

How to Read *Wake: The Hidden History of Women-Led Slave Revolts* A Guide to Understanding Graphic Narratives

Write about this:

How does reading a book differ from looking at an image or watching a film? How are these activities similar?

Technical Elements of Graphic Narratives

Layout

Element	Define:	Effect:	Things to Consider:
Panels			
Frames			
Size, shape, & space			

Wake: The Hidden History of Women-Led Slave Revolts

Guided Notes

Gutter			
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Perspective

The shape of the panel and the use of _____ within it can be manipulated to

_____.

Many elements of graphic novels are similar to what you see in films.

Close-up

Images that are shown in a large view. Frequently, close-ups focus on a character's face, but they can be used to highlight anything.

Extreme Close-up

Images that are shown in very large view, often focusing on a small portion of a larger object or character. The image in a comic is drawn as if the artist zoomed in very closely on the object or character.

Longshot Images that show objects fully, from top to bottom.

When a longshot focuses on characters, the panel shows the characters from head to toe. Readers can see the character's full body.

Extreme Longshot

Images that show objects or characters in very small scale. Frequently, extreme longshots are used to show a full landscape or a crowd of characters.

Reverse Images that are in reverse position from the previous panel.

This technique is often used to show changes speaker or point of view.

Time

- _____ can be represented in **how panels change**. For example, lots of small panels in a row, lot of large panels in succession, etc.
- **Time**, in how fast or slowly it seems to pass--or the interplay between past, present, and future—is **represented by how panels change**.

Transitions & Gutters: The Invisible Messenger

According to Scott McCloud, the gutter allows for closure to happen. **Closure** is defined as, “**observing the parts, but perceiving the whole**.” Since authors & illustrators can only draw one static image in a frame, the space between frames—the gutter—conveys the **passage of time and movement**.

Our imagination take two separate images and transforms them into a single idea. Readers **connect the images in the panels to construct a continuous story**.

6 Types of Panel-to-Panel Transitions		
Moment-to-Moment:	Action-to-Action:	Subject-to-Subject:
Scene-to-Scene:	Aspect-to-Aspect:	Non-sequitur:

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Layout: Where is an object in space: close up or far away?

Foreground:

Midground:

Background:

Faces

What is the difference between *portrait* faces and *iconic* faces?

Define *open blank*. What is its effect on the reader?

Shading & Color

- Shading and color can reflect a creator's _____.
- Time, feelings, moods, and emotions are shown through _____ and _____.
- _____ indicate how characters or objects are moving.
- What other information can you infer from a creator's use of shading and color?

Text Elements

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Speech Balloons:

Thought Balloons:

Sound Effects:

Captions & Narration:

Similarly to a film director, a graphic narrative creator decides what each panel and page shows. Ask yourself:

- What are you seeing in each panel?
- What are you *not* seeing?
- How are transitions between time, space, or ideas depicted?
- What about the perspective, i.e. “camera angle”? Close-up or long shots? Worm’s-eye or bird’s-eye view?
- What is in the foreground, midground, and background?
- Do some images have more graphic weight than others? What do you notice about the color and shading?
- How do the creators show motion and sound?
- Why do you think the creators made these choices?

Three Big Takeaways:

1.

2.

3.