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AUDIENCE ANALYSIS: The process intends to describe making a comic book for beginners, both genders, and who have interest in the medium as readers or creators without technical knowledge.

Not Just Capes and Tights: The Process of Creating a Comic Book

The Mission:

Creating a comic book or a graphic novel has several steps and decisions are made even before a single image has been drawn. Artists and writers have their own processes to create comic books and the following is an overview described in *Making Comics* by Scott McCloud (Harper, 2006) and “How Comic Books Are Made” on the website <http://www.madehow.com/Volume-6/Comic-Book.html>

The process wont address materials needed or technique; the artist chooses the best fit for him or her.

Gathering the Heroes:

The main goal of comic book artists is to transmit their message clearly and persuade readers to follow a story with only images and words. The artist has several choices that can be condensed in five basic types:

1. Choice of Moment – deciding the moments being portrayed.
2. Choice of Frame - deciding the angle and distance of how reader will view these moments.
3. Choice of Image - rendering what will be seen.

4. Choice of Word – deciding words that will add information and complement the images.

5. Choice of Flow – deciding how readers will follow the story.

The artist uses them throughout each stage and with each panel. For example, the first step to create a graphic novel could be doing sketches (Choice of Image) or writing a script (Choice of Word).

The Hero's Birth:

A comic book needs characters, and since it is a visual medium, the artist must design characters' appearances, personalities, ambitions, and backgrounds. During this phase, artists create a basic model sheet, which is the blueprint of how a character will look. In this sheet, the character is drawn in different angles, clothes that it will mostly wear, and how artists can draw it too.

In summary, a successful character design must have three components:

A) an inner life - personality, backstory and motivations.

B) visual distinction - appearance or archetype.

C) expressive traits - how they express themselves.

What He Says and Hears:

In comic books, words are used for what characters say, the sound effects, and background information that readers need to know.

The single image and text in the panel can be combined seven different ways:

1. Word-specific - Reader knows everything from the words with a picture illustrating them.

2. Picture-specific - Reader knows everything from the picture and the words accentuate them.

3. Duo-specific - Words and the picture send same message to the reader.
4. Intersecting - Words and the picture work together while giving new information.
5. Interdependent – The picture and the words convey an idea together.
6. Parallel - Words and the picture follow different paths.
7. Montague. - Words and pictures are combined pictorially.

The artist advances the story with these seven techniques. They each have different advantages and uses. The writer (who can be the artist or a different person) pens the script, telling the story with a set number of pages and panels.

Now that the artist has characters and a script, the world is created. The artist creates a world full of details and texture that invoke other senses such as touch, smell, and even sound. With a combination of world building, script, and character design, the artist can develop his or her own comic book.

The World's Creation:

In the process of drawing places, characters, and actions, the comic book artists use their creativity for a fantasy world or do their research if they are trying to be as realistic as possible. The process at this stage has become more streamlined.

- 1) The artist creates for each page a thumbnail, a rough sketch that helps set up the scene and make any necessary changes.
- 2) Artist makes pencil drawings, using the thumbnail as a guide.
- 3) Artist darkens the main elements and draws background. Space is reserved for caption boxes, dialogue balloons, and sound effects with a blue pencil.

4) An editor views the work done so far, and he or she can ask for changes or redraws that are necessary at this stage.

5) The artist delivers the work to an inker who retraces the drawings with ink. The inker also adds shadows, texture, and effects.

6) The lettering of the words, dialogue and narration are added.

7) Work is sent to the colorist who, by using a guide, adds color to the pages before it goes to print.

Works Cited

"Comic Book." *How Products Are Made*, 2019, www.madehow.com/Volume-6/Comic-Book.html.

McCloud, Scott. *Making Comics Storytelling Secrets of Comics, Manga and Graphic Novels*. Harper, 2008.