

Comic Book Primer

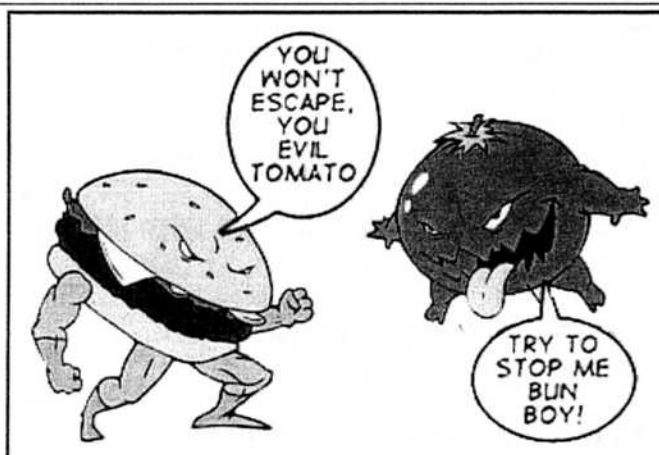
Roles in Comic Book Production:

- **Writer:** the person who writes the script from which the story will emerge.
- **Artist:** the person who draws the script, usually using pencils.
- **Inker:** the person who goes over the artist's pencil lines with ink to make them stand out.
- **Colorist:** the person who colors the inker's and artists' work, sometimes by hand and sometimes using software.
- **Letterer:** the person who puts the words in the right places and makes them clearly legible. The letterer might also put in the sound effects.
- **Editor:** the person who looks over the stories for errors as well as helps the creative team find direction for telling the stories.
- **Editor-In-Chief:** the boss! The person all of the above must make happy.

Parts of a comic book:

- **Script:** all the written directions for how the comic book will get put together; the dialogue for the comic.
- **Pages:** parts in the script where the writer tells what should be on each page.
- **Panels:** rectangles or squares where the action of the script will go.
- **Word balloons:** to show where people speak.
- **Thought balloons:** to show when people are thinking.
- **Narratory blocks:** little rectangles or squares where a narrator, maybe a character from the story, shares special information with us.
- **Open panels:** panels where one or more, or even all, of the sides are open to help show dramatic effect.
- **Splash page:** usually a panel that takes up the whole page, used to help introduce stories or give special attention to battles or particular events.

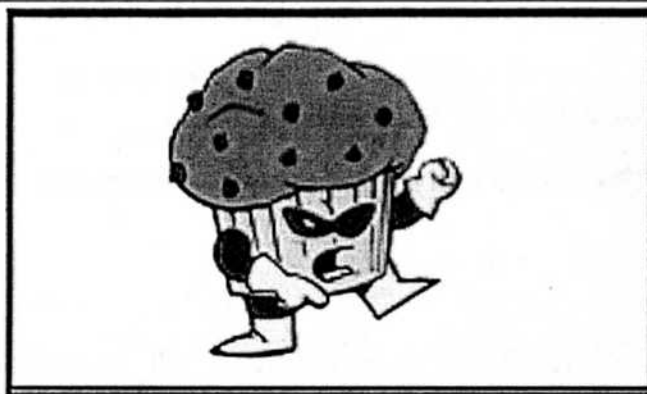
Comic Vocabulary Definitions and Examples: Text Containers



Balloons

(AKA speech balloons, bubbles)
The objects that are used to contain the dialogue that the characters in the comic speak.

Balloons are frequently rounded, but can take many shapes included rectangular. They typically have smooth edges, but can also have jagged or irregular edges.



DO YOU KNOW THE MUFFIN MAN?

Caption

Text that speaks directly to the reader. Frequently, the text appears below the comic panel, but it can be placed in beside or above it as well.



Emanata

Text or icons that represent what's going on in the character's head.

Examples:

- ? to indicate confusion
- ZZZ to indicate sleeping
- light bulb to indicate an idea
- @\$%#\$ to indicate anger

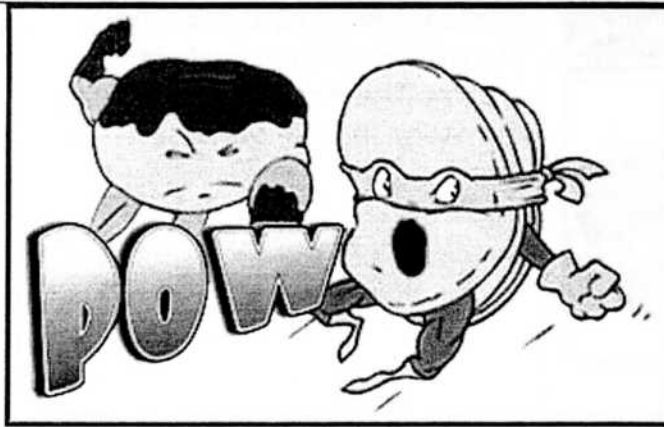
Emanata are different from motion or speed lines, which indicate that a character is moving.

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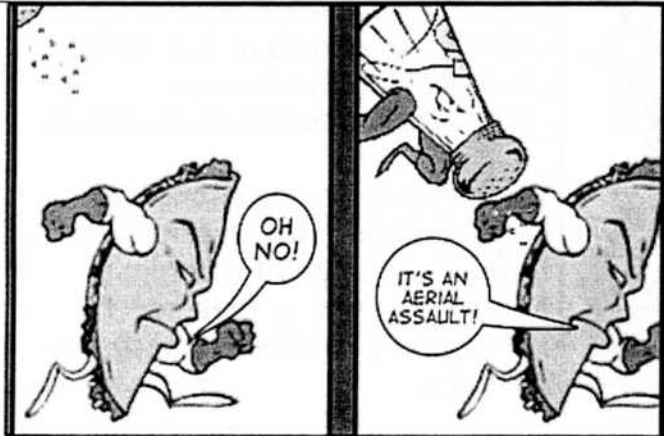
Comic Vocabulary Definitions and Examples: Layout & Design



Border

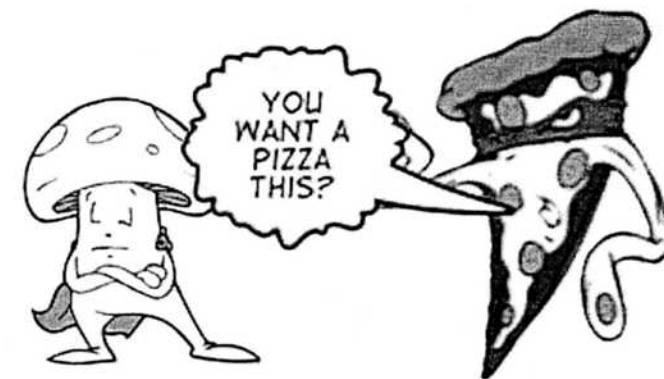
(AKA panel frame)

The edge or outline of the comic page (shaded red in this example).



Gutters

The space between the panels of the comic (shaded red in this example).



Open Panels

(AKA Borderless Panels)

Panels where one or more, or even all, of the sides of the comic panel are open to show dramatic effect.

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ON A KITCHEN COUNTER SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY



Panel

(AKA frame)

Rectangles or squares where the action of the comic is drawn. The example here tells the story in four panels.

SUDDENLY THE FOOD FIGHT CONSUMED EVERYONE'S ATTENTION.



Splash Panel

A panel that takes up the space of several panels in the comic in order to introduce or highlight an action or character.

Splash panels are similar to *splash pages*, which takes up the whole page of a comic to help introduce or give special attention to battles or particular events.

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Labels

Text labels written on characters in comics. The label can be the character's name or a more general label that identifies the character as part of a general group.

Labels are frequently used in political cartoons to identify the specific public figures who are included in the scene.

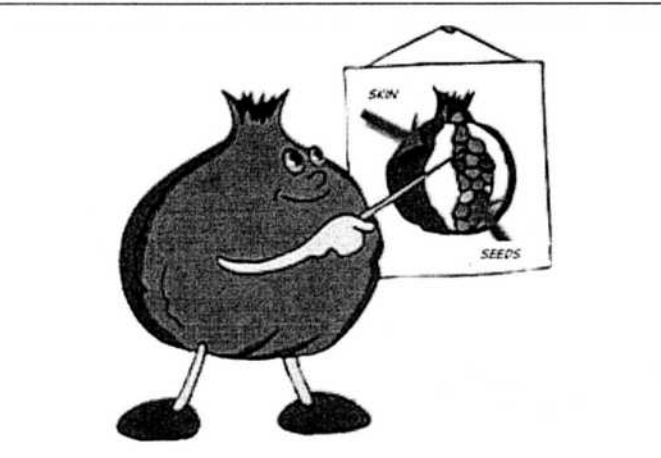
HAVING BROKEN THE VASE, SUPERCRAAB SNEAKS OFF TO CAUSE TROUBLE ELSEWHERE...



Narratory Blocks

(AKA narrative box, voice-over)
Rectangles or squares in which a narrator or a character from the story shares special information with readers.

The box usually narrates something that is happening in the scene or that happened before the scene in the panel.



Signs

Text labels written on objects in comics. Signs may be used to identify an object or to provide more information that is important to the scene.

The sign can be a familiar object to the reader, like a stop sign; but they can also identify objects that may not be clear to the reader.

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CRASH!!!



Sound Effect

Words that indicate a sound that accompanies the comic panel.

Examples:

BANG
WHAM
POW
BOING



Thought Balloon

Objects used to contain a character's thoughts.

These text containers are sometimes called thought bubbles because of the trail of little bubbles that connect the thought balloon to the character in the comic.

Comic Vocabulary Definitions and Examples: Angles



Bleed

Images that run outside the border of the panel. In this example, the top and bottom of the taco as well as the taco's left arm bleed outside of the comic panel.

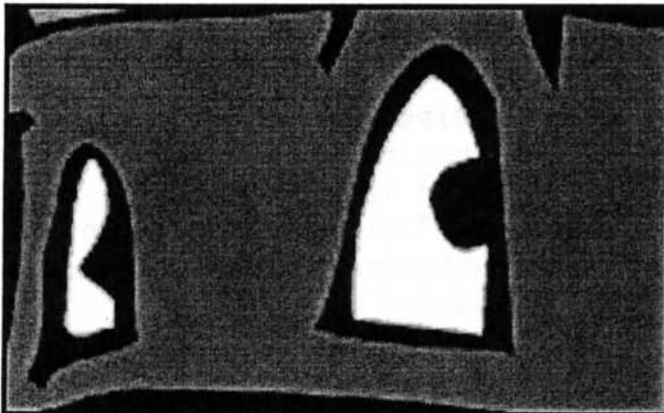
When an image runs outside the panel on all four sides, it is called a *full bleed*. Comic book covers frequently use a full bleed.



Close-up

Images that are shown in a large view. Frequently, close-ups focus on a character's face, but they can be used to highlight anything.

This example shows a close-up on a specific character from the comic.



Extreme Close-up

Images that are shown in very large view, often focusing on a small portion of a larger object or character.

The image in a comic is drawn as if the artist as zoomed in very closely on the object or character.

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