

Panel Lottery

Panel lottery is a collaborative activity where participants create panels, and then, as a group, create a story using those panels.

Age appropriateness

This activity can work for various age groups. For teens and adults, discussion can delve into fairly sophisticated concepts of storytelling and the effects of panel juxtaposition. For kids, it could simply be a fun way to tell a story together.

Objectives

1. verbalization of narrative choices
2. understanding of how comics function by juxtaposing panels
3. learning how narrative choices later in a story can affect earlier understanding.
4. understanding panel transitions and the principle of closure (see *Drawing Words & Writing Pictures* chapter 4).

Materials

- blank 3 x 5 index cards or cut up paper at about the same size
- pencils and/or pens
- a box or bowl
- tape or push pins and a wall to post panels on

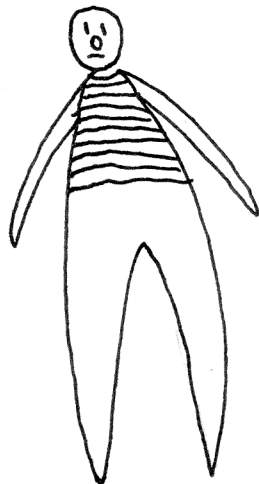
Instructions

Ask participants to draw a few random comics panels on index cards. (They should not tell a story). They don't need to be well-drawn or highly polished drawings. The goal is to produce a big pile of random, unrelated (except for the characters) comics panels.

1. Have participants use any of the following characters:



Pingüino



Lucky



Chris Kross

2. Have participants use either of the two following guidelines to come up with panel content:
 - a) They can choose any of the following instructions and use them as the starting point for a panel:
 - Somebody asking a question (no answer).
 - Somebody answering a question (no question).
 - Somebody walking through a doorway.
 - Somebody looking out of the panel with a surprised expression.
 - A punch or kick.
 - Somebody looking for someone or something.
 - A panel with no people in it.
 - A landscape with a single building in it.
 - A panel full of sound effects and/or emanata.
 - b) Have them take a comic off a shelf, close their eyes, open the book at random and put their finger on the page. Have them draw a new panel using the three characters above based on the panel they have randomly selected. (They shouldn't worry if it's a boring panel, in fact that's better, as they will see.)
3. When people finish their panels ask them to put them in the box or bowl.

Workshop leaders

Once you have collected a big pile of panels, pick one, and post it on the wall. (You can pull one at random but it might help to select one that suggests a promising beginning for a story.)

Have someone pass out all the rest of the panels to the people in the group. Each person should have a few panels, but ideally not the ones he/she drew.

Everyone should read the first panel on the wall. Then, those who think they have a panel that could follow should offer it. Take 3-5 and post them vertically next to the first panel.

Discuss as a group what each panel proposed does to the narrative. Does it suggest a change of scene? A continuation? Is it a total non-sequitur? Which characters are in your scene, and what is their relationship? Does that relationship change with the second panel?

Vote. The most popular choice for second panel goes in (You may exert some executive power if the popular choice will derail any narrative development). The others are returned to their owners.

Repeat. Notice how, as you move along in the story, some choices you make may cast a whole new light on the earlier sequences. Resist any impulse to allow the story to descend into chaos in the name of silliness. Choose panels that come together to make some kind of sense.

When you approach 10-15 panels, try to guide the group to some kind of conclusion, a wrapping up of the drama.