gutter

Readers see a single subject or character going through specific transitions.

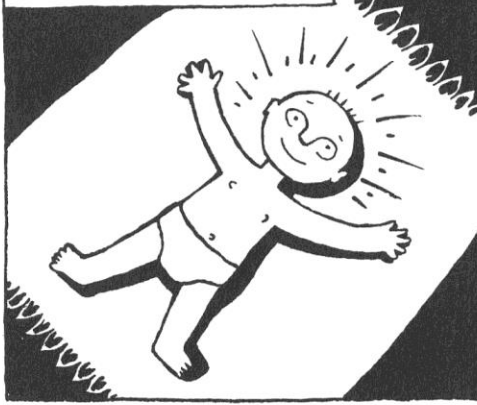
# Subject-to-Subject Gutter:

Readers move from one subject to another, progressing the storyline. This encourages reader involvement to find meaning in the transition.

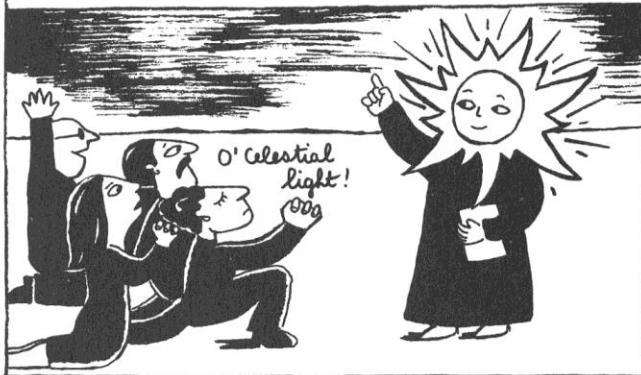
I REALLY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK ABOUT THE VEIL. DEEP DOWN I WAS VERY RELIGIOUS BUT AS A FAMILY WE WERE VERY MODERN AND AVANT-GARDE.



I WAS BORN WITH RELIGION.



AT THE AGE OF SIX I WAS ALREADY SURE I WAS THE LAST PROPHET. THIS WAS A FEW YEARS BEFORE THE REVOLUTION.



BEFORE ME THERE HAD BEEN A FEW OTHERS.

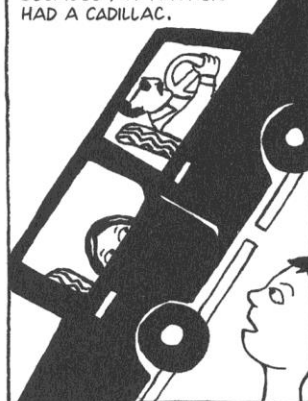


I WANTED TO BE A PROPHET...

BECAUSE OUR MAID DID NOT EAT WITH US.



BECAUSE MY FATHER HAD A CADILLAC.



AND, ABOVE ALL, BECAUSE MY GRANDMOTHER'S KNEES ALWAYS ACHED.

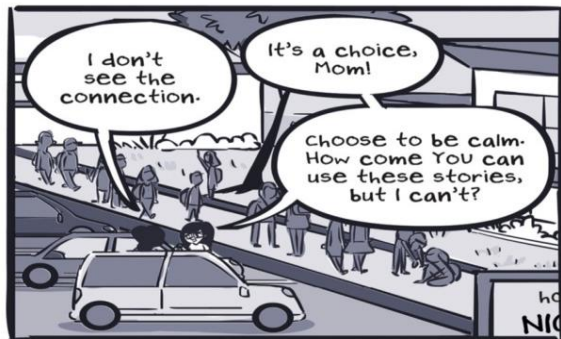
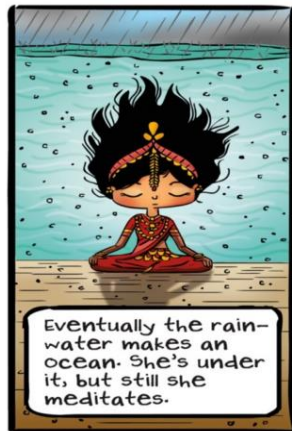
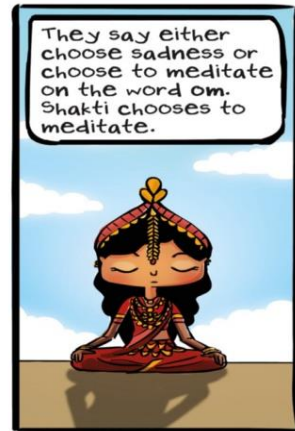


Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi

<http://knopfdoubleday.com/2009/06/30/the-veil-from-marjane-satrapi-persepolis/>



# Scene-to-Scene Gutter: Move readers across time or space, requiring readers to use deductive reasoning.



**Aspect-to-Aspect Gutter:**  
shows different aspects  
occurring simultaneously  
within the same scene.  
This can challenge  
readers to think about  
the characters feelings  
and emotions delivered  
across panels.

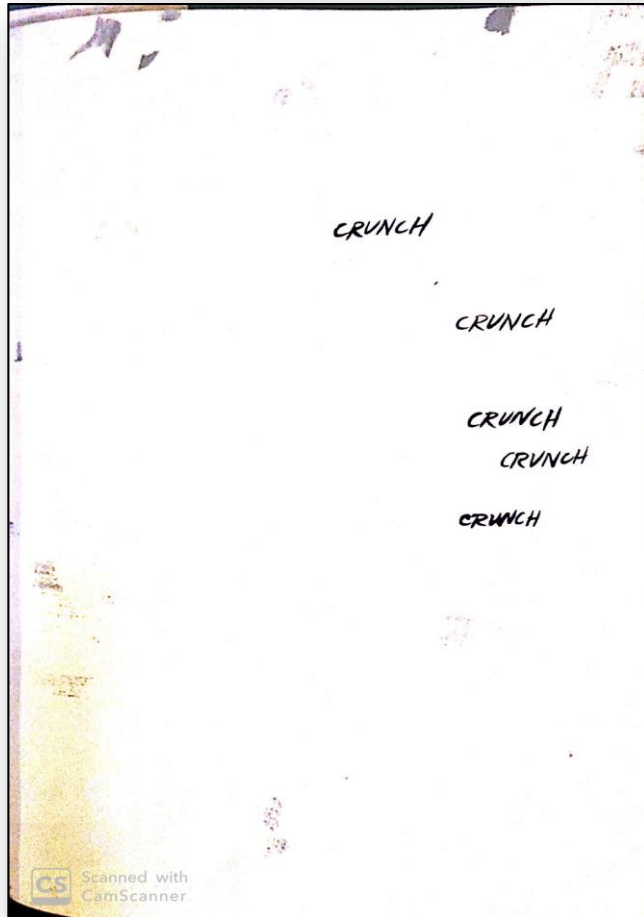




# Graphic Weight

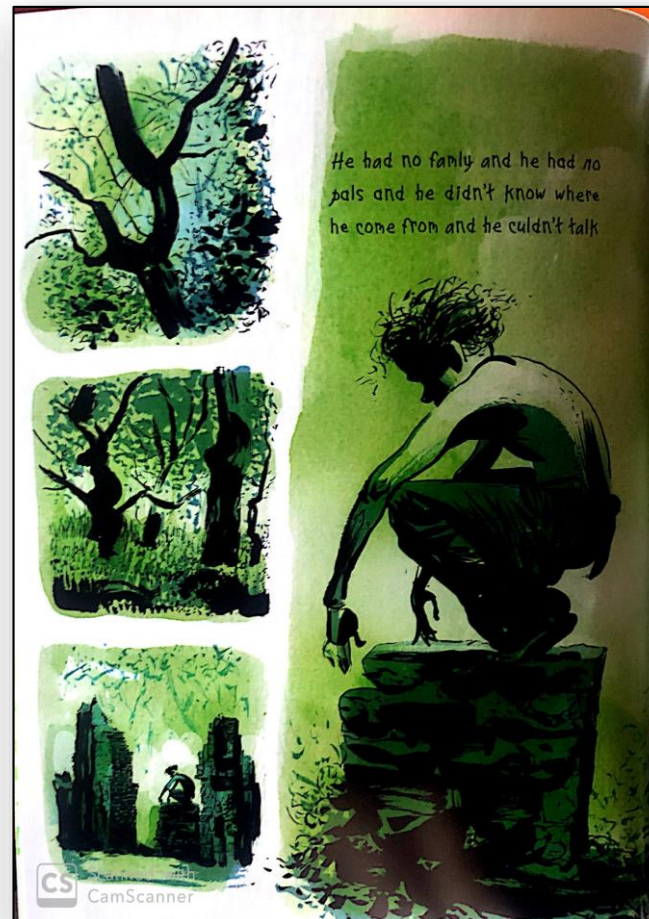
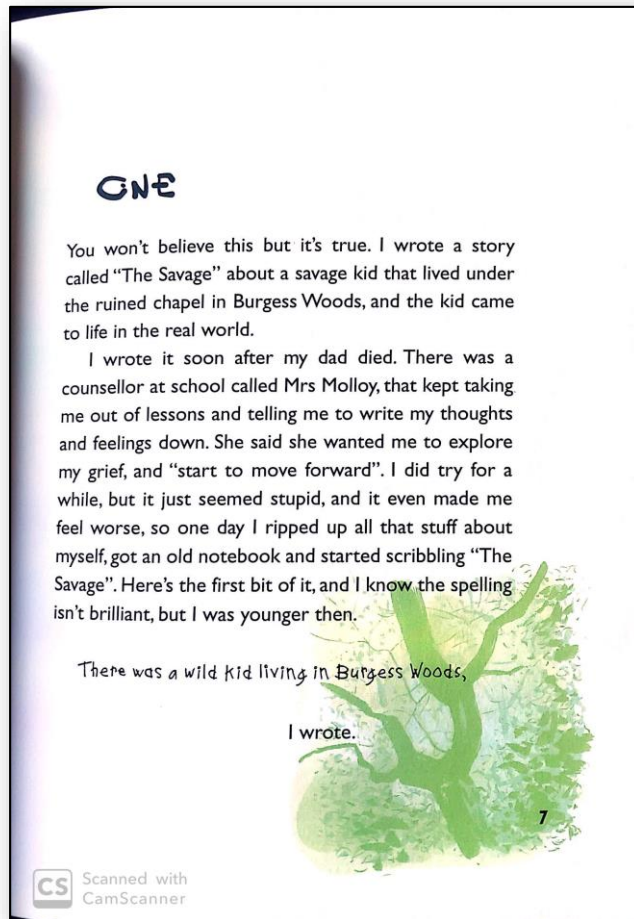
A term that describes the way some images draw the eye more than others, creating a definite focus using colour and shading in various ways

# Exploring the opening of *This One Summer*



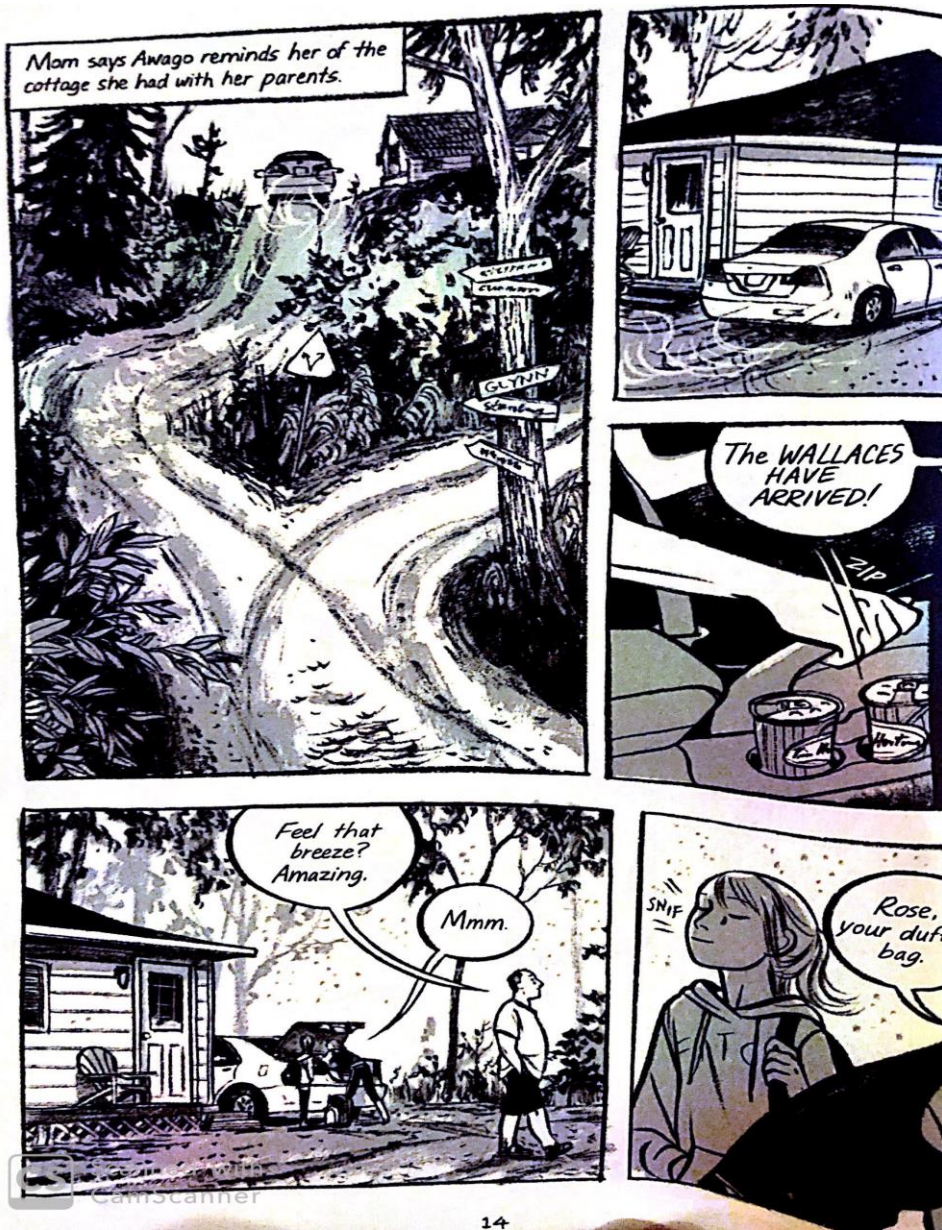
- Having read these two pages, what do you think about:
  - Setting
  - Characterisation
  - Story
- What's your overall impression?

# Exploring the opening of *The Savage*



- How does the opening of this graphic text help shape the reader's understanding?
- Examine the layout and placing of words in this text. What's the impact and overall effect of this opening?

# Discussion Points for *This One Summer*



## Panels and gutters

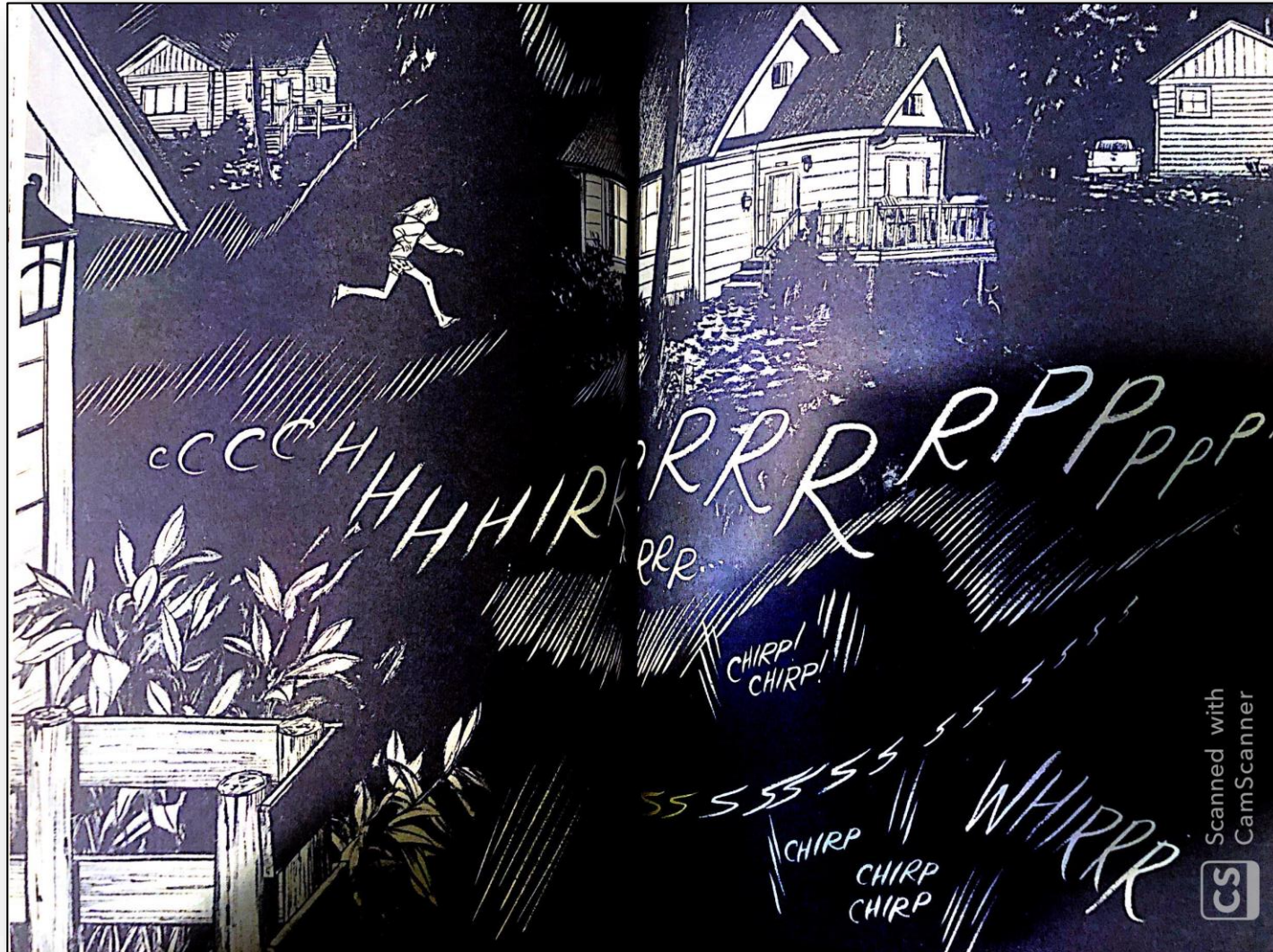
- Consider the size and shape of panels.
- How do they fit together?
- Do they interrupt or overlap with each other?
- Are there any images without any panel borders at all?
- What do the gutters add to how you understand the story?

# Discussion Points for *This One Summer*



- From reading this page, what do you think is the mood or atmosphere at this point in the story?

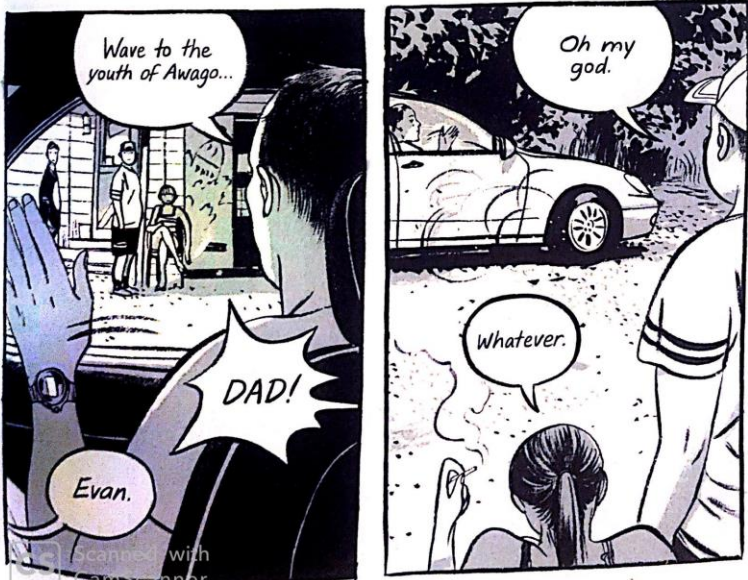
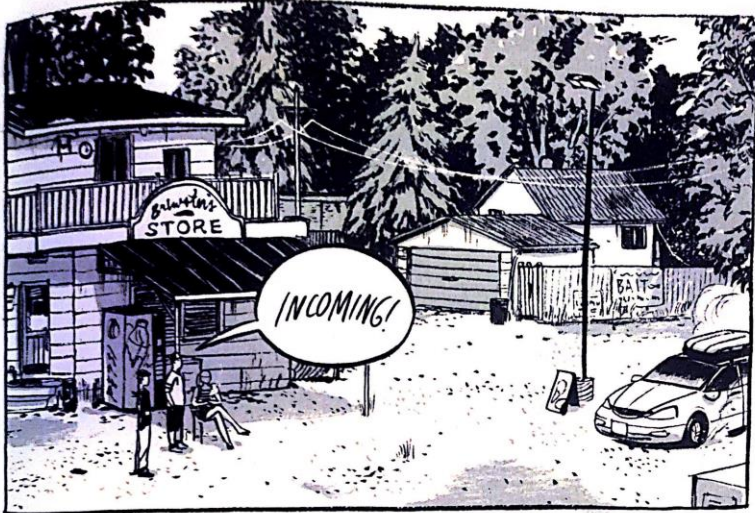
# Discussion Points for *This One Summer*



- How do you think the mood or atmosphere has changed from this image?



# Finding the elements of a graphic novel in *This One Summer*



- Can you find all the **elements** that make up graphic novels: panels, word balloons, sound effects, motion lines, narration, and background colours?
- What is the impact of these elements in this sequence?
- If you take out any one of these, what do you lose?
- Can you still understand the story?
- How do they help create meaning and shape the story?
- What insights to character do they give the reader?

# Examining a full-page panel from *This One Summer*

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- Many elements of graphic novels are like what you see in films.
- A graphic novel creator can be the director in deciding what each panel and page shows.
- Think about the frame of each panel: What are you seeing? What are you not seeing?
- What about the camera angle? How does it shape meaning?
- The distance from the subject of the panel?
- Allow students to create their own story based on a given panel from the Graphic Novel – encouraging them to engage with and **learn from models** of oral and written language use to enrich their own written work

# Examining a full-page panel from *The Savage*

Encourage students to create their own story based on a given panel from the Graphic Novel – encouraging them to engage with and **learn from models** of oral and written language use to enrich their own written work

