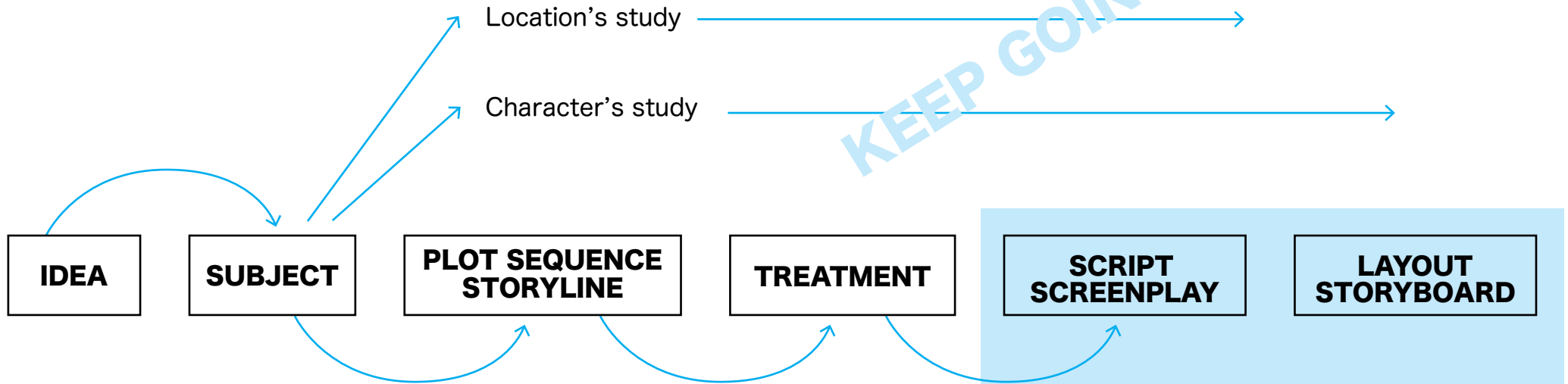


A METHOD



it's up to you ;)

Short abstract of the idea with keys elements: Who, When, Where, Characters, the Conflict where the idea stand, and its resolution (usually the end of the story). It must show the plot describing clearly the three phases of the story: begin, development (the core), end

Set list of the structure comprehensively every scene, in sequence and numbered. It will help to understand the length of the story pointing out what to cut and what to re-write for maximum clarity

Literary description of the story. Developing the characters and their psychology, their motivation and biography. Describe in detail locations, key scenes, and every kind of detail functional the understanding of the story. Set the mood: atmosphere, music, mood-board, picture reference, etc

Remember always: images and text are interlaced. Description page by page of the single plates divided by panels (frame) comprehensive dialogues and panels descriptions - one by one! -

Visual transformation of the screenplay in detailed drawing sequence. *Usually a cartoonist receives the screenplay and then can start drawing the preparatory pencils based on that, skipping the storyboard part. On the other hand a solo-cartoonist can realize directly the storyboard without the screenplay

THE SUBJECT - SYNOPSIS

1

Quick and short abstract of the idea comprehensive all the key points.

2

Describe “what’s happening” through beginning, the middle, end (the final resolution of the conflict).

3

Short, focus and effective.

It Must include:

- **the Title**
- **the Logline** ONLY ONE sentence focused on what your story is about
- **the Pitch** brief description of “what’s happening” in the story
- **the Characters** who they are, motivation and driven desires
- **the Summary** the effective arch of your story through beginning, the middle and the end
- **ART** study of characters, locations, opening pages and style’s study

TIPS

- cut out any unnecessary details
- make the abstract straightforward and simple
- use colorful and light prose
- avoid technicality and theoretical concept

THE SUBJECT - SYNOPSIS

Required Keypoint:

- **Where** the story happens
- **When** the story happens
- To **Whom** the story happens to and **why their are dragged into it** (where there is conflict)
- **Why the story happens** to them and why in that moment
- **Turning points** relevant to the development of the story
- **General intent** of the story (and deeper meaning if it is relevant)
- **End of the story**/closure/ final resolution
- **Target audience** and why the story is suited to them

TIPS

one page is more than enough!

what the subject is useful for

1

Found the clear intent of the story

2

divide the fundamental key-point from the secondary passage

3

Start to work on the structure of the story

THE SUBJECT - SYNOPSIS

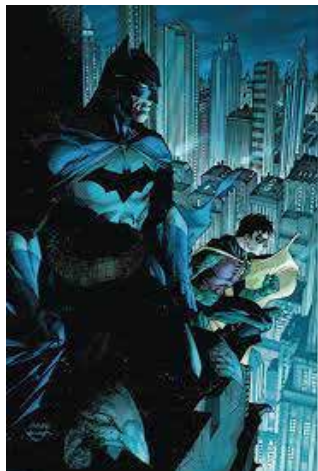
THE BATMAN, AN EXAMPLE

- **Title** The Batman
- **Logline** A traumatized young heir chooses to fight crime to revenge his family; using his intelligence, his cleverness and his high moral balance he personifies The Batman, a dark and masked hero who will save his city, Gotham, from crime
- **the Pitch** A young boy and his parents are walking home in the city one night. They're a happy, wealthy-looking family. But everything changes when a mugger accosts them, then panics and shoots the parents. The boy, devastated, watches his mother and father die in the street. He vows vengeance. The boy grows into a driven young man. For years he trains in martial arts and hones his skills as a detective, all the while building his inherited fortune into a commercial empire. He adopts the public persona of a flighty playboy to mask his inner obsession with justice. At last, as an adult, he deems himself ready to exact his revenge on the criminal underworld. Inspired by a creature glimpsed flying past his window, he dons a dark costume and sets out to fight crime... as the Batman.
- **the Characters**
 - *Bruce Wayne* - a good-looking inheritor, a tormented soul with high moral value who impersonates a superhero to fight the crime in his city
 - *Arnold* - his loyal servant, the only one who knows Bruce's double life, helps him to fight the crime but also a paternal guide
 - *The Joker* - sworn enemy of Batman, created by an incident while they fought, a mental villain with the purpose of killing Batman and taking over Gotham City
 - *Random woman* - Bruce's occasional lovers, often kidnapped by the villain and rescued by The Batman
- **the Summary** First act: we meet Bruce in his adult everyday life, acknowledging his habit, his house, his servant Alfred, slowly picking up the initial clues of something different. First flashback to Bruce training martial art. In the night we see a masked hero, The Batman, fight and stop a minor crime. A detail lets us know that The Batman and Bruce are the same person. He doesn't know yet that the minor crime he stopped will lead to the creation of his sworn enemy, The Joker, who'll swear revenge.
 - Second act: Joker starts to plot how to take over the city and kill the Batman, fighting Batman at night and Bruce

on daylight. Meanwhile Batman try to manage this new growing menace, he meet a girl and start to follow in love. This growing affection expose his fears. We explore that in flashbacks of his past (but recent) life that shown how alone he was because he suffered a major loss. With a turn of event Joker finally understand that Bruce and The Batman are the same person and kidnap the loved girl to set a mortal trap to Batman.

Third act: A confused and overwhelmed Batman goes off to save the girl and stop Jokers evil plan to conquer the city. During the conflict a flashback overlaps the fight and Bruce realize that the Joker is also the murder of his own parents. This revelation and the fear to lose also the girl give him the strenght to fight back and win the clash. Happy ending.

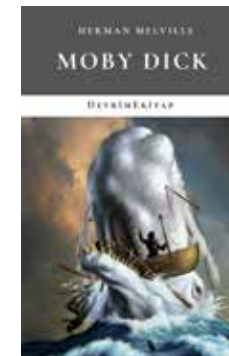
- **ART**



- Jim Lee for DC Comics

THE SUBJECT - SYNOPSIS

EXERCIZE!



15 MN

STORYLINE - PLOT SEQUENCE

1

Basic structure of the story to unravel the plot in every detail

2

numbering the scene to understand the total length

3

find out the weaknesses and the strengths to solve all the problems of constructing of the story

You must looking for:

- The correct **length of the scenes** (and consequentially of the whole story) - from there you can schedule the following steps –
- Individuate the **narrative units**, meaning **action** or **events** which allow the story to advance
- **Expendable scene** or **weak connection** through scenes
- If the evolutions of the character's personality are **consistent** to the development of the story
- If the **turning point are well positioned** in the development of the story
- Number of **location** used (and consequentially what kind of visual material you must collect)
- **Meaningful props**/objects/animals etc etc...
- **Meaningful date**/time/period (and relative data)

TIPS

the classic three acts structure contain:

Trigger event
1° turning point

Midpoint
2° turning point

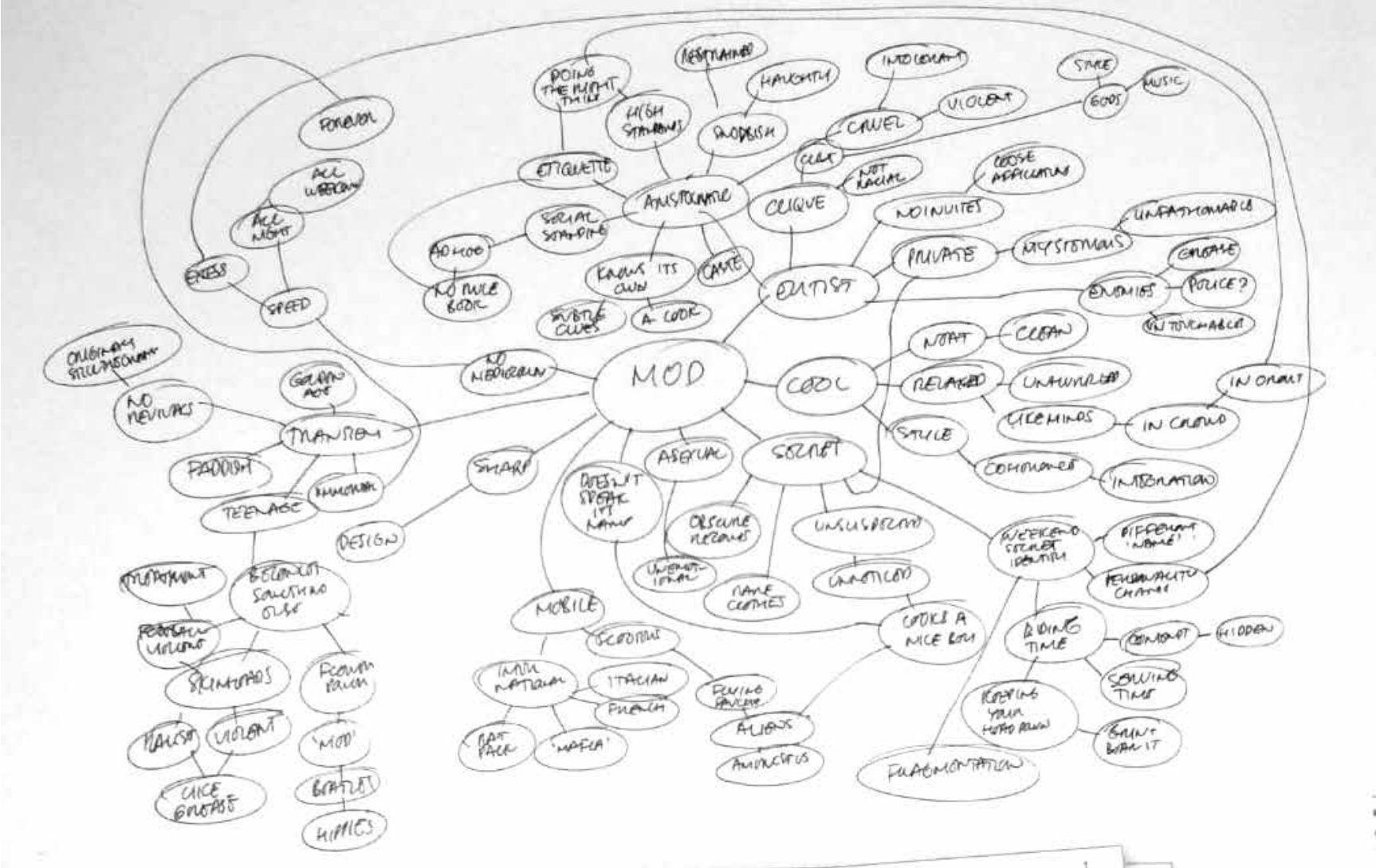
Climax
Epilogue

FIRST ACT

SECOND ACT

FINAL ACT

STORYLINE - PLOT SEQUENCE



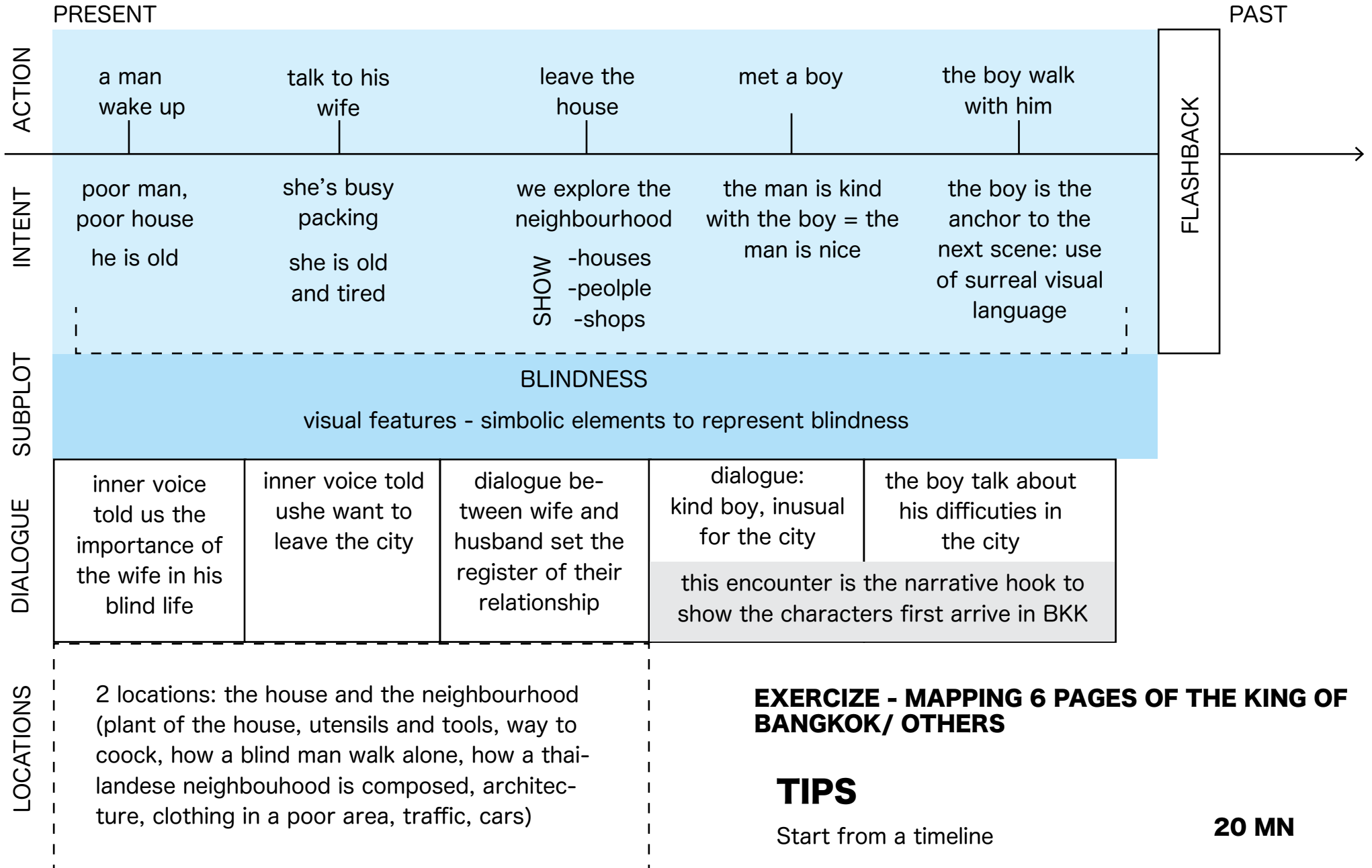
TIPS

Dave Gibbons's map
write for *The Originals*

Usefull to develop the sequences, the timing, the plot

STORYLINE - PLOT SEQUENCE

EXAMPLE OF STORYLINE



TREATMENT

*Some writers or some solo-creators cartoonists skip this part, moving directly to the screenplay or the storyboard. The american method often use instead several sheet description of the characters and turning point

1

Literary description of the whole story, near to a novel.

2

developed scene by scene, according to the specific order decided in the plot sequence.

3

Help to collect lyric suggestions and silent clues.

Wander:

- wide descriptions of **places, set, location**
- **atmospheres**
- **accurate psychological characters' portraits**
- character's **biography**
- **physical features**
- **inner feelings**
- **Meaningful peculiarity and characteristic**

TIPS

gather everything which can help to set the atmosphere of the story

Photographic reference

Clip or video with a similar mood

Suggesting music, noise, extra or intradiegetic sounds

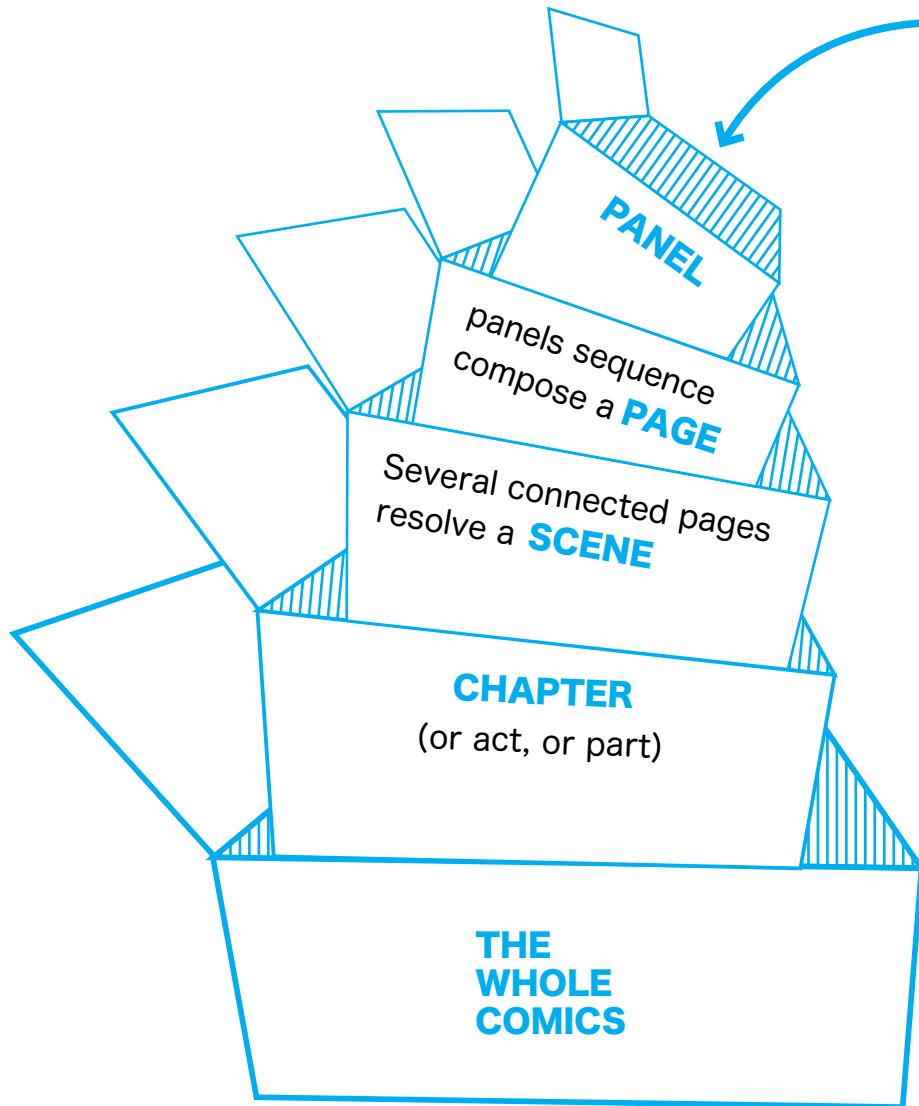
Colors intended for the places, the scene, the characters

Dress, shoes, props

Parfume, smells

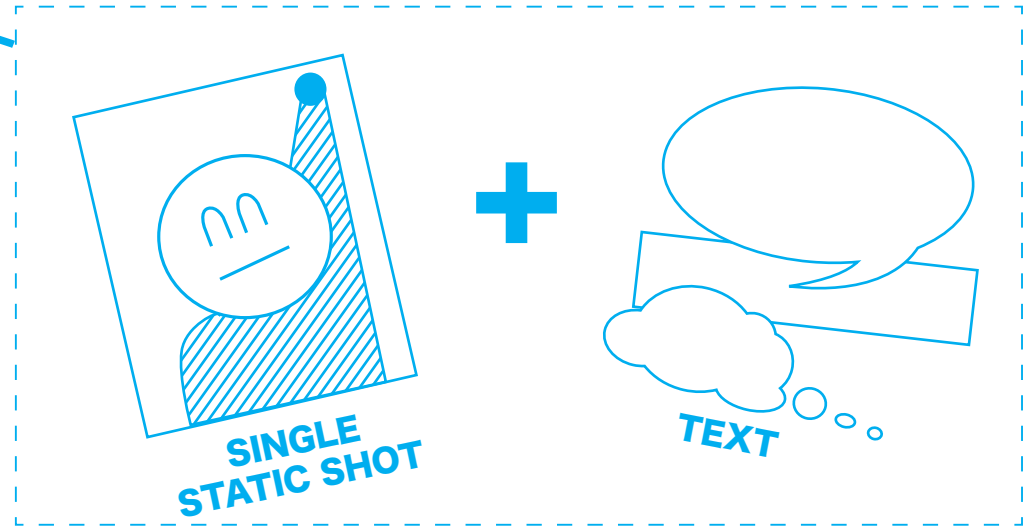
Dishes, etc etc..

SCRIPT - SCREENPLAY



Comics needs to “summarized” the action in one single static shot: choose wisely

Words can bring an unparalleled level of specificity, driving an image into a wished meaning



Static shots and texts jointly will be broken down into panel

Comics is a game of Chinese boxes, where all the basic elements are tiny significant pieces on theirs own, but there are amplified or changed when altogether

All this meaningful parts must remain invisible to the reader, letting him focusing on the story

PLOT FIRST: typically used by Marvel Comics where writer/artist teams have a strong collaborative rapport. The writer writes the plot (or the writer and the artist) after the artist pencils the story, only then can the writer come back to the pages and write in the in-panel-text to fit the art. The advantage is that the writer knows exactly what the art looks like, and how much room there is for text, but also he/she needs to give up some control over pacing and composition, where the artist will be in charge.

FULL SCRIPT: the writer produces a complete script with panel descriptions, on which the artist then pencils the story. Although you never know exactly how the artist will interpret your descriptions, this method gives the writer more control over layout and pacing. The disadvantage is that you may need to trim or revise your dialogues and captions after seeing the art. We will explore this method.

VISUAL THINKING

- before writing visualize the images through simplifications and synthesis
- for rhythm and pace use the maps or diagrams completed before
- for the artist write a brief description of people, scenery, or events, with all the references you'd like

In this way you will find that some complex scenes can be summarized in one single panel, on the other hand simple actions could take more shots than what you think.

TIPS

There are several script formats, also a few online script generators, no matter which format you'll choose, the matter is clearly label pages and panel numbers, with indented paragraphs for all balloons, captions, sound effects, and display lettering

SCRIPT - SCREENPLAY

AN EXAMPLE

MARVEL ZOMBIES HALLOWEEN

Written by Fred Van Lente / © 2012 Marvel

ONE

Panel 1: CLOSE UP: The top of a zombie's head gets BLOWN OFF.

1. SFX (BIG): **TOOOM**

Panel 2: PULL BACK: As that zombie falls to the ground, two more on either side of it are similarly decapitated by a high-caliber round.

2. SFX: **TOOOM**

3. SFX: **TOOOM**

Panel 3: PULL BACK: The trio of zombies drop, adding to the RING OF CORPSES piled almost waist-high in the front lawn of a suburban house.

4. SFX: **whud whuddd**

Panel 4: AERIAL SHOT: We now see the lawn of that house, and the ring surrounding it. The house is a big old New England colonial mansion -- the kind haunted houses are regularly made of:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_Haunted_Mansion.jpg

(Note the greenhouse/solarium on one side. That's important.)

Alessandro, keep in mind in the world of *Marvel Zombies*, that the undead eat EVERYTHING LIVING -- including trees and grass, so there won't be any of that around the house. At best, a bunch of depressing, stunted trees, limbs stripped of leaves and bark.

NO COPY

Panel 5: Inside the cupola -- that's that round thing with the weathervane at top -- MOM, a lithe, Linda Hamilton type, about 42, with a pony tail of curly brown hair, peers through the sight of a massive .50 caliber sniper rifle, the BARRET M107:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZdmc-iRARs&feature=related> and

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VvBiH8U5OuY&feature=related>

5. PETER (DOWN): Mom?

6. PETER (DOWN): **Mom?**

MARVEL ZOMBIES HALLOWEEN/Van Lente

TWO

Panel 1: ANGLE DOWN: PETER, 7, Son of Mom, looks up apprehensively from the bottom of the stairs leading to the (off-panel) cupola hatch.

1. PETER: I think there's something in the walls.

Panel 2: Mom descends the stairs and switches guns to a COMBAT SHOTGUN. She makes Peter stand behind her while she goes over to one of the walls.

<http://www.gizmag.com/aa-12-combat-shotgun-frag-12-automatic/11393/picture/74152/>

2. MOM: Weren't you watching the monitors?

3. PETER: **I was!**

Panel 3: Angle on cheap green (light enhancement) monitors on one side of the room. On one a zombie has been caught in a BEAR TRAP, flailing his arms uselessly, moaning.

4. ZOMBIE (j): *Rrrrrnnnnhhhhhhh*

5. PETER (OFF): Nothing got through! I woulda seen it!

Panel 4: Mom places her ear against the wall, skeptical.

6. MOM: Well. This is an old house.

7. MOM: I'm sure all you heard was **settling**--

Panel 5: Smash zoom -- Mom's eyes go wide as she hears:

8. SFX: **skrrrtchh skkkkttcchhh**

MARVEL ZOMBIES HALLOWEEN/Van Lente

THREE

Panel 1: BIG PANEL - Mom fires the shotgun at the wall as Peter covers his ears. An enormous HOLE and an accompanying cloud of sheetrock is blown out of it.

1. MOM: **BACK!**

2. SFX: **WHOOOM**

Panel 2: Shoot through the hole as a trepiditous Mom reaches inside the wall...

3. MOM: Come **out** where I can **see** you, you dirty mothe--

4. PETER (OFF): Mom! **Bad word!**

5. MOM: Wait...

Panel 3: EXTREME CU - small panel - Mom's smile.

6. MOM: Well, **hello** there...

Panel 4: BIG PANEL - From the hole Mom removes a cute and utterly terrified BLACK KITTEN, no more than a couple months old.

7. MOM: How long have you been **stuck** back there?

8. KITTEN: *Mrrrrrrreeeww?*

9. MOM: My God. I can **feel** every **bone** beneath the fur...

Panel 5: Peter's delighted face as he picks up the kitten, nuzzles it to his face.

10. PETER: We -- we better **feed** him then ... and keep him safe. Right, Mom?

11. KITTEN: *Ppppprrrrrrrrrrrr*

12. PETER: I'll name him Blackie!

Panel 6: Mom smiles a weary but honest smile.

13. MOM: Original.



EXERCIZE!

Storyboard pag 1, or 2, or 3

15 MN

SCRIPT - SCREENPLAY

AN EXAMPLE

