

# THE CHINATI FOUNDATION

## ILLUSTRATING OUR STORIES: PERSONAL NARRATIVES AND COMICS



**Grade Levels:** Adaptable to K-12

### Possible Materials

Paper, cardboard, pens, markers, pencils, erasers, paints, watercolors, ruler, etc.

### Vocabulary and Definitions

**Comic:** A comic is a story told through images and text. Comic illustration generally has a very specific style that is less concerned with realism, or the replication of observed reality, and often focuses on gesture, fantasy, storytelling, and, really importantly, highlighting an artist's drawing style. Comics are often told through a strip, or any number of scenes put together.

### Lesson Objectives

- To develop the skills of sharing emotion and experiences through a personal narrative.
- To create a work of art that uses drawing and narration.
- To develop a story that follows a plot, contains characters, themes, setting and/or time sequence through graphic and written language.
- To gain a further understanding of art-making terms such as composition, reception, color, aesthetics and scale.
- To broaden the artists' understanding of what fine art can be.

### Procedure and Prompts

1. After watching the video (<https://vimeo.com/410408673>), create a comic about what is happening in your school while we are sheltering-in-place. As we left everything as is, how do you think the objects in your classroom are spending their time? What do you imagine is taking place in your classroom? If you were able to have a view into these spaces, what might you see or discover? What if these spaces have a second life when you're not in them? What does this life look like?
2. The first thing to do when starting a new art project is to brainstorm! What happens in your story? Is this story about you? What does your school look like? How is it different than normal, if it is? Who is your main character? How many characters will there be? Are they humans? What will your characters look like? If a character experiences a number of emotions, how will their face and/or body change? How many panels will your comic have? What happens in each panel?
3. Draw the panels of your comic. These will act as frames for each scene. With pencil, sketch the scenes that take place in each panel. How does the view move from panel to panel? Are they sequential? Are there jumps in narration? If so, how will you guide the reader through your comic? How will we keep characters straight? Do you have a narration/text that is inside your panels? Is your story told purely through dialogue? Do you have text? How do you show the passing of time? Emotion? Reactions?
4. Finalize your drawing by going over your pencil marks with marker or pens. Does your comic have a title?



### **Expanding your project**

Once you have finished your comic, you may want to consider how to expand your project. Will your comic exist as a single work of art on whatever you created it on? Will you use a copy machine to create many prints? Will you photograph your comic? Is the comic you created the beginning of a greater book? Will you put it in an envelope and mail it to someone?

### **Reflection**

Now that you have completed your comic, it is important to reflect on your artmaking experience.

1. If your comic was about a personal experience, how did it feel to recreate it, to put it into words, to draw yourself?
2. Do you feel like you told your story successfully? Success can take many different shapes and should be defined by you, the artist.
3. What were your expectations about comic-making before creating your work? Did they change? Were some correct, some incorrect?
4. If you were to make your comic again, what would you do differently? What are you most proud of from this project?

### **Brainstorm and Sketch!**

Use the space below to brainstorm and sketch your comic.