Links, recommendations & resources pulled from Chat – IN-SCBWI graphic novel conference

BOOK RESOURCES/RECOMMENDATIONS
Jen Malia: A great resource I've used for writing a script divided by pages and panels is Mark Kneece's THE ART OF COMIC BOOK WRITING: The Definitive Guide to Outlining, Scripting, and Pitching Your Sequential Art Stories.
ayarothwell: (for anyone who read Displacement, "Citizen 13660" by Okubo may be of interest)
Stevie VanBronkhorst: Here's another resource I found very useful:
https://www.abebooks.com/Visual-Storytelling-Art-Technique-Tony-Caputo/30741068398/bd?cm_mmc=ggl-_-US_Shopp_Trade-_-naa-_-naa&gclid=CjwKCAiAuoqABhAsEiwAdSkVVH00YoMAZdNFUgheU759S3I9uGpqgelLA-d0dtfsKyG2QsrkhQBmSxoCbUAQAvD_BwE
Alan Jones: Another good resource: Comics Experience Guide to Writing Comics: Scripting Your Story Ideas from Start to Finish Paperback ……...https://www.amazon.com/Comics-Experience-Guide-Writing-Scripting/dp/1440351848/ref=asc_df_1440351848/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=312167502430&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrand=5510405397140257249&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=902
Edna Cabcabin Moran: Wired for Story is amazing! Love Lisa Cron's book. She also has a Creative Live class if anyone is interested. I was in the studio audience and learned so much. Now, it's available on Creative Live online. One of the best tools I work with comes from Lisa Cron. It's her Scene Template.
Natascha Morris: There is a great image in WRITING IRRESISTIBLE KIDLIT that talks about internal and external conflict and how they tie together.
Shannon Watters: Kiara, this feels like a series you would like, I am crazy about it:
https://us.macmillan.com/books/9781645052951

LEGAL STUFF
Shannon Watters: Get a lawyer familiar with comics and graphic novel contracts if you're unagented!
Tanya: graphic novel TK is a great podcast that goes over all the publishing terms and processes in detail!
Kimberly Marcus: The Author's Guild also has information and a legal team
Natascha Morris: Yeah because there are some splits that are pretty common, but if you don't know, you might not get the best deal. Agent plug to say: get an agent!

PITCH PACKAGES
Edna Cabcabin Moran: Here's something about pitch packages from twitter if anyone's interested: https://twitter.com/gokomikimok/status/1336113301525307392
Natascha Morris: Another great pitch packet guide on Twitter:
https://twitter.com/RHKidsGraphic/status/1161346841021169665
Natascha Morris: And a round-up of topics:
https://twitter.com/WhitLeopard/status/1181586334353432576

JANNA MORISHIMA'S KIDS COMICS UNITE FORUM
Hollie Michaels: https://www.kidscomicsunite.com/feed
Andy Jewett: https://www.kidscomicsunite.com/
Johnell DeWitt: https://jannaco.co

KIDLITGN GROUP
Johnell DeWitt: Thanks, Theresa! Here's the FB group for KidLit GN:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/KidLitGN

ONLINE RESOURCES
Teresa Robeson: These and other resources are listed on our site:
https://indiana.scbwi.org/events/turning-writing-and-illustrator-ideas-into-graphic-novels/
Alan Jones: One more, a blog that is a little light on volume but heavy on useful info: Story
Structure in Graphic Novels.....https://timstout.wordpress.com/story-structure/

TEXT BALLOONS FORMATING
Tanja Wooten: Blambot has some great balloon text formatting tips:
https://blambot.com/pages/comic-book-grammar-tradition

CONVENTIONS
Andy N: Wonder and ComicCon has speed-dating-type mixers for writers and artists. I've heard
NYCC has something similar. More info: https://www.comic-con.org/wca/2017/comic-creator-
connection
Andy N: Shout out for LA Zine Fest! 🔥

GN TEMPLATES
Natascha Morris: For an example of panel pages, check out LUMBERJANES TO THE MAX
editions and go to the backmatter. They have examples of the scripts in the paneled pages.
Johnell DeWitt: Scrivener has two GN templates, for anyone who's on Scrivener.
Tanya Elchuk: Celtx is also a free program that has a comics template. I don't know how it
compares to other programs, but I like it.
Kirsten Larson: Dark Horse Comics has a good comics template. https://images.darkhorse.com
Tanja Wooten: I love Scrivener. :) Use the template from Anthony Johnston.
Johnell DeWitt: Ken Lamug did a post for me where he shows his page and how it's broken out
in panels, etc.: https://johnelldewitt.com/2019/08/27/interview-with-author-illustrator-ken-
lamug/
Alan Jones: Ditto on the Anthony J. GN script format, I go a little further and customize that.

Leigh: The Comic Book Script Archive is great for script examples for formatting strategies. https://www.comicsexperience.com/scripts/

Hannah McGill: Here's a great mini-comic template for practicing: http://experimentwithnature.com/03-found/experiment-with-paper-how-to-make-a-one-page-zine/#.YAMhgJNKjUI

Marcie Colleen: Google "panel format for comics" and see lots of templates online.

Kiara Valdez: *page dimensions depend on the house. they'll let you know early on

LETTERING

Hannah McGill: Hand-lettering is a trap :) Just make a typeface.

Edna Cabcabin Moran: Here's a letterer generator to play with… https://lettering.org/lettering-generator/

Kiara Valdez: Font, and lettering preferences are very based on house as well! Very different depending.

Kiara Valdez: Jonathan, depends! Many readers won't be able to tell if it's truly hand lettered vs handlettering-like font. And also fonts just make the production process much easier (remember, text needs to be edited every pass. If you have hand lettering, that's a huge feat. But font is fast.)

Hannah McGill: Also typefaces in lettering make it easier to internationalize graphic novel editions for different languages

MG VS YA

Molly Kasperek (they/she): The shorthand I've heard for MG vs. YA is that MG is about the character's perspective expanding about their family and friends whereas YA is more about the character's discovery of their place in the world (family and friends and beyond)

Johnell DeWitt: @Megan, as to your question about how to know if it's YA or MG, don't know if this will help, but here's a post that talks about "voice" as it pertains to different age groups (it's focused on PB, but there's other info too). I hope it helps a bit: https://johnelldewitt.com/2020/05/11/voice-youre-picture-book-sounds-too-old/

EDITOR PREFERENCES

Kiara Valdez: Shannon and I agree: For an *artist* or *artst+ writer* project, we want detailed outline or detailed summary, and sample pages!

Kiara Valdez: but for a writer alone, for me, i want a fully script

Kiara Valdez: i think Shannon wants something shorter if it's writer alone?

Kiara Valdez: It depends on house and your agent would help you with that!

Shannon Watters: It's funny, and Kiara can maybe speak more to this, but I feel like dedicated graphic novel imprints or publishers DON'T want the full script, and publishers/editors who are used to editing prose DO want the full script

Natascha Morris: Goes back to the "do the research" bit.

Shannon Watters: Big agree — a mistake I see a lot is the back story of the story is covered in depth and not the story itself!
Shannon Watters: In the pitch

PB VS GN
Kiara Valdez: picture books are just picture books, in the traditional format for me. i never called graphic novels that are for young readers "picture books"
Kiara Valdez: picture books have no panels
Kiara Valdez: if it has panels, then it's a young reader
Kiara Valdez: (yes you can have a picture book that's comic style like it has word balloons, My Papi has a Motorcycle for example)
Kiara Valdez: but that's a picturebook
Kirsten Larson: Picture books are meant to be read to children, not necessarily read independently. Regardless of how they are illustrated.
Jen Malia: I would think about in terms of WHO the intended reader is. If it's the child, it's an early reader. If it's an adult reading to a child, it's a picture book.

WEBCOMICS
Kiara Valdez: houses 100% go after half self published webcomics and we can come into an agreement how much come down or not
Kiara Valdez: Yes, First Second for example serializes some stuff online before the pub date as promo
Kiara Valdez: but never the full thing
Kiara Valdez: Dungeon Critters is an example

COMPS
Shannon Watters: I too like to see comps
Kiara Valdez: same but i hate when they are just not correct lol or like i can't see it as a comp
Shannon Watters: But in that case, it tells you something!
Shannon Watters: Re: the way the writer sees the story vs. the way you as the editor is seeing it
Natascha Morris: You can use it [comps] like a positioning statement: Titanic meets Jumanji but make it vampires.

FORMATTING
Marcie Colleen: Often, each paneled page equals a single page in the manuscript. And detail the description of what is in each panel.
Marcie Colleen: and most are 4-8 panels per page.
Marcie Colleen: and make sure you are varying layout per page
Kirsten Larson: I think Dark Horse recommends less than 125 words a page. No more than 25 words in a caption or bubble. As a guideline.

Jen Malia: I use the sample manuscript pages in THE ART OF COMIC BOOK WRITING as a model. You could also reverse script a few published pages from a comparable GN. So write out what you see on the published page into a script. I sort of did this but not too many pages like this.

<u>Recommended books</u>
Writing Irresistible Kid Lit
Tiger Vs. Nightmare
Snapdragon
The Art Of Comic Book Writing: The Definitive Guide to Outlining, Scripting, and Pitching Your Sequential Art Stories
Science Comics
Relish
Next Best Chef
Fruits Basket
Prince and the Dressmaker
Americana by Luke Healy
Scott Pilgrim
Bone
Science Comics series
e.g. https://www.amazon.com/Science-Comics-Plagues-Microscopic-Battlefield/dp/162672752X/ref=sr_1_4?dchild=1&keywords=science+comics&qid=1610826157&sr=8-4
History Comics series
e.g. https://www.amazon.com/History-Comics-Challenger-Disaster-Tragedy/dp/1250174309/ref=sr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=history+comics&qid=1610826181&sr=8-2