

Relationship: An Autobiographical Comic Book
Professor Murphy - Communication 2110

PART I: WRITING

Step 01–The Pitch

Write down a pitch for your story. It should be a paragraph that describes the plot, characters, and location for your story. It is a brief outline that goes over the sequence of events and who was involved. Characters need to have a description of their motivation. An important part of this is to determine what it is that you want to say. Did you learn something? Did the event change you? Be sure to have a plot, characters, and a point.

Pitch_____/5

Step 02–The Brainstorm

Brainstorm your ideas for no less than ten minutes of continuous writing. This is a sketch. Get down on your paper. Don't worry about how well this is constructed; You will have time to fix things on the next go around. This will most likely look like a chaotic mess.

Brainstorm_____/5

Step 03–Rewrite

Look at details from your brainstorm and pitch that are important: highlight them. Find things that are unnecessary: cut them. Write out your story into a more organized prose form. Emphasize action and dialogue. Go back and draw a box around ideas to group them into chucks that will become panels. When depicting people in a conversation, avoid using more than one exchange, more than two word balloons, in one panel. Also, avoid more than twenty words in one balloon, or more than forty words per panel. In the end this should end up looking like a script with boxes drawn all over it.

Rewrite_____/5

Step 04–Show and Tell

This is where you start thinking about layout. Draw a line down the middle of a paper. On the left side write “show” and on the right side write “tell.” On the show side, describe the action you will draw. On the tell side, write out in script form any dialogue that will be written down, including the narrator. After each panel, draw a horizontal line and start on the next panel. Put the title and credits at the beginning (or the end).

Show	Tell
Nancy is sitting on the couch. Sid sits down next to her. He looks sad. Nancy is surprised.	Narrator: When I got home, I had to face the last person I wanted to hurt. Sid: I hate my life. Nancy: What happened? Was it school?
Sid turns away from Nancy. Nancy leans in towards Sid.	Sid: No, it wasn't that. It's the band. Nancy: Tell me about it.
Close up of Sid as he pauses in pain.	
Close up of Sid as he buries his face in a couch pillow to hide his tears.	Sid: They kicked me out!

Show and Tell_____/10

PART II: DRAWING

Step 01–Character Design and Model Sheets

Do a study of all your main characters. Use a single paper for each character so you can use it for quick reference. Draw them full body from at least two different angles. Practice drawing their face by doing five different emotional states. Write a brief description of their motivation and other important and distinguishing characteristics.

Character Sketch____/5

Step 02–Layout and Blocking

To paraphrase Bob Ross, big decisions need to be made here. Start thinking about how you want the panels to flow and how you want the characters to interact within each panel. Approach your story as a sequence of interconnected panels that complete a larger idea. Be sure to consider things like establishing shots and line of action. This will be a rough sketch that shows what you are going to pencil in the next step. Characters should only be blocked in using basic shapes. Take pictures with your phone to use as reference if it helps. You can draw small, putting two or four pages on a single piece of paper. Add in your narration and dialogue balloons to make sure you have enough room for your words. The idea is to make sure you have things planned out well in advance before mistakes mean starting over.

Layout and Blocking____/5

03–Pencils

This is where things get real. Using your layout and Show and Tell script as guides, begin putting things down. Start with light lines, making sure you can fit characters, environment, dialogue, and narration into the panel (this should have been worked out in the previous step). As things progress, use darker lines and finish things up. Use a ruler to make light lines as a guide for your lettering.

Pencils____/5

04–Ink

You can scan your pages in and ink them digitally, or ink them on the page. This step is to finalize your line work to give a crisp edge to your art and words. Erase any errant pencil marks. Also, if you are working digitally, you can use your computer to drop in your narration and dialog.

Ink____/5

05–Color and Finalize

If you want to color your comic, you can do so digitally or old school. If you want it to remain black and white, that is acceptable also. Your comic should be scanned in, 300 dpi, and be prepared for submission.

Color and Finalize____/5

Writing____/25

Drawing____/25

Total Points____/50