



Nurturing excellence in
children's and *young adult* literature

Young Writers Online

Year 6 Students with James Foley

What is included?

6 x Creative Writing Sessions

Aim of the Sessions:

Learn the writing and drawing skills necessary to produce a two page graphic novel.



Session One: Character Design

In this session, get to know WA author and illustrator James Foley, as he guides you through the essential foundations of graphic novels and comics. James will show you how illustrators use the secret languages of shape and colour to subconsciously signify personality characteristics to the reader.

ACTIVITY: Sketch up one basic character design based on one of the three shape categories. Show front and profile view. Add notes about character.

Session Two: Defining your Characters

This session will teach you how to fill out your cast of characters. Consider how to make every character different and unique. Use vocabulary, body language, facial expressions, shape and colour to make each character unique (and to create conflict, i.e. to make stories happen!).

ACTIVITY: Develop your second character, front and profile view. Make notes about them. Revise the first character if necessary. Make notes about story ideas.

Session Three: Story Outlines/Scripts

James will discuss how he creates story structure and will reveal the three-act structure he uses to write and illustrate his graphic novels. Thinking about examples of timing, build-up and conversation in stories that you have read or watched will help you to learn how to write your own graphic novel script.

ACTIVITY: Draft up a short script with only two characters and one setting. Aim for two pages of final artwork.

Session Four: Comics Basics (Part I)

James had some tips for creating effective and expressive speech bubbles for every occasion. There are many different types of speech bubbles including thought, music, electronic, sick/weak, whisper, sweetness/sarcasm and jagged shout bubbles. Learn how to use these and arrange conversations between two or more characters in a graphic novel for optimal readability. Learn how to also add evocative, graphic onomatopoeia (i.e. sound effects) for your comics.

ACTIVITY: Create 2 examples of onomatopoeia. Draw two backgrounds to go alongside.

Session Five: Comics Basics (Part II)

Session five is about arranging and laying out comic panels on the page for peak legibility. Learn how to draw backgrounds that describe settings as simply and efficiently as possible. Consider what is the minimum amount of detail you need so the reader understands the setting. Using examples from *Dungzilla*, see how viewpoints and 'shot types' from film (e.g. close-up, wide shot) can be used in graphic novels for maximum effect. Then you'll learn about the importance of planning out your story beats before drawing.

ACTIVITY – What types of 'shots' are used in this spread from Dungzilla?

Session Six: Plot, Structure and Editing

In this final session, learn how James develops his written script into rough sketches then final artwork. Observe James live as he demonstrates his process for thumbnail sketching and full-sized rough drawing.

ACTIVITY: Make full size roughs for your comic (two A4 pages).

Each session:

- Is a tailored pre-recorded writing workshop for students presented by WA author/illustrator James Foley. They are designed to be used in sequence.
- Can be used at the teacher's discretion; one session at a time or together, as six private video links are provided. Privately enrolled students can watch as they wish.
- Includes a writing exercise and a short reading by the author from one of his books.
- In keeping with the writing program, James' books are available for purchase from the Centre.

About WA Author/Illustrator James Foley

James Foley is a children's author and illustrator. His interests include comics, film, psychology, science, history, as well as yoga and social justice. James is the author/illustrator of the S.Tinker Inc graphic novel series, *My Dead Bunny*, *In the Lion*, *The Last Viking* and *The Last Viking Returns*. He is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators Australian West chapter, the Australian Society of Authors and the Children's Book Council of Australia. He lives in Perth with his wife, 2 kids and a labrador. In his spare time, he is a massive Marvel movie nerd.

Your Feedback

As this is still a new and exciting venture for The Literature Centre, your feedback on our Young Writers Online workshop is appreciated. We know there may be improvements and adjustments needed along the way. As always, the content and presentation style of each of our award-winning authors will differ. A short feedback survey will be emailed to all participating teachers after sessions are released.

Full details on our Website

Young Writers Online is suitable for school classes or individual students (home-school or privately enrolled) keen to write. For all the online program details including reduced fee, registration forms, timetable of authors and what to expect, see our website -

<https://www.thelitcentre.org.au/young-writers-online.aspx>