Students use a six-paneled comic strip to summarize a story. This activity allows for multiple interpretations and enhances comprehension by drawing attention to story elements.

**Instructions**

Begin by reading a short story. Discuss the story’s elements. Create a class elements chart with a column for setting, character, problem, event, and solution. Write down student responses that relate to each element. Allow the students to explore Comic Creator Student Interactive onReadWriteThink.org: www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/comic-creator-30021.html

Distribute the story elements comic strip planning sheet. Work with the students to fill out the planning sheet using the data gathered on the class elements chart. Once the chart is complete, students refer to the planning sheet information while creating a six-frame story map on Comic Creator. Type the title of the story as the comic title. Allow students to create personal subtitles based on their understanding of the story. Designate the first frame of the six-frame strip as the title frame. Each of the remaining five frames will highlight a specific story element. Students may add backgrounds, characters, and dialogue to represent each story element. Print the black and white strips and allow the students to color them for sharing and display. Completed comic strips should be evaluated for clarity of student understanding of story elements.

Add a little “Zing!” to the dialogue by asking students to include onomatopoeias. Read a few comics to the students, asking them to identify the words that imitate sounds such as whiz, bang, boom. Discuss the use of onomatopoeia.

Brainstorm and write possible words that would be appropriate to use in a summary of the story you just finished. Encourage students to use onomatopoeia in their comic strips. The Comic Strip Rubric (see reproducible) may be used for self-evaluation, peer evaluation, or grading.

In a follow-up lesson, allow the students to complete a Comic Strip Planning Sheet (see reproducible) and six-frame comic for a book they read independently.

**Extensions**

Comic strips are great to share with parents, younger students, and peers. Use the students’ comic strips to create mini Readers Theatre presentations. Assign parts, allow the students to rehearse, and allow the students to present the comic strip to the whole class. Comic strips may be posted on a bulletin board, gathered for a comic book convention at which students read each other’s comics.

(continued)
## Comic Strip Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action</strong></td>
<td>Action makes sense from one panel to another</td>
<td>Most of the action makes sense from one panel to another</td>
<td>Some of the action makes sense from one panel to another</td>
<td>Action does not make sense from one panel to another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characters</strong></td>
<td>Characters are believable in all panels</td>
<td>Characters are believable in most panels</td>
<td>Characters are adequate in some panels</td>
<td>Characters are not believable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscape and props</strong></td>
<td>Landscape and props relate to the action and characters in all panels</td>
<td>Landscape and props relate to the action and characters in most panels</td>
<td>Landscape and props relate to the action and characters in one panel</td>
<td>Landscape and props are not chosen or do not make sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Captions</strong></td>
<td>Captions are well written and edited for punctuation, grammar, and usage</td>
<td>Captions make sense and are edited for punctuation, grammar, and usage</td>
<td>Captions may or may not always make sense; some are not edited for punctuation, grammar, and usage</td>
<td>Captions don’t make sense and are not edited for punctuation, grammar, and usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Onomatopoeia</strong></td>
<td>Onomatopoeic words are used correctly in five or six panels</td>
<td>Onomatopoeic words are used in two or three panels</td>
<td>One onomatopoeic word is used</td>
<td>No use of onomatopoeia in the comic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:**
### STORY ELEMENTS: COMIC STRIP PLANNING SHEET

For each panel or story element, list the landscape and props (chosen from the list below), the characters, the actions that take place, and the caption.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel 1 (Title)</th>
<th>Landscape and Props</th>
<th>Characters Present</th>
<th>Actions that Occur</th>
<th>Caption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Panel 2 (Setting)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Panel 3 (Characters)</td>
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<td>Panel 4 (Problem)</td>
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<td>Panel 5 (Events)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Panel 6 (Solution)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Landscape options:** horizon line, interior room, lake, mountains, road or river, blank, cave, city

**Props:** book, rock, castle, chair, cloud, computer, table or bench, house, lightning bolt, crescent moon, notebook, musical notes, pencil, pine tree, radio or CD player, school, spaceship, sun, leafy tree, television

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