

TOPIC: Comics

SUBJECT: LITERATURE

LEVEL/AGE: 11-12 YEARS OLD

FOREKNOWLEDGE: No prior knowledge required

LENGTH: 7 PAGES (DURATION: 80 MINUTES)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the lesson, students will know:

- The History of comic books
 - The elements composing a comic book page
 - The different 'camera' shots
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RESOURCES

Comic books, visual documents, video projector or screen, YouTube videos

TEACHING METHODS

Visual documents

Repetition exercises

Explanatory videos

ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION (3 minutes)

Comic books have gained popularity since their birth in the early 1800s, evolving from traditional scrolls and short newspaper strips to full book series since the 1920s and growing all over the world in various forms.

Some of the first and most famous names are, for example, American superheroes such as Superman and Batman, Franco-Belgian characters (from 'bande dessinée') like the Smurfs and Tintin, and Asian precursors (from Japanese 'manga') with Astro Boy and Doraemon.

Each of these regions of the world adopted different codes, styles, and terminology, although some are similar across all types of comics.

REVISION (10 minutes)

Organise a brainstorming session where students list what they know about comics, their components and how to read them (left to right, top to bottom; varies with Asian 'manga/manhua/manhwa', which are read right to left). Ask the pupils to explain the meaning of each element and its purpose.

If they don't have much knowledge of this topic, ask them to name comic book characters they know (superheroes or anime adaptations) and provide physical or visual documents as examples to make them identify and develop which elements they have in common and how they could be named.

Write down what is suggested to provide a clear informative basis.

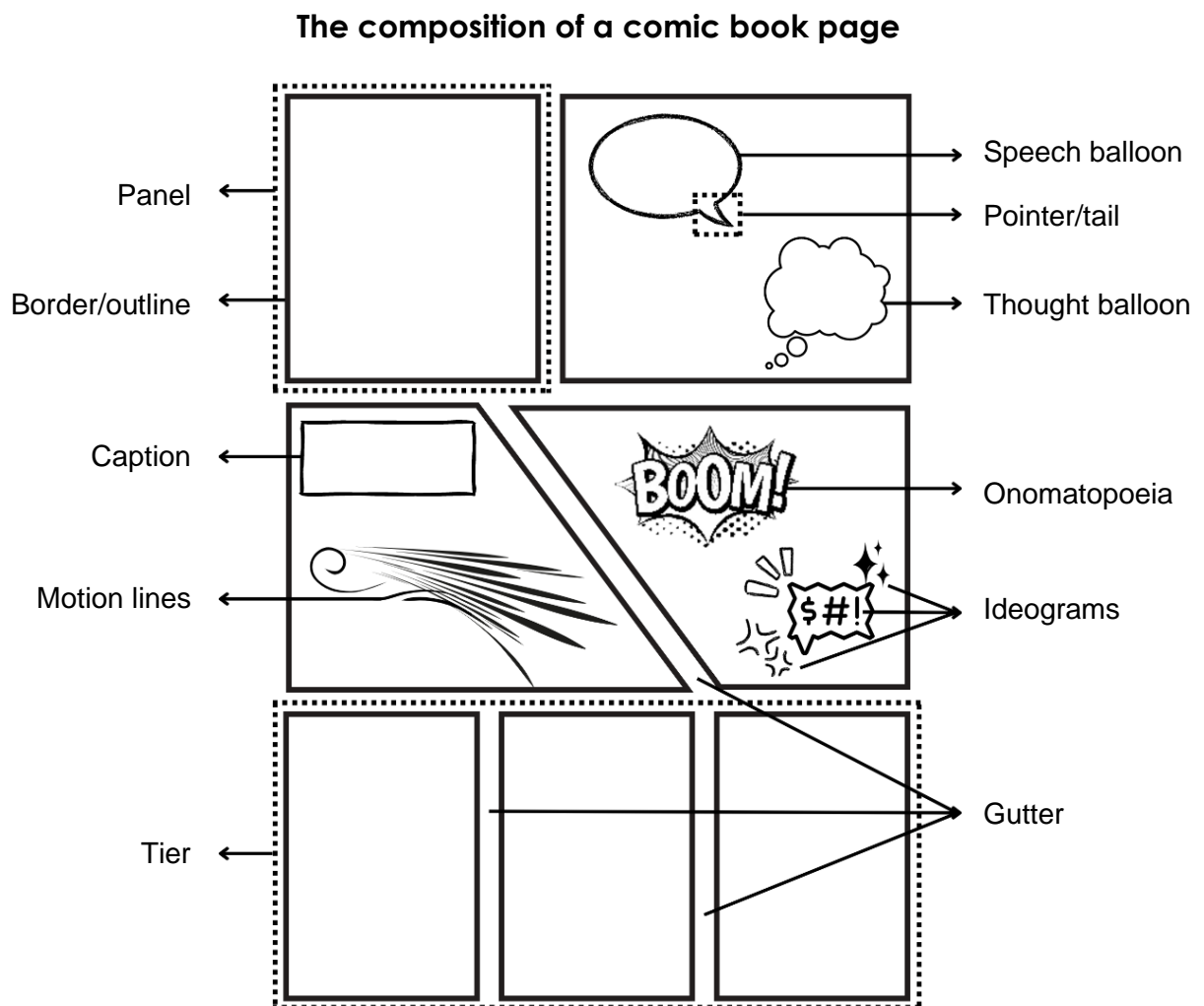
Note: The homework adventure "Between the pages" can be used as an introduction, considering it has a low difficulty level, does not require prior knowledge of the topic, and provides a theoretical and practical basis in the

form of blank comic pages that students can complete throughout the story (see Theory part below) with the terminology of comic page composition and the names of different shots that they learn during the homework.

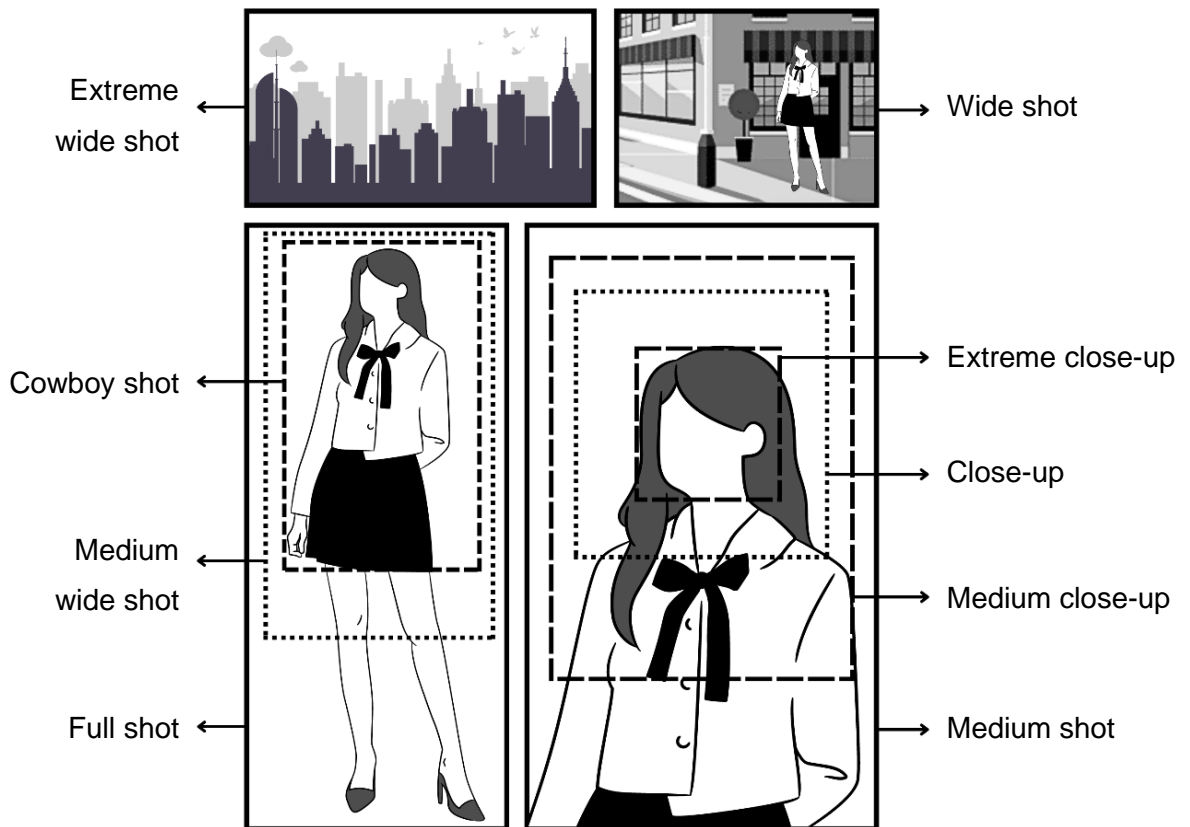
THEORY PART (10 minutes)

Provide documents depicting comic book pages, whether curated for this purpose or from existing media, identifying each component and type of shot used. You can either provide the terminology and ask students to analyse it and deduce the purpose of each element or provide a full list of vocabulary and its meaning and purpose with visual representation.

Examples (blank versions provided with the adventure “Between the pages”):



The types of 'camera' shots



Note: If you used the adventure “Between the pages” as an introduction, the students should have already completed these documents. This part could consist of sharing what they have written down and bringing their answers together to make sure they have the correct information.

To develop, you can also play a video that explains the components of a comic book, with more terminology and explanations on how to read a comic page or how to make it look dynamic.

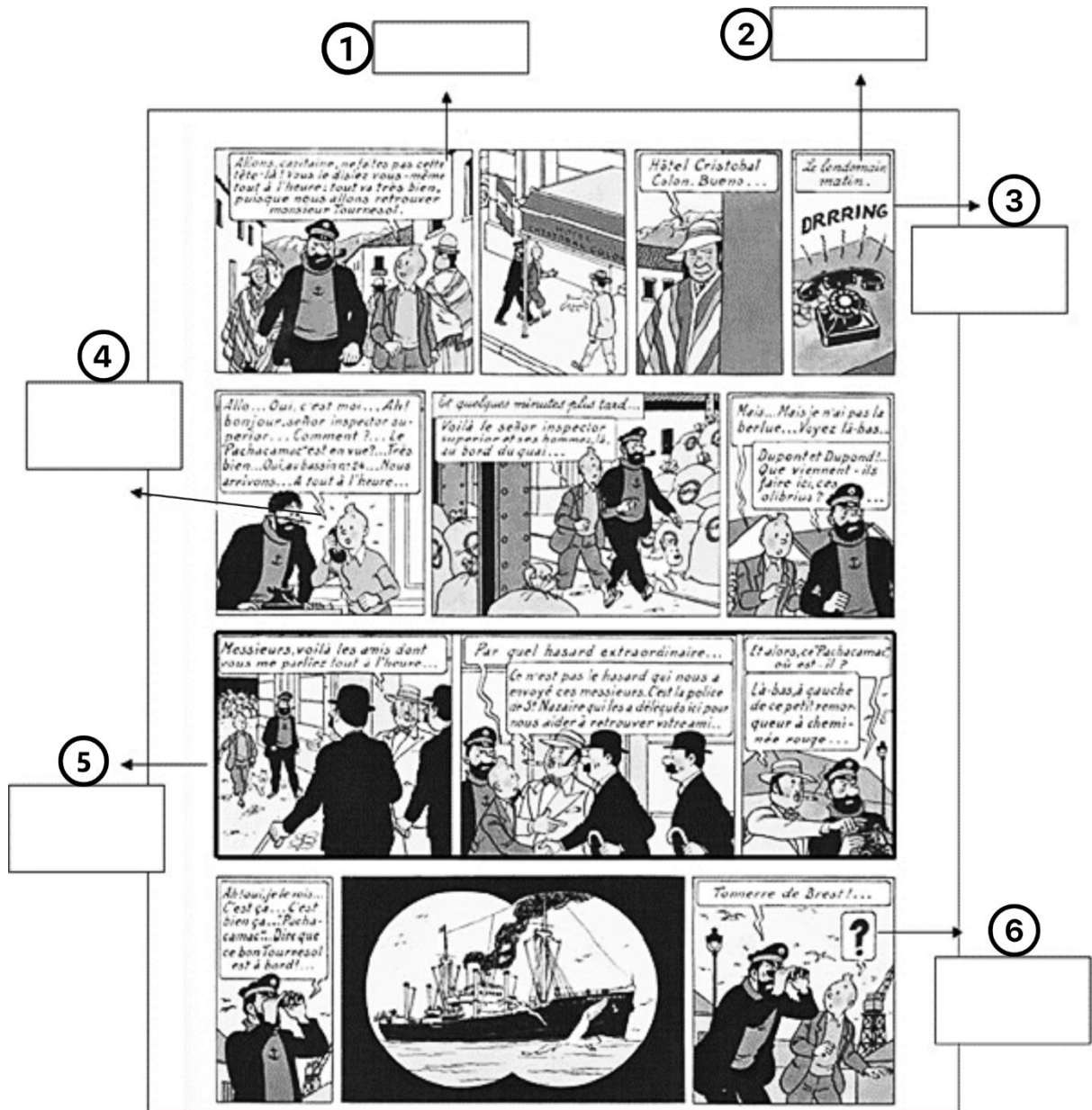
Example: “[1 Comics Vocabulary](#)” by Jason Little (YouTube)

To add a cultural aspect to the lesson, you can also play an explanatory video about the History and evolution of comics around the world or provide more diverse examples of famous comic books.

Example: “[History of Comic Books](#)” by History of Stuff (YouTube)

HANDS-ON PART (15 minutes)

A. Name the elements composing this page



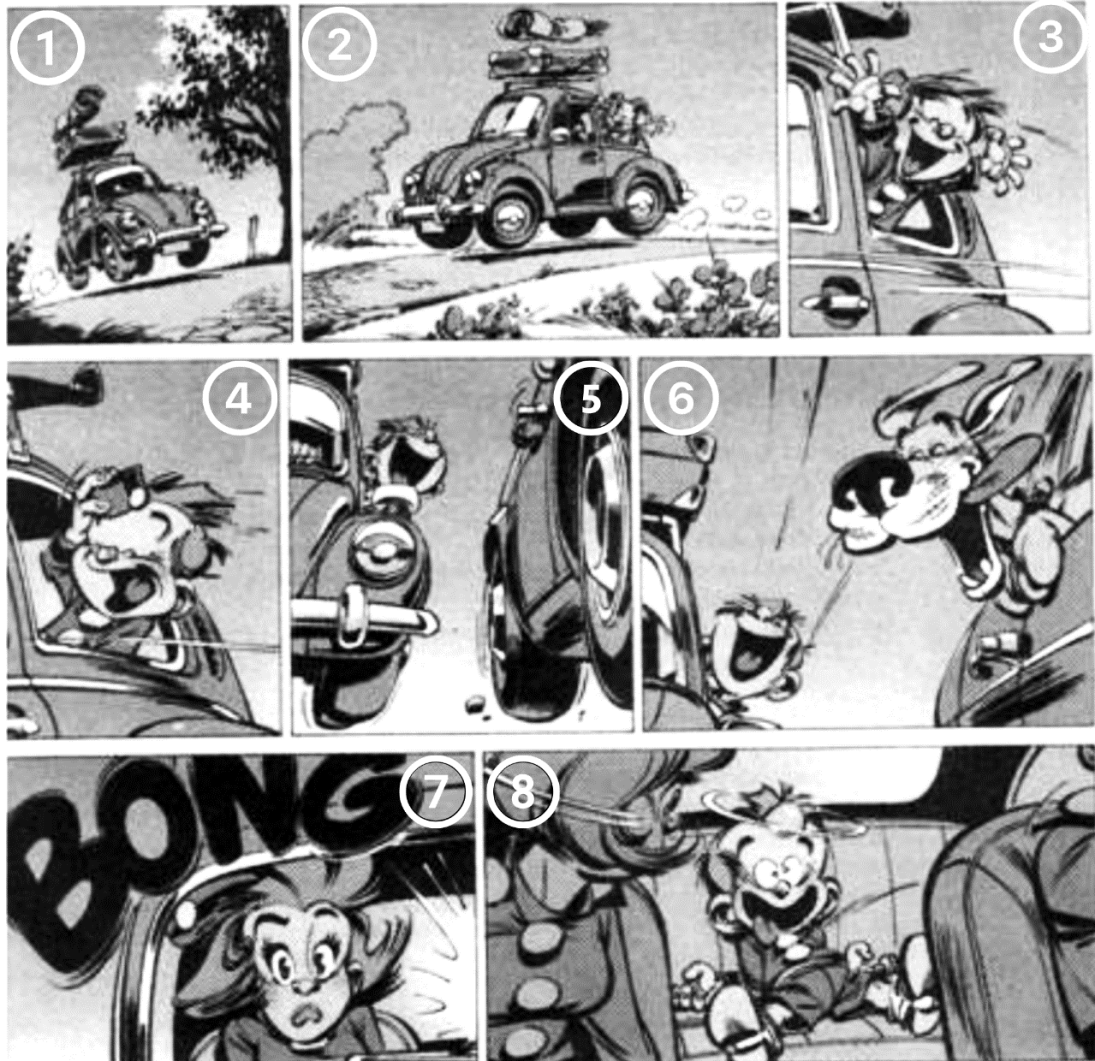
From the Belgian comic *Les Aventures du Tintin*, "Le Temple du Soleil" by Hergé, Casterman, 1949

Expected answers

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Speech balloon | 4. Pointer/tail |
| 2. Caption | 5. Tier |
| 3. Onomatopoeia | 6. Ideogram |

To develop, ask for the definition and purpose of each element.

B. Name each type of shot used on this page and specify its main purpose



From the Belgian comic *Le Petit Spirou*, "C'est pas de ton âge" by Tome & Janry, Dupuis, 2000

Expected answers

1. **Extreme wide shot:** Shows the decor, establishes time, location and context
2. **Wide shot:** Shows the character in context
3. **Medium wide shot:** From the knee up, focus on an action, emotion or attitude
4. **Medium wide shot:** From the knee up, focus on an action, emotion or attitude
5. **Full shot:** From head to toe, shows an action or attitude along with its context
6. **Medium close-up:** From the mid-torso, focus on emotions and expressions
7. **Medium close-up:** From the mid-torso, focus on emotions and expressions
8. **Full shot:** From head to toe, shows an action or attitude along with its context

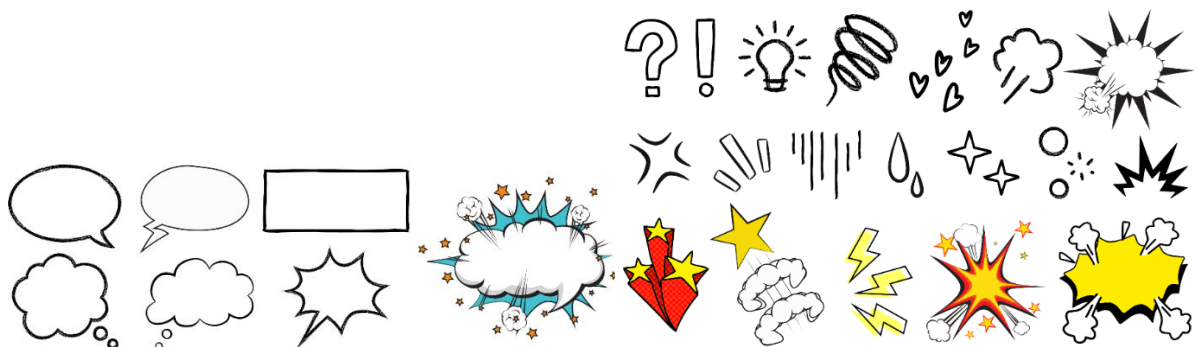
EXERCISE PART (40+ minutes)

Creative activity: To use what they have learned in a more practical manner, students can create their own comic strip by cutting and assembling different elements and adding drawings, words and symbols to tell a short story.

Provide themes and tropes along with visual materials or ask them to gather magazines, comics or colouring books to use for inspiration. They can either recreate or trace the designs they want or use spare documents, patterns or magazines to cut and paste the components of their comic.

Once they are done, they should present the result to their classmates, explain the story and specify which elements they used, with their proper names and purposes and the reason for those choices.

Examples of elements to provide (adapt to the size of the comic strip):



Download all the visual lesson materials [here](#).

SYNTHESIS/SUMMARY (2 minutes)

Provide documents depicting comic book pages and identifying each component and type of shot with the name, meaning and purpose of each element (see Theory part), along with explanations on how to read or create a comic strip or page.

RESOURCES

- EduGraal project. (2023). *EduGraal Comics lesson Materials.pdf*. Google Drive. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1asg08UtQu1ImMPg6NZoxOS5fg0o8JR9n/view>
- Jason Little. (2021, July 11). *1 Comics vocabulary* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivxc1tm_zgY
- History of Stuff. (2017, April 27). *History of comic books* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjpZ6h4S--c>
- Cartoon Studies, C. F. C. (n.d.). *Teaching comics. The Center for Cartoon Studies*. <https://www.cartoonstudies.org/teachingcomics/>