

# START YOUR OWN CARTOONISTS CLUB

**ACTIVITIES, RESOURCES, AND MORE!**



get drawn in  
**SCHOLASTIC**

# WELCOME TO THE CARTOONISTS CLUB!

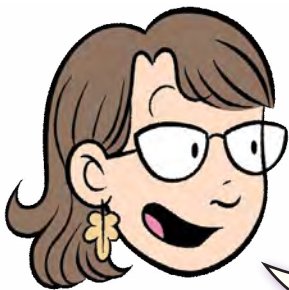
A cartoonists club is a fun way for artists, writers, and makers to share and celebrate their love for storytelling with pictures.

You're building a safe and inspiring space for kids to follow their imaginations, make mistakes, form friendships, and discover new things. Whether your club members are new to creating comics or they already make them, everyone can practice their drawing, writing, and collaboration skills.

This guide includes many of the drawing and writing activities that appear in *The Cartoonists Club* book. Use the activities and resources in this guide to plan your club meetings or supplement your ideas. You can use them all in order to strengthen your comics-making skills, or pick and choose the ones you're most excited about! Ask club members about their interests, too. What do club members want to learn about making comics? Take turns planning meeting activities so that everyone feels included.

All you need to get started is paper, pens or pencils, and a few friends. You can explore the activities in this guide with basic home, school, or office supplies. Have fun!

## GET INSPIRED!



**Raina Telgemeier**

I suggest reading as many types of comic books, graphic novels, and comic strips as you can get your hands on. Different creators do TOTALLY different things with the medium, and you might find inspiration where you least expect it! I only read newspaper comic strips growing up, but in high school and college, I started to read graphic novels, comic book series, manga, and zines. Each of them inspired me to try writing and drawing comics in different ways. Eventually I settled on book-length graphic novels as my storytelling art form of choice, but it was fun to experiment and figure out what I liked best. Even now, I still do short comics for online platforms, make journal comics, and participate in all kinds of fun drawing exercises with friends just for fun!



**Scott McCloud**

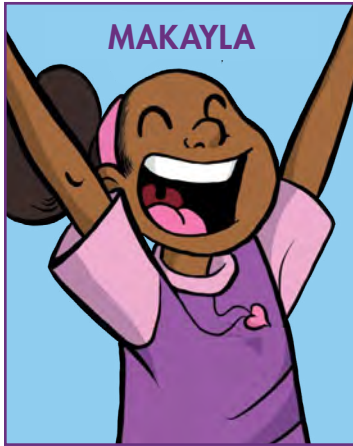
It's so much fun to find other kids who want to draw and tell stories just like you do, and having something in common like that is wonderful. But there will probably be a lot of differences, too. Everybody has their own style and their own point of view about making art. Be ready to listen and learn from those differences. My friend Kurt Busiek, who's an award-winning comics writer now, convinced me to start reading comics when we were in seventh grade—and we argued all the time! But we're both better at what we do now because of it.



# MEET THE CARTOONISTS CLUB MEMBERS!

## Add a picture of yourself and your creator bio!

In the blank box, draw a self-portrait in any style you like and add your name too! Next to it, share some details about yourself. You could start with a quotation or catchphrase you always say, a description of yourself, what you love creating, what you want to do better, and what you dream of becoming.



**MAKAYLA**

- "Mistakes are cool. They're how we learn."
- Outgoing, determined.
- Loves to come up with stories. Keeps idea notebooks.
- Wants to improve her drawing skills.
- Dreams of becoming a multimedia storyteller.



**HOWARD**

- "Perfect is for robots. Let's make comics for people!"
- Silly, fun loving.
- Loves to draw humorous characters. Draws instead of doing schoolwork.
- Wants to come up with story ideas.
- Dreams of becoming a cartoonist.



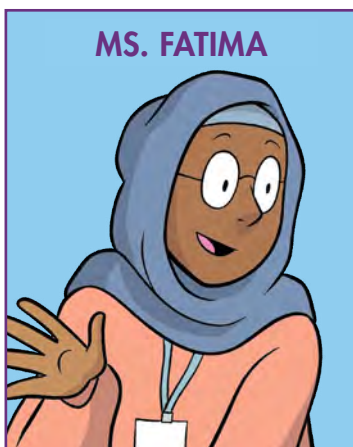
**LYNDA**

- "I love thinking about all the cool things I can draw."
- Thoughtful, observant.
- Loves to draw realistic-looking people.
- Wants to become more confident about sharing her drawings.
- Dreams of becoming an artist.



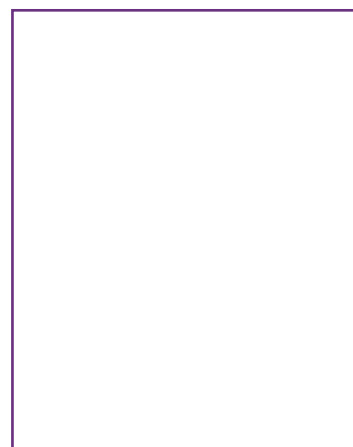
**ART**

- "I want to fail at so many things."
- Curious, creative.
- Loves to make stuff. Bakes, creates music, builds models, and more.
- Wants to learn how to make comics, too!
- Dreams of becoming an anthropologist. (Might change their mind!)



**MS. FATIMA**

- "Remember the golden rule of comics . . . there are no rules!"
- Encouraging, fun, knowledgeable.
- Loves books and comics.
- Wants all kids to feel included in the library.
- Dreams of blank pages.



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# EXPRESS YOURSELF!

**Art and Lynda study, practice, and teach the rest of The Cartoonists Club how to show facial expressions and body language in their drawings.**



Start with the six simple faces that Art shows the club on page 146. These faces show how the eyes, mouth, and eyebrows of faces change to show universal expressions like joy, sadness, fear, disgust, anger, and surprise. Practice drawing them at least a few times. Next, combine elements from these common emotions to show more complicated expressions like disappointment. How can you expand and deepen these facial expressions with additional details? Practice drawing different facial expressions.

A large empty rectangular box for drawing practice.

**BONUS:** Lynda describes body language as the poses or shapes our bodies make when feeling different emotions. How can you change a character's body language by making them stand straighter, slump down, expand, shrink, or shift their personal space? Using your own paper, practice changing characters' body language by altering their shape and position.



# STORY IDEA GENERATOR

**Howard thinks he has no story ideas. Makayla thinks she has too many!**

Use this list of words (or come up with your own) to generate your own stories. Pick one word from each column—People, Places, and Things—and come up with an idea based around those three words. In the space below, or on a separate sheet of paper, explore how a comic using these three words could work in different genres. For example, brainstorm a memoir comic, then use the same three words to draft a superhero comic. How many ideas can you come up with from three words?

## People

artist	monster
astronaut	scientist
bus driver	singer
chef	soccer player
coach	spy
dancer	video gamer
detective	writer
dog trainer	YouTuber
dragon	zookeeper
explorer	zombie
farmer	robot

## Places

airport	hospital
amusement park	kitchen
auditorium	laboratory
bakery	moon
basement	public library
beach	rooftop
dentist's office	secret hideout
driving school	swimming pool
farm	train tunnel
forest	underwater cave
grocery store	zoo

## Things

ant hill	graphic novel
backpack	lawn mower
bunk bed	lizard tank
cardboard	motorcycle
chicken nugget	pajamas
chopsticks	pizza
drum set	shopping cart
flashlight	snowmobile
flower pot	trampoline
glass of milk	toy piano
guitar	washing machine



Reproducible activity sheet for THE CARTOONISTS CLUB  
by Raina Telgemeier and Scott McCloud.

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# THUMBS UP FOR THUMBNAILS!

**Many artists use a technique called “thumbnailing” to plan their comics without getting stuck on the details too early in the process.**

Thumbnails are small, quick, rough sketches that enable you to quickly visualize the composition or layout of a panel, scene, or page—and make changes as needed—*before* you put a ton of effort into creating full sketches or final art!

Use the space below to practice thumbnailing an idea from the Story Idea Generator activity or another story. Start by chunking your story into panels like Makayla and Howard do in the library (page 27). Then make a rough sketch using stick figures to show the action you imagine for each panel, like Lynda does (page 115). How does the thumbnailing process keep your creativity flowing? What might you change from your initial layout ideas when you draw the next draft of your comic?








# BEHIND THE ZINES!

**A zine (or fanzine) is a handmade, self-published magazine or minicomic.**

Art learns how to make zines from their dad, then teaches the rest of the club. You will need blank paper, a pencil or any writing utensil, scissors, and a stapler. You don't need an elaborate story. Start small.

**Need help?**  
**Watch this video from creator Raina Telgemeier!**  
[scholastic.com/RainaLesson](https://scholastic.com/RainaLesson)



**TIP:** If you want more than one copy of your zine, photocopy or scan it before you fold and staple it. Ask an adult for help with the copier or scanner, as needed. You can swap zines with other club members, display zines at a club art show, or give them to family and friends!



# A BLANK SPACE FOR YOU!



I LIKE IT HERE.  
SO MANY POSSIBILITIES!

I LOVE THINKING ABOUT ALL THE  
COOL THINGS I COULD DRAW!



PENS AND PAPER.  
GOOD START!

THE BLANK PAGE  
WANTS YOUR COMICS!



Reproducible activity sheet for THE CARTOONISTS CLUB  
by Raina Telgemeier and Scott McCloud.

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# GROUP ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR CARTOONISTS CLUB

Here are a few more activities you can do with your club!  
Ask an adult for help as needed.

## 1. Inspiring Creators!

Who are the cartoonists, writers, or other creators you like to read? Who inspires you to make comics? Dedicate a club meeting to sharing your inspirations! Take turns teaching the rest of the club about the role models whose comics and art you enjoy. You can share examples of their work and the stories of their lives.

## 2. Story Starter Collage!

Collect photos from magazines or websites. Ask family members for donations of old magazines and photos. Spread your photo collection face down on a table and invite club members to draw any two photos. Create a story using these two images as a story starter. (You could also use an approved online image generator, a book with many images like an illustrated dictionary or encyclopedia, or story cubes!)

## 3. Host an Art Show!

Create a gallery of your art (online or in person) and invite family and friends to see your club in action! Share the comics, zines, and stories that you have created and tell guests about your club. Ask an adult to help you host your celebration, so you can talk with guests and they can help supervise the event.

## 4. Comics Collaborators!

Comics are not always created solo! Refer to the Comics Jobs section on pages 272–273 of *The Cartoonists Club* to learn about the many people and roles that go into comics-making. Assign each group member a role, develop a project timeline, and have each group member complete their respective task(s) to create a collaborative comic!

## 5. Artistic Choices!

Have one person (a club member or an adult) choose a graphic novel the group hasn't already read and write out a script from one of the scenes in advance of the club meeting. With only the script for reference, discuss and sketch out how you think the scene could look by figuring out where all the characters, balloons, objects, etc. could go on the page(s). You can do this individually or in small groups. Once finished, compare your sketches with the actual book to see how your choices might be similar to or different from what the book creators did!

## 6. Make Quanto Comics!

Give each club member a sheet of blank paper. Have each person quickly write a title (or draw a logo) at the top of the page. Then, swap papers with another club member! Quickly draw a comic of your own on their paper, based on their title or logo. You can repeat this process as many times as you like in the time available! Don't stress the details: remember, quanto comics are all about the quantity, not the quality. You don't have to draw detailed panels or finish your story! Don't be afraid to make "a beautiful mess" (page 80). See how The Cartoonists Club makes quanto comics starting on page 70!



# COMICS RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

Want to learn more about creating comics after reading *The Cartoonists Club* by Raina Telgemeier and Scott McCloud? Check out these other books and online resources!

## Narrative Graphic Novels

**Amulet series** by Kazu Kibuishi

**Berrybrook Middle School series** by Svetlana Chmakova

**Be Prepared** by Vera Brosgol

**Cat Kid Comic Club series** by Dav Pilkey

**El Deafo** by Cece Bell

**Little White Duck: A Childhood in China** by Na Liu and Andrés Vera Martínez

**MexiKid** by Pedro Martín

**New Kid** by Jerry Craft (also **School Trip**)

**Smile** by Raina Telgemeier (also **Sisters** and **Guts**)

**When Stars Are Scattered** by Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed

## Instructional Resources

**Adventures in Cartooning** by James Sturm, Andrew Arnold, and Alexis Frederick-Frost

Ed Emberley's **Drawing Book series**

**How to Draw Comics the Marvel Way** by Stan Lee and John Buscema

**How to Draw for Kids series** by Alli Koch

**Just Jerry: How Drawing Shaped My Life** by Jerry Pinkney

**Let's Make Comics!: An Activity Book to Create, Write, and Draw Your Own Comics** by Jess Smart Smiley

**Making Comics** by Lynda Barry

**Picture This: How Pictures Work** by Molly Bang

**Steal Like an Artist** by Austin Kleon

**Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art** by Scott McCloud (also **Making Comics: Storytelling Secrets of Comics, Manga, and Graphic Novels**)

**Whatcha Mean, What's a Zine?: The Art of Making Zines and Mini-Comics** by Mark Todd & Esther Pearl Watson

## Websites and Activities

**Go Raina! | Advice for Budding Cartoonists**  
[goraina.com/advice](http://goraina.com/advice)

*The Cartoonists Club* co-creator Raina Telgemeier shares examples, encouragement, and practical advice for young cartoonists.

**Debbie Ridpath Ohi | Resources for Young Readers**  
[debbieohi.com/resources/for-young-readers](http://debbieohi.com/resources/for-young-readers)

Author and illustrator Debbie Ridpath Ohi offers downloadable activity sheets for young artists and writers, glimpses into her creative process, and additional resources.

**Read Brightly | How to Make a Zine: A Kid-Friendly DIY Guide** by Celia C. Pérez  
[readbrightly.com/how-to-make-zine](http://readbrightly.com/how-to-make-zine)

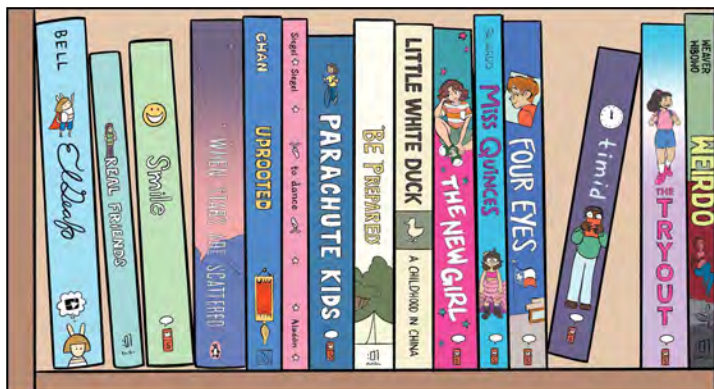
2018 Pura Belpré Honor winner and longtime zine creator Celia C. Pérez leads young artists step-by-step with this visual guide to making and sharing zines.

**Jarrett J. Krosoczka | Resources for Young Authors and Artists**  
[studiojjk.com/freeresources](http://studiojjk.com/freeresources)

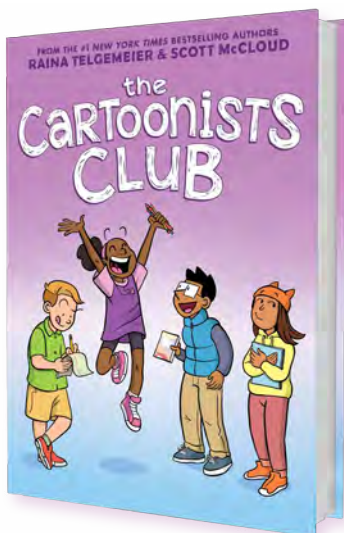
National Book Award Finalist Jarrett J. Krosoczka teaches online art classes and shares many resources he's created for kids. Young cartoonists can learn more about plot structure, download blank panel pages, or watch video tutorials with drawing and writing tips.

**Scholastic Graphix | A Guide to Using Graphic Novels with Children and Teens**  
[scholastic.com/content/dam/scholastic/educators/discussion-guides/guide-to-using-graphic-novels.pdf](http://scholastic.com/content/dam/scholastic/educators/discussion-guides/guide-to-using-graphic-novels.pdf)

An engaging and informative guide geared toward educators about reading, sharing, and discussing graphic novels and comics with young people.



# ABOUT THE BOOK



## The Cartoonists Club: A Graphic Novel

Created by Raina Telgemeier and Scott McCloud

HC: 9781338777222 • \$24.99

PB: 9781338777215 • \$14.99

Also available as an ebook

Ages 8–12 • Grades 3–7

**#1 New York Times bestselling cartoonists Raina Telgemeier and Scott McCloud team up for a one-of-a-kind friendship story about creativity and self-expression that blends how-to and comics magic. Welcome to the club!**

Makayla is bursting with ideas but doesn't know how to make them into a story. Howard loves to draw, but he struggles to come up with ideas and his dad thinks comics are a waste of time. Lynda constantly draws in her sketchbook but keeps focusing on what she feels are mistakes, and Art simply loves being creative and is excited to try something new. They come together to form The Cartoonists Club, where kids can learn about making comics and use their creativity and imagination for their own storytelling adventures!

# ABOUT THE CREATORS



## RAINA TELGEMEIER

is the #1 New York Times bestselling, multiple Eisner Award-winning creator of *Smile*, *Sisters*, and *Guts*, which are all graphic memoirs based on her childhood. She is also the creator of *Drama* and *Ghosts*, the adapter and illustrator of

the first four Baby-sitters Club graphic novels, and with Scott McCloud, the co-creator of *The Cartoonists Club*. *Facing Feelings: Inside the World of Raina Telgemeier* is based on an exhibition that was held at The Ohio State University's Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum. Raina lives in the San Francisco Bay Area. To learn more, visit her online at [goraina.com](http://goraina.com).

## Praise for Raina Telgemeier

**"Raina Telgemeier is the reigning queen of comics."**

—*The A.V. Club*



## SCOTT MCCLLOUD

is the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*; *Making Comics: Storytelling Secrets of Comics, Manga, and Graphic Novels*; *Zot!*; and *The Sculptor*. He is also, with Raina Telgemeier, the

co-creator of *The Cartoonists Club*. Scott is a frequent lecturer on the power of visual communication, creator of the international 24-hour comic movement, and, in 2021, was inducted into the Will Eisner Awards Hall of Fame. He lives with his family in Oregon. His art and stories are available in more than 30 languages and on the web at [scottmccloud.com](http://scottmccloud.com).

## Praise for Scott McCloud

**"Reading *Understanding Comics* blew my teenage mind, and gave me a toolbox full of ideas that I still use today."**

—Raina Telgemeier

**About the Writer of this Guide:** Donalyn Miller is a leading expert on independent reading and children's literature, the author of *The Joy of Reading*, coauthored with Teri S. Lesesne, and *Game Changer! Book Access for All Kids*, coauthored with Colby Sharp. She is cofounder of The Nerdy Book Club with Colby Sharp and has published articles in many prominent periodicals.



The logo for 'HOME BASE' is prominently displayed. The word 'HOME' is in a large, white, sans-serif font with a 3D effect, appearing to sit on top of the word 'BASE'. 'BASE' is in a similar white font but with a blue shadow underneath. The entire logo is set against a dark blue background that resembles a book cover or a base. Above the logo, there are several small, colorful rectangular blocks in shades of red, orange, and yellow, arranged in a slightly curved line.

- Interact with characters from the book!
- Share activities and comic creations with other comic enthusiasts!
- Enter fun art and comic contests and be featured in a digital gallery on the Newsfeed!
- Unlock special trophies by completing in-game challenges.



Home Base is completely free to use with no download fee, subscriptions, or in-app purchases.

To get started, visit the website or search for “Scholastic Home Base” in the App Store or Google Play, and create your account.

**SCHOLASTIC.COM/HOMEBASE**



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