

# Comic Book and Graphic Novel Writing

This is a sample syllabus. Actual course topics and assignments may vary by instructor and class.

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## **Week 1**

The basics: the steps of making a comic book (writing, penciling, et cetera). The steps of writing a comic book (idea, premise/pitch, plot outline, script). Creating a lead character. Formatting the initial premise/pitch.

Assignment: Write three story ideas.

## **Week 2**

Plotting the story: finding the essential "story beats." Characters who grow and change between "panel 1" and "the end." Page-by-page breakdowns and panel-by-panel breakdowns.

Assignment: Turn your best story idea into a plot outline.

## **Week 3**

Scripting: staging the scenes. Panel-to-panel flow. Structuring the pages. The importance of brevity. Visual storytelling.

Assignment: Turn the first half of your plot outline into a script.

## **Week 4**

The business end of the comics business: getting editors and publishers to want your work. Finding the right artist. Contracts and payment. The power and peril of self-publishing. Confronting comics conventions. Handling Hollywood.

Assignment: Turn your entire plot outline into a script.