EdRugby Online Educational Resource

LESSON: Comic strip 1

LEVEL
Upper primary
Lower secondary

THEME: Teamwork

DESCRIPTION:

Students are introduced to the purpose and form of a comic strip. They read a short comic strip and deconstruct the form.

An ideal follow-up to this lesson is *Comic strip 2*.

OUTCOMES

This lesson contributes to the achievement of the following unit outcomes:

English

- Selects, uses and reflects on strategies appropriate for different texts and reading or viewing purposes.
- With peers, identifies information needs and finds resources for specific purposes.

The Arts

- Explores and uses several art elements and uses specific skills and techniques appropriate to the medium.

SUGGESTED TIME:

2 x 50 minutes

WHAT YOU NEED:

- class copies of student handouts (at the end of this lesson plan)
- highlighters or coloured pencils
- scissors and glue

TEAMWORK

australian RUGBY

PART 1 FUNCTION

a. Distribute Student handout – The comic strip. Ask students to scan the comic, 'Shortie saves the day', briefly reading and viewing the eight frames.

b. Explain that to fully understand the way the comic was constructed it is important to consider its function. Students may remember that function concerns a text's purpose and its context; how and why it was produced; what its style is; and what issues affect it.

   Question students as to what they think the function of 'Shortie saves the day' might be. Explain that a sporting organisation is to publish a series of comics which are designed to encourage Australians to play sport and develop qualities like leadership, team spirit, courage, sportsmanship and friendship. This comic is the first in the series. The hero will vary with the subject matter.

c. Ask students the following questions:

   Who is the intended audience for 'Shortie saves the day'?

   Why are the ideas presented in this form, a comic strip?

   Would the same ideas work in an educational pamphlet?

   Explain that the main aim of the comic is to convey the message that it is good to play sport and develop the positive qualities associated with it. The intended audience is children because the characters in the story are young. Students may include the fact that young people like comics and that comics can be read and understood more easily by people with different cultural backgrounds and educational standards.

PART 2 STRUCTURE AND LAYOUT FEATURES

a. Explain that the comic strip, 'Shortie saves the day', has a narrative structure made up of the same stages as other narratives such as short stories and novels. It has an orientation, a series of complications, a climax and a denouement. Each different part of a narrative has a different function and generates a different amount of tension.

   'Shortie saves the day' also has a narrator or observer who sets the scene and explains the action, and a main character or hero, Shortie, and minor characters such as Salem and Josh and the other players. Explain this is a common literary device.

TEAMWORK

b. Ask students to study the comic's structure. Indicate that the comic has:

– a title

– a story comprising a combination of written and visual text

– a narration, which in combination with visual elements gives the story's orientation, complications in the plot, and its climax, resolution and coda or moral

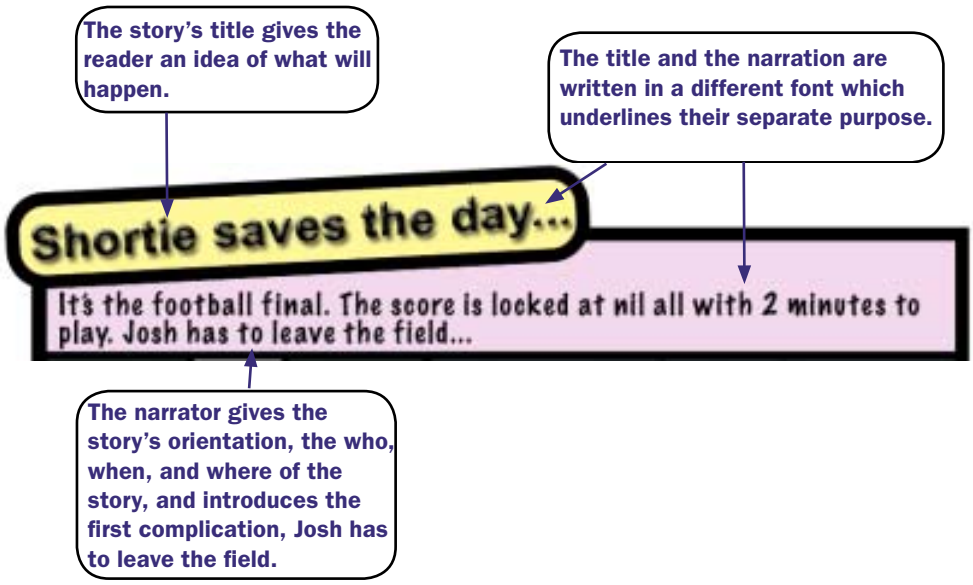
– a hero, who is central to the story and is central to the outcome.

Each different part of a narrative has a different function and generates a different amount of tension.

PART 3 TITLE AND ORIENTATION

a. Direct students' attention to the opening graphic which gives the name of the story, 'Shortie saves the day', and its orientation, the who, where and when of the story.

b. Explain that the story is set at a football ground, with two teams playing in a football final. The two teams are tied at nil all and there is only two minutes to go in the match. It also reveals the first complication: that Josh has to leave the field.

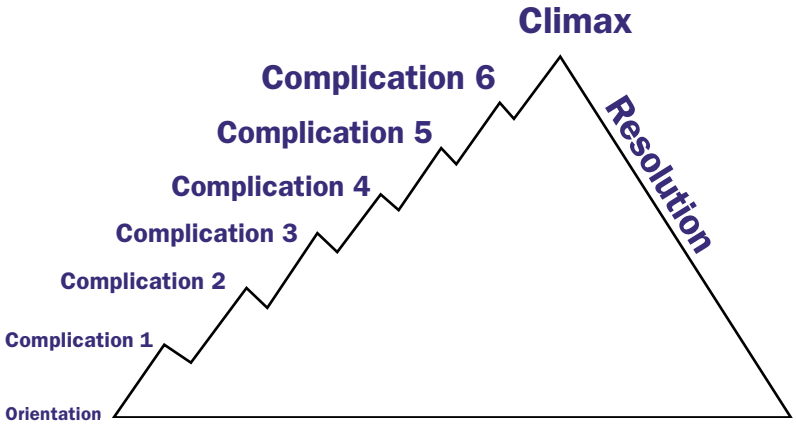


c. Ask students if they could predict what happens in the story from its title, orientation and first complication.

TEAMWORK

PART 4 COMPLICATION AND CLIMAX

a. Ask students to list some stories they enjoy. Discuss the plots of these narratives. Explain that narratives usually have plots that contain a series of events or complications, each event or complication building up the tension in the story until the climax is reached. The climax is the point of maximum tension, after which the plot comes to a resolution. Draw the following plot diagram to use with the discussion.



The structure of the narrative shows an increase in tension up to the climax and a decrease in tension with it's resolution.

b. Ask students to re-read the comic, thinking about how the tension mounts with each new complication to the plot. Remind students that the climax of a story is the point of maximum tension. Ask students to discuss which frame contains the part of the narrative where tension is at its peak.

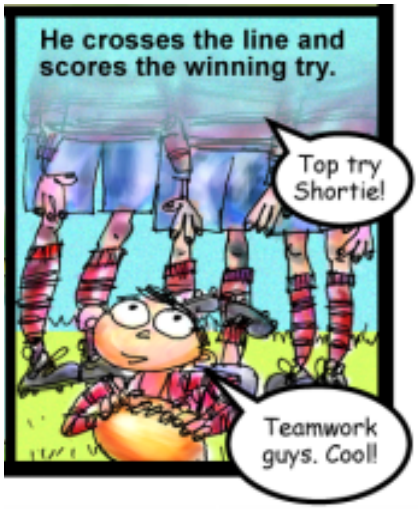
Climax

Shortie has to sidestep the opposition, who all seem very big. Will he make the final metre to score a try? Tension is highest at this part of the narrative and so this is the climax.

TEAMWORK

PART 5 RESOLUTION AND CODA

a. Explain that the resolution winds up the story, telling the reader what happens to the main characters after the climax.



Resolution

Shortie evades the other team and scores a try. His team members congratulate him and Shortie realises that teamwork has meant that his size didn't matter, that the team has won.

b. Explain that a resolution often includes a coda or moral of the story. This is a common device in narratives.

What is the coda in this story?

In this case the coda is: size doesn't matter, it's teamwork that counts.

c. Distribute Student handouts – Structure 1 and Structure 2. Ask students to complete the table on Structure 2 by cutting out the complications and placing them in the order in which they occur in the table. The table has already been started for them.

PART 6 COMPOSING A NARRATIVE

a. Explain to the students they will begin to plan creating their own cartoon strip. Explain that the hypothetical context is that a sporting organisation is holding a competition for students. It wants students to create a comic strip of no more than ten frames that will encourage young children to play sport and teach them sporting values. Students, in groups or individually, write the outline of a short, simple story that they will later turn into a comic strip. Their outlines should have:

- a title and orientation
- a sequence of complications leading up to a climax
- a resolution
- a coda.

b. Distribute Student handout – Storyboard and organise students into small groups. Each group should discuss their story and make decisions about what to call the comic strip, whether to have a narrator explaining the action and how long the comic strip should be. They can decide what each frame should show. Ask students to make a storyboard of the comic strip using the outline on the student handout.

PART 7 REFLECTION

Reflect on the importance of teamwork as illustrated by the comic. How have students learned sportsmanship and gained friends by taking part in sports or hobbies? Explore the ideas of teamwork that make up the production of a comic (ie writers, editors, illustrators, colourists, printers, etc).

PART 8 EXTENSION

- Use the Internet to find examples of other comics and cartoons. What coda, message or moral do they communicate?
- Develop stories that could be transformed into a comic.
- Compile ideas for comics and select one or two to develop as a class.

Explore www.rugby.com.au/edrugby (select 'ONLINE RESOURCE') for a student interactive activity related to this lesson.

TEAMWORK

TEAMWORK

Shortie saves the day...
It's the football final. The score is locked at nil all with 2 minutes to play. Josh has to leave the field...
How is it Josh?
It's only my ankle
You're on Shortie.
Not Shortie!! Whatta pipsqueak!!
As he runs on to replace Josh, Shortie knows this is his big chance.
Hope I don't drop the ball...
Salem gives Shortie the secret move...
Oranges and lemons.
Shortie feeds the scrum...
He gets the ball as it comes out of the scrum...
Oranges and lemons, oranges and lemons...
With the ball firmly under his arm he sidesteps the opposition...
Just another metre to go.
He crosses the line and scores the winning try.
Top try Shortie!
Teamwork guys. Cool!

STUDENT HANDOUT STRUCTURE 1

Shortie is worried about his abilities

A team member gives Shortie the secret

Shortie takes Josh's place

Shortie gets the ball as it comes out of the scrum

Shortie feeds the scrum

Josh is taken off with an injured ankle

Shortie sidesteps the opposition

TEAMWORK

STUDENT HANDOUT STRUCTURE 2

Orientation and complication 1	It's the football final and a nil-all draw with two minutes to play. Josh has to leave the field
Complication 2	
Complication 3	
Complication 4	
Complication 5	
Complication 6	
Climax	
Resolution	Shortie scores a try, showing the importance of team work.

TEAMWORK

STUDENT HANDOUT STORYBOARD

1 Title and orientation		
2 Complication 1	**3 Complication 2**	**4 Complication 3**
5 Complication 4	**6 Complication 5**	**7 Complication 6**
8 Complication 7	**9 Climax**	**10 Resolution and coda**