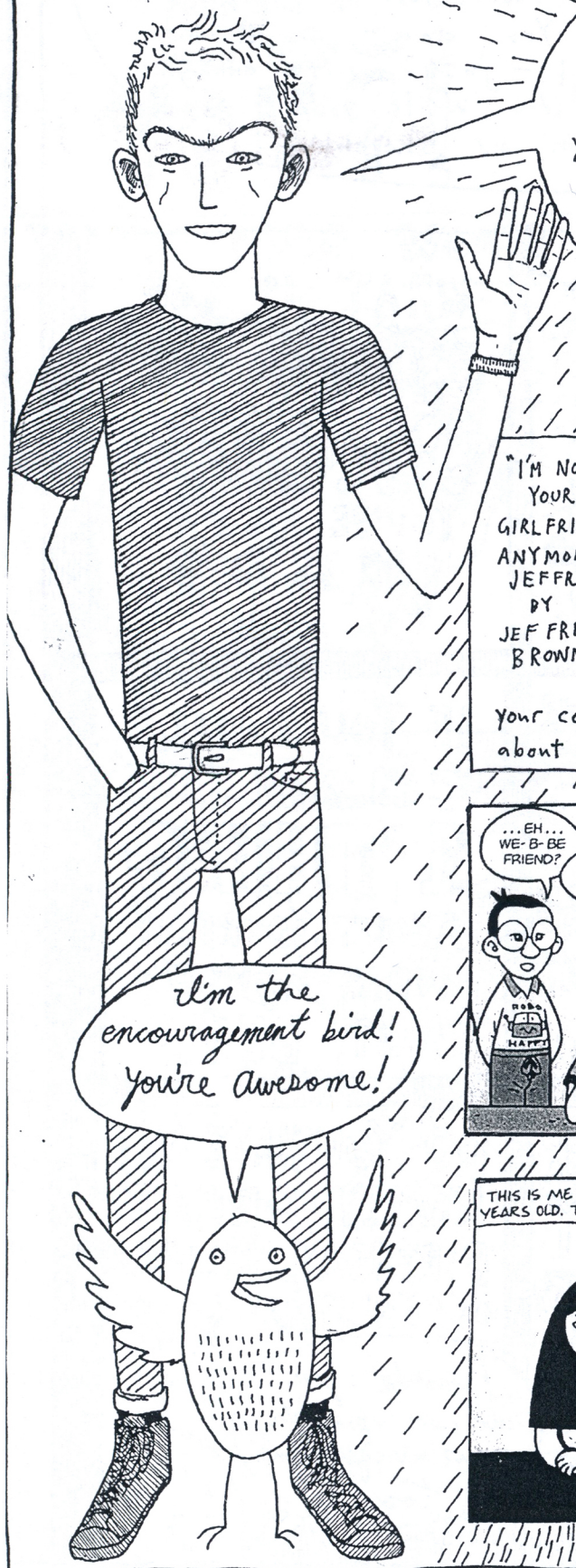


# MAKING AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL COMIX

## STORIES ABOUT YOU!

Comics are not just about superheros or funny animals and they are NOT just for boys! Go into any public library or bookstore and you'll find comics (or "graphic novels") that range from telling historical epics to intimate autobiography. The comics medium is a wonderful way to communicate ideas or tell stories that you want to tell. And I think that you have a great story to tell! So let's learn how to tell it in comics!



"I'M NOT YOUR GIRLFRIEND ANYMORE ANYMORE" BY JEFFREY BROWN.



your comic can be about anything! about a relationship...



or food!!!



"AMERICAN BORN CHINESE" BY GENE LUEN YANG

it can be about making friends- in Manga Style!



or about questioning yourself or about your overactive imagination...



it doesn't matter if you draw simply like this - or if you're the best drawer in the universe who cares?!

it can be about coming to terms with your cultural heritage like

MARIJANE SARTRAPIS PERSEPOLIS



the possibilities are endless!!!

or teen ANGST! whatever!

JILLIAN TAMAKI "SKIM"





The first thing you'll need is an idea! This is often the hardest part so to help you out here are 9 questions that might spark an idea. You don't have to answer all of them. You can make up your own. You don't have to write a novel - just write enough to spark an idea. Write your answers in your sketchbook.

WHAT IS THE MOST EMBARRASSING THING THAT'S EVER HAPPENED TO YOU?

HAVE YOU EVER GOT INTO REALLY BIG TROUBLE?

WHAT IS THE STRANGEST DREAM YOU'VE EVER HAD?

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE THING IN THE WORLD (TO DO?)

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FAVOURITE PERSON OR A PERSON WHO HAD A HUGE IMPACT ON YOU

IF YOU COULD CHANGE 1 THING ABOUT YOURSELF WHAT WOULD IT BE?

DID YOU EVER GET HURT REALLY BAD? INJURED? BROKEN BONES? WHAT HAPPENED?

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN REALLY SCARED? WHAT WERE YOU SO AFRAID OF?

DO YOU HAVE ANY REALLY GREAT BIRTHDAY, HALLOWEEN OR CHRISTMAS STORIES?

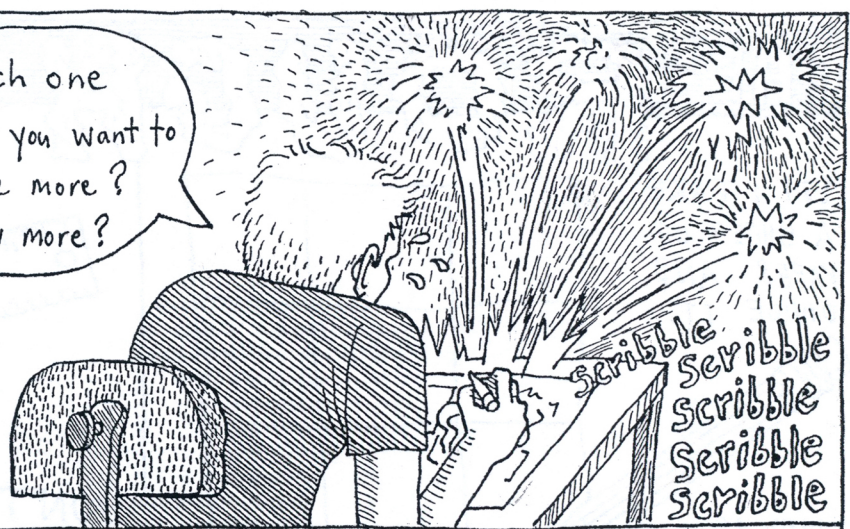
Remember: you can come up with your own questions too!





WHICH ONE  
**GRAB**  
YOU?!

Which one makes you want to write more? draw more?



WHICH IDEA WOULD BE THE MOST FUN TO DRAW?



WOULD YOU RATHER DRAW A COMIC ABOUT MONSTERS CHASING YOU IN A DREAM OR A COMIC ABOUT HAVING TEA WITH YOUR GRAMMA?



Psst - I love my grandma but monsters are SOOOO much fun to draw!



do as the little bird says dear!

Can you remember any specific dialogue about your real life story?

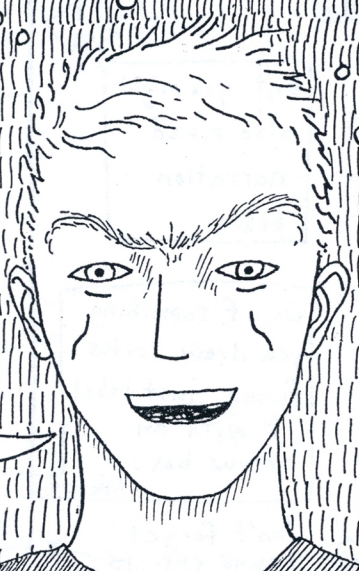
You could do something fun like turn everyone into an animal!

How will your comic start? think about it like a movie - what's the opening scene?

What'll be most FUN to draw?

Any really BIG, important parts of the story? what do you want to focus on?

Once you've decided - it's time to **THINK** About your COMIC!

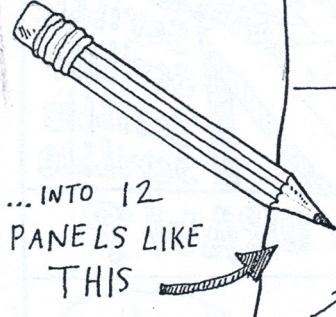


I'm SOOO Exited!



# THE ROUGH DRAFT!

1ST: TAKE A SHEET OF PAPER AND DIVIDE IT...



... INTO 12 PANELS LIKE THIS



DON'T USE A RULER BUDDY!  
IT'S JUST A ROUGH DRAFT!

not everything has to be perfect you know!



NOW LISTEN:

Start drawing your comic with stick figures - TRUST me it's all you need right now

More on these little guys next page!

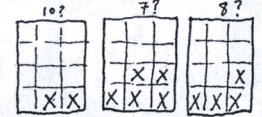
pat pat pat



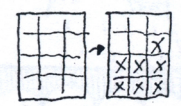
THIS IS JUST YOUR FIRST VERSION - JUST GET YOUR STORY DOWN!

WHAT MOMENTS WILL YOU SHOW?

HOW MANY PANELS DO YOU NEED? less than 12?



DO YOU NEED MORE THAN 12? just grab an extra sheet of paper!



DON'T WORRY ABOUT FANCY DRAWING! No shading + not too much detail!



FOCUS ON STORYTELLING



## A BRIEF WORD ABOUT WORDS IN COMICS:

To tell a story you might need a dialogue balloon like this one

OR thought balloons

But you might also need narration boxes

Or if something you drew looks funny just label it with an arrow box.

like this...

don't forget sound effects

Just then a mouse ran across the floor!





# INTERLUDE: IN PRAISE OF THE HUMBLE STICK FIGURE

How many times have I heard someone say: "I can't even draw a stick figure!"



of course you can!

What's so wrong with stick figures anyway!?

They are simply quick + easy representations of people. They get an idea across.

And really - DRAWING IS JUST about communication and, depending on what you are trying to communicate, stick figures work really well, especially if you are telling a simple (but still really interesting) story.

Mostly people just feel that if they can't make fancy drawings then they shouldn't make art.

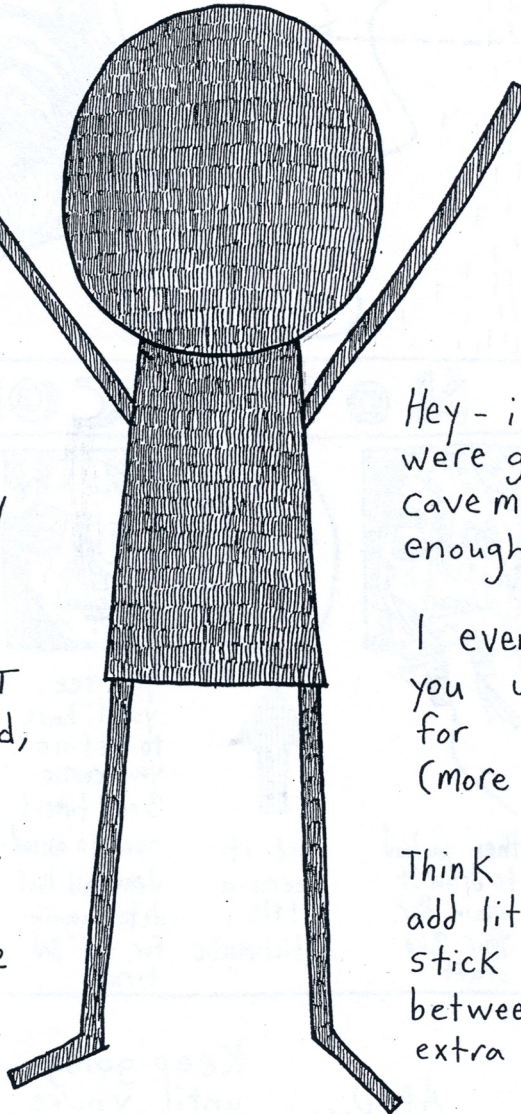
Baloney!

Hey - if stick figures were good enough for cavemen they're good enough for me!

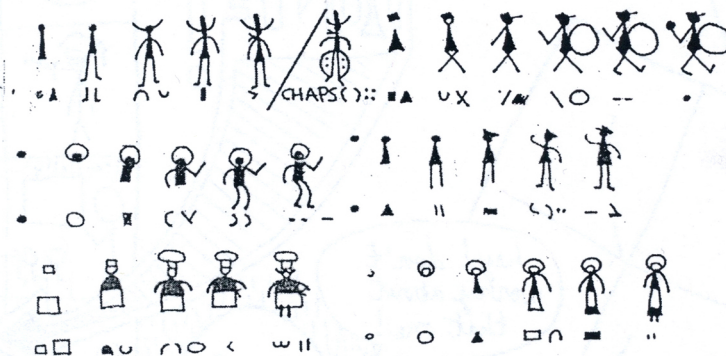


I even think it's ok if you use stick figures for your final copy (more on this later)

Think about how you can add little details to your stick figures to differentiate between characters and add extra personality. (see examples below)

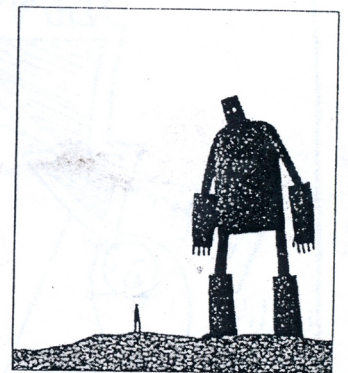


JOEL PRIDDY.  
From "The Amazing life of Onion Jack"



ED EMBERLY

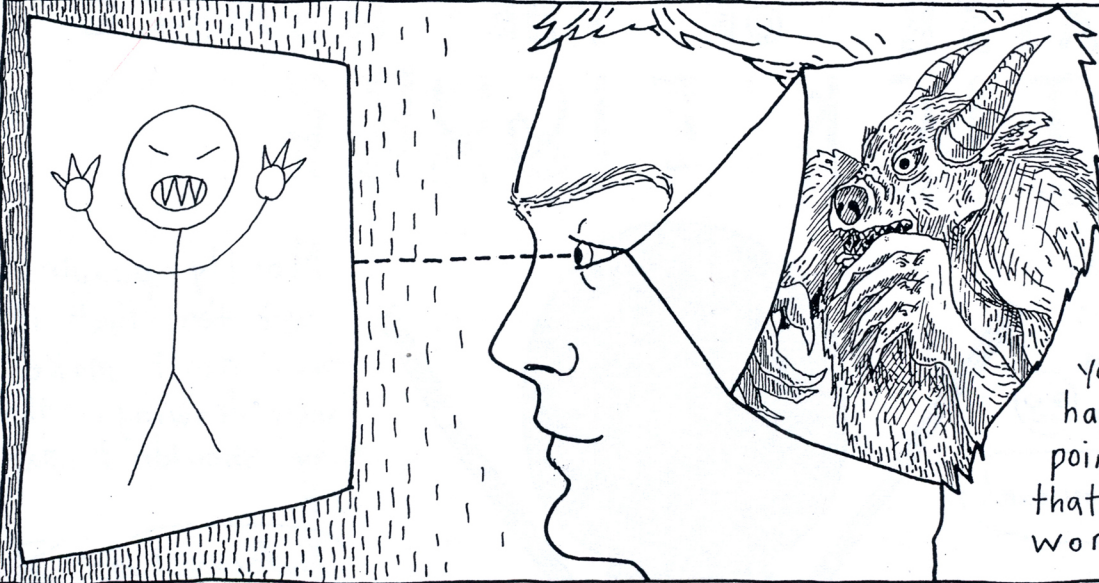
Children's book illustrator - who developed a whole method of drawing based on simple lines and shapes (+ slight alterations of stick figures)



TOM GAULD  
From: "Our Hero Battles 26 Alphabetized Terrors"



# BACK TO THE ROUGH DRAFT



Most of the details should be in your head. All you should really need is a simple drawing to remind you of what is happening at that point. Any more than that is a lot of work for nothing.

## STILL NOT CONVINCED?

Imagine that you drew this for your 1st draft	and you were pretty pleased about it.	then you had to draw it again for your 2nd draft	and it seems a little anticlimactic	you see: you'll have to refine your comic 3 or 4 times!	now go ahead- draw all that detail again for the 3rd time.	This is how you're looking!	and for your 4th draft? This is you... <b>YOU'RE GOING TO GET BORED WITH YOUR COMIC!</b> - and frustrated!

Figure out a good place to **START**

AND...

Keep going until you're **DONE!**



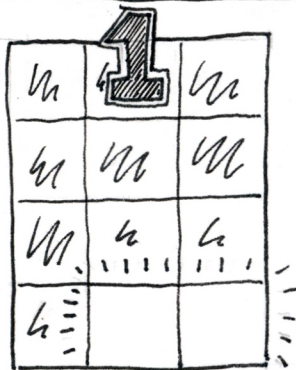
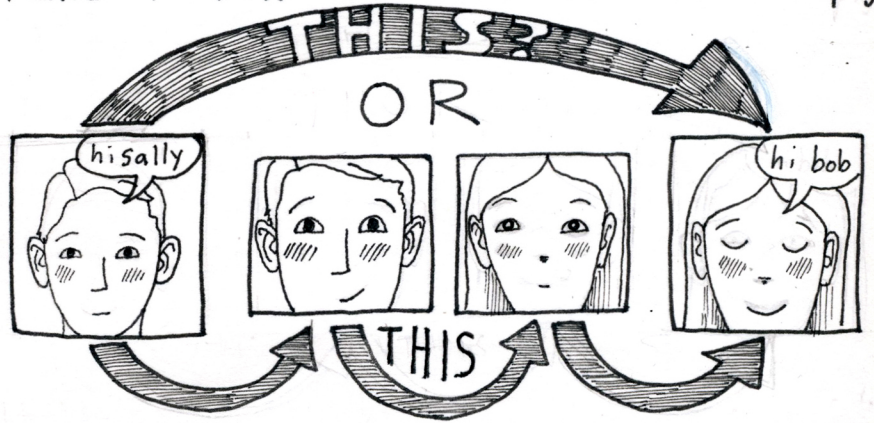


# 2ND DRAFT!

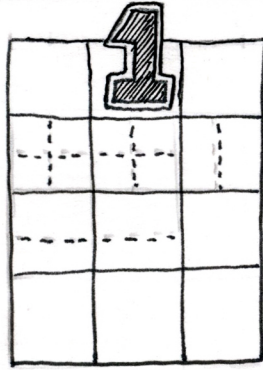
So... Do you have too many panels? or not enough? You need to think about whether or not you can tell your story better with more or fewer pictures and how you can make them fit!



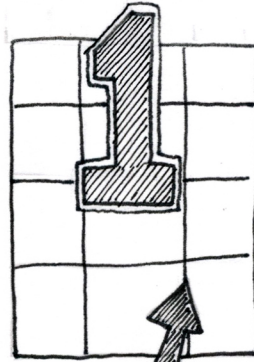
Do you need to add more panels / drawings to make the story make sense? or make it better? or to make it fit on 1 page?



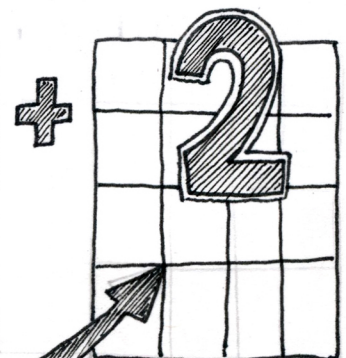
You could just use up left over panels



OR you could make smaller panels + and squeeze more in

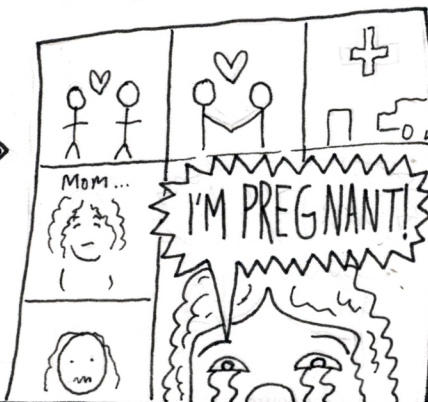


OR you could just make it a 2 page comic



don't worry dear - those panels aren't too boring!!

Maybe your story is short and instead of adding more panels you just make some panels bigger - like the ones with the most going on or the most important stuff!



Essentially the 2nd draft is when you figure out what to include and what not to include, how long your story will be and how you will make it fit.

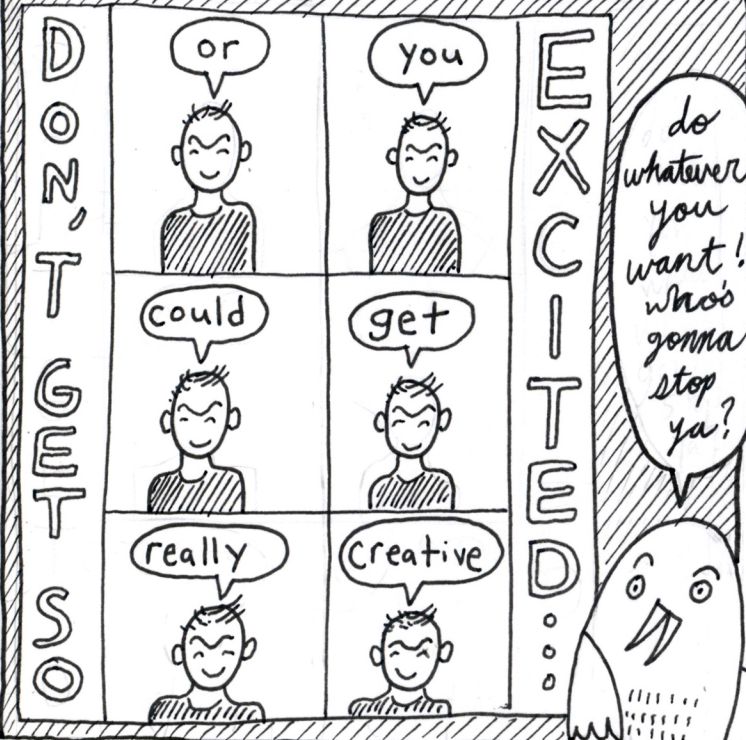
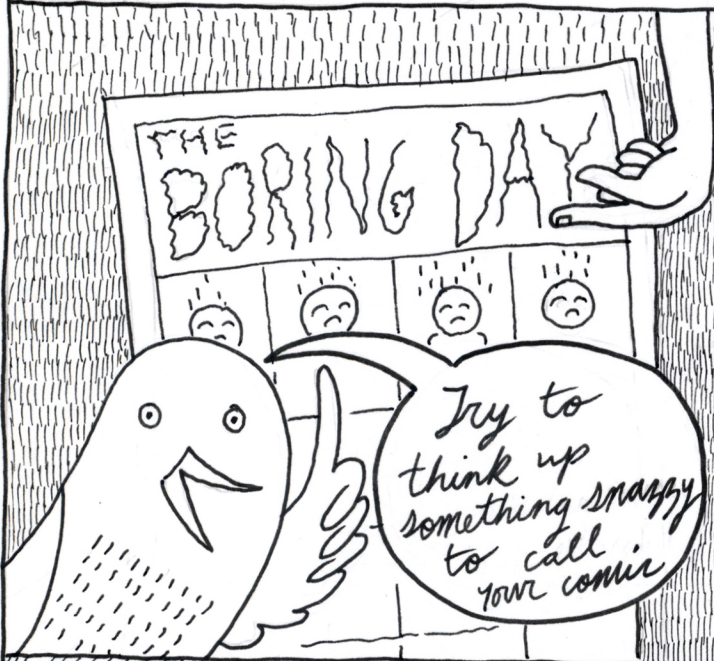
OH YEAH I FORGOT, YOU'VE ALSO GOTTA DECIDE ON A...



REALLY COOL

# TITLE!

(A BRIEF INTERLUDE TO TALK ABOUT THIS COOL STUFF!)



You can try out lots of different STYLES:

