

SAMPLE PLOT

The art for comic strips is generally generated in a couple of different ways. One of the easiest to work from is a simple plot like this, which describes the action panel by panel. Once the artwork is finished, the writer can then go back and add the word balloons and captions based on the artist's interpretation of the plot.

This is very simple sample script we'll be using during the lesson. While the story was conceived as a single page in a super-hero comic book, I have provided a second interpretation if you want to practice and draw comics, but not necessarily super-heroes. Of course, this simple plot can be adapted any number of ways! These are just two possibilities! You should tell the story you want to tell while following the basic structure of the page.

Most authors write very simple descriptions for panels, unless a very specific kind of action is required. For this exercise, we're definitely going to keep it simple.

PANEL ONE:

An establishing shot of the CITY. Nighttime. Dark clouds frame the tall buildings. It looks like it's going to rain.

Alternative: An establishing shot of a SUBURBAN HOUSE. Nighttime. Dark clouds in the distance suggest it's going to rain soon.

PANEL TWO:

A shot of the HERO atop one of the buildings. Her/his CAPE billows in the nighttime wind. S/He's looking down into an ALLEY below. Something is amiss.

Alternative: A shot of MOM/DAD in the KITCHEN. Her/his arms are full of grocery bags. Her/his head turns as she walks in; something is amiss.

PANEL THREE:

In the ALLEY WAY, TWO CRIMINALS are escaping out the BACK DOOR of a store. Their hands are full of bags of LOOT.

Alternative: At the REFRIGERATOR DOOR, TWO YOUNGSTERS get caught eating DESSERT they shouldn't be eating! They have SPOONS in their hands and one of them holds a TUB OF ICE CREAM.

PANEL FOUR:

The criminals look up to the sky. Close on their FACES, startled, stunned. They can't believe what they're seeing. They've been caught and they know it.

Alternative: The kids look up from the freezer. Close on their FACES, startled, stunned. They've been caught, and they know it. Their faces are covered in ice cream!

PANEL FIVE:

The biggest panel on the page. A big shot of the HERO pouncing down on the VILLAINS! A real sense of drama to this panel; perhaps one is toppled over by a boot kick of the hero!

Alternative: A big shot of the MOM/DAD coming after the kids. The children run! There is an element of humor to this panel; perhaps their mouths are still covered in ice cream!