

# Comics: Easy as ABC!

by Ivan Brunetti

A TOON Graphic

Grades K-5

Lexile level=TBD

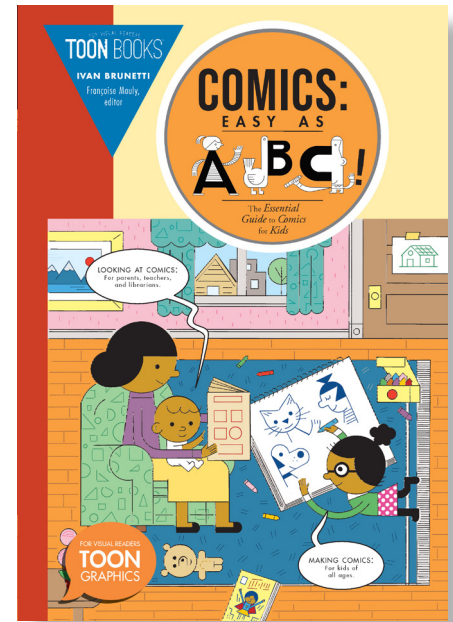
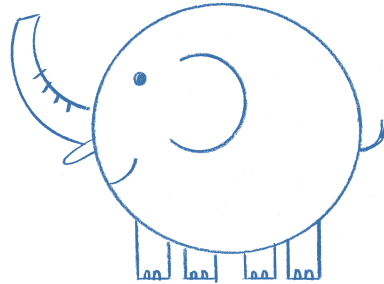
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## CCSS-aligned Guided Reading Lesson Plan

This lesson plan is designed to be used over a period of time. It can be divided into parts to fit teachers' schedules. Parts 2 and 3 can be done independently by students.

Part 1 is a discussion designed to encourage students, especially those who feel they're "not good artists" or who haven't had much experience drawing cartoons or comics.

Part 2 is addressed to students. It goes through the skills in the book and suggests that children practice them. Sections can be assigned for as much time as is required or convenient, or students can work at their own pace.

In the third part, students will make their own comics, starting with a four-panel strip and working up to a full comic whose length and subject matter they will choose.

The book develops skills from simple to more complex:

Children in grades K-1 can focus on pages 6-13 (doodling, basic shapes, making marks and patterns, drawing faces, giving characters emotions, drawing profiles).

Children in grades 2-3 should do all of those activities and then investigate pages 14-22 (using the ABCs, using clothes and props, drawing bodies, and drawing animals).

Students in grades 4 and up should do all of the previous activities and then move on to pages 23-41 (comics language, making characters cute or menacing, props, scale and setting, perspective, point of view, balloons and lettering, pages and panels, choosing a setting, using prompts, making a four-panel strip, and finding their own voice). Of course, high school and college students and adults can use this book, too!



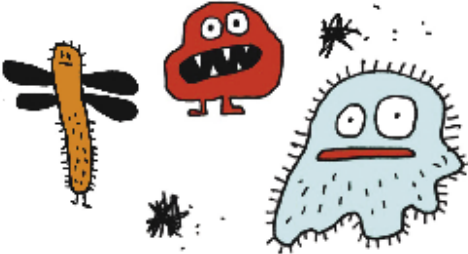



*These ideas are not set in stone. If a first-grader wants to work on animals, or if a second- or third-grader wants to try out balloons and lettering, by all means allow him or her to do so. The complexity of what children can do is very individual. Often they can understand and accomplish more than you might imagine.*



Everyone should do Part 1, either with the teacher or independently, depending on his or her age and ability to understand.

*The numbers in the left-hand column refer to the ELA Common Core State Standards being addressed. The Standards are listed by grade level at the end of this document.*

# Part 1

<p>RI.K.5, RI.K.6</p> <p>RI.K.1, RI.1.1, RI.1.7, RI.2.1, RI.3.1</p>	<p>Look at the front and back covers of the book and at the title. What do they make you think about drawing comics?</p> <p><i>Drawing comics is easy. People and things don't have to look exactly the way they do in real life. You can use many different shapes to represent them. The book is going to be lively and fun to use. Many people make comics.</i></p>  <p>Now look at Elise Gravel's "ugly drawings" on the inside cover. What makes her drawings ugly? Are they funny, too? Does a drawing have to be beautiful? Why or why not?</p>
<p><i>Some children say they don't like to draw because they're not good at it. But even art that is simple or what some people might call "ugly" can be meaningful and important--and even beautiful! You don't have to draw things exactly the way they look in real life to make a great cartoon or comic. Look at this drawing by a famous artist, Joan Miró.</i></p>	
	<p><i>Besides, there's more to art than drawing ...</i></p> <p><i>This painting (One: Number 31, 1950), by Jackson Pollock, is worth millions of dollars and was created by dripping paint on a canvas lying on the floor. It's in the Museum of Modern Art, in New York.</i></p>
<p><i>And look at this painting, by Yves Klein.</i></p>	

# Part 2

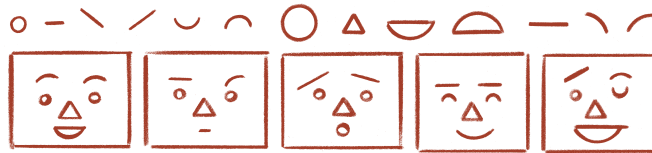
RI.K.6, RI.K.8,  
RI.1.7, RI.1.8



Ivan Brunetti says that doodling is the first step in cartooning. You should do it a lot. Just be careful of when and where you doodle! Use some of Brunetti's basic shapes, on page 6. Make marks, connect dots, and use patterns. (See page 7.) Things don't have to be complicated, unless you want to make them that way.

RI.K.1, RI.K.7,  
RI.1.1, RI.1.7,  
RI.3.1

On pages 9 and 10, Ivan shows you how to draw faces and how to use simple shapes to vary them. On page 11, he gives you hints at how to change the eyebrows, eyes, and mouth to show different emotions. Make some of your own faces showing some of these emotions. Are there other emotions you can show?

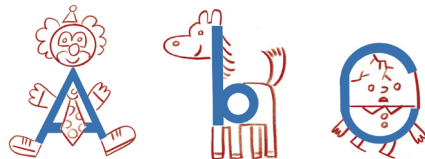


RI.K.1, RI.K.4,  
RI.K.7, RI.1.1,  
RI.1.4, RI.1.7

Now try drawing some profiles (pages 12-13). We get a different feeling when we view a face from the side.

RI.2.5, RI.2.6

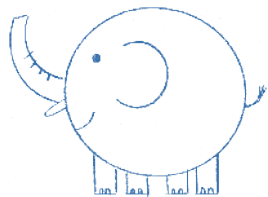
Pages 14 and 15: Can you make a drawing of a person or animal for every capital and small letter in the alphabet? Give it a try.



RI.2.2, RI.2.4,  
RI.2.6

Time to try some bodies, to see how much more they can tell us about the characters' personalities. Practice some, using Ivan's ideas on pages 16-19.

RI.2.2, RI.2.5,  
RI.2.6, RI.2.7



Animals are fun to draw, too, and you can make them with simple shapes. Look at pages 20-21, especially at the elephant on p. 20. And be sure to take Ivan's advice and look at real animals. You'll learn how their bodies are organized, and they'll help your imagination to grow.

RI.3.4, RI.3.7,  
RI.3.8

Study the comics language on page 23. You can use lines, symbols, stars, tears, bursts, and emanata to express different things. The word "emanata" comes from the word "emanate," which means to spread out from.

RI.3.7, RI.3.8

Page 24 has some good ideas to give your character personality. Try to draw some cute or menacing characters. Or friendly, timid, or excited ones.



RI.4.4, RI.4.7, RI.5.4,  
RI.6.4, RI.6.5, RI.6.7,  
RI.7.4



Props: You might think that props--objects that help you set the scene--are hard to draw, but Ivan shows you how to create them with simple shapes on page 25. Make some of your own. Keep a notebook of drawings of props that you can refer to when you want to use one in a cartoon or comic.

RI.4.4, RI.4.7, RI.4.8,  
RI.5.4, RI.5.8, RI.6.1,  
RI.6.4, RI.6.5, RI.6.7,  
RI.7.2, RI.7.4, RI.7.5

On page 26, you'll learn how to keep people's heads and bodies in proportion and how to create setting (where something happens) with a few details.

RI 4.1, RI.4.4, RI.4.7,  
RI.4.8, RI.5.1, RI.5.4,  
RI.5.6, RI.5.8, RI.6.1,  
RI.6.2, RI.6.4, RI.6.5,  
RI.6.6, RI.6.7, RI.7.1,  
RI.7.2, RI.7.4, RI.7.5,  
RI.8.2, RI.8.4

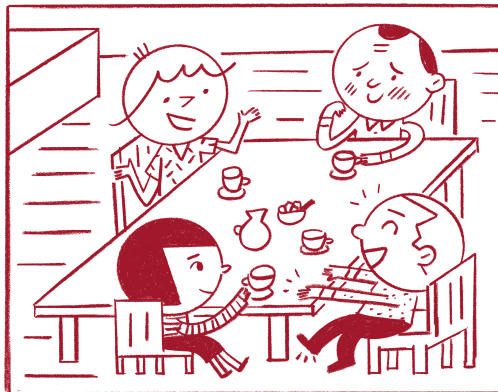


Read page 27 to learn about perspective, which is creating the illusion of depth on paper. Practice some one- and two-point perspective. Then try Ivan's way of showing space on page 28.

RI.4.1, RI.4.4, RI.4.7,  
RI.5.1, RI.5.4, RI.5.7,  
RI.6.1, RI.6.2, RI.6.4,  
RI.6.5, RI.6.6, RI.6.7,  
RI.7.1, RI.7.2, RI.7.4,  
RI.7.5, RI.8.3, RI.8.

Page 29: Do you always have to show the whole setting?  
Think about how to use long shots, medium shots, and close-ups in your story.  
Why would you choose one over the others?

### LONG SHOT - MEDIUM SHOT - CLOSE-UP



A long shot (left) sets the scene. Close-ups (above) are a good way to bring attention to the character's emotions.

RI.4.1, RI.4.2, RI.4.4,  
RI.4.7, RI.4.8, RI.5.1,  
RI.5.2, RI. 5.4, RI. 5.8,  
RI.6.1, RI.6.2, RI.6.4,  
RI.6.5, RI.6.6, RI.6.7,  
RI.7.1, RI.7.2, RI.7.4,  
RI.7.5, RI.8.3, RI.8.4



Time for balloons and lettering. Draw a character or group of characters talking and try to express their feelings with different kinds of balloons and lettering. Use some sound effects, too.





# Part 3

Now that you've been practicing, it's time to work on your own comic:

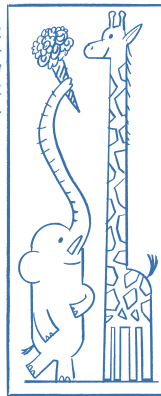
Think about where it's going to take place. Choose a setting (page 34).



Should you draw first or write your story first? On page 35, Ivan says, "You can start with either, but think about what you'll be drawing. Try to show the characters somewhere, doing something. It's always good to let pictures suggest other pictures and tell the story." So make a plan, either in words or pictures.



Tall scenes need tall panels.



Think about how you will organize your story into panels on a page or pages. Ivan has very good advice on pages 32-33. Do you want to use a spread to make a big, dramatic drawing? Ivan has given you ideas for characters, settings, and props on pages 36-37.



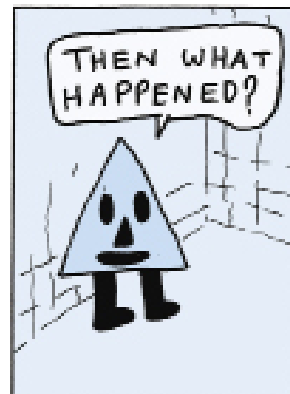
Wide scenes need wide panels.

**SIMPLER IS BETTER**

Give your characters enough room to breathe.

Before you create a long comic, try a four-panel one (pages 38-39). Make sure that your fourth panel is your punch line (page 32).

MARK CONNERY



A Tragedy

You're all set! Have fun! Remember, practice makes perfect.

Below are the ELA Common Core State Standards for Reading for Information addressed in this book by grade level.

	<b>Key Ideas and Details</b>	<b>Craft and Structure</b>	<b>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</b>
<b>K</b>	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.1 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.4 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.  CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.6 Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.7 With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts).  CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.8 With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.
<b>1</b>	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.4 Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words or phrases in a text.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.7 Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.  CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.8 Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.
<b>2</b>	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.2 Identify the main topic of a multiparagraph text as well as the focus of specific paragraphs within the text.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 2 topic or subject area.  CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.5 Know and use various text features (e.g., captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts o information in a text efficiently.  CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.6 Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.7 Explain how specific images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.
<b>3</b>	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.7 Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).  CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.8 Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/ third in a sequence).
<b>4</b>	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7 Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.  CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.8 Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

	<b>Key Ideas and Details</b>	<b>Craft and Structure</b>	<b>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</b>
<b>5</b>	<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2 Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.</p>	<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6 Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.</p>	<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7 Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.8 Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).</p>
<b>6</b>	<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.2 Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.</p>	<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.5 Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.</p>	<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.7 Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.</p>
<b>7</b>	<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.7.2 Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.</p>	<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.7.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.7.5 Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.3. Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).</p>	<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p>	