

Learning to Communicate Sustainability Issues Through Cartoons

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ta' Malta

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Abstract

This project-based dissertation entitled "*Learning to Communicate Sustainability Issues Through Cartoons*" advocates for more awareness with regards to Sustainable Development (SD) and acknowledges the need to integrate sustainability issues within the curriculum. Driven by artistic practices, this research primarily investigates the way in which educators can use cartoons in art education to teach about Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as specific artistic skills. The scope of this dissertation is to advocate for social change and environmental protection with the aim of satisfying UNESCO's 17 SDGs by the year 2030. This research amalgamates SD, art education, cartoons and comic art to provide new and alternative approaches to deal with matters related to SD and to enable educators to incite discussions about real-life issues within schools. This study explores how the visual arts can effectively reflect present-day realities and needs, to contribute to change.

This research utilises an Arts-Based Research (ABR) methodology to create a pedagogical resource which addresses complex issues like SD in a visual manner. In fact, a 32-page cartoon book consisting of a series of four short narratives was illustrated to portray specific SDGs. To increase the level of engagement and familiarity, the stories were presented in a comic-strip format and contextualised within local settings. To opt for more sustainable choices, the cartoon book was drawn digitally to ease the eventuality of distribution without the need for printing. This dissertation also acknowledges the importance of issues-based art education to shed light on matters which resonate with the world in general. Moreover, through research, critical reflections and creative approaches, a scheme of work (SoW) for Year 10 Art option students was developed, acting as a guidance tool on how to integrate this cartoon book and other concerns within the curriculum. Besides exposing students to the 17 SDGs, international artists, different art forms, learning outcomes and skills, this SoW seeks to encourage students to express their personal perspectives on sustainability issues and become active, critical, reflexive and responsible citizens in today's society.

Keywords (Sustainable Development, Arts-Based Research, Curricular Development, Issues-Based Art, Cartoons, Comic Art)

*I dedicate this dissertation to those individuals
who have advocated for environmental awareness and social change
in the hope of encouraging further action.*

*With the greatest gratitude, I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved parents and sister
who have given me indispensable educational opportunities,
love and support throughout my life.*

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List of Abbreviations

ABER	Arts-Based Educational Research
ABR	Arts-Based Research
CGI	Computer-Generated Imagery
DLAP	Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programmes
EE	Environmental Education
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
FEE	Foundation for Environmental Education
LEAF	Learning About Forests
LO/s	Learning Outcome/s
LOF	Learning Outcomes Framework
MATSEC	Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
PBL	Problem-Based Learning
SD	Sustainable Development
SDG/s	Sustainable Development Goal/s
SEC	Secondary Education Certificate
SoW	Scheme of Work
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VAE	Visual Arts Education
VL	Visual Literacy
YRE	Young Reporters for the Environment

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

It is undeniably poignant for society at large to have to experience issues related to unsustainable practices which are seriously affecting the natural environment and citizens' well-being. In the face of these urgent challenges, all citizens should do their part to combat various societal, environmental and economic matters. Within such scenarios, the notion of Sustainable Development (SD) becomes pertinent, as it encourages cooperation between all nations, guarantees a better world for upcoming generations, and advocates for more responsibility and sensitivity. In fact, the term SD is defined as a type of development that fulfils the needs of the present generation without compromising the potential of future generations to meet their own (Rabie, 2016).

1.2 The Research Questions

Education has been regarded as a powerful tool which ensures the creation of a more sustainable future. Therefore, the incorporation of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) within all subject matters has become even more important in the present day. When it comes to art education, this could potentially “promote a commitment to action” on numerous sustainability issues, and it could even extend one’s sense of care towards future generations, ecosystems and environments (Caruana et al., 2021, p. 237). Thus, the visual arts could detach from the notion of creating art for art’s sake to adopt an activist agenda. Through this project-based dissertation titled “*Learning to Communicate Sustainability Issues Through Cartoons*”, the researcher investigated ways of informing students about pressing sustainability issues and encouraging them to engage with issues-based art.

The research questions that this dissertation investigates relate to the impact that contemporary issues have on art education, the role the visual arts play in tackling such issues and the way teachers could use cartoons in different teaching and learning scenarios to teach students about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The research aims to

direct students' attention to issues of sustainability in the hope of instigating more action and awareness. This research study includes a 32-page cartoon book which consists of four concise stories about four specific SDGs, and a corresponding scheme of work (SoW) for Year 10 Art option students. Contextualising the stories in Malta is necessary, as students are thus given the chance to connect visual information to the local reality. Furthermore, given that cartooning is a very appealing and persuasive form of art for such a young audience, it was an undoubtedly justifiable option. Lastly, this research acknowledged the potential of cartoons to serve as a social and environmental commentary to confront pressing global issues. Through "guided practice and inquiry questioning", the students will first learn how to critically analyse cartoons to discern underlying messages, and then create their own cartoons about current events (Kroesch, 2016, p. 63).

1.3 Relevance of the Topic

This particular topic is of extreme relevance to art education, educators and the researcher herself. Firstly, this research is valuable within the field of art education as it is reoriented towards the principles of SD and encourages the discussion of real-life issues within the classroom. Rather than merely remain tied to art history and traditional artists, this project acknowledges the importance of continuously adapting the curriculum to meet present-day needs. In fact, the visual arts should remain responsive to what is happening on an international level. On the other hand, the produced pedagogical resources, cartoon book and SoW will encourage all educators to infuse complex cross-curricular themes, such as SD, within their lessons to encourage responsible and active citizenship. Through such visualisations, sustainability issues become easier to address and explain. Additionally, the artist-researcher herself seeks to engage with issues-based art with the aims of increasing awareness in society, achieving social justice and safeguarding the local environment.

1.4 The Written Component

This project-based dissertation is divided into six interlinked chapters. The present chapter introduces and explains the research's main questions and relevance, and provides an

overview of the remaining five chapters. Secondly, the Literature Review chapter presents information on the main components of this project-based dissertation as it expounds on sustainability and SD, the role of visual arts in tackling pressing environmental and social issues, the impact of contemporary issues on art education, the notion of learning through cartoons and comic art, as well as local art/ sustainability initiatives. Thirdly, the Methodology chapter expounds on the specific methodology that formulated and led this research project; that is, Arts-Based Research (ABR). It even details the artistic process behind the cartoon book, the utilisation of digital tools, and issues pertaining to curriculum development. The fourth chapter is an in-depth description and analysis of the cartoon book and touches upon its rationale, stylistic techniques, strengths, challenges, potential improvements and future implications. The fifth chapter is an in-depth description and analysis of the SoW from an educational perspective, thus explaining the eight interrelated activities. It also refers to the Learning Outcomes Framework (LOF) and the SEC Art Syllabus 2025, and expounds on the SoW's relevance for its target audience. The concluding chapter is a summary of the research findings, limitations and recommendations based on the findings. This dissertation was structured in this way so as to reflect the research process that was undertaken to develop two pedagogical resources based on relevant literature.

1.5 Conclusion

As the following chapters will demonstrate, the arts could do what other data collection methods cannot, and this is that it has the potential to instil emotional reactions. Such a response towards art could potentially affect decision-making, be the motor of behavioural change, and motivate citizens to act (Klöckner & Sommer, 2021). Moreover, given the existence of the global development agenda titled "*Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*", this research becomes an instrument to support the acquisition of "the 17 SDGs and 169 target areas" (Agbedahin, 2019, p. 676). The following chapter is a theoretical insight of the dissertation's main research aspects.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents literature on the main aspects of this project-based dissertation, mainly the need for sustainability, the role of visual arts in tackling pressing issues, the impact of contemporary issues on art education, the definition of cartoons and comic art, the importance of education through comics, and local initiatives. Therefore, this research will expound on SD, visual arts and their subset comic art, as well as their integration in education.

2.1.1 What is Sustainability and Sustainable Development?

Throughout these past two decades, the degradation of the environment has escalated to the extent that it has become an international problem (Katoppo et al., 2020). In fact, seeking alternative ways to live more sustainably has become all the more urgent (Belton, 2011). According to Adams (2016), the term ‘sustainability’ correlates with preserving and enduring and, as outlined by Kuhlman and Farrington (2010), this can be traced back to the Brundtland Report (1987), which was concerned with nature’s limitations in terms of resources versus mankind’s aspirations.

One could find varying definitions on theories of sustainability as each theory is considered to be a “guiding idea that can be implemented differently” rather than a uniform concept (Enders & Remig, 2015, p. 5). Some perceive sustainability as an economic state whereby the demands imposed upon the environment by commerce and people can be satisfied without diminishing the environment’s capacity to produce for future generations. Some look at sustainability as something which reduces the long-term risks related to variations in energy costs, resource depletion, waste management and pollution, whereas others regard it as an informed balance between environmental management, social equity and economic development (Bhanot et al., 2019). For others, sustainability means providing the required necessities for present and upcoming generations, and this is the definition that prevails

within this research (Katoppo et al., 2020). It prioritises not only the environment but also one's welfare; hence, it aims to achieve 'intergenerational equity' and find a balance between available resources and humans' needs. The United Nations' (UN's) agenda perceives social and economic development, as well as environmental protection, as interdependent factors. To better manage our resources, it is beneficial to differentiate between man-made, natural, renewable and non-renewable resources, and to distinguish between weak and strong sustainability. Irreplaceable resources fall under the latter domain, which is why we should ensure their preservation (Kuhlman and Farrington, 2010). Although the notion of sustainability "means to keep in existence, to prolong", it is believed that society is adaptive and can never remain in a "single state" (Barbosa et al., 2014, p. 6).

SD is our hope "for a better future" and aims to transform our lives and the earth "by connecting people" through "collaborative partnership" (Katoppo et al., 2020, pp. 1-2). SD concerns are real-life issues which affect one's well-being and which have been infused into educational and political discourses. The concept of SD is associated with various social, economic and environmental issues and refers to a population's ability to sensibly manage its available natural resources for the following generations (Pavlou, 2022). SD is a type of development which lasts and one which advocates for economic equity and social justice (Barbosa et al., 2014).

Initially, a three-pillar model related to SD was developed to safeguard the economy's and the environment's stability. It was argued that SD could occur only when the environmental, social and economic concerns intersect and when 'win-win' solutions are practised. Yet, an integral pillar of sustainability relating to the cultural realm was not considered. Given that one's culture not only regulates how individuals act in society but also determines their definition of development, one cannot disregard this aspect of sustainability. The SD model developed into "a four-pillar framework" encompassing the environment, economy, society and culture. The arts are a crucial component of the cultural pillar (Vella et al., 2021, p. 123).

Therefore, as described by the "United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation" (UNESCO), "sustainability is a long-term goal" for a sustainable world, whilst SD suggests the "processes to reach this goal" (Wagner, 2021, p. 3; Jeronen, 2022, p. 2).

When safeguarding our natural resources and ecosystems, citizens are making environmentally sustainable decisions, whereas social SD is promoted through cooperation and solidarity. A sustainable economy ensures societies' self-development and an adequate life standard (Sinakou et al., 2018). In the case of Malta, a concerning SD challenge relates to land degradation, since land is a scarce resource and such an increase in demand necessitates clearer limitations. Another challenge relates to poverty since "in 2019, people at risk of poverty increased by 5.2%" (Vella, 2022, p. 171).

In fact, according to the Ministry for Social Justice and Solidarity, the Family and Children's Rights (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic hindered the progress made in mitigating social exclusion and poverty. This means that it has become more crucial to deal with poverty to reduce homelessness, unemployment, health risks, school underachievement and dropouts. Malta should even develop a more comprehensive strategy to deal with the issue of gender inequality, and there is an imbalance in terms of domestic responsibilities, time spent on social activities, pay, political empowerment and women's involvement within the labour market (Grech, 2017). When it comes to decent work, Debono (2021) argues that the country needs to safeguard workers' health and safety as the number of fatal accidents has increased (mostly among migrant workers). Lastly, since Malta is not a resource-rich country, both its natural habitat and its endemic species (biodiversity) are threatened by climate change, land development, invasive species and human pressures (Grech, 2017). SD becomes crucial for small countries like Malta whose resources are limited (Mifsud, 2012).

2.1.2 UNESCO and Sustainable Development Goals

UNESCO is a crucial partner for various stakeholders mainly with regards to arts education and ESD (Wagner, 2021). It urges all citizens to opt for sustainable living, to embrace social and economic justice, and to have ecological integrity. This is feasible if one reflects critically on their own practices and fosters values of sustainability. Agenda 2030 for SD intends to reach the 17 SDGs which, in many ways, address international challenges that affect human survival. These interdependent goals were endorsed by the UN in 2015. They aspire to eradicate hunger, poverty and inequalities, ensure adequate well-being, health, work and

education, promote gender equity, responsible production and consumption, economic and infrastructure development, peace and justice, facilitate access to clean energy and quality water, create sustainable communities, address life on land, life in oceans, and climate change, and establish cooperation amongst nations (Pavlou, 2022).

The unprecedented pressure on our resources, the growing human population, and the hardships experienced by specific groups led to the development of this international agenda, titled “Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (Sachs, 2012; Wagner, 2021, p. 4). Within it, there is a balance between the social, environmental and economic SD dimensions (Sinakou et al., 2018). SDGs generally have “8 to 12 targets” to address the outcome or the implementation, and every target has “1 to 4 indicators” to calculate achievement (Jeronen, 2022, p. 2). Despite the existence of 17 SDGs, those related to environmental matters like pollution are likely to be mentioned more than those related to social justice, inequality, cultural traditions or poverty. In addition, whenever putting specific sustainability issues to the forefront, it is beneficial to consider the local context and to amalgamate related challenges like poverty and climate change. Locally, issues related to high-rise buildings, food sovereignty or security, and access to healthy food are deemed particularly concerning (Vella et al., 2022).

2.2 Education for Sustainable Development

Education has been regarded as an indispensable tool in preparing citizens to address sustainability issues and to resolve them “since the Rio Declaration and the Earth Summit in 1992” (Pavlou, 2022, p. 10). Quality education is in fact the fourth SDG, and in order to achieve this, the way we perceive education must change. Having education which leads “us through the challenges and visions of the 21st century” will help to instil certain competencies leading to sustainable practices and a peaceful co-existence (Pavlou, 2022, p. 10).

ESD is a “lifelong learning process” which aspires to enhance the social, cognitive, behavioural and emotional learning dimensions (Jeronen, 2022, p. 4). It must encourage

citizens to alter the way they work for a sustainable future where everyone should retain their responsibility to resolve challenges. In fact, it seeks to advocate for “environmental integrity, economic viability, and a just society” (Keuchel, 2021, p. 169). ESD presents a shift in focus from prioritising the protection of the environment to social issues (Kopnina, 2012). The integration of ESD and sustainability issues in the curriculum should be transversal and consequently included as a cross-curricular theme in all subjects (Benavot, 2014). Through ESD, present and future learners obtain certain values, attitudes and skills which enhance their quality of life and through it, the environment inside and outside of the learner’s school transforms into a teaching resource which is “culturally sensitive” and “locally relevant” (Vella et al., 2022, p. 63). For sustainability to be taken seriously, educators need to teach personal skills related to creativity, co-operation, reflectiveness and problem-solving, whereas learners should be actively engaged in questioning, doing or discovering for real understanding and experiential learning (Belton, 2011).

2.3 Visual Arts’ Role in Tackling Social and Environmental Issues

Utilising visual arts like painting, drawing, film, photography, printmaking and sculpture as a form of social or political commentary has been commonplace for a long time in American and European cultures (Brown, 2015).

The arts have the ability to shape our behaviours, values, social norms and choices, provide us with information, and instil a sense of empathy and care towards nature. Such roles are crucial in directing citizens towards sustainability so as to combat biodiversity loss, climate change, land degradation and over-crowded cities. The arts prompt individuals to perceive issues differently, they help reveal nature’s beauty, and communicate educational messages in non-threatening and creative ways (Curtis, 2017). As information and empathy could be communicated through different artistic methods, it is more likely for individuals to remember underlying messages, making the arts crucial in the process of SD. Visual art forms open a space for emotional reactions, imbue serious issues with a sense of humour and connect individuals (Curtis, 2020).

As a result, SDGs can be supported through visual arts education (VAE) and what is often referred to as a 'life-connecting pedagogy'. In fact, a recent project entitled *CARE* seeks to find ways of connecting VAE and ESD (Pavlou, 2022). Through VAE resources like cartoons, students could become knowledgeable about pressing issues, seek solutions and act towards them. Nonetheless, visual arts educators are encouraged to utilise sustainable materials, and reuse and upcycle materials (Vella, 2022).

2.3.1 Defining Visual Culture

"We live in a world of images" where visual cultures have been predominant for centuries (Plate, 2015, p. 1). Chang et al. (2012) define visual culture as interdisciplinary, a "field for inquiry", and something which reflects our lives (p. 19). In fact, art touches upon language, culture, history, tradition, science and social studies. It consists of various means of visual representations, from everyday life situations such as those featured in advertisements or newspaper cartoons, and it includes the "popular visual culture" and "traditional fine arts". In class, images should be chosen for their potential to deal with issues (Chang et al., 2012, p. 20).

Studying visual culture gives students the chance to question their surrounding contexts, whereas linking artists' or students' everyday visual cultures to pressing issues makes art education relevant (Chang et al., 2012; Darts, 2006). Since an individual's perception interprets available data in the best possible way, our eyes help us look whilst our mind helps us see. The latter is a learned process for which our past experiences play an important role (Plate, 2015).

2.3.2 The Need to be Visually Literate and a Critical Thinker

Being able to write and interpret visual information as well as investigate semiotics' and images' cultural meanings, is as crucial as knowing how to read basic text (Duchak, 2014). In other words, being competent in visual literacy (VL) is essential to communicate effectively in today's "visually saturated" societies. Understanding, analysing, interpreting and

conducting “visual-verbal-visual translation” are skills related to visual reading, whereas producing and using images are skills related to visual writing. VL competency also includes “visual learning” and “visual thinking” abilities (Kędra, 2018, p. 67). The latter refers to the ability to transform information into different kinds of visual communication (Duchak, 2014). Hence, it is very important for students to become active consumers of visual messages and generate meaning which goes beyond a mere description. Engaging them in activities involving “visual storytelling” could enhance students’ skills in visual communication (Kędra, 2018, p. 77).

In class, it is necessary to ensure a balance between textual and visual literacies, and encourage learners to develop skills related to critical thinking in connection to visuals (Duchak, 2014). Critical thinking, a major competence for quality education (SDG 4), allows educators to consider art criticism as an integral part of the curriculum. The former helps to avoid a predetermined pedagogy, allowing learners to make reasoned decisions about real-life contexts (Vella, 2022). VL aids in developing visual sensitivities amongst individuals, and for this reason, it helps in solving SD-related problems (Adejumo & Fajuyigbe, 2010).

2.4 Education for Sustainable Development Through Art Education

Given that ESD is perceived as a “cross-curricular theme” within the Maltese National Curriculum Framework, it could be infused within various subjects, including Art. The Learning Outcomes Framework for Art touches upon some generic issues which might relate to SD distress, yet there are few specific links to environmental issues (Vella et al., 2022, p. 61). Having teachers understand what sustainability is could help in the instilling of ESD-related skills, whilst specific teaching approaches like self-regulated, project-based or constructive learning aid in understanding SD holistically (Sinakou et al., 2018).

Vella et al. (2021) refer to Elliot Eisner’s aims of art education which are in line with UNESCO’s ESD competencies, such as taking decisions, making moral judgements, thinking critically, imagining the future, communicating feelings and embracing other viewpoints. Although art education is more or less learner- and process-centred, whereas ESD focuses

on the common good and on empathy towards the disadvantaged, both of them envision a sustainable future. Finding ways to address pressing concerns artistically, without imposing rules about correct behaviours, leads to alternative solutions (Keuchel, 2021).

Art education contributes to “reorienting education towards sustainability”, as it promotes the fourth pillar and acts as a “channel of hope”. Sustainability should be infused within all subjects so that the school can transform into the “microcosm of the world” we envision. If art is perceived as a form of activism, it will certainly support ESD competencies such as “systems thinking” (Vella et al., 2021, pp. 122-123). Nevertheless, the educational theorist of sustainability Brian Murphy claims that vision and imagination “are the cutting edge of knowledge” and that knowledge is obtained whenever reality is questioned (Clammer, 2014, p. 69).

2.4.1 Issues-Based Art Education and Art Activism

Instead of focusing solely on techniques or materials, art educators should address contemporary issues, introduce “socially engaged artists”, and explore “issue-themed projects” (Darts, 2006, p. 7). When incorporating contemporary issues in class, students gain a better understanding, they explore contemporary artists and become “critical visual consumers” (Chang et al., 2012, p. 22). The Seoul Agenda, a fundamental 21st-century document on arts education, promotes the notion that arts education could resolve challenges. The works of numerous contemporary artists including Ai Weiwei, Banksy, Olafur Eliasson, Nyaba Leon Ouedraogo, El Anatsui, and Mónica Mayer speak about different SDGs to prioritise issues related to ecology, politics, poverty, climate change, consumerism, recycling, and unfair employment or pay. Locally, Steve Bonello illustrates political cartoons to convey his concerns about environmental degradation (**Figures 1-7**). Rather than creating art for its sake, educators should support self-awareness, problem-solving skills, and interdisciplinarity. Hence, SD and Art should be presented as “interlinked modes of social action” (Vella, 2022, p. 10).

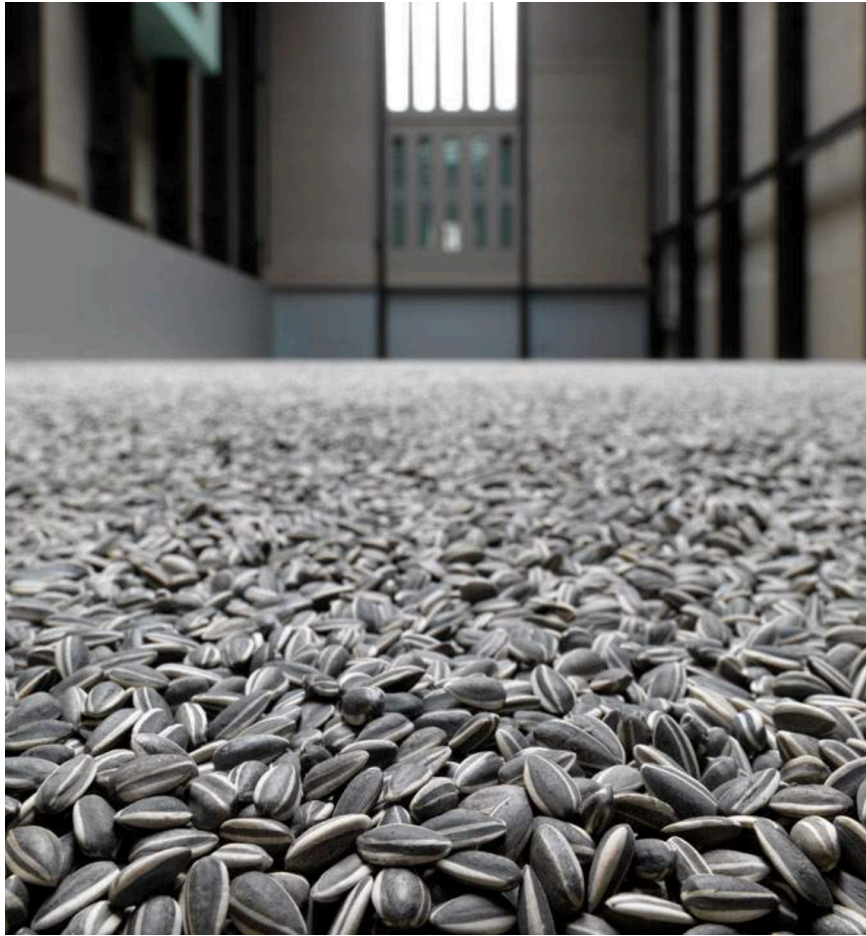


Figure 1: WeiWei, A. (2010). *Sunflower Seeds* [Installation].
Tate Modern's Turbine Hall, London, United Kingdom.



Figure 2: Banksy (2018). *Welsh Steel Town of Port Talbot* [Graffiti].
Port Talbot, Wales, United Kingdom.



Figure 3: Eliasson, O. (2018). *Ice Watch* [Installation].
Outside Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom.



Figure 4: Ouedraogo, N. L. (2008). *The Hell of Copper* [Photography].
Accra, Ghana.



Figure 5: Anatsui, E. (2007). *Dusasa II* [Installation].
Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy.



Figure 6: Mayer, M. (1978). *El Tendedero (The Clothesline)* [Performance].
Mexico City, Mexico, Southern North America.

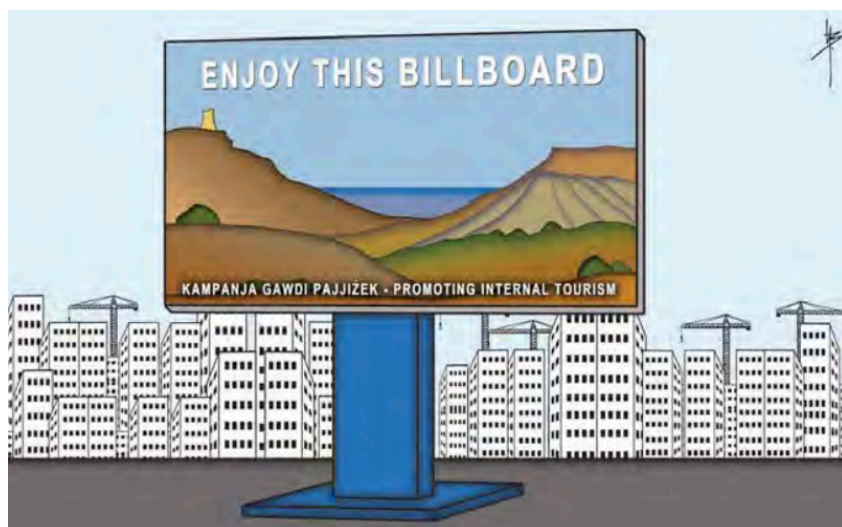


Figure 7: Bonello, S. (2020). *Gawdi Pajjizek (Enjoy Your Country)*
[Newspaper Cartoon]. The Sunday Times, Malta.

Art activism then refers to the potential of art as a form of protest where activists seek to improve present social and environmental conditions (Groys, 2014). For decades, artists have taken on the role of responding to challenging issues, increasing awareness, and bringing their perspectives to the forefront. An example of this is when, in 1937, Pablo Picasso managed to make a powerful political statement through his painting *Guernica* as a reaction to brutal bombing (Scott, 2020).

2.4.2 How Can Art Education Contribute to Change?

Adams (2016) acknowledges art's potential to address important notions related to well-being, sustainability and equality. Arts and culture not only offer alternative ways of looking at problems, but contribute to engaging with individuals on an emotional and cognitive level. Thus, VAE and ESD encourage learners to become "agents of change" (Pavlou, 2022, p. 17). The arts can advocate for an ethic of care through which individuals are able to alter their communities (Darts, 2006).

Moreover, when hearing the term 'reconstructivist art education', we refer to the kind of education which contextualises art in relation to present-day needs rather than focus on traditional expressionistic approaches. Guaranteeing its implementation is challenging, whilst moving away from such methodologies is even more difficult. Inquiry-based pedagogies invite all learners to question present situations, and they instil a sense of agency within those individuals who aspire for change. Through questioning and visual means, students are invited to discover and reflect on scenarios dominated by unsustainable practices to reimagine the future (Vella et al., 2021).

It is the emotional reaction that is triggered when confronting an artwork that leads to change. Emotions like guilt, hope or awe instil in the viewer a sense of commitment which is essential for decision-making and in mitigating irresponsible behaviours (Klößner & Sommer, 2021).

2.5 Interpretation Through Illustration

Artists utilise different art forms and give their own interpretation to react towards environmental or social changes (Klößner & Sommer, 2021). Without imposing a specific action, artists “put something on the social agenda” (Nurmis, 2016, p. 511). More specifically, illustration is a mode of visual communication through which messages are expressed. Since prehistoric times, individuals have used images to interpret complex messages as whilst being entertaining, an illustration also educates people. The following are five contexts for which it could be used: fiction, persuasion, commentary, identity and knowledge. Illustrations have the potential to imagine new worlds through original characters, stories and desired emotions (Garner, 2017, para. 1, 4, 6, 8, 13).

2.5.1 Defining Cartoons, Comic Art and Comic Strips

The art of cartoons, comics, or — as the cartoonist Will Eisner referred to it — sequential art, is an art form that “supports democracy”. According to the cartoonist Scott McCloud, cartoons emphasise new ideas while simultaneously simplifying them (Maggio, 2007, p. 237). Created in the form of animated films or illustrations, cartoons give character and colour to realities whilst cartoon characters influence children’s beliefs, and facilitate learning about morality and the world (Attard & Cremona, 2020). Cartoons seek to capture a particular idea which the artist wants to address, and its effectiveness is determined by whether it is remembered or not (Brown, 2015). Rather than being “just a way of drawing”, cartooning is “a way of seeing” and the simplification of images can be effective for storytelling (Maggio, 2007, p. 237).

Through the powerful art form of comics, which are sequenced and juxtaposed text and images, information can be conveyed (Berkowitz & Packer, 2001). A comic needs to have an underlying message presented in multiple parts or in a single panel cartoon, and it could be presented in two forms either as comic strips or as comic books. On the one hand, comic strips generally have “few panels of pictures of cartoons” and are oftentimes found in newspapers or magazines, whereas “comic books are collections of comics” gathered in a

book (Novitasari, 2020, p. 269). Hence, a cartoon generally means one panel, a picture, whilst a 'comic strip' or 'cartoon strip' refers to a concise series of panels, usually three to four (Theuma, 2017). Comics are temporal due to the element of time duration (Grant, 2012).

Consequently, besides the animated cartoons to which children might be more accustomed, cartoons can be static in the form of strips. In fact, animated cartoons are initially visualised as static strips (Mallia, 2000). Given that comic strips consist of a concise series of visuals that have a short storyline and which consume less time, they are more commonly used in classrooms when compared to comic books. Media literacy skills, which help one engage with media-produced messages, could be improved when one reads comic strips (Novitasari, 2020).

When understanding and interpreting a comic's meaning, individuals tend to adopt the cognitive technique of 'closure' to fill in the 'blanks'. The reading of comics entails a different experience than when reading a standard text because meaning is exchanged between pictures and words (Maggio, 2007). Certain information needs to be learned to read comics effectively and this includes understanding the direction of panels, the dialogues' sequence, volume and tone, and speaker identification (Theuma, 2017). Reading them thus entails a degree of visual and textual proficiency (Ogier & Ghosh, 2017).

2.5.2 Cross-Curricular Learning Through the Art Form of Comics

Cross-curricular learning constructs a more knowledgeable understanding of our surrounding environments and seeks to acknowledge diverse viewpoints. This pedagogical approach which combines different disciplines could potentially enhance the curriculum's relevance, level of learning, as well as solve real-life issues and trigger creative thinking (Barnes, 2015). It gives students a degree of autonomy and allows them to contribute to their personal learning experiences. A cross-curricular project like one involving comics promotes learning in both text-based and visual literacies in a very fluid manner. Besides learning artistic techniques, its utilisation could teach about literature, grammar,

vocabulary, punctuation, types of genres, plot, characterisation and figurative language (Ogier & Ghosh, 2017). Hence, comics offer students the opportunity to master various skills whilst developing visual narratives (Grant, 2012).

On the other hand, the way information is presented enhances the learning experience. As an art form, comics allow students to engage on a personal level, allowing them to react with recognition if the material is familiar to them. Sometimes, comic storylines are reworkings of popular myths or stories, act as an interpretation of reality, and present solutions to problems. The extent to which learners understand and connect them to real life is determined by their existing knowledge. Otherwise, unfamiliarity with the visual's references hinders such a possibility. For instance, a Chinese student might not instantly link an image of the Empire State Building to New York (Theuma, 2017). This proves the importance of familiarity in understanding works of art.

By putting an artwork within a context, artists encourage deeper processing and higher visual attention. Through such contextualisation of information, an artwork's meaning could be better interpreted (Keller et al., 2019). Post-modern appropriation artists like Barbara Kruger believe that by reusing some details of existing imagery within a new artwork, the viewer is allowed to reconsider the meaning of the original in a more relevant context (Rowe, 2011).

2.6 Cartoons and Comic Art in Educational Scenarios

As outlined, cartoons and comic art offer numerous pedagogical possibilities whereby students develop a wide range of skills including art analysis. The educational tool of comics can be utilised in different learning scenarios, and as a medium, it is multimodal (Berkowitz & Packer, 2001). Comics are an effective learning tool because of their "imaginative notions" and because knowledge could be absorbed very efficiently through them. In reality, an educational illustrated book which relates to children's surrounding contexts could be very informative (Katoppo et al., 2020, p. 4). In fact, comics are generally linked to the culture of the respective target audience and include comments on their society

(Theuma, 2017). Through them, different subjects could be taught just as well, or even better, than through non-illustrated textbooks (Mallia, 2000).

For students to produce a comic strip, they should think of ideas related to the storyline, speech and cartoon character/s, and sketch equally-sized frames. Illustrating the characters, sketching the word balloons, and adding speech are the following steps (Novitasari, 2020). Cartoons and comic art are powerful enough to allow an individual to communicate life experiences, target issues, provide alternative visions and encourage re-evaluations (Maggio, 2007). Having teachers and students expressing their views on SD through the mentioned artistic means can certainly prove rewarding.

2.6.1 Using Cartoons to Communicate Sustainability Issues to Others

Young individuals tend to be concerned about global issues related to global warming, poverty, natural disasters, war and sustainability. Yet, they should be able to describe their vision for a sustainable world, too (Barnes, 2015; Venkataraman, 2009). Through powerful cartoons, the artist could disseminate knowledge and encourage action to counter negative consequences (Scott, 2020).

As explained, having pedagogical resources which manage to link the classroom to the outside world is significantly effective. In fact, through simple cartoon-line drawings which are instantly intelligible to children and which have no unnecessary details, reality can be visualised (Mallia, 2000). By portraying everyday life in the form of cartoon characters and within an educational context, life lessons are learned. Also, having teachers producing their own comic strips will offer invaluable benefits to students (Novitasari, 2020).

It is definitely beneficial for the syllabi regarding SD issues to be relevant to the learners' lives, as such connections help viewers regard the expressed topics as ones which affect them personally and not as something distant (Briguglio & Pace, 2003; Klöckner & Sommer, 2021).

2.7 Local Initiatives Regarding Sustainable Development

Locally, the Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programmes (DLAP) promotes a global vision that encourages schools to obtain a better understanding of global issues and engages them in sustainability initiatives (Sustainable Development Directorate, 2020). As ESD empowers humans to be active citizens who aspire to live a sustainable lifestyle, Nature Trust - Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) Malta implemented the 1994 “International Eco-Schools Programme”, commonly referred to as EkoSkola, to encourage students to manage their actions at school, at home, and in the community. This programme, which is the largest international school-network programme engaged in ESD, instils within learners the need to act towards sustainability and if these goals are reached, the respective schools are awarded the Green Flag (Nature Trust – FEE Malta, 2022, p. iii). Ekoskola was introduced in Malta in 2002 and it involves a collaboration between the government and Nature Trust Malta, an NGO (Mifsud, 2012).

This prioritisation of ESD is certainly more successful if adopted as a whole-school approach. Students should be given enough opportunities, such as EkoSkola summits, to voice their opinions. Infusing such concerns within the curriculum and school activities could potentially cause a ripple effect (Nature Trust – FEE Malta, 2022). This programme aspires to infuse “an environmental ethic” within schools’ ethos (Briguglio & Pace, 2003, p. 3).

Besides EkoSkola, local NGOs organise activities to improve the environment and life quality. The project *Dinja Waħda*, an initiative by the NGO Birdlife, was adopted by more than half of Malta’s primary schools to promote Environmental Education (EE). Further efforts are being made through projects like ‘Learning about Forests’ (LEAF) and ‘Young Reporters for the Environment’ (YRE) (Sustainable Development Directorate, 2020). Schools should be interested in the initiatives’ intrinsic value and not in achieving certificates (Mifsud, 2012).

2.8 Conclusion

According to De Heer (2015), what we could do regarding sustainability is to think, talk, dream, write, make art about it and act on it. As discussed, infusing sustainability issues and SD within schools should be a priority and further initiatives should be taken. The benefits of discussing such concerns in schools are significant and by doing so, learners become encouraged to act. Art education has the potential to educate individuals on a different level as it has the potential to engage learners on an emotional and personal level. Through the engaging art form of comics, students and teachers could communicate sustainability issues pertaining to the local context and beyond whilst raising awareness. It grants students skills related to visual and text-based literacies.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the main theoretical components of this project-based dissertation and acknowledged the importance of integrating issues relating to sustainability within the school curriculum. Through this, both teachers and students could express their concerns regarding SDGs and encourage action. This chapter introduces the methodology that will be leading and formulating the research project. To abide by official University of Malta procedures, this research was initiated after being granted the necessary ethical approval.

3.2 Arts-Based Educational Research

As a methodological approach, Arts-Based Research (ABR) is considered to be legitimate within the area of education. Through it, the construction of knowledge becomes embedded within the arts' potential to obtain and generate deeper understandings (Pentassuglia, 2017). The researcher Patricia Leavy regards ABR as any human inquiry or social research that utilises the "creative arts as a part of the methodology", whereby the process of researching and writing becomes grounded within artistic practices (Jones & Leavy, 2014, p. 1). Barone and Eisner (2011) even claim that ABR is empathetic and heuristic. Hence, it allows for deeper discoveries and meanings. In fact, ABR alters the way through which research is managed and as a methodology, it is expressive and exploratory (Springgay et al., 2005).

Arts-Based Educational Research (ABER) refers to the integration of ABR approaches and educational research (Duygu Bedir, 2015). Rather than being a substitute for qualitative or quantitative research, ABER becomes a methodology in its own right that widens the researcher's perspectives (Barton, 2015). As Barone and Eisner (2006) argue, "ABER is an umbrella concept" and for this reason, there are no prescribed procedures on how to create

an ABR product (p. 98). Therefore, ABER could be defined as a type of research that uses different artistic practices for representation, analysis, or data collection, with the aim of improving education (Bertling, 2020).

According to Sullivan (2008), “the task of any rigorous intellectual and imaginative inquiry” is to create new insights, and possibly to challenge one’s knowledge (p. 249). Creative acts allow arts-based researchers to see things from a new perspective, and even to go beyond what is already known. In such practices, the artwork itself becomes the principal source of knowledge through which specific problems, insights and questions arise “as part of the practice” (Graeme, 2006, p. 31). ABR even cultivates within the researcher a sense of empathy and reflexivity that favours open dialogue, and unlike traditional methods, it offers important insights on critical issues that pertain to the wider community (Chow et al., 2019). In a similar way to this dissertation, the artistic outcome of ABR reflects the findings, implications, and conclusive statements, whereas the actual practice of painting/drawing is regarded as a form of research: ‘painting as act’, which implies that knowledge could be realised whilst developing the artwork (research through painting); ‘painting as idea’, which refers to the notion of exploring conceptual issues to open up a dialogue between the viewer and the artist (research with painting); ‘painting as theory’, which suggests that the artist is creating artworks which are partially directed by the research project’s scope, and which exist within a broader critical discourse (research in painting); and ‘painting as form’, which constitutes thinking of the medium in ways which broaden knowledge of the discipline to deal with visual problem-finding and problem-solving (research about painting) (Barton, 2015; Sullivan, 2008).

Nonetheless, epistemological questions related to the so-called ‘nature of knowledge’ of ABR, its reliability, validity and seriousness remain contested through questions like: Can one’s work be regarded as research? How could it lead to knowledge? Yet, in such artistic practices, artists/researchers ground their work within theoretical frameworks and engage in ongoing inquiry. This means that the work stems primarily from readings, critical reflective practices and exploratory sketches rather than from personal biases or curiosities (Vella, 2014). Moreover, the notion of credibility is extremely important for any type of research. When conducting ABR, the following criteria should be considered to ensure its

quality: question/method fit, to provide justification of why the ABR method was needed to reach the research's aims; aesthetic power, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the artistic product to convey meaning; usefulness, referring to the educative power of the output; and authenticity, that is the researcher's reflexive and transparent practices (Morris & Paris, 2022). Hence, although some question the purpose of conducting ABR (the why, how, and what for), the researcher could raise further questions through it. An ABR paradigm allows individuals to learn through embodiment, intuition, relational practices and engagements (Conrad & Beck, 2015).

Hence, this dissertation prioritises an ABR approach, as when compared to other qualitative research approaches, the former has the potential to elicit "more reflexive accounts" (Ward & Shortt, 2020, p. 2). Apart from this, reflective practice is equally important in this research as it is closely related to the notion of being critical and of learning from experience. As reflective practice necessitates reflection-for/in/on-action, it alludes to the continuous process of analysing the work being undertaken. Within such processes, practice and theory (the doing and the knowing) become interdependent, whereas learning becomes active and participative (Thompson & Pascal, 2012). The above suggests that through artistic, reflective and experiential research methods, the researcher could attain deeper understandings and knowledge.

3.3 The Artistic Process Behind the Cartoon Book

The pressing need for citizens to learn about the SDGs was the dissertation's point of departure. Appropriate research methods determined the development of a promising cartoon book which could help the students develop a sense of compassion and empathy towards the earth and advocate for an equitable world (Weeks, 2021, para. 9). The following paragraphs will expound on the dissertation's research design that indicates how theory and practice feed into each other.

This project-based dissertation, which includes a 32-page cartoon book and a SoW for Year 10 Art option students (**Appendix D, E and F**), was initiated by referencing relevant

literature. This was carried out to help the researcher acquire a well-informed theoretical basis and to shape the artistic lens through which the cartoon book was designed. Following the thorough research process with regards to the dissertation's main components, and after conducting numerous socio-environmental reflections, these four goals pertaining to the local context were chosen: SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 15 (Life on Land).

As the cartoon book developed into a collection of four concise stories, its narratives were written (**Appendix A**). Although the stories are distinct in their own ways, they all somehow relate to the Maltese context, every story communicates a specific goal, and one particular character features in all of the stories. After the writing stage, relevant artists were referenced to formulate the desired overall aesthetic. As the storyboard medium serves as a creative “pre-visualisation tool” for graphic storytelling and allows the artist to elicit more in-depth and reflective narratives, four separate storyboards were produced (**Appendix B**) (Ayob & Omidire, 2021, p. 2). Through them, the pages' distribution, sequential narrative, text bubbles and characters were deliberately planned.

Simple character design or model sheets were created to study the characters from different angles (front, three-quarters, and side view), and ensure the expression of different emotions (**Appendix C**) (Walker, 2017, para. 3, 7). The knowledge acquired from such textual and artistic processes all contributed to the development of an informative and educational SoW, which could guarantee the acquisition of diverse learning outcomes, skills and knowledge. According to Panjaitan et al. (2020), integrating comics within the learning process yields positive results because the medium itself motivates the students to learn, engages them in a discussion and offers memorable visual experiences. Thus, through educational comics and cartoon characters, learners will not only enhance their imagination, academic achievement and thinking skills, but also learn important values (like kindness and respect) (Şentürk & Şimşek, 2021). To create or read such multimodal texts, one should be able to construct meaning through, or from, the comic's visual elements, written language and design features – gutters or panels (Reid & Moses, 2020).

All of this preparatory work was essential in order to illustrate the comic strips and present them as a cartoon book, and develop a corresponding SoW. Inevitably, this comprehensive analysis of the research's artistic process substantiates the relevance of an ABR methodology. Moreover, the discussed research methods prove that this dissertation entailed reflective practices.

3.4 Utilising Digital Tools

The use of technology has become more commonplace, hence contemporary researchers need to seek alternative research methods. In view of this, this research embraces digital storytelling as it is an innovative ABR method which allows a person to be both reflective and active (Khoshkesht et al., 2020). On the other hand, given that this research advocates for more eco-friendly and sustainable choices, it was undeniably sensible to opt for employing a digital platform to produce the cartoon book. Although the production and utilisation of digital devices have their own carbon footprint, the waste generated by traditional practices such as those involving the use of paintbrushes, paint and other disposable supplies is eliminated through digital arts (Wang, 2022, para. 2, 4-5). More importantly, considering the nature and purpose of the cartoon book, the implementation of digital storytelling rendered it easily accessible and shareable with other students and educators without necessitating the existence of a hard copy.

All of the necessary sketches and the actual cartoon book were produced on a digital illustration application, Procreate. Nonetheless, so as to make sure that the students could ultimately translate and approach such a project in a traditional manner as well, no particular tools or effects were used. Digital comics are perceived as an educational and informative learning tool which is well-explained and engaging, which is because digital comics contain material in the form of illustrated narratives (Idayanti et al., 2022). Although students tend to find it very challenging to think or understand something in an abstract manner, such learning media and learning through visuals could make difficult content clearer and more understandable (Miftahul Jannah & Rosyidi, 2022).

3.5 Curriculum Development

Nowadays, it has become a priority for teachers to introduce ESD-related topics, as every subject matter offers a distinctive entry point. Yet, the curriculum needs to be continuously adapted to make room for more comprehensive reflections, innovative lessons and big ideas (such as conservation, change and regeneration) to help students “learn how to care” (Caruana et al., 2021, p. 254). ESD must be achieved via a whole-school approach and if the school culture, school management, curriculum, and the community are reoriented to support SD (Vella et al., 2015).

Curriculum development comprises stages “of analysis, building, implementation, and evaluation” and it is often developed at a national level to standardise learning outcomes (what the students will learn), the sequence of content, and the method of delivery (Skyepack, 2020, para. 8-9, 12). More specifically, it is a six-step process which entails the following stages: conducting a needs assessment and writing a rationale, deciding the content, articulating the objectives and goals, determining the teaching strategies and resources needed, as well as implementing them and conducting an evaluation. Revising the curriculum or developing a new one is essential to ensure that it caters for present-day needs (Schneiderhan et al., 2019). Throughout the development phases, one must ensure that any established requirements or objectives set by an institution will be met, and that the necessary materials will be available for use. Furthermore, there are different models or approaches which one could utilise to determine the development of the curriculum. Adopting a subject-centred approach could help learners acquire subject-specific skills, whilst a problem-centred approach could offer useful collaborative or critical-thinking skills. The latter will ultimately help students learn how to perceive a problem and generate a solution. This research brings these approaches together to develop a more holistic curriculum that values both the process and the product (Skyepack, 2020, para.21-22, 32, 34, 37, 41).

However, such learning models have their benefits and drawbacks. On the one hand, although the subject-centred approach allows students to learn and be inspired by experts

in the field, it could lead to passivity or minimal integration. Yet, on the other hand, even though the problem-centred approach is very time-consuming, it is more learner-centred; it engages the students in more valuable, inquiry-based and profound tasks and it strengthens interdisciplinary links, as real-world problems could be addressed via multiple disciplines (Rodrigo, 2017; Braßler, 2016). Hence, by bringing these two learning models together, the traditional classroom transforms into a learning space that encourages deep learning and which develops life-long learners and addresses the “needs of the students in the 21st century” (Rodrigo, 2017, p. 4).

According to the LOF, art education should promote the following four foci: encouraging the learner’s collaborative and personal responses, evaluating and interpreting art, understanding aesthetic qualities, skills, materials and techniques, and contextualising art (Vella et al., 2015). Besides considering these requirements and foci, this project corresponds to one of the general themes mentioned in the recently published Art MATSEC 2025 syllabus. This theme demands reflections on social and/or personal experiences and poses the need to approach pressing social concerns more creatively. Interestingly, the syllabus infuses diverse Learning Outcomes (LOs) which somehow relate to cross-curricular topics like SD. Meanwhile, the following are some specific LOs which the cartoon-book promotes: coming up with solutions to problems by adopting lateral thinking skills, applying design principles and art elements to express one’s views, responding to a situation or a theme in a personal way, and then visually expressing one’s emotions and beliefs (MATSEC Examinations Board, 2022).

Hence, the developed cartoon book and its corresponding SoW become a tool to promote ESD and critical thinking, and to infuse what is actually needed within the Art curricula. Through this SoW, the students could engage in interdisciplinary, problem-based learning, experiential learning and reflective processes, all of which are crucial to cultivate ESD (Vella et al., 2015). Through learning activities based on Problem-Based Learning (PBL), students engage with real-world problems. In such a context, they learn and acquire creative thinking and problem-solving skills, they become fluent in building and compiling essential knowledge through reasoning and they learn how to deal with certain real-life experiences. PBL is certainly beneficial, as actual experiences lead to effective learning (Zarvianti &

Sahida, 2020). Lastly, the developed cartoon book not only considers the subject-centred approach by facilitating the acquisition of technical, narrative and artistic skills, but it also promotes the problem-centred approach by integrating SDGs.

3.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this project-based dissertation required an ABR approach as its main research method and involved curriculum development. In truth, an ABR project like this one could provide an essential “public service that may be otherwise unavailable” (Barone & Eisner, 2011, p. 13). This project acknowledged the potential of the arts to discern valuable knowledge, and just as many artists have asserted, it justified the view that no words could replace what the visual can do (Sullivan, 2006). According to Barton (2015), the artist Pablo Picasso claimed that he “never made a painting as a work of art”, but regarded it as a form of research (p. 64).

4. Cartoon Book Description and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter delved into the specific research methods that were adopted for this project-based dissertation as well as into ABR – the research’s specific methodology – the cartoon book’s artistic processes and curriculum development. The present chapter is an in-depth description and analysis of the research project; therefore, it examines the cartoon book’s rationale, its stylistic techniques, strengths, challenges, possible improvements and future implications.

4.2 The Cartoon Book’s Rationale

As outlined in the Literature Review, it is important to introduce real-life issues within the curriculum. Through issues-based art education, the educator is able to address the most topical issues in a more understandable manner whereas the student is offered adequate opportunities in which to discuss and question current issues (Hall, 2022). Interestingly, through a straightforward storyline and attractive characters, the students can obtain informed insights about the issues being presented. The learning medium of comics can serve both educative and informative functions, and it could also facilitate the achievement of specific learning objectives (Idayanti et al., 2022).

When it comes to the stories’ content, relevant literature allowed the researcher to discern which SDGs pertain most closely to the local context, whereas through the aforementioned creative processes, they were visualised effectively. The notions of re-contextualisation in terms of characters as well as contextualisation in terms of scenarios were prioritised to make the narratives more familiar to students. Therefore, the portrayal of the four narratives within the following local scenarios helps students acknowledge the fact that such issues are part of their lives: Birgu Car Boot Sale; typical house of character and Valletta’s City Gate; White Rocks Holiday Complex (Pembroke); National Museum of Natural

History (Mdina), Buskett Woodlands (Rabat) and Portomaso (St. Julian's).

4.2.1 The Connections Between Disney's Stories and the Four Narratives

According to López-Fuentes and Fernández-Fernández (2021), films invite their spectators to connect to different everyday experiences so as to understand the world. Therefore, they are regarded as a powerful learning tool that gives students different perspectives of the world. Given that Disney's films have included themes like migration, mobility, interculturality and difference, their use in educational settings could not only expose students to different identities, attitudes and themes, but even help them become more critical and open-minded. Sandlin and Garlen (2017) even argue that the use of Disney's works in classrooms acts as a tool to enhance students' instructional engagement, as well as a pedagogical source for critical literacy and multicultural education. Hence, the incorporation of popular culture within education could effectively bridge the gap between students' personal lives and their studies. Hence, the following animated movies were referred to due to their direct or indirect connection with the chosen SDGs, and they even directed the development of the cartoon book's stories: *Aladdin*, *Mulan*, *Cinderella* and *Tarzan*.

Firstly, the 1992 animated movie *Aladdin* portrays matters related to social class inequalities. The film focuses, albeit subtly, on poverty-related issues. The character within this story is not only seeking food and shelter due to homelessness, but he is even aspiring to go upward in terms of social stratification (Streib et al., 2017). Given that SDG 1 (No Poverty) advocates for more social consciousness, identifying a narrative which somehow speaks about social injustices was essential. Secondly, the absence of gender equality versus the presence of gender binaries and stereotypes dominate the movie *Mulan* (1998). This story is primarily influenced by the traditional social constructs which position males at a higher level, and even touches upon the notion of arranged marriages. Mulan's main aspiration was to obtain self-worth, and throughout, she is seen as a resilient female figure within a male-dominated society (Manaworapong & Bowen, 2022). Consequently, no character seemed to better fit SDG 5 (Gender Equality) than Mulan.

Thirdly, the story of *Cinderella* (1950) was attributed to SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) because of the way in which she was treated and exploited by her closest relatives. Even though she was working within her own domestic space, the conditions were unpleasant, unjust and inhumane (Causon, 2016). Having said that, the issue of decent work was linked to this particular narrative. Fourthly, an analogy between the animated movie *Tarzan* (1999) and SDG 15 (Life on Land) was identified, since according to Fafowora (2017), the opening scene in *Tarzan* portrays a jungle terrain still untouched by humans. In addition, this movie is even more relevant because of the context the story takes place in and the harmony that was present prior to humans' intervention.

4.2.2 Looking into the Four Narratives

The cartoon book sheds light on specific sustainability issues; however, since environmental matters tend to be more topical within educational scenarios, it focuses more on the social dimensions of SD. Within this cartoon book titled *Through the Eyes of Walt*, the leading film producer Walt Disney was transformed into a cartoon character himself, and one who is looking critically at the local context. Through a creative approach, he is represented as a socially conscious individual who aspires to improve the lives of those enduring poverty, a curator who offers women equal opportunities, a manager who safeguards the safety and the well-being of his employees, and an explorer interested in preserving the land and the life that lies within it. The book facade portrays him as an educational activist who is introducing future generations to this cartoon book in the hopes of generating awareness. The cover features eight students of different nationalities to encourage an ongoing partnership among all nations.

The first story, *If Only*, illustrates the issue of poverty and pertains to SDG 1. This narrative offers an insightful perspective into some of the impoverished conditions which people living in poverty are likely to experience. The sense of material deprivation and the lack of humaneness are implied in both an implicit and explicit manner. Despite the direct representations which portray inadequate housing and a difficult lifestyle, the story alludes to other consequences of a lack of educational opportunities and social mobility. In fact,

Dino, the main character, is denied the opportunity for a better life due to limited access to education. Nonetheless, this story touches upon rising inflation and how international scenarios including conflicts, pandemics and natural disasters could derail progress that has been made. Hence, this story reflects the need to end poverty in all its forms and break the cycle of extreme poverty.

The second narrative, *Empower*, is essentially socially-oriented as it explores SDG 5, the goal associated with attaining gender equality. It expounds on pressing societal biases and gender stereotypes and sheds light on how women are more likely to be subject to forced marriages. Yulan's place within the wider society is clearly questioned by her husband as he believes that she should be confined to their home. It even focuses on a lack of shared responsibilities in terms of the work burden and minimal value given to domestic work. The story seeks to empower women in diverse ways and highlights the importance of their being granted more dignity, independence, respect and decision-making rights. Rather than having the female artist be suppressed by society, she is given the opportunity to showcase her artistic work. Through this, she advocates for more equality and social justice.

The third story, *Behind Closed Doors*, pertains to SDG 8 as it relates to decent work and economic growth, with its focus being on the former. Ella was initially not allowed to choose a job which she regarded as self-fulfilling, but instead was forcefully enrolled into employment by her parents. Further to this, the story sheds light on precarious work and the poor state of certain working environments. It even touches upon the importance of safeguarding the labourer's rights, promoting secure and safe working environments, eradicating forced labour or modern slavery, improving working conditions and pay, and ensuring that workers are not exploited. As a result, the story advocates for more employee entitlements and respect towards employees' well-being.

Lastly, the fourth story, *The Strange Encounter*, is the only environmentally-oriented narrative and deals with SDG 15. It explicitly focuses on our unsustainable use of land and how our everyday practices endanger both ecosystems and biodiversity. Silas, who looks at the urban area from a stranger's point of view, feels astounded by the number of high-rise buildings and the possibility of ending up with an artificial land or extinct species. Moreover,

the narrative makes us more aware of the fact that invasive alien plant species could threaten indigenous ones. The protagonist reacts to combat bird poaching, deforestation and land desertification. In order to restore our woodland and natural habitats, the story implies actions of afforestation and reforestation. Through a humorous take, the message of this story gets across more effectively, and through contrasting connotations with the *Three Wise Monkeys*' maxim, the viewer is encouraged to hear, see and speak about various environmental concerns.

4.3 Cartoon Book's Stylistic Techniques and Layout

Throughout the years, Disney's animation style has experienced great developments. However, in terms of stylistic techniques, the cartoon book's point of departure was Walt Disney Classics' traditional style. The scenes that featured within movies like *Snow White*, *Pinocchio* and *Bambi* were characterised by intricately detailed scenes and fascinating backgrounds even long before Computer-Generated Imagery (CGI) was popularised (**Figures 8-10**). Remarkably, such detailed scenarios contrasted greatly with the hand-drawn characters at the forefront (The Disney Classics, 2021, para. 1, 4, 6-7). Even through personal observations, it was noted that the characters within Disney's early movies were practically flat and without any shadows, whereas the backgrounds were relevantly realistic. Therefore, given that the project's artistic style reflects the overall aesthetic of Classic Disney (1937-1967), the stories' backgrounds, scenery and objects were given a three-dimensional look, whereas the characters were approached in a simplistic and flat manner. Such technical contrasts allowed the stories' characters to feature more prominently.



Figure 8: Walt Disney Productions (1937).
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs [Film].



Figure 9: Walt Disney Productions (1940). *Pinocchio* [Film].



Figure 10: Walt Disney Productions (1942). *Bambi* [Film].

In terms of layout, Chavanne (2015) argues that the comic's panels could be vertically aligned beneath each other rather than simply juxtaposed horizontally next to one another. In fact, a comic's composition could be either regular (whereby panels have the exact width and height), semi-regular (with the panels' sizes varying whilst retaining the observed structured layout), or even rhetorical (where panels vary to the extent that the grid structure is no longer evident). Given that within this cartoon book, the vertical comic strips occupy the same width but vary slightly in terms of height, it is evident that the book has a semi-regular composition. All of the pages within this A4 cartoon book have three to four panels, whereas the four stories consist of six to seven pages each. The cartoon book amounts to 32 pages which includes the two-page outer cover. The decision to work in multiples of four took into account the possible eventuality of printing.

4.4 Reflective Analysis

This artistic project necessitated prolonged research processes which allowed for the development of an educational cartoon book. As will be outlined in this reflective analysis, the cartoon book is characterised by a number of strengths, and although some challenges were encountered, they were properly addressed and rectified. Moreover, just like many artistic projects, one could even discern potential improvements. This critical reflection is an in-depth analysis of the researcher's experience with conducting an ABER project and engaging with issue-based art education.

4.4.1 Key Strengths of the Cartoon Book

The cartoon book is characterised by a number of strengths. To start with, first-hand experiences allowed the researcher to construct a more deliberate SoW through becoming more aware of the difficulties students might encounter. Such experiences also allowed the researcher to understand how knowledge could be scaffolded and the amount of time needed for every activity. The creative processes of brainstorming, story-writing, storyboarding and character designing led to the development of a cartoon book, which attests to the arts-based approach of this study. The research's findings – which were related to techniques, challenges, sequence and visualisation – would not have been discerned had the researcher not experienced them herself.

Secondly, the four stories in the cartoon book mirror present-day realities and real-life concerns, and therefore, the book can be said to have both social and environmental agendas. Each story within the book reflects a specific SDG and presents the issue in a subtle but critical manner. Hence, within this project, art is being utilised to raise awareness on pressing international issues. Furthermore, utilising a digital platform led to facilitating its eventual use within different educational scenarios. Thirdly, it is evident that the literature and the artists referred to have in one way or another informed the art practice. For instance, the research on the stylistic techniques of Classic Disney allowed the artist-researcher to give her own contemporary reinterpretations. In addition, the desired

contrast between the characters and the scenes was achieved by making the former look flat, and the latter three-dimensional.

Another key strength is that the cartoon book is legible, and there is a sense of consistency. Such uniformity is evident in the text style and typeface, in the way colour was applied, the number of pages or panels per story and in the characters' design. Having the character of Walt Disney featuring within every story connected them even more. Another important factor is that complex SDGs were visualised in a concise but creative manner, and in a way which could easily be understood by students (**Refer to Tables 2-5**). Nonetheless, given that the cartoon book will serve as a pedagogical resource in the teaching of specific sustainability issues as well as various artistic and technical skills, it was kept as minimal as possible to allow for traditional reinterpretations by students. In fact, no special effects were created and all of the tools that were used are physically available.

Such a simplistic approach facilitated the development of a corresponding SoW for Year 10 Art option students, which will be focused on in greater detail in the following chapter. In brief and as outlined in the tables below, the stories will allow students to apply or obtain knowledge on specific artistic techniques like perspective, figure drawing, cartooning, landscape or seascape drawing (**Refer to Tables 1-5**). Students can also acquire skills enabling them to make use of mixed media, awareness of how to engage with creative processes and cross-curricular learning, knowledge on how to incorporate elements of art and principles of design, together with communicative and evaluative skills. The LOs that will be acquired through this SoW comply with those indicated in the LOF (Level 9) and 2025 SEC Art Syllabus.

Tables 1-5

LOs in the Learning Outcomes Framework (LOF) (Vella et al., 2015, p. 19)	
3.7	“I recognise how artists in the 20 th Century experimented with perspective, and I can apply this understanding to my own work.”
LOs in the SEC Art Syllabus 2025 (MATSEC Examinations Board, 2022, p. 10, 12-13)	
3.3a	“I can creatively use drawing and/or painting media and choose the right support and handling.”
3.3b	“I can make the appropriate use of the intrinsic characteristics of the selected medium/media to express myself visually.”
5.3a	“I can make use of the basic colour theory (the colours of the prism), warm/cool colours, juxtaposition of colours, to convey the desired atmosphere and mood in my artworks.”
5.3b	“I can make use of the juxtaposition of colours to obtain the right hue and tone by simultaneous contrast.”
5.3c	“I can use the rules of linear and aerial perspective to create form and space from direct observation and imagination in two-dimensional artworks.”
5.3d	“I can render the illusion of form and depth of objects and figures in foreshortening.”
5.3e	“I can create the illusion of light and shade (through light, highlight, middle-tone, core shadow, reflected light and cast shadow) to create form in two-dimensional work.”
5.3f	“I can make use of the right tonal values to express form, texture and tactile value.”
5.3i	“I can render the correct weighting and function of line in my drawing i.e. outline, contour and expressive line.”
5.3j	“I can draw objects in their right shape and proportions through the correct use of proportional measurements (measuring at arm’s length).”

Table 1: Relevant Learning Outcomes

The Referred SDG Targets – SDG 1 (The Global Goals, 2023, para. 3, 6-7)		Their Reference and Incorporation Within the Narrative
Target 1.1 “Eradicate Extreme Poverty”		The man in this story is deprived from the most fundamental life necessities (drink, food, clothes, shelter et cetera).
Target 1.4 “Equal Rights to Ownership, Basic Services, Technology and Economic Resources”		Dino does not have access to essential services like electricity or ownership of adequate technology, and is unable to even light his home.
Target 1.5 “Build Resilience to Environmental, Economic and Social Disasters”		Walt is aware of the vulnerable situation Dino is in during times of international conflicts and rising inflation. He offers him a better life.
The Learning Outcomes (LOs)		Their Evidence Within the Comic Story
LOF 3.7 SEC 5.3c	Linear perspective was used mainly to portray the following interior and exterior spaces/places: the streetscape, thrift store and Dino’s home.	
SEC 5.3a SEC 5.3b SEC 5.3f	Colour was used deliberately to create the desired atmosphere and create a contrast between Dino’s dull surroundings and those of Walt.	
SEC 5.3d SEC 5.3e SEC 5.3j	Both the characters and the objects were drawn in the correct proportional measurements. In terms of form and depth, the characters were approached in a flat manner, whereas through the illusion of light and shade, the objects obtained form.	
SEC 3.3a SEC 3.3b SEC 5.3i	Different tools were used to create the desired painterly effect and to express the narrative visually. Outlines were rendered in such a way so as to distinguish the cartoon characters from the background.	

Table 2: Story 1 on SDG 1

The Referred SDG Targets – SDG 5 (The Global Goals, 2023, para. 3, 5-6, 10)		Their Reference and Incorporation Within the Narrative
Target 5.1 “End Discrimination Against Women and Girls”		Walt is the curator who is willing to give women and girls the opportunity to showcase their work and gain a place within the art industry.
Target 5.3 “Eliminate Forced Marriages”		Yulan was forced to marry someone whom she did not even know despite being young and wanting to be independent.
Target 5.4 “Value Unpaid Care and Promote Shared Domestic Responsibilities”		Yulan’s husband devalues domestic work and does not give a helping hand. He also believes that she should be confined to their home.
Target 5.8 “Promote Empowerment of Women Through Technology”		The artistic exhibition was going to be broadcast on television, therefore technology is being used to empower seven local female artists.
The Learning Outcomes (LOs)		Their Evidence Within the Comic Story
LOF 3.7 SEC 5.3c	With the aid of linear perspective, the house’s interior (furniture, yard and living room), Valletta’s city gate and the exhibition space were given a sense of depth.	
SEC 5.3a SEC 5.3b SEC 5.3f	In this story, particular attention was given to colour to suggest the following aspects: the duration of the day, as well as the mood/feelings of the two main characters. For example, bright colours suggest daylight and/or happiness.	
SEC 5.3d SEC 5.3e SEC 5.3j	Proportions were prioritised to ensure that the cartoon characters fit the wider context. Through the incorporation of both light and shade, the surrounding environments, objects and buildings obtained a sense of depth and form.	
SEC 3.3a SEC 3.3b SEC 5.3i	The characteristics of the chosen media were utilised effectively to distinguish the characters from the background and surrounding objects. Through the right handling, the style of Classic Disney was successfully reinterpreted.	

Table 3: Story 2 on SDG 5

The Referred SDG Targets – SDG 8 (The Global Goals, 2023, para. 8-10)		Their Reference and Incorporation Within the Narrative
Target 8.6 “Promote Youth Employment, Education and Training”		In this story, youths are given the opportunity to find employment; however, the working conditions are not at all adequate.
Target 8.7 “End Modern Slavery”		The matter of forced labour is evident from the very start, as Ella was denied the chance to find fulfilling employment. The working conditions (hours, safety, workload et cetera) and environment are both inhumane. Walt takes action to combat this precarious situation.
Target 8.8 “Protect Labour Rights and Promote Safe Working Environments”		The labourers’ rights are not safeguarded as they are overworked. Moreover, the environment is not well-maintained and is unsafe for both its employees and residents.
The Learning Outcomes (LOs)		Their Evidence Within the Comic Story
LOF 3.7 SEC 5.3c	Through linear perspective, the residence’s building and its corridors were depicted in a more realistic manner.	
SEC 5.3a SEC 5.3b SEC 5.3f	Through an effective colour scheme, both the atmosphere and the environmental conditions of the residence were clearly portrayed. Through the right tonal values, different visual textures were created to suggest a deteriorating workplace.	
SEC 5.3d SEC 5.3e SEC 5.3j	All of the figures were proportionally drawn, also in relation to the surrounding contexts. The elements of form and depth were effectively obtained through the incorporation of linear perspective and the utilisation of a specific colour scheme.	
SEC 3.3a SEC 3.3b SEC 5.3i	Through the right selection of different digital tools, the residence’s environment was given a painterly effect whereas the characters were given a simplistic look.	

Table 4: Story 3 on SDG 8

The Referred SDG Targets – SDG 15 (The Global Goals, 2023, para. 4, 7, 9-10)		Their Reference and Incorporation Within the Narrative
Target 15.2 “End Deforestation and Restore Degraded Forests”		At the very end of this narrative, Silas and his monkey act to combat deforestation. They acknowledge the need for reforestation and afforestation before ending up in an artificial land.
Target 15.5 “Protect Biodiversity and Natural Habitats” Target 15.7 “Eliminate Poaching and Trafficking of Protected Species”		Silas immediately acts to prevent biodiversity loss and the extinction of protected birds by throwing some branches towards the hunter. He even attempts to regenerate the natural habitats by planting different non-invasive trees.
Target 15.8 “Prevent Invasive Alien Species on Land and in Water Ecosystems”		One of the billboards at the end of the narrative prioritises the need to become more aware of invasive plants/trees to protect indigenous flora.
The Learning Outcomes (LOs)		Their Evidence Within the Comic Story
LOF 3.7 SEC 5.3c	The technique of linear perspective was utilised to portray both man-made objects or buildings and the natural environment in a more precise manner.	
SEC 5.3a SEC 5.3b SEC 5.3f	The natural landscapes that feature within this story feel more organic and serene when compared to the urban area. Through such contrast, the issue of overdevelopment and the sense of chaos become far more evident.	
SEC 5.3d SEC 5.3e SEC 5.3j	The proportions of the human figures were given particular attention to communicate the story more effectively. For instance, Walt was drawn relatively small in the scene where he is parachuting to suggest distance and depth.	
SEC 3.3a SEC 3.3b SEC 5.3i	In this narrative, the line occupies different weights and functions. In most cases, the line was omitted from the background to make the scenes look organic and in other instances, it was used to suggest movement and speed.	

Table 5: Story 4 on SDG 15

4.4.2 Challenges Encountered and Potential Improvements

The primary challenge that was encountered was mainly due to time limitations as the development of a full colour cartoon book necessitated a demanding preparatory creative process. Moreover, the researcher had to be very attentive in terms of design and colouring to achieve consistency. The transformation of characters into cartoons was not an easy process either; however, through appropriate visual references such a challenge was overcome. Another demanding task was related to story-writing, as the SDGs had to be communicated in a way that would be easily understood by Year 10 students. Creating original storylines which were succinct but not too simplistic, and reinterpreting the characters of Aladdin, Mulan, Cinderella and Tarzan, were two other challenges.

Finding adequate visual resources to develop the desired compositions and obtaining specific painterly effects using digital tools were another two arduous challenges. On the one hand, in order to contextualise the stories in Malta in as close a way as possible to reality, the cartoon book entailed finding good quality images of the aforementioned local contexts. Besides these visual references, photographs of Walt Disney from different angles and displaying different emotions were just as crucial in developing a cartoon character which reflects his true characteristics. On the other hand, achieving natural or man-made textures, the necessary highlights and shadows, and a style which appears traditionally drawn using a digital screen and a single stylus pen was equally challenging.

In every artistic project, there is room for potential improvements. Inevitably, although the cartoon book was meticulously approached, more attention to certain detail could have been given to attain more precision. Possibly, certain statements could have been written more concisely whilst still having it still remain implicit. When it comes to the comic strips' framing, the artist-researcher could have been more experimental, whereas the model sheets could have explored different traits rather than simply drawing an identical design from different angles and in different expressions. Even so, the storylines could have tackled further aspects of the chosen SDGs, but this would have meant the development of a more extensive cartoon book which was not possible in terms of time.

4.4.3 Future Implications

Potentially, the way forward for this research project is to visualise the remaining SDGs through additional storylines. Through them, the students could acquire informed insights about the other pressing social, environmental and collaborative concerns. Hence, the cartoon book could develop into a collection of 17 short stories which pertain to both the local and international contexts. Additionally, more simplistic SoWs could be developed to infuse such cross-curricular themes within the curriculum of younger age groups. Nonetheless, it would be extremely viable to utilise the cartoon book and its respective SoW within an actual learning scenario.

4.5 Conclusion

The cartoon book reflects the creative processes that the researcher went through as part of this project-based dissertation. The researcher not only developed a pedagogical tool to help students acquire various skills and knowledge, but also became more aware of the potential challenges in doing so. This same awareness was crucial in constructing a SoW which is appropriate for Year 10 Art option students. The following chapter is an overview of the SoW.

5. Scheme of Work Description and Analysis

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter critically examined the cartoon book that was produced and expounded on its rationale, stylistic techniques, layout, strengths, challenges, potential improvements and future implications. The present chapter is a comprehensive description of the SoW and its analysis from an educational perspective. Hence, it presents information on the second component of this project-based dissertation, entailing curricular development.

5.2 Describing the Activities of the Scheme of Work

The way in which the cartoon book was approached considered both its potential implementation within different educational scenarios and its target audience. Such considerations eased the process of developing a corresponding SoW which utilises this cartoon book as a primary pedagogical resource. In short, the comic stories will serve as a visual resource tool for all educators to teach about SD, for art educators to teach about cartoons, comics and other artistic techniques, and as a visual example enabling students to understand present-day concerns. The SoW reflects the creative process that was undertaken to develop the cartoon book and introduces the students to multimedia and multinational artists from different centuries. Considering the fact that SDG 5 advocates for gender equality, it was sensible to refer to both female and male artists. The following subsections give an overview of the eight interlinked activities which span across eight weeks, and expound on how the cartoon book will be used in class. It is important to note that Year 10 Art option students have two lessons of about 80 minutes each per week.

Given that art education is being connected with SD, strong links between the SoW and ESD in the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) can be identified. In both, the learner is given the opportunity to develop the values, attitudes and lifelong learning skills needed for active involvement. As evident in the following activities, art education was integrated with other

disciplines to aid in achieving a holistic understanding. Also, as indicated in the NCF, the learning experiences the students will obtain through this SoW will empower them with decision-making and problem-solving skills needed to safeguard the rights of all individuals and the planet's resources (Ministry of Education and Employment, 2012). Similarly to the SoW, the Environmental Studies LOF acknowledges the need to opt for interdisciplinary approaches to contextualise sustainability issues within the learners' life experiences (Calleja et al., 2015). All of the activities comply with an issues-based approach to art education with the aim of giving students the space to express their personal perspectives through different art-making activities (Li, 2018).

5.2.1 Activity 1 – The 17 SDGs and Activism

Given the issues-based approach adopted for the teaching of art, students will start by brainstorming ideas about SD, UNESCO's 17 SDGs and activism within small groups. Making them aware of pressing environmental and social issues is the initial step that needs to be taken to reflect on our everyday practices and contribute to change. Through multimodal means, they will learn about specific issues which somehow relate to sustainability. Moreover, the cartoon book itself will be presented to help them understand what the end product will more or less look like, and to discuss the following goals: SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 15 (Life on Land). The students will conduct further research to become knowledgeable on one particular SDG and in the following lesson, they will discuss their findings and the SDG's targets. Through this, the students will be exposed to other environmental, social and economic issues. They will start thinking about their story by expressing their thoughts on the chosen SDG through mind maps and sketches.

5.2.2 Activity 2 – Story Writing and Visualisation

This activity prioritises cross-curricular learning as it bridges story writing and visualisation. In pairs, the students will write a short narrative on the researched SDGs using their preferred language, and amalgamate their findings to create something more critical. The

students will be introduced to different cartoons and comic techniques to understand how a story could be visualised sequentially. A more detailed explanation on how they could experiment with text boxes and panels will be given in the subsequent weeks. Individually, they will plan it in the form of a comic strip via a two-page storyboard. The four short narratives and their storyboards will be presented to the students. Hence, the creative process that this project entails will be structured systematically throughout the different activities of this SoW. In order to continue exposing the students to other SD aspects, SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) will be prioritised during the introductory parts of these lessons. This activity reflects the anticipatory competency for sustainability, as students will communicate their personal “visions for the future” and assess the repercussions of actions (UNESCO, 2017, p. 10).

5.2.3 Activity 3 – The Human Figure

Given that cartooning is a valuable component of comic art, the students must first be knowledgeable on how to draw the human figure proportionally before being able to stylise it. Therefore, they will be given the chance to understand how the human figure could be approached in basic shapes. By focusing on both the standing and the seated figure, the students will gain necessary knowledge on volume, foreshortening, angles and measurements. Relevant artists will be mentioned to explain figurative drawing. Given that SDG 17 speaks of partnership, this particular activity allows the students to work together when drawing each other from real life. Besides opting for this collaborative artistic method, they will be introduced to SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation). Lastly, drawing the human figure from primary and secondary sources, and gaining practice in fast-drawing, are equally essential for future learning scenarios. Given that this activity requires the students to learn and understand each other’s needs, it supports the collaboration competency for sustainability (UNESCO, 2017).

5.2.4 Activity 4 – The Character Model Sheets

Given that by now the students should have formulated their story, visualised it through a storyboard, and understood how to approach the human figure, the next step would be to design full-figure characters. The students should consider what was discussed during the previous week in order to create an effective cartoon character. Moreover, to portray and explore the characters from different angles and displaying different emotions, they will be asked to develop a cartoon model sheet for every mentioned character. This would eventually ease the process when drawing the actual comic strips. To ensure understanding, the students will be shown the eleven character model sheets that were done as preparatory work. Similarly to the previous weeks, SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) will be mentioned to discuss two additional aspects of SD. Lastly, to make enough room for student exploration, they will be shown three artists who approached cartooning in different styles.

5.2.5 Activity 5 – Designing the Comic Strips

These lessons require the students to illustrate two comic strips, thereby becoming necessary to amalgamate all of the creative process with relevant prior knowledge. In fact, the production of comic strips entailed the connection of the following aspects: the story, scenes and text that were planned via a storyboard; the cartoon characters that were designed to portray different emotions and angles; and specific technical skills related to a linear perspective. A detailed explanation on text bubbles and the comic's panels will be given to make the students aware of the different possibilities. To give an example, they could draw or omit the panel's frame. Some of the comic strips' designs that were created will be shown to them, and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) are the two main goals that will be discussed. Similarly to this project, the students will narrate a story which reflects a specific SDG/s and they will engage with issues-based art. Through their art, the students will reinforce their critical thinking competency for sustainability by questioning everyday practices and norms, and by reflecting on their values. They will take a stand within the sustainability discourse (UNESCO, 2017).

5.2.6 Activity 6 – Colouring the Comic Strips

Throughout this activity, the students will finalise the comic strips they have drawn and experiment with the media at hand. In terms of style, although they will be referred to that of Disney Classics and John Tenniel, they could approach colour differently and in the way that works best for their story. Simultaneously, the students should ensure that the characters are somehow distinguished from the background, and that colour choices are harmonious enough. The cartoon book will be presented to the students once again but this time, they should focus on how line work and colour were approached. Given that the students are working with traditional media, they could think creatively to create both visual and tactile textures within their work. Light, shade, tones, value and texture should be given equal attention to achieve the desired atmosphere. SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 13 (Climate Action) are two goals they will be focusing on.

5.2.7 Activity 7 – Creating the School Exhibition Poster

The whole class will collaborate to produce the exhibition poster and they could opt for different techniques such as drawing, painting and collage. The students will engage in a group discussion to identify important information about the exhibition and they will then work individually to visualise their ideas. In order to ensure that the poster reflects the issues the students are speaking about, evaluative processes and constructive criticism become significant. In fact, after the sketching process, the students will select the most effective ideas for the poster. In the following lesson, they will be divided into smaller groups and assigned specific roles. The students should ensure that all of the creative process is gathered within an art journal and annotations are added. SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) will be discussed. The self-awareness competency for sustainability is important to encourage the students to reflect on their own role within society and communicate it through their poster (UNESCO, 2017).

5.2.8 Activity 8 – A Collective School Exhibition

A positive element is that through the created comic strips, art students will learn about SD and engage with issues-based art. However, through this school-based art exhibition, all students will gain informed insights about UN's SDGs. Through an onsite visit, the students will plan the exhibition space where they will be displaying their work. Throughout this week, they will prepare any other necessary materials for the exhibition opening.

Undoubtedly, this exhibition will reflect the creative process that the students have gone through as well as the obtained LOs. This opportunity allows the students to obtain collaborative, communicative and problem-solving skills as they might encounter and overcome unexpected challenges. The concept that this dissertation started with, that of teaching about SD and raising awareness, will be fostered by the students themselves through their participation. Besides talking about SDG 17 (Partnership for the Goals), the students will work in partnership to hold a successful exhibition. Undoubtedly, this activity relates to the problem solving competency for sustainability as students must generate viable solutions and options for sustainability problems (UNESCO, 2017).

5.3 The Scheme of Work's Relevance and Analysis from an Educational Perspective

When analysing the SoW, it is evident that there is a sense of progression and that learning is scaffolded. In fact, knowledge on SD and specific artistic techniques was distributed over an eight-week period. Through scaffolding, the students are given the right opportunity to stimulate their ideas, to build upon their strengths in order to demonstrate a degree of success, and to progress into unfamiliar learning areas. Hence, it is clear that the SoW encourages growth and it was designed in a way that takes into consideration this "zone of proximal development" (Culpan, 2008, p. 42). In addition, the SoW values the contribution that individuals could make to the wider society, it allows informed discussions about real-life issues, and it prioritises both issues-based art education and cross-curricular learning. Nonetheless, according to Culpan (2008), the psychologist Jerome Bruner argues that cooperative learning contributes to problem-solving as learners are given the

opportunity to interpret a given situation differently. Upon considering the importance of such skills, a number of cooperative activities were included.

All of the research aspects included in the Literature Review are somehow reflected within this SoW and this connection clearly demonstrates how research feeds into artistic practices. To expand on this, the SoW supports the need to discuss UNESCO's 17 SDGs and the notion of ESD, to utilise the visual arts as a vehicle for change, to consider the students' visual culture, and to encourage the acquisition of visual literacy skills and cross-curricular learning. The following sections expound on the LOs and the project's target audience.

5.3.1 The Learning Outcomes Framework and the SEC Art Syllabus 2025

The LOs embedded within the SoW are diverse to the extent that they relate to the four-subject foci listed in the LOF and the latest SEC Art Syllabus. On the one hand, the SoW incorporates specific LOs which prioritise the learner's collaborative and personal responses, the evaluation and interpretation of art, the understanding of techniques, aesthetic qualities, skills and materials, and the consideration of art within a wider context (Vella et al., 2015). On the other hand, it includes LOs related to "Aesthetic Awareness", "Technical and Productive Skills", "Perception, Cognitive Skills and the Creative Process", and "Personal and Social Expression" (MATSEC Examinations Board, 2022, p. 2). Such balance would certainly provide a more holistic learning experience. As indicated in the SoW, the students will be able to engage with a creative process to express their concerns, be critical about their work and that of others, understand artworks within a wider context, incorporate art elements and principles, work from both primary and secondary sources, render the illusion of form, depth and perspective, manipulate the media at hand to convey desired emotions, document the creative process, and participate in a school-based exhibition.

In line with three of the four mentioned courseworks in the SEC Art Syllabus, the SoW encourages students to study the human figure within man-made and natural environments, to reflect on social and personal experiences, and to develop work from

primary observations (MATSEC Examinations Board, 2022). Moreover, a key strength of this SoW is that ESD is regarded as a cross-curricular theme and therefore, this project could easily be infused within other educational scenarios (Vella et al., 2015). Last but not least, as prioritised in the Literature Review, the SoW promotes Elliot Eisner's aims for art education, some of which are in line with UNESCO's ESD competencies. To elaborate on this, the SoW encourages students to think critically, imagine the future, take decisions, conduct moral judgements, embrace different viewpoints, accept unpredictable possibilities, contribute to change, and communicate ideas and feelings which might be difficult to express (Vella et al., 2021).

5.3.2 The Target Audience

SDG 4 speaks about providing quality education for all as it is the right of every individual, even those who have a learning difficulty or a particular disability, to learn within an equitable, safe and inclusive learning environment (Boeren, 2019). Hence, the notions of student-centred learning and differentiated instruction were prioritised as, through them, the needs of all students are met. Such approaches become even more crucial given that they are correlated to the concept of sustainability.

As outlined in the Literature Review chapter, inquiry-based pedagogies invite students to reflect, think critically, collaborate, research and question. Through this student-centred approach, students are fully engaged with the learning process and have ownership over their own learning, hence this was given a great deal of attention. Moreover, students are expected to solve problems through collaboration, acquire understanding of the world, and gain research-related skills. Hence, the learning experience is not only enhanced, but knowledge is discovered and constructed by the students themselves through questioning and personal experiences rather than through imposition. This indicates that this is an approach rooted in the learning theory of constructivism (Gholam, 2019). A number of probing questions were included to increase students' active engagement.

Secondly, when it comes to differentiated instruction, these dimensions were promoted to make sure that the students' abilities, prior knowledge and interests are considered: content, instructional strategies, the classroom, and the end product. In other words, the SoW is adequately flexible for a number of reasons: it allows the students to align the contents of the lesson with their interests and abilities, it considers multiple learning styles by including individual, pair or group work activities, as well as group discussions and hands-on projects, it involves the use of technology and other spaces beyond the classroom, and it allows the students to demonstrate their learning in different ways, such as visually or verbally (Reis & Renzulli, 2018). The SoW allows students to experiment with different media, to conduct research or produce the work in their preferred style, to design more than two-comic strips, and to include as many characters as they want to, among others.

As suggested in the Literature Review chapter, education should prioritise the need to develop critical and visually literate students, because such skills are key competencies for a quality education. Hence, through the incorporation of peer and self evaluations, the learners will not only obtain different social skills related to mutual respect, active listening and constructive feedback, but also become more self-reflexive with regards to their strengths and areas of improvement. In line with this, the SoW supports visual literacy to develop active consumers of visual information. Simultaneously, given that information contextualisation was acknowledged for enhancing the lesson's relevance, references to the students' lives and immediate surroundings were made.

5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the SoW reflects the creative process that the artist-researcher went through to develop the cartoon book and offers all students the chance to develop a wide range of skills. In addition, it is a pedagogical resource aimed directly towards making educators aware of alternative approaches to deal with SD in school. Within this SoW, SD was regarded as a cross-curricular theme and through its incorporation, further awareness could be generated.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

The dissertation recognised the potential of issues-based art to advocate for environmental integrity and social change. Through illustrative cartoons, storytelling and comic art, the artist-researcher managed to shed light on present-day realities and encouraged the cultivation of sustainable values. The visual arts were regarded as a tool to visualise the problem at hand, to shape behaviours and to engage viewers on an emotional level. Nonetheless, this research acknowledged the importance of empowering educators with the tools and knowledge needed to engage young learners with SD (Pesanayi & Lupele, 2018).

6.2 Summary of Main Findings

As outlined in the Literature Review chapter, one could discern different theories of sustainability which aim to guarantee a better future for all as well as intergenerational equity. It becomes crucial that all nations constantly seek collaborative ways of ensuring ongoing improvements. Given that Malta has very scarce resources, SD and ESD become even more salient. Hence, it should be schools' priority to offer all students the opportunity to obtain the attitudes, competencies and values needed to enhance their quality of life. Through the avoidance of predetermined pedagogies and the integration of critical thinking, learners could bring their own perspectives to the forefront.

In light of this, the research's primary aim was to create a pedagogical resource to encourage the integration of sustainability issues in class. From a personal viewpoint, such an objective was successfully met, and even though the cartoon book was re-oriented towards art education, it could be utilised across other disciplines, too. This is because the LOF regards SD as a cross-curricular theme. Besides this, school institutions should actively support local initiatives like EkoSkola and Dinja Waħda for them to become a microcosm of the wider world. Within this research, art was regarded as a powerful tool enabling one to

speak, visualise issues and be encouraged to take action. Lastly, this research required the researcher to occupy the role of an artist to obtain a deeper understanding of the issues at hand. This is because artistic practices provide alternative ways of imagining, seeing, inquiring and articulating, when compared to more traditional research methods. Moreover, the incorporation of artistic methods within a research study could offer a type of understanding that is obtained only via empathic experience, which refers to the ability to understand what others are feeling or experiencing (Van der Vaart et al., 2018, para. 5, 34).

6.3 Limitations of This Research Study

The limitations of this research are mainly due to time constraints. If time had allowed, the cartoon book would have portrayed a broader picture of present-day realities by focusing on all of the 17 SDGs. By doing so, the social, environmental and economic dimensions of SD would be equally prioritised. Perhaps the cartoon book could have been approached in a more experimental manner to make the stories more interesting. Ideally, additional SoWs were designed in the eventuality of discussing such issues with younger age groups. Nevertheless, ABR tends to be self-reflexive and focuses mainly on one's own perception and reflections about a particular issue or artistic style. Hence, the outcome might have been different if the research had involved critical and reflective discussions with experts in visual communication, and with social or environmental advocates.

6.4 Recommendations Based on Findings

Throughout the developmental stages, consistency, simplicity and familiarity should all be prioritised to produce an effective and engaging cartoon book. In fact, the four stories were contextualised in Malta and approached in the style of classic Disney as it is something which permeates within the students' visual culture. Through this, they could react towards the narratives with a sense of recognition. In addition, a contemporary approach towards illustration could suggest the immediacy of such issues, whereas a realistic colouring style could give a better picture of the local context. These are all effective strategies which

should be considered when developing specific pedagogical resources. The research's findings acknowledge the importance of engaging students with issues-based art, of communicating the message in an implicit manner, and of offering a holistic learning experience. First-hand practical experiences help one become aware of the challenges students might encounter and of the time required to create a similar project.

This ABR confirmed that comic art is one of the most effective strategies used to immerse the viewer when compared to other art forms. It was also an eye-opener with regards to the importance of accommodating to students' needs when it comes to curricular development and lesson planning. To communicate a stronger message and facilitate the process of drawing, images of the local context could be taken as well. Undoubtedly, the cartoon book could be approached differently in terms of style, colour, technique, orientation and media to promote students' creativity and to support different learning styles. Lastly, reflective practices are necessary when engaging with ABR to ensure that what is being created reflects the research's primary objective. This project-based dissertation exemplifies how the research is engrained in creative and artistic practices.

Throughout this dissertation, comic art was not employed for its leisure purposes but as an engaging tool to expose students to current challenges. Therefore, this research supports the possibility of opting for alternative approaches to advocate for SD rather than remaining tied to traditional and textual ones. Although this research focuses only on comic art, it could certainly be expanded for educational use by integrating it with other visual art forms. To give an example, drawing could simply serve as the basis of developing a critical painting or poster, collage, photograph, performance, installation et cetera about local or international issues. Positively, this research demonstrates that the introduction of different creative methods could facilitate students' understanding. Thus, schools should seek to adopt new approaches to enhance students' ideas and knowledge about SD.

6.5 Conclusion

The outcome of this project-based dissertation is very rewarding, as the researcher managed to create a pedagogical resource which responds to current issues, as well as a SoW which encourages its integration within different teaching and learning scenarios. Through it, further awareness could be generated in the hope of fulfilling the targets of UNESCO's 17 SDGs by 2030. For the cartoon book and the SoW to be critical to the local context, extensive research was required. Additionally, the methodology that was adopted yielded positive results which might not have otherwise been discerned. In conclusion, this research encourages educators and students to contribute to wider society even though they might think that their effort is irrelevant. It is crucial to constantly adopt an ethics of care and to advocate for social justice and environmental protection.

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Appendices

Appendix A

The Four Short Narratives

Story 1: *If Only* in the book *Through the Eyes of Walt*

SDG 1: No Poverty

Re-interpreted Disney Character/Story: *Aladdin*

Context: Birgu's Car Boot Sale and Thrift Shops

Narrative: Many more people are living in poverty as a result of the war in Ukraine

Dino, a young man living on the small island of Malta, was deprived of the most basic needs. As he had no other means of engaging with the world, he used to visit the local coffee shop to catch up on the daily news and see how the present situation was developing. Unfortunately, since he had no money to spend, he used to sit outside on a wooden bench rather than inside. Watching the news regarding the conflict in Ukraine on the television set inside the cafeteria was an elegant, well-off, middle-aged man.

Trembling because of hunger and as it was a very cold evening, Dino stood up and walked back home as soon as the news bulletin ended. On his way back, he stared at the only thrift shop in town, hoping that one day he would be able to buy his own fur coat. Upon arriving home, he had some coffee, and before he went to rest, ate a piece of bread he had toasted on an old gas stove – a *spiritiera*. His house was neither well-equipped nor in the best condition for a person to live in.

The following morning, as he needed something to light his place up, he cycled to the popular car boot sale in Vittoriosa which was held on a Sunday. There he saw the rich man he had seen in the coffee shop again, but this time, he was selling second-hand and vintage household items, such as carpets and lamps. They looked at each other with a sense of familiarity, and the man started showing him some of the objects. Even though Dino knew he could not afford them, he still asked about the price of a particular object he was fascinated by. Having a sense of empathy towards such individuals and not wanting the man to go back home empty-handed, the seller gifted him something very special and for which Dino felt extremely grateful. The two men headed back to town together.

Dino, extremely happy with the fact that he was gifted something for the very first time, looked at what was inside the bag and found a nice, shining lamp with which he could light up his house. Still, he was not able to read or make sense of the text inscribed on it. In the following days, the well-off gentleman was in his own place, feeling concerned whilst hearing about the latest international developments and rising inflation. Not knowing what to do, he sadly turned off the TV and headed to bed.

Alone and in silence, Dino was no longer able to sustain himself, and no one ever saw him in the streets again. He was not able to tap into the potential of the lamp and the possibilities that lay within it. It was a lost opportunity.

Story 2: *Empower* in the book *Through the Eyes of Walt*

SDG 5: Gender Equality

Re-interpreted Disney Character/Story: *Mulan*

Context: Valletta (Exhibition Space)

Narrative: Women are still being subject to making uninformed decisions

Yulan was a young female artist living in an old townhouse. Although she was still very young and she wanted to be an independent woman, her father, a widower, forced her to marry someone whom she did not know and who, according to him, was suitable for her. Yulan ended up spending all of her days alone, managing the house whilst her husband was out, either at work in the morning or out with his friends in the evening. At some time during the day, she used to go to the cellar where she drew, painted, or read about art history. As she had no one whom she could talk to, she expressed herself through her art.

Yulan had always wanted to find employment but her husband did not allow her to get a job. His argument was always the same: "Only I should work for the family and bring food to the table. Your place is at home". Besides this, he used to criticise the work she did at home: "You do not even do your job well at home". He never gave a helping hand as he was raised that way. In fact, he used to eat and go to bed, never sharing domestic responsibilities. Not only that, but whenever Yulan insisted on going for a walk after her husband returned home, he used to follow her persistently.

One day, Yulan was listening to the radio and she heard that in a newly built space in Valletta, there was going to be an exhibition for emerging artists. That same day, without much thought, she created an alias and sent a letter to express her interest. For this exhibition titled 'Empower', for which Walt was the curator, all artists had to exhibit four related works. Walt received her letter and included her among the list of exhibitors. Yulan worked so hard to submit her best possible work whilst her husband was out. When it was time to set up for the exhibition, she headed to Valletta. That evening, her husband noticed that she was acting unusual so he decided to follow her instead of going out. Whilst there, she met many other female artists and together with the exhibition curator, they organised their work. Through her work, she delivered a feminist message which acted as a form of protest against discrimination. Before she returned home, she took the opportunity to head to her father's house. She cried uncontrollably as she explained the situation she had ended up in. That night, her father realised he had been very wrong.

Her husband pretended he did not know anything to see if she would ever do this again. The day of the exhibition arrived and since everything was going to be broadcast on TV, she did not hesitate to go. She only wanted to speak and deliver a message through her art. That night, her husband still went out but this time, he watched the event. Although Yulan exhibited the work under an alias, he could easily identify her work. Tears fell from his eyes.

Story 3: *Behind Closed Doors* in the book *Through the Eyes of Walt*

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Re-interpreted Disney Character/Story: *Cinderella*

Context: White Rocks Pembroke

Narrative: An awakening in the face of modern slavery and forced labour

Ever since Ella had been a little girl, she was into fashion design and aspired to move abroad to work for a well-known brand. Since her parents did not believe in her and in her designs that much, they did not allow her to consider this option and instead, they enrolled her for a job in a local residential home, even though she had no choice in the matter and Ella did not regard this as a fulfilling career path. Left with no other alternative, she started working there as a carer and at least, the place had a fascinating sea view. Yet, it was still undergoing a lot of maintenance and was not so favourable as a working environment.

Billie, the only handyman in this home, was very reserved and did not communicate well with others, with the exception of Ella. Once, he told her that since he had various tools to work with, he was given a small workshop to store his things in. As Ella had long working hours, she did not have any time left to fulfil her dreams. One day, they came up with the idea to start working secretly in Billie's workshop straight after work.

Early the following day, Ella brought in her sewing machine in a wooden case as well as some pieces of fabric in different sacks. As she was hurrying about in order not to be seen by her managers, she forgot about the puddle of water she had noticed in one of the corridors and slipped. She thought to herself, "When is this ceiling ever going to be repaired?" She stood up and headed to Billie's workshop to leave her belongings there. Apart from some elderly people who were sitting in the corridors, watching her from his office was Walt, one of the residence's managers. That day, Billie had to finish repairing the walls of his own workshop and hours later, even after Ella had finished her shift, he would still be working. Whilst Ella was working on some of her designs, Billie felt so exhausted that he fell off the wooden plank, but luckily enough, he landed on a pile of textiles. Not too long after, small rocks hit the table Ella was working on and without any hesitation, Billie said, "That is not so unusual". At that very moment, Walt was peeking into the small keyhole and he was terrified, as he had no idea what was going on.

A few days later, Walt knocked on the door to give Ella a poster and without saying a word, he sat next to her and helped her sketch for a fashion brand that was rewarding a scholarship to the designer who made the most powerful fashion statement. Walt did his best to direct Ella towards the job she deserved. Meanwhile, he worked on the renovation of the residence, notifying the workers and its residents and closing the residential home until it was fully refurbished, thereby safeguarding everyone's health throughout the process.

Story 4: *The Strange Encounter* in the book *Through the Eyes of Walt*

SDG 15: Life on Land

Re-interpreted Disney Character/Story: *Tarzan*

Context: National Museum of Natural History, Buskett and High-rise Building

Narrative: Life on land is being negatively affected due to over-development

As Walt was an explorer who was interested in Malta's natural history, one day, he visited Mdina's national museum. Whilst roaming around the museum, he overheard a conversation between two adults who were talking about needing to revisit Buskett Gardens. As it was a place he had never heard of, and one which seemed interesting, he took note of it and headed there straight after. Shortly, Walt arrived and parked his off-road vehicle under the tent.

Without really knowing where he was going, Walt walked for a long time in this woodland area to look closely at the flora and fauna with his magnifying glass. Watching him from atop a tree was a young adult along with his monkey who, at first, seemed very concerned about Walt's visit. Regardless, Walt noticed Silas and moved towards him to introduce himself. At that moment, Silas realised that he was not like the others. They talked to each other for a while, and at some point, Walt asked him if he had ever been to an urban area. The curious and puzzled expression on Silas' face implied everything Walt needed to know, and they headed back to Walt's vehicle to get his unique parachutes. By the count of three, they were flying just beneath the clouds.

Whilst up there, Silas noted a hunter and reacted immediately by throwing some branches to stop him. At the same time, his monkey uncovered her ears. Later on, Silas noted the presence of a small forested area and asked, "Look, is that home?" but Walt replied by saying, "Look closer... It used to be." In fact, it was just an area of land covered with artificial trees and taxidermied animals. The monkey uncovered her eyes to get a glimpse of the scene. For Silas, this was a totally different experience than before, when he had spent his time jumping from one tree to the next. Soon after, he smashed into one of the highest buildings in Malta and he ended up hanging onto a nearby crane. Whilst there, he questioned the existence of such buildings and said, "This has never happened to me before. What is this confusion? Where is my family?" Both him and the monkey stared at some of the surrounding billboards and were left speechless. At that moment, the monkey uncovered her mouth in a sign of protest.

Both of them headed back to Buskett and then to their own home. Whilst in his own shelter, Silas opened up his sacks and picked some tree seeds.

(Silas name meaning: Man of the Forest)

Appendix B

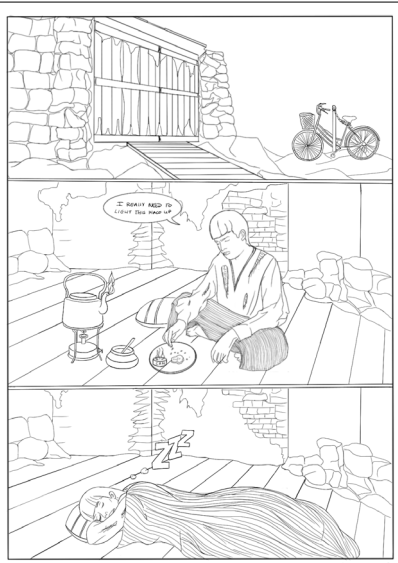
The Four Storyboards



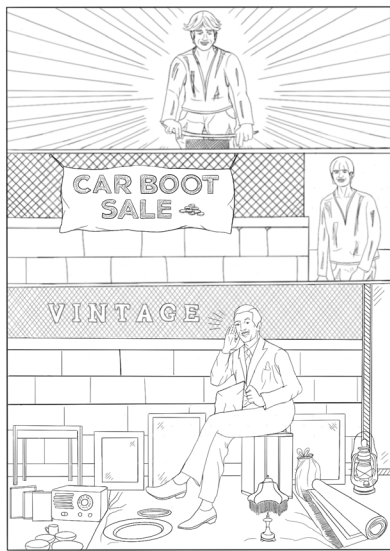
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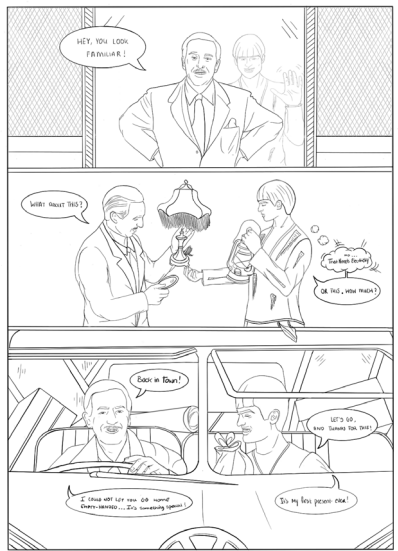
PAGE 2



PAGE 3



PAGE 4



PAGE 5



PAGE 6



PAGE 7

Story 1: SDG 1



PAGE 1



PAGE 2



PAGE 3



PAGE 4



PAGE 5



PAGE 6



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PAGE 3



PAGE 4



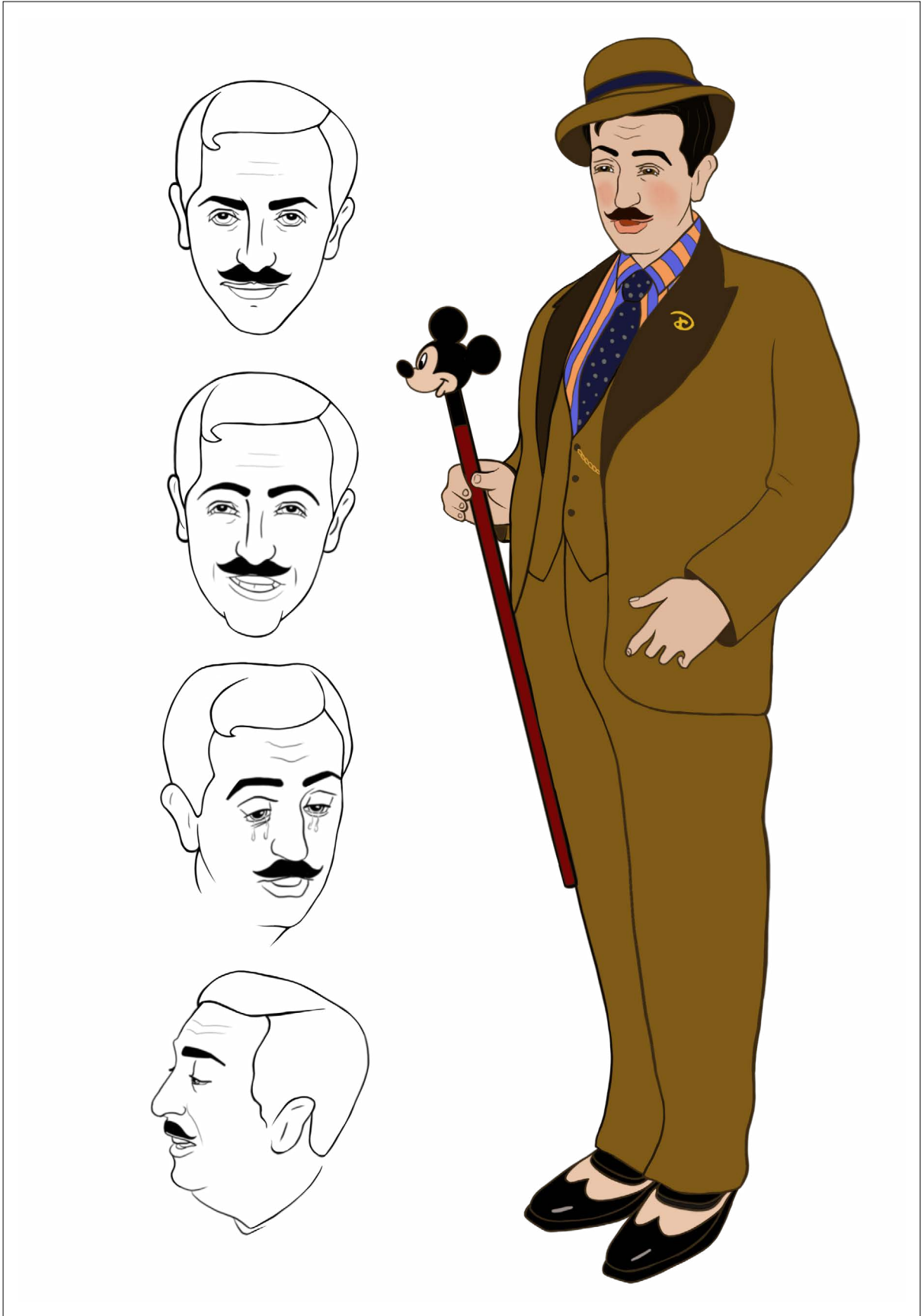
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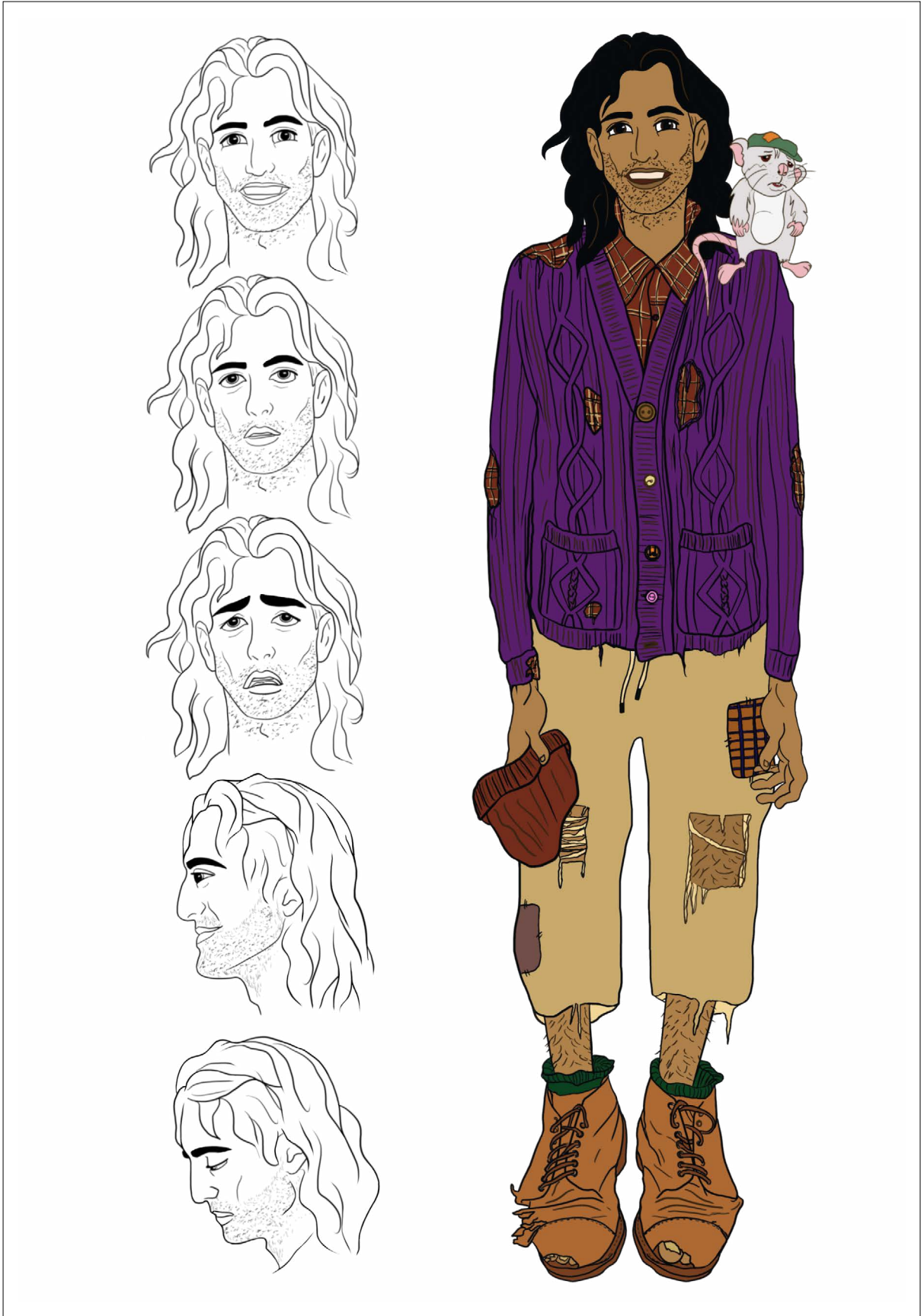
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Appendix C

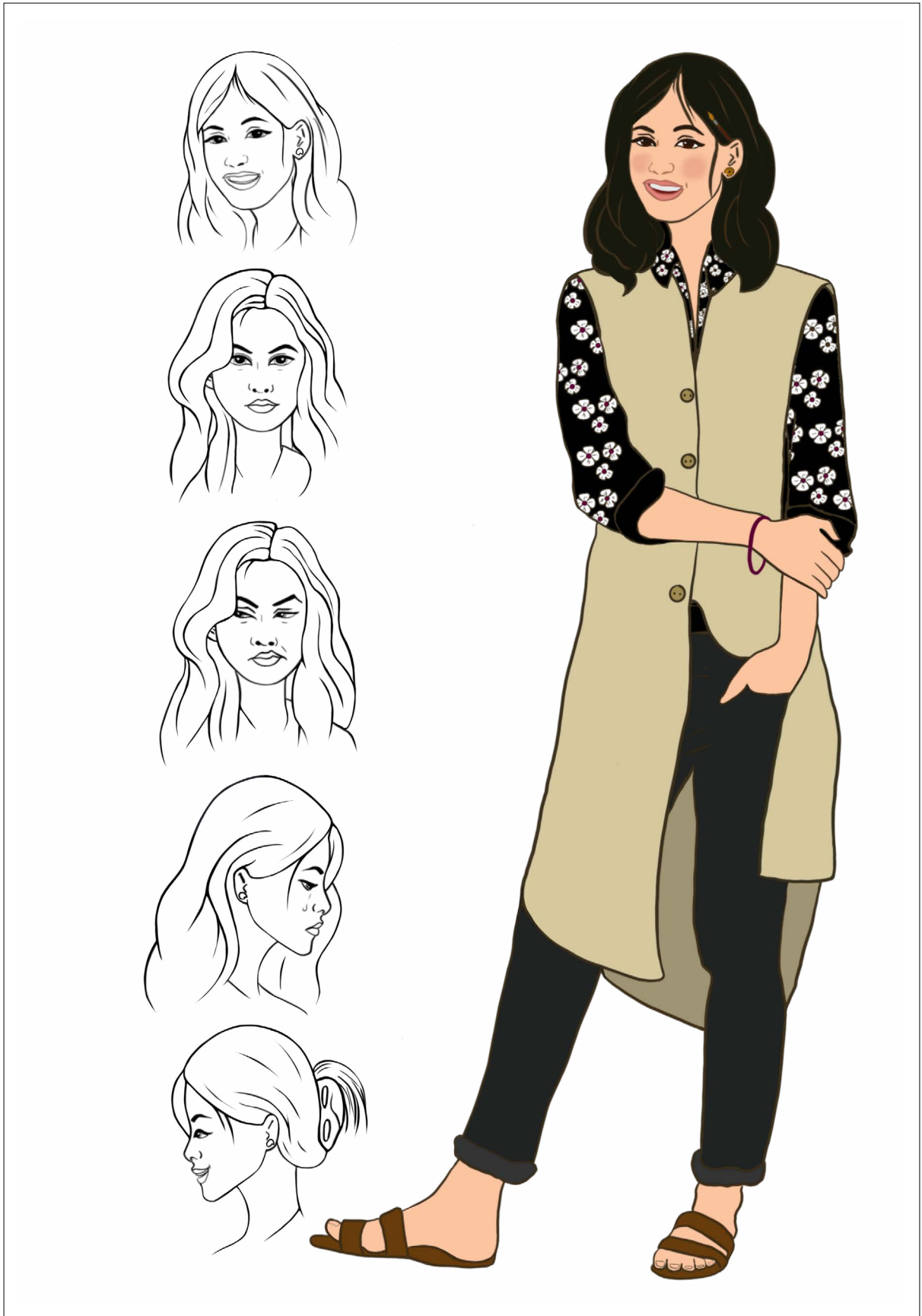
The Character Model Sheets



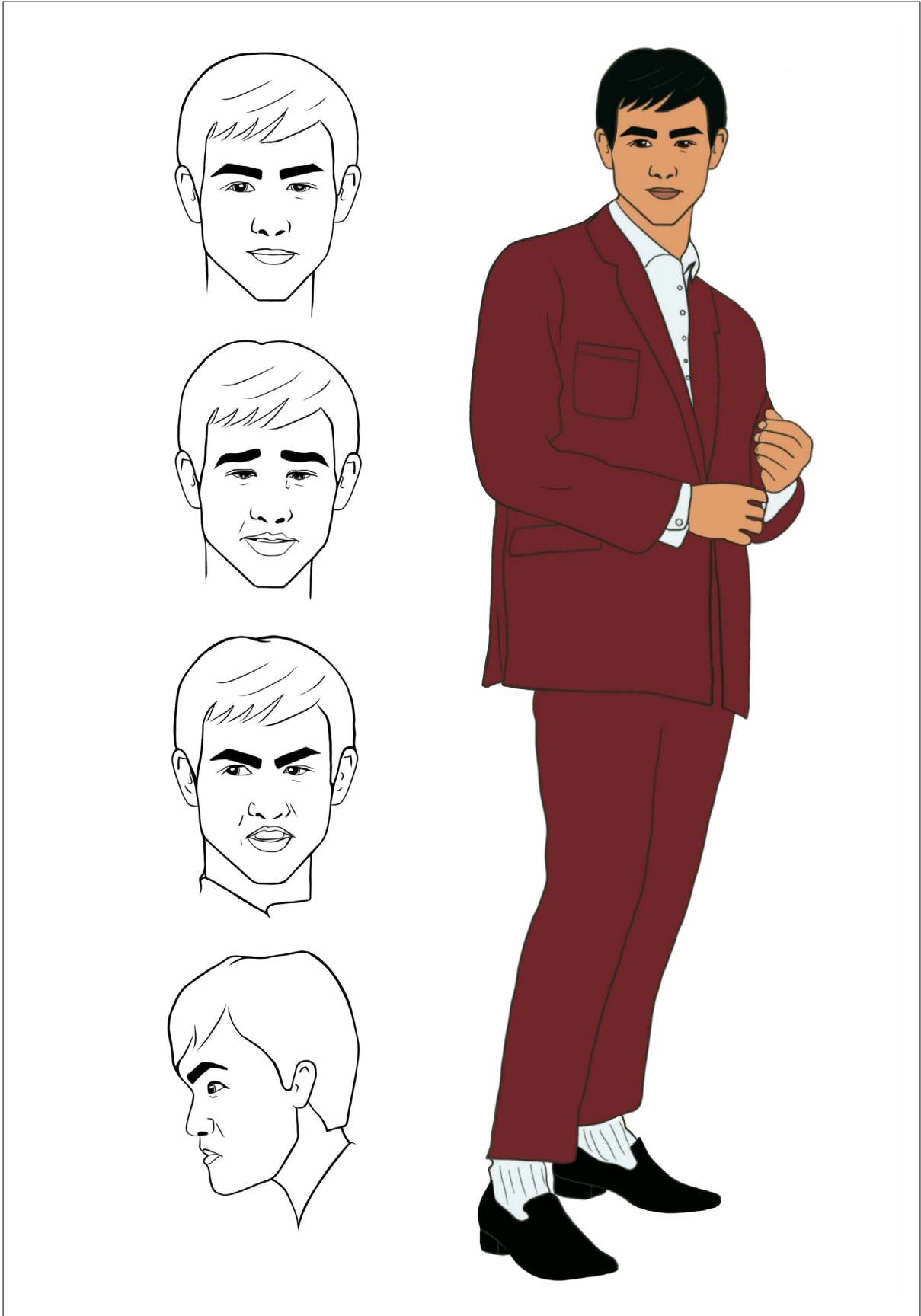
Story 1-4: Walt Disney



Story 1: Dino



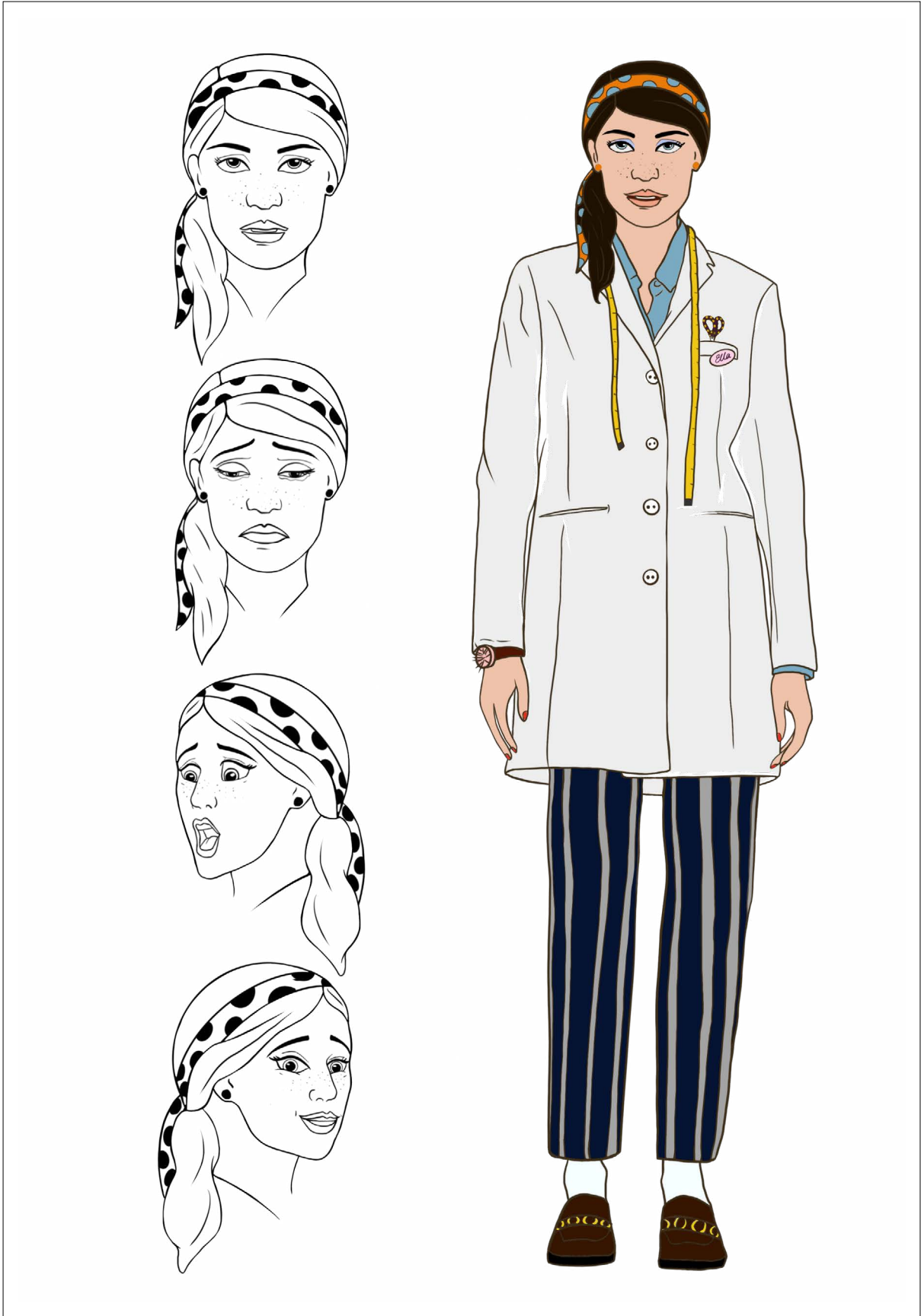
Story 2: Yulan



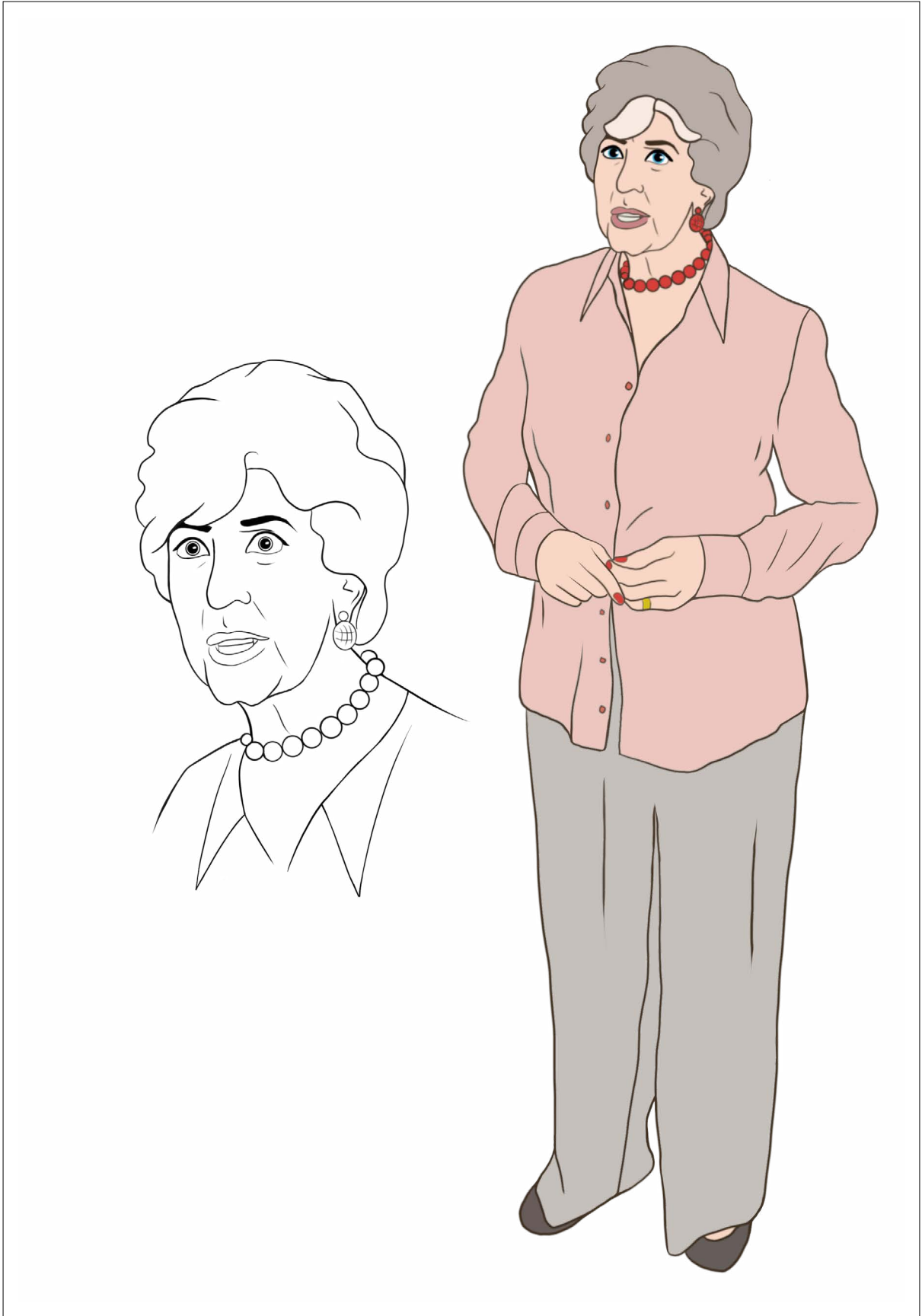
Story 2: Yulan's Husband



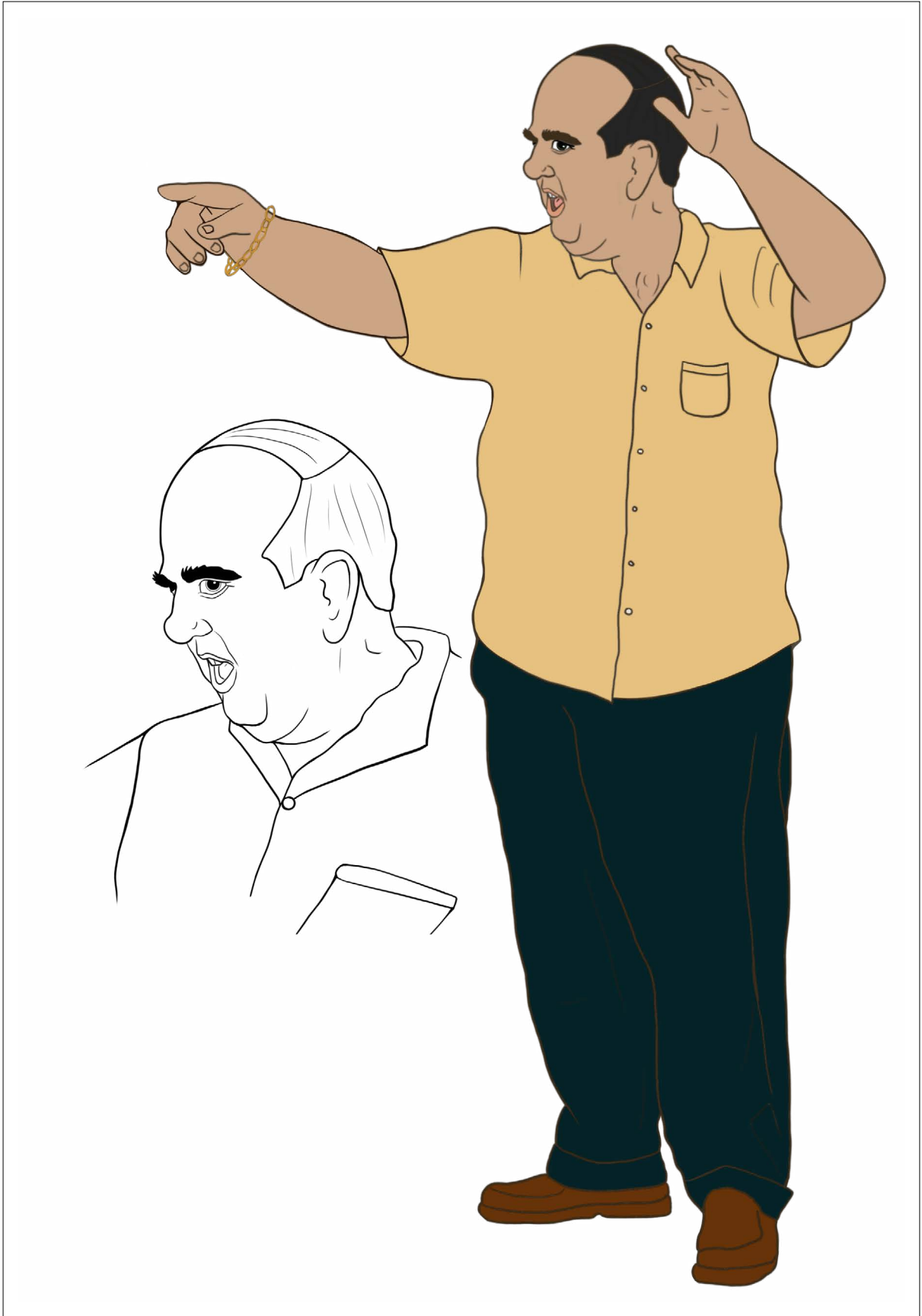
Story 2: Yulan's Father



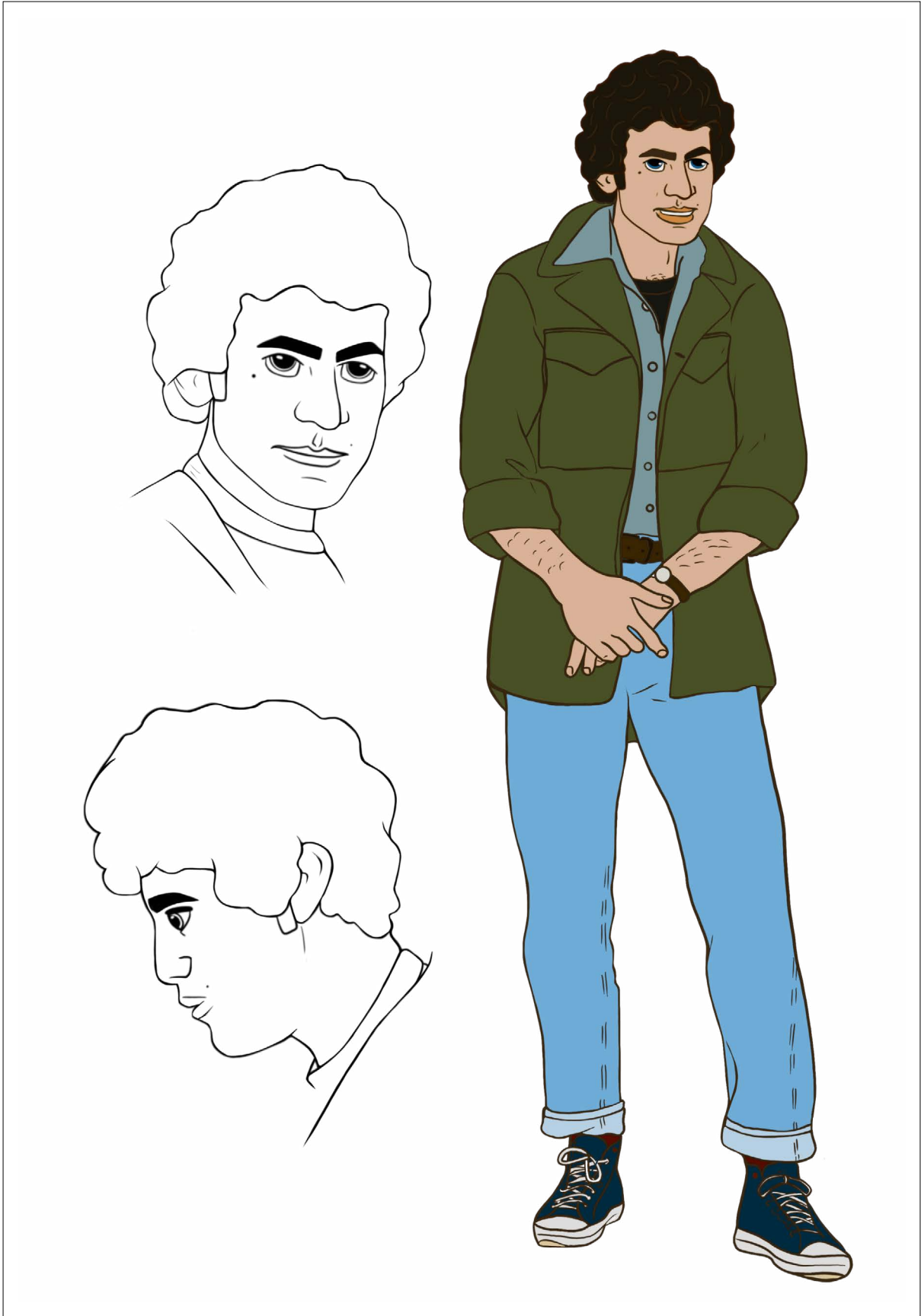
Story 3: Ella



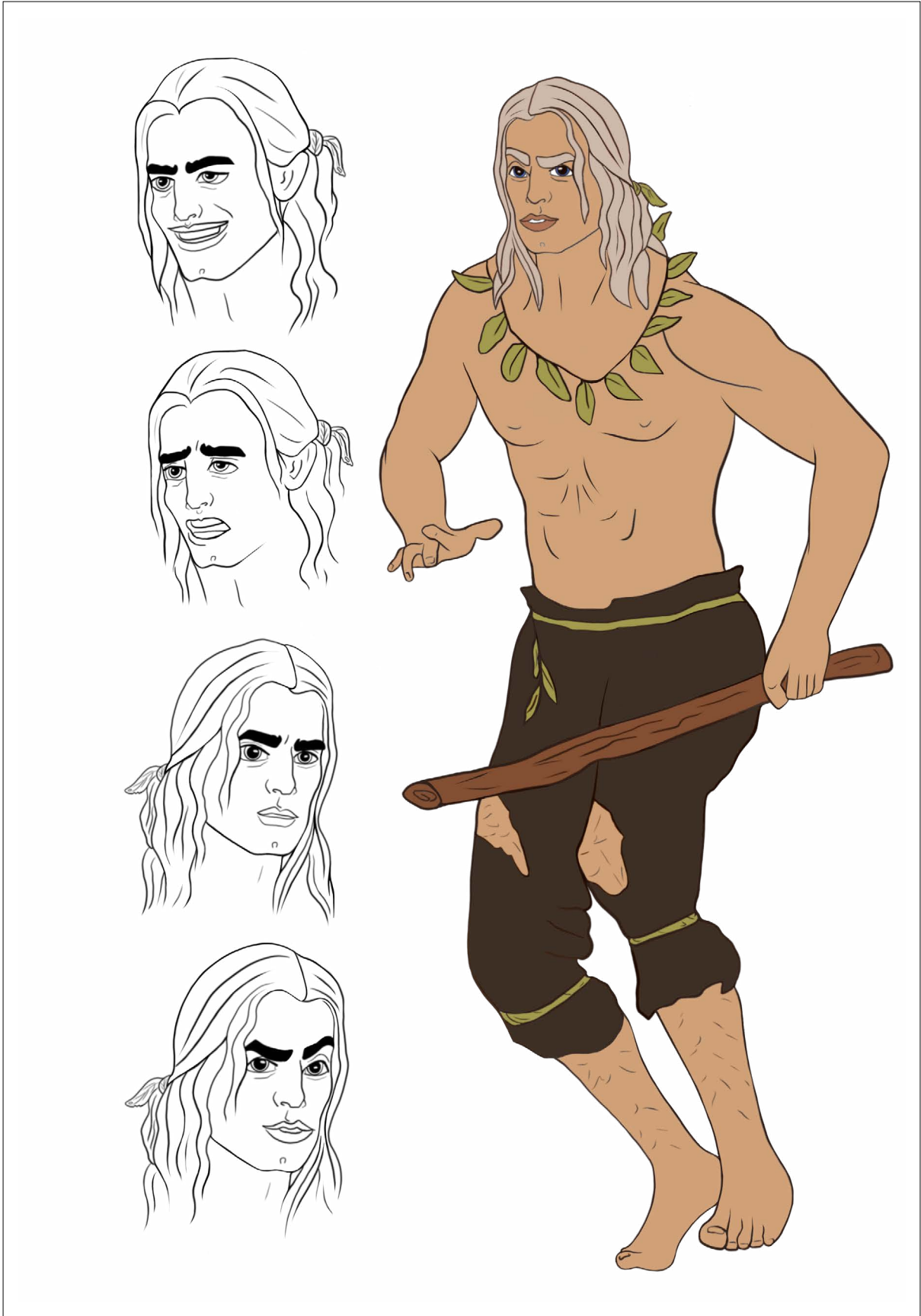
Story 3: Ella's Mother



Story 3: Ella's Father



Story 3: Ella's Colleague



Story 4: Silas



Story 4: Silas' Monkey

Appendix D

The 32-Page Cartoon Book



IF ONLY

This story sheds light on the solitary and simplistic life of Dino, a young man living on the small island of Malta. In a succinct manner, the story alludes to matters related to social injustice and mobility, and to Sustainable Development Goal 1 (No Poverty).

Questions / Points for Student Reflection:

In what ways could education make a difference?

Why and how does the international context affect what happens locally?

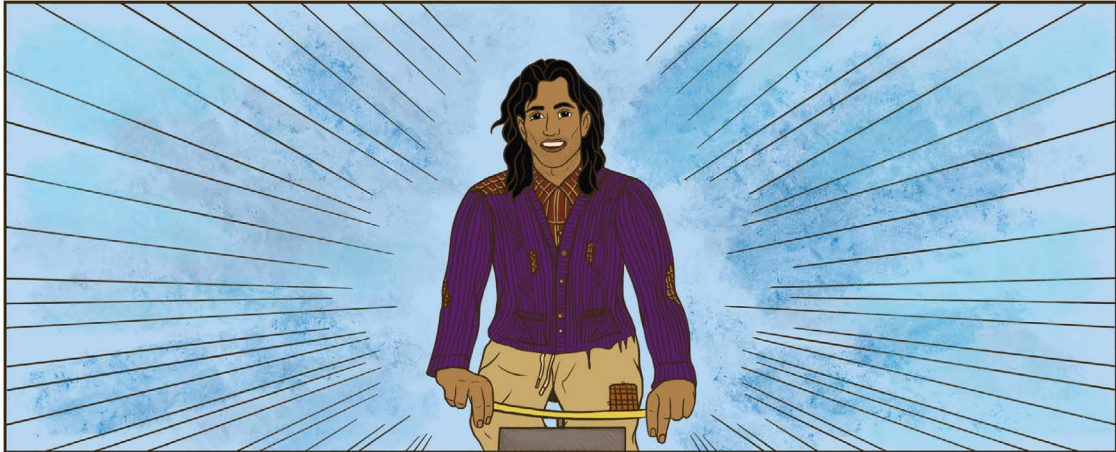
Reflect on at least five aspects of the story which suggest a sense of material deprivation.

Story 1

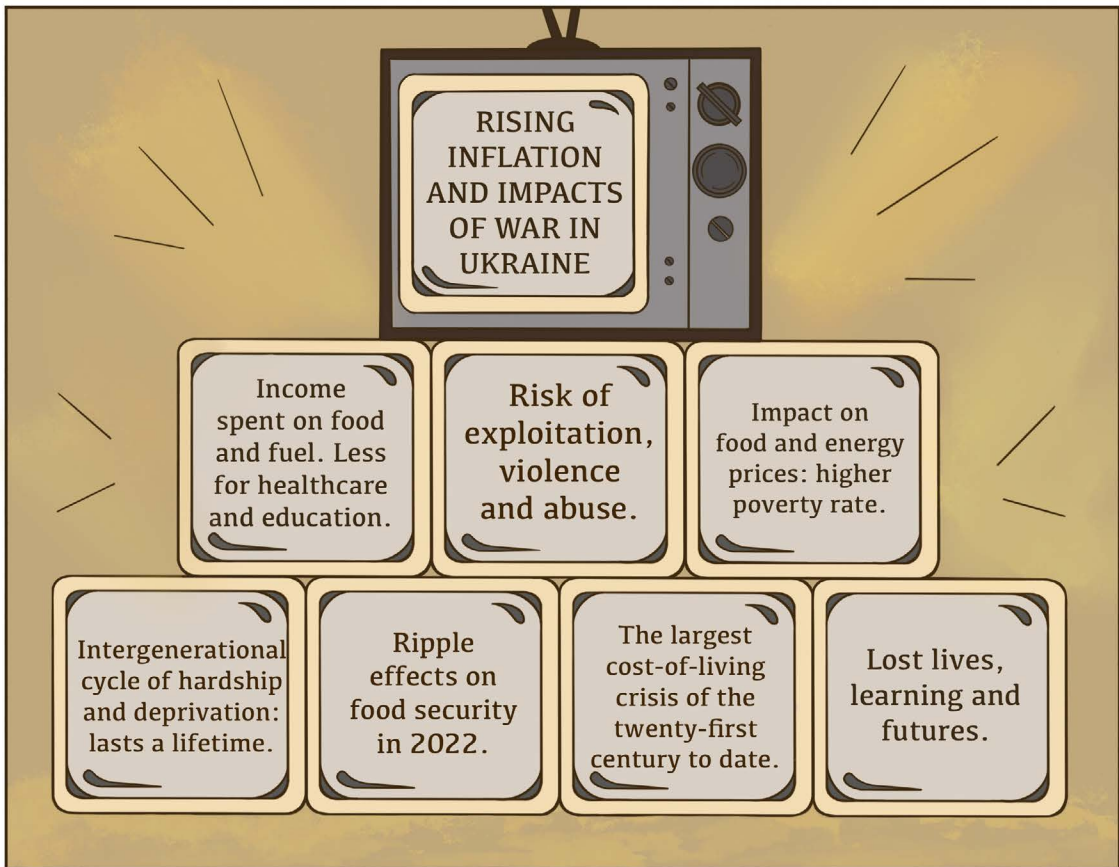


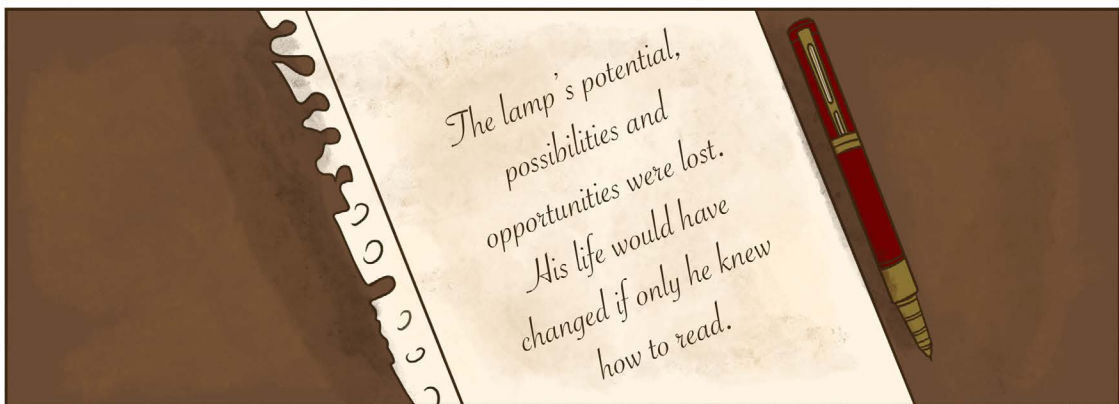
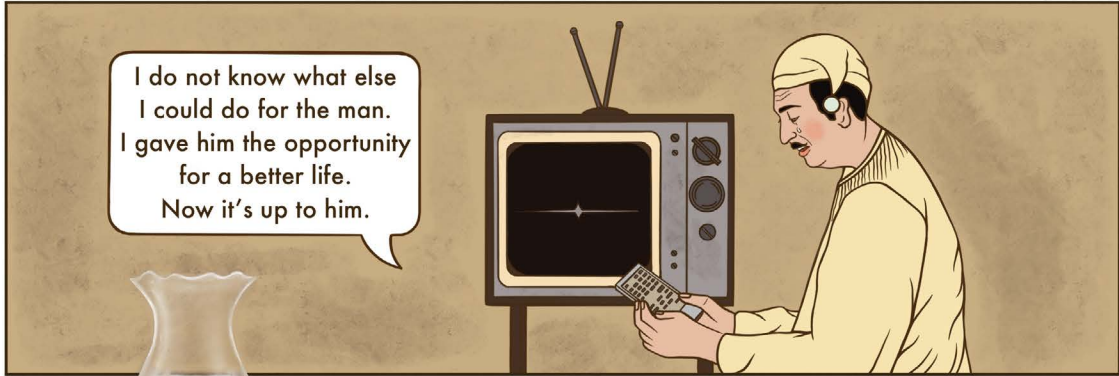












EMPOWER

This story portrays the married life of the young female artist Yulan, and contrasts her way of living with that of her husband. In a concise manner, the story refers to pressing gender stereotypes and societal biases, and to Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality).

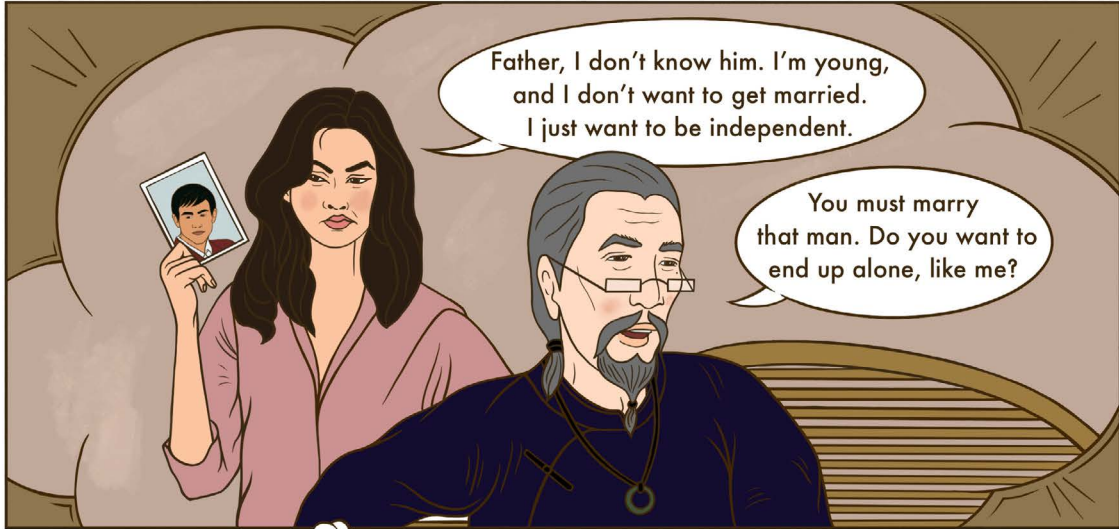
Questions / Points for Student Reflection:

How is Yulan perceived within a male-dominated society?

In what ways is Walt contributing to social change?

Reflect on the social message Yulan is expressing through her art.

Story 2





His friends see him more than me.

But at least I can express myself here!



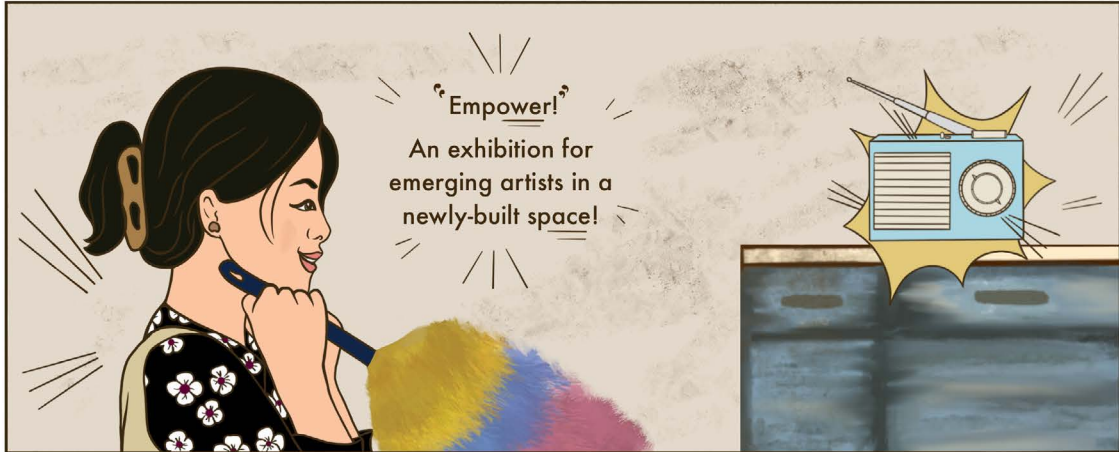
I have always wanted to find employment!

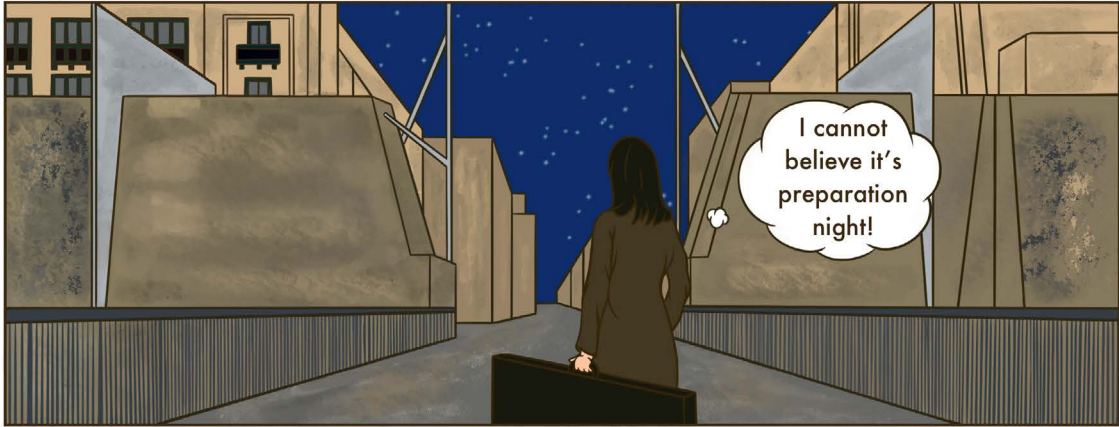
No, Yulan. Only I can earn money and bring food to the table! Your place is at home.



The house isn't even well-maintained. Look, we have dust everywhere.

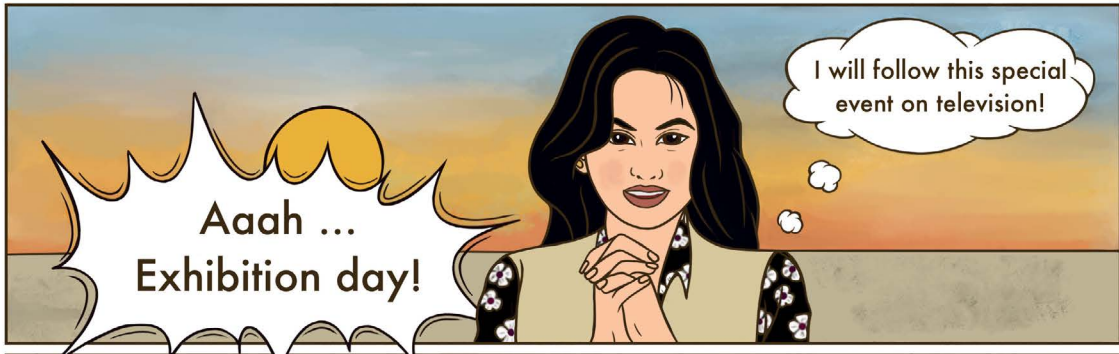






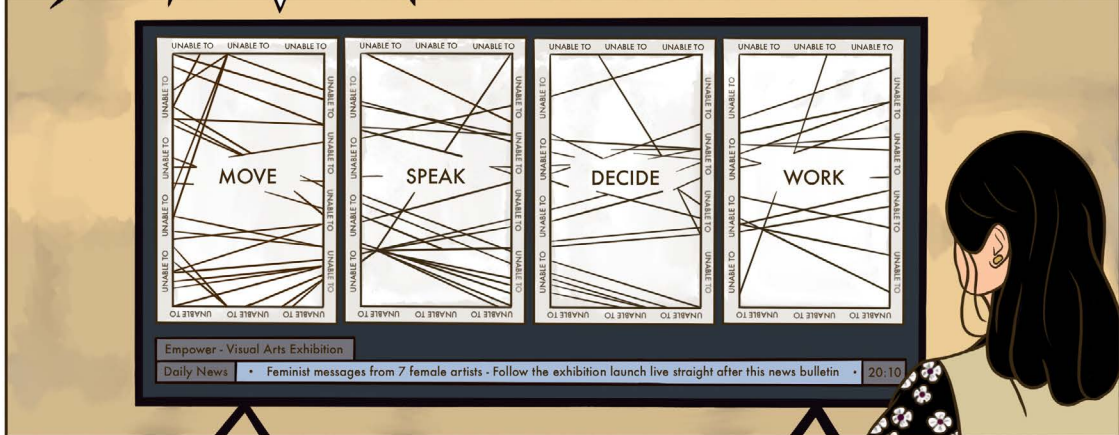


Let's see if she does this again.



Aaah ...
Exhibition day!

I will follow this special event on television!



MOVE

SPEAK

DECIDE

WORK

Empower - Visual Arts Exhibition
Daily News • Feminist messages from 7 female artists • Follow the exhibition launch live straight after this news bulletin • 20:10



Let's watch this event.
Yu ... I'm sure that's her work.
Oh, I should never have ...

20:50

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

This story presents an aspirational and creative woman who is seeking to find her place within the fashion industry. Briefly, the story refers to matters related to forced labour and modern slavery, and to Sustainable Development Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

Questions / Points for Student Reflection:

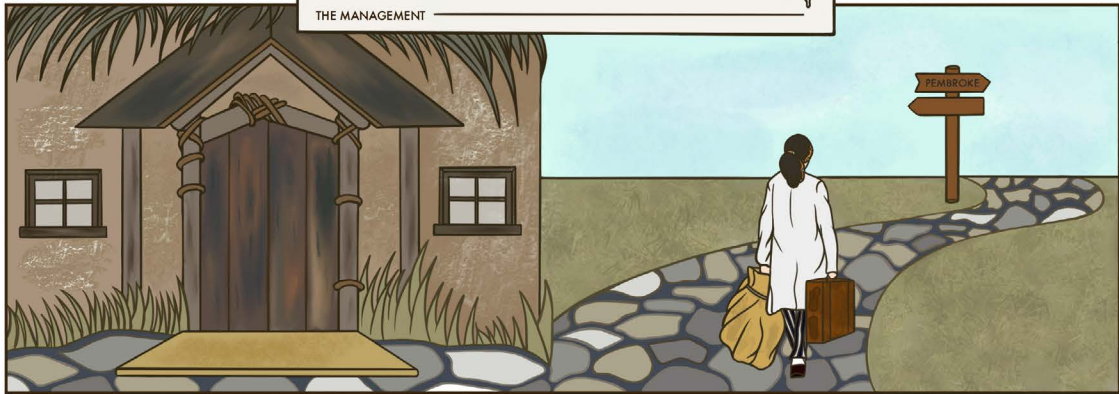
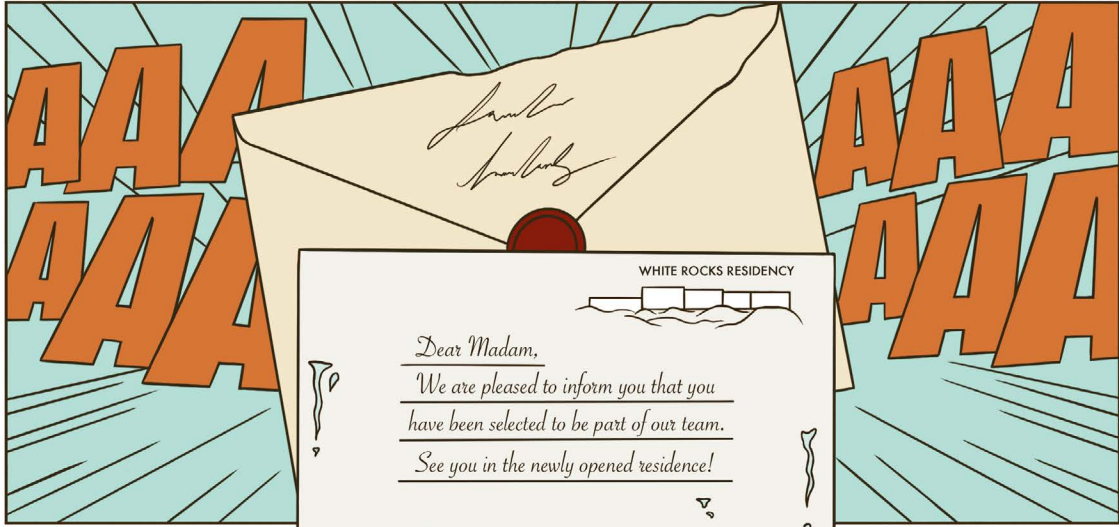
Was Ella's employment a fulfilling career path? Why / why not?

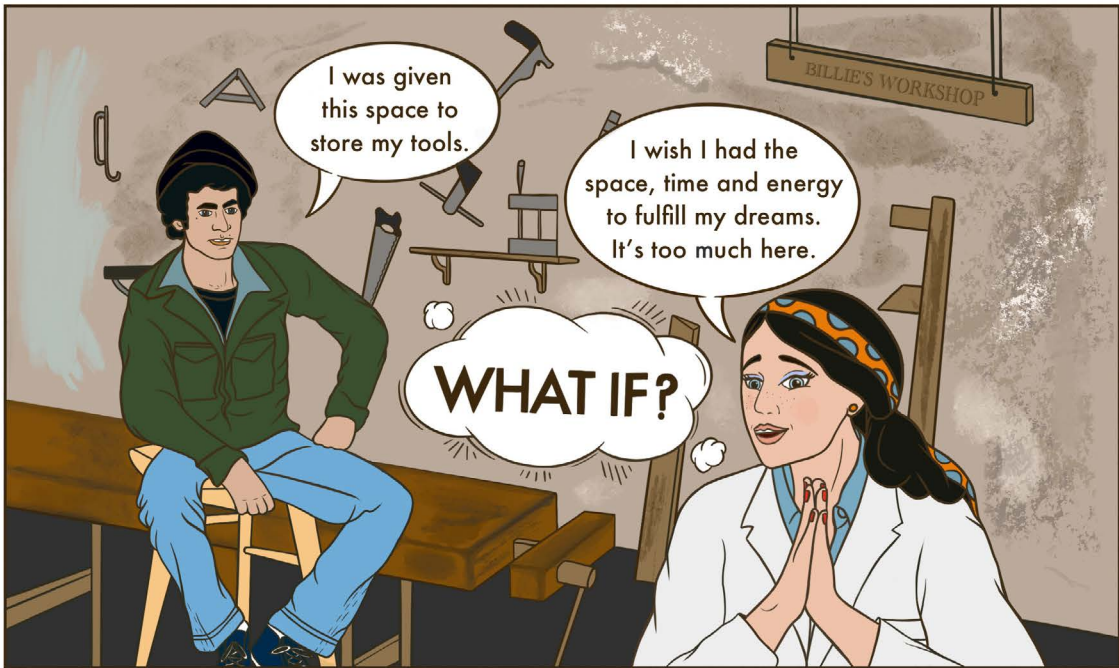
How could the well-being and the safety of the employees be safeguarded whilst at work?

Reflect on at least three inhumane and/or unsafe working conditions at large.

Story 3







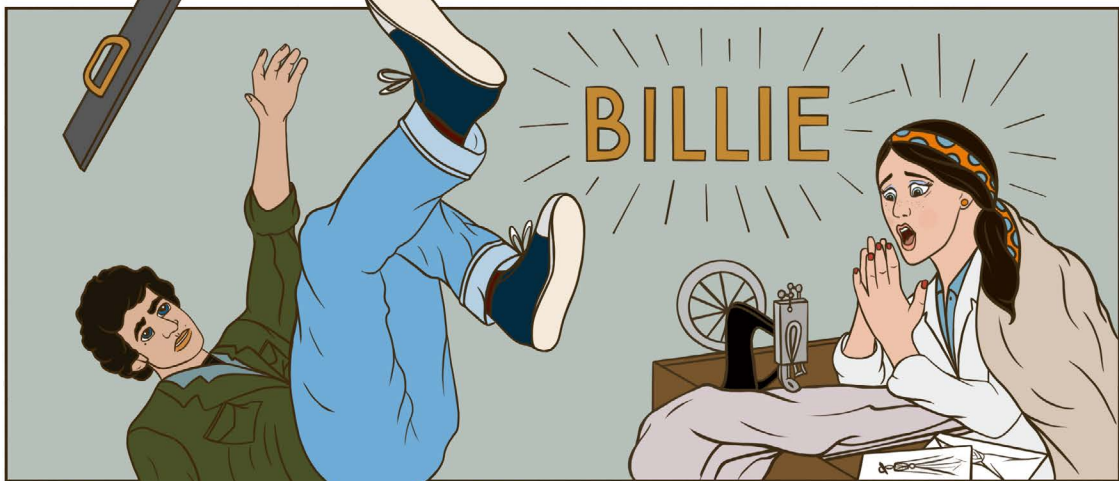


When is this ceiling going to be repaired?

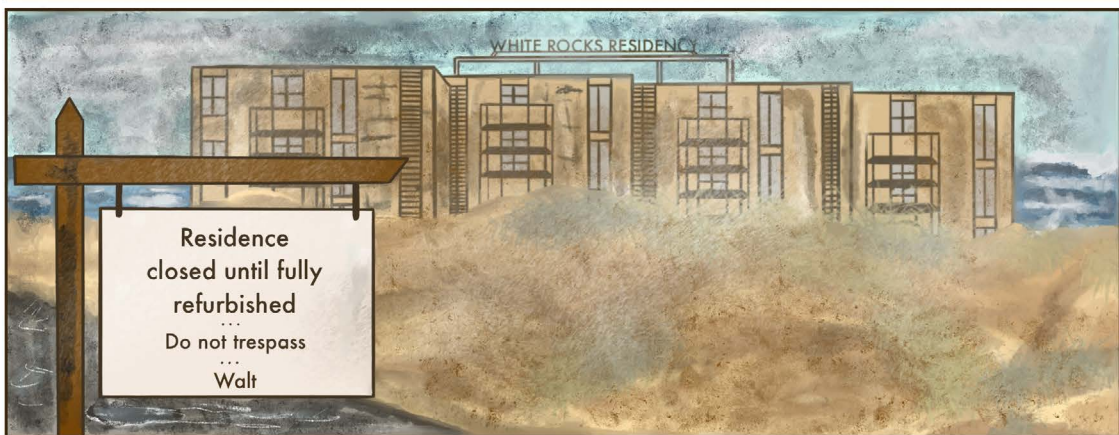
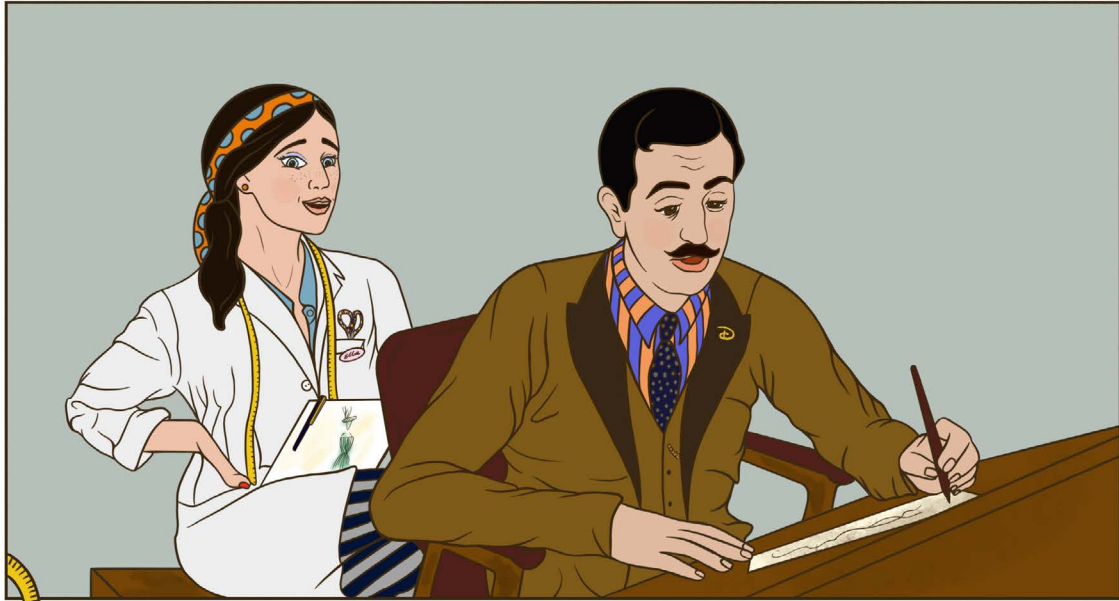


I can't wait for this evening!









THE STRANGE ENCOUNTER

This environmentally-oriented story expounds on Silas' adventure to an urban area, with the protagonist being a young adult who inhabits the woodland. The story relays messages regarding our unsustainable use of land, overdevelopment and Sustainable Development Goal 15 (Life on Land).

Questions / Points for Student Reflection:

In what ways are the ecosystems and biodiversity being endangered in the story?

How and why does the humorous approach emphasise the message of this story even further?

Reflect on at least three ways in which humans could protect and restore natural habitats.

Story 4



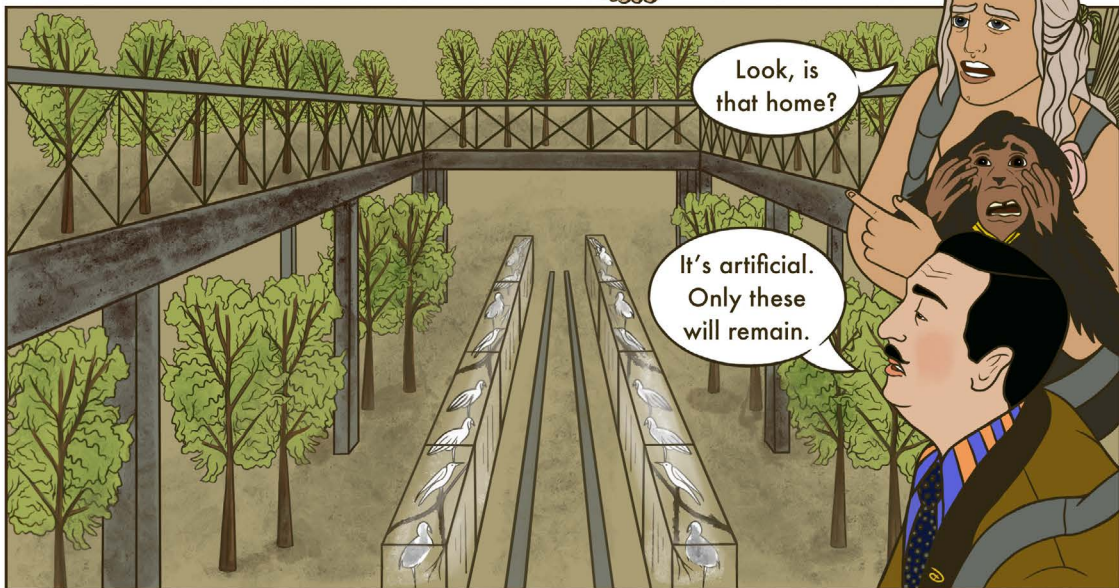






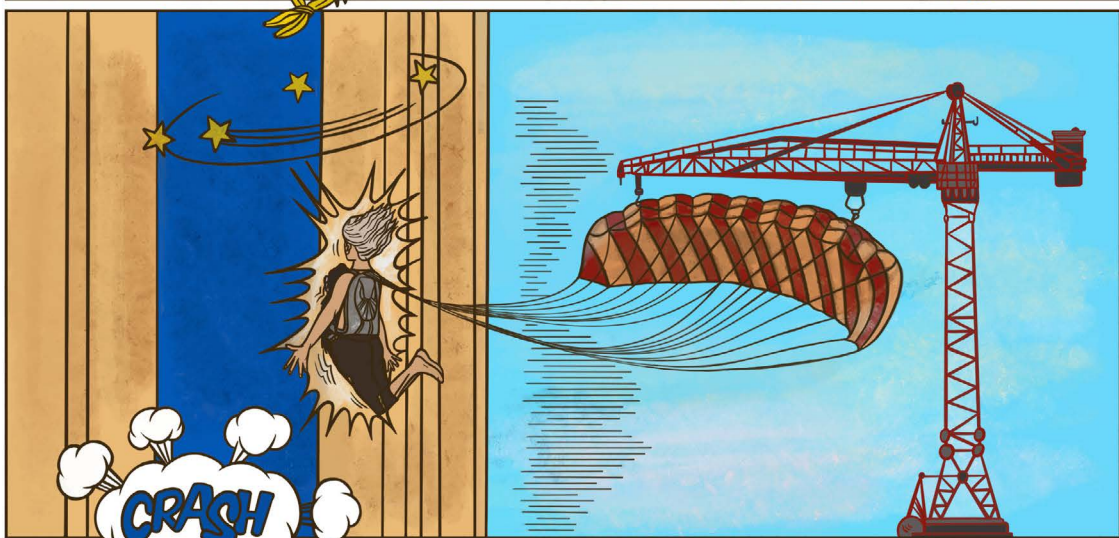
It's a nice experience, isn't it?

This is so different! Oh, wait ... Listen, that is protected!



Look, is that home?

It's artificial. Only these will remain.





THROUGH THE EYES OF WALT

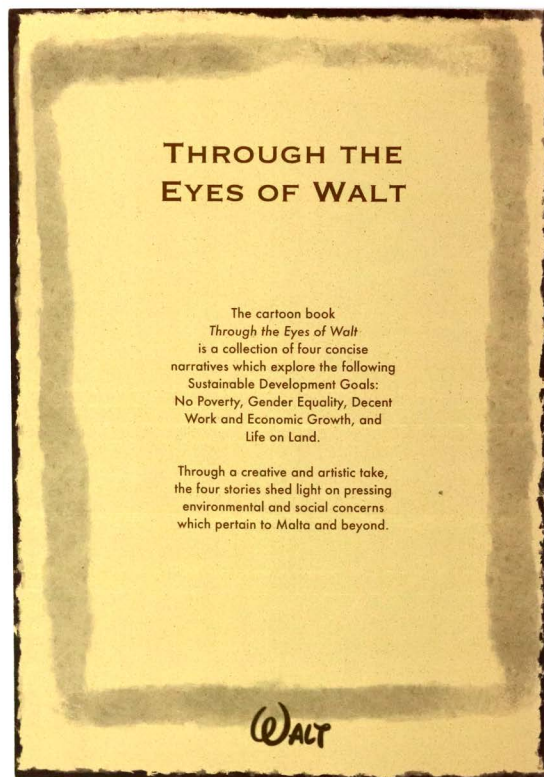
The cartoon book
Through the Eyes of Walt
is a collection of four concise
narratives which explore the following
Sustainable Development Goals:
No Poverty, Gender Equality, Decent
Work and Economic Growth, and
Life on Land.

Through a creative and artistic take,
the four stories shed light on pressing
environmental and social concerns
which pertain to Malta and beyond.

WALT

Appendix E

Printed Cartoon Book on Recycled Paper



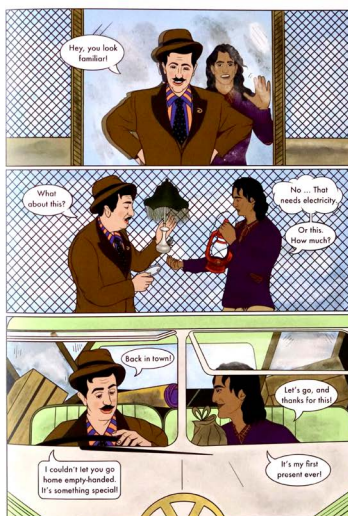
Outer Front and Back Cover

IF ONLY

This story sheds light on the solitary and simplistic life of Dino, a young man living on the small island of Malta. In a succinct manner, the story alludes to matters related to social injustice and mobility, and to Sustainable Development Goal 1 (No Poverty).

Questions / Points for Student Reflection:
 In what ways could education make a difference?
 Why and how does the international context affect what happens locally?
 Reflect on at least five aspects of the story which suggest a sense of material deprivation.

Story 1





EMPOWER

This story portrays the married life of the young female artist Yulan, and contrasts her way of living with that of her husband. In a concise manner, the story refers to passing gender stereotypes and societal biases, and to Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality).

Questions / Points for Student Reflection:

How is Yulan perceived within a male-dominated society?

In what ways is Wolk contributing to social change?

Reflect on the social message Yulan is expressing through her art.

Story 2

Father, I don't know him. I'm young, and I don't want to get married. I just want to be independent.

You must marry that man. Do you want to end up alone, like me?

Oh, Father, you said he was suitable for me. Can't you see he is never home?





**BEHIND
CLOSED DOORS**

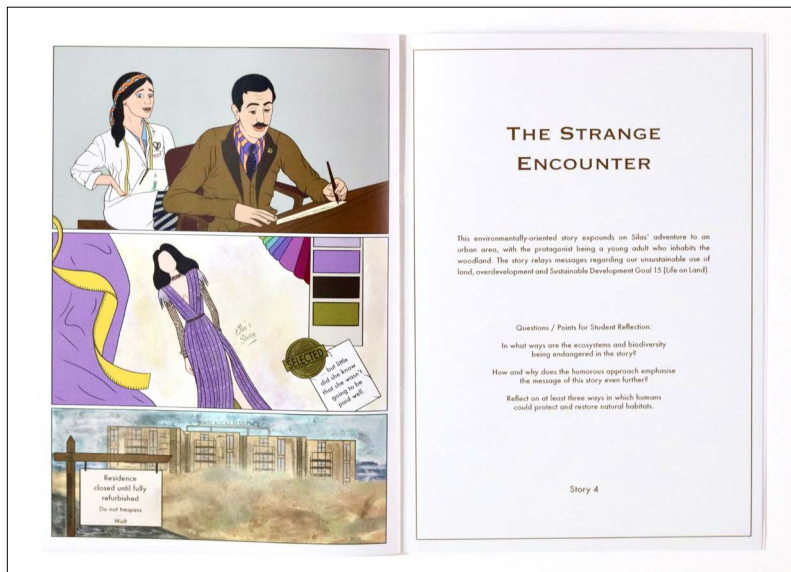
This story presents an aspirational and creative woman who is seeking to find her place within the fashion industry. Briefly, the story refers to matters related to forced labour and modern slavery, and to Sustainable Development Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

Questions / Points for Student Reflection:

- Was Ello's employment a fulfilling career path? Why / why not?
- How could the wellbeing and the safety of the employees be safeguarded whilst at work?
- Reflect on at least three inhumane and/or unsafe working conditions at large.

Story 3





Appendix F

The Scheme of Work for Year 10 Art Option

SCHEME OF WORK

SECONDARY LEVEL: YEAR 10 ART OPTION

WEEK 1 — 2 Double Lessons

Theme of Activity 1: The 17 SDGs and Activism

Brainstorming session about SD and UN's 17 SDGs; discussing pressing environmental and social issues.

Verbal and visual brainstorm: writing and drawing.

VISUAL REFERENCES



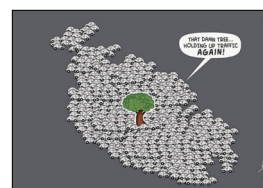
Lorna Simpson: Gender Stereotypes



Banksy: Social Commentary



Banksy: Environmental Art



Steve Bonello: Political Cartoonist

LEARNING OUTCOMES

LOF 4.3 "I can discuss how art relates to the society in which it is produced and/or exhibited".

SEC 6.3b "I can produce a mind-web on a selected theme or idea and sustain its creative development until I reach and produce my final artwork on the theme".

SEC 7.3a "I can analyse my thoughts and feelings through sketches, drawings and annotations regarding my personal experiences in my work journal".

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Focus on **SDG 1, SDG 5, SDG 8** and **SDG 15** during lesson 1. Reinforce them during lesson 2.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

* Collective Discussion, Group Work and Individual Work

Introduce the students to sustainable development (SD), UNESCO's 17 SDGs, issue-based art and activism.

Ask: What is sustainable development (SD)? Which environmental or social concerns are you aware of? How would you explain issue-based art? What could be the message/s within the work of these artists?

Lesson 1: Students will be given an explanation on SD and UN's SDGs through relevant visuals, video/s and artists. The class will be divided into groups to brainstorm ideas on the following issue/s that pertain to the local/international contexts: poverty, gender equality and overdevelopment. Present the cartoon book.

* **Homework:** Conduct further research on an environmental or social SDG to obtain deeper insights. Pose these two questions: What are the targets of the chosen SDG? What could be done to meet such targets? Provide these web links for additional support: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals> and <https://www.globalgoals.org>.

Lesson 2: The students will be presented some examples of issue-based art and they will discuss some of the works of well-known art activists. Individually, the students will share their own research and findings, brainstorm ideas on the chosen SDG and express their thoughts through mindmap/s and sketches.

LINKS

Cross-Curricular Learning, Environment, Society and Student's Life: SD is an important cross-curricular theme whereas the 17 SDGs reflect the environmental, social and economic dimensions of life.

Art History and Artists: Lorna Simpson, Banksy and Steve Bonello

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7V8oFI4GYMY>

ART VOCABULARY

SD, 17 SDGs, Environmental Aspects, Social Aspects, Issue-based Art, Activism, Brainstorming, Mindmap

ART ELEMENTS

Line, Shape, Space

ART PRINCIPLES

Balance, Emphasis, Variety

RESOURCES (R) AND PREPARATIONS (P)

* Teacher

R: Presentation, visuals, short video (*What is Sustainable Development?*), mindmap example, cartoon book to explain some SDGs.

P: No preparations are required.

* Students

R: Art journal, A3 papers, pencils, black pens and pencil colours.

P: No preparations are required.

SCHEME OF WORK

SECONDARY LEVEL: YEAR 10 ART OPTION

VISUAL REFERENCES FROM THE PROJECT

THE CARTOON BOOK

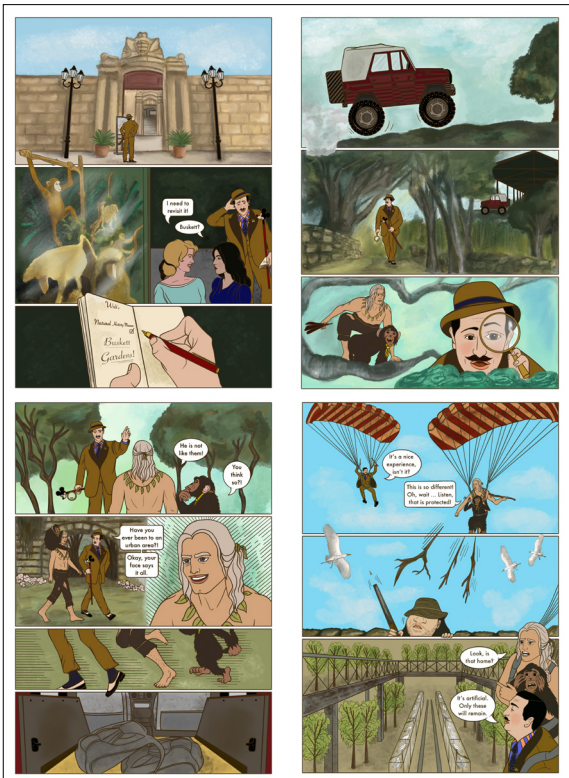


Story 1 on SDG 1

Story 2 on SDG 5



Story 3 on SDG 8



Story 4 on SDG 15

SCHEME OF WORK

SECONDARY LEVEL: YEAR 10 ART OPTION

WEEK 2 — 2 Double Lessons

Theme of Activity 2: Story Writing and Visualisation

Writing the short narratives and planning the overall layout of the comic-strips via detailed storyboards.

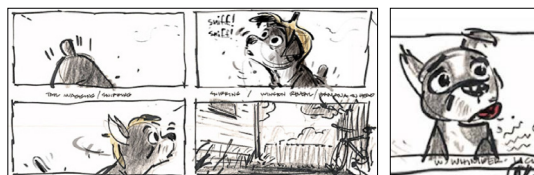
Drawing: dry and mixed media.

VISUAL REFERENCES



Josie Trinidad: Wreck It Ralph

Ted Mathot: Story Supervisor and Artist



Paul Briggs: Story Sketches

LEARNING OUTCOMES

LOF 2.4 / 2.5 "I can make reasoned judgements about my own work and that of others, demonstrating contextual understanding", and use them "to make decisions about how to proceed".

SEC 3.3d / LOF 4.8 "I can use my drawing skills to express myself in 2D" works and to investigate specific issues.

SEC 2.3c "I can analyse how various elements and principles of art contribute to the aesthetic value of works of art and design".

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Focus on **SDG 2** during lesson 1 and **SDG 3** during lesson 2.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

* Pair Work, Individual Work and Peer-Evaluation

Introduce the students to these comic techniques: cartoons, comic strips, storytelling and storyboarding.

Ask: What is sequential art? What do you find interesting in comic strips and cartoons? Which SDGs will you communicate through your stories? Why is the storyboarding process crucial in comic art?

Lesson 1: The students will work in pairs to invent their own short narratives related to one or more SDGs. Such collaboration allows them to bring their ideas together to develop a narrative which is not only interesting, but which raises awareness about particular environmental and/or social issues.

* **Homework:** Conclude the narrative and start thinking about how you could visualise it within two pages. Optional - bring some visuals to help you visualise the story.

Lesson 2: Through a two-page storyboard, the students will plan the panels' text and images - annotations on colour could be added. They will reflect on the stories' effectiveness and they will engage in art criticism to identify the key strengths and any possible improvements within each other's work (peer-evaluation).

* **Homework:** Finalise the two-page storyboard.

LINKS

Cross-Curricular Learning, Environment, Society and Student's Life: Comics connect art and literature as one needs to write a story and include text within the visual narrative in the form of speech and/or thought bubbles. Students might even incorporate aspects from their immediate surroundings in their story sketches.

Art History and Artists: Josie Trinidad, Ted Mathot and Paul Briggs

ART VOCABULARY

Comic Strips, Storywriting, Sequential Art, Visual Narrative, Storyboards, Panels, Art Criticism

ART ELEMENTS

Line, Shape, Space, Colour

ART PRINCIPLES

Balance, Emphasis, Proportion, Variety, Unity

RESOURCES (R) AND PREPARATIONS (P)

* Teacher

R: Presentation, visuals, four short narratives and storyboards as examples and cartoon book.

P: No preparations are required.

* Students

R: Art journal, A3 papers (white or coloured), pencils, black pens and pencil colours.

P: Finalise the story prior to the 2nd lesson.

VISUAL REFERENCES FROM THE PROJECT

THE FOUR STORYBOARDS



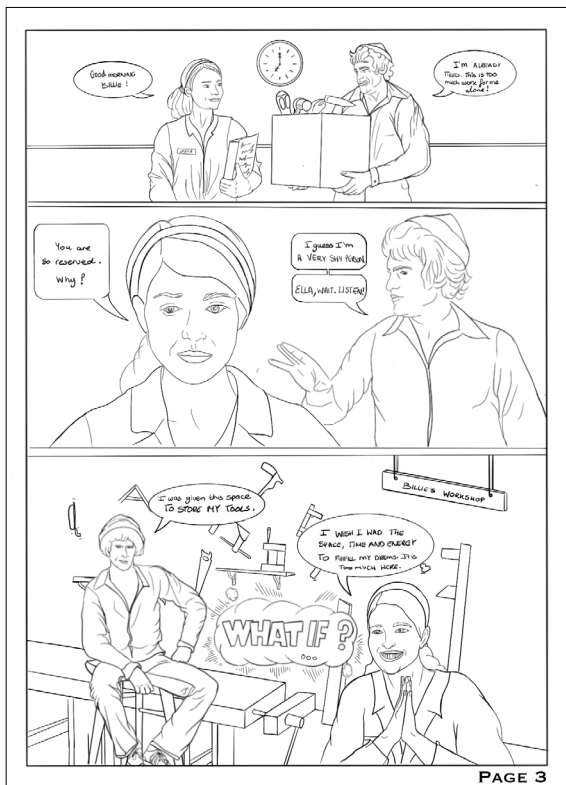
PAGE 1

Storyboard for SDG 1



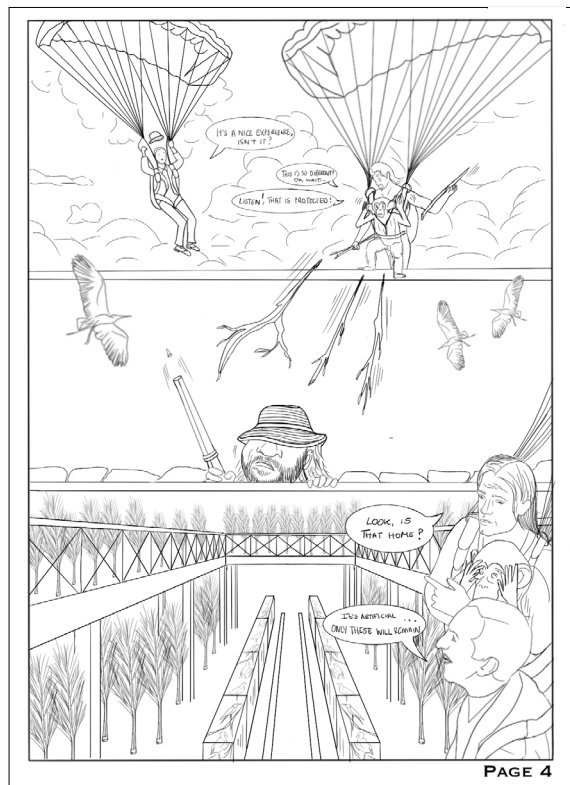
PAGE 2

Storyboard for SDG 5



PAGE 3

Storyboard for SDG 8



PAGE 4

Storyboard for SDG 15

SCHEME OF WORK

SECONDARY LEVEL: YEAR 10 ART OPTION

WEEK 3 — 2 Double Lessons

Theme of Activity 3: The Human Figure

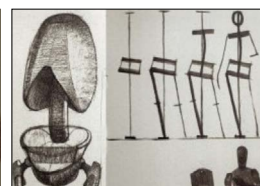
Introducing and understanding the human figure, and learning how to simplify it in basic shapes.

Drawing: dry and mixed media.

VISUAL REFERENCES



Gottfried Bammes: Drawing Movement



Gottfried Bammes: Life Drawing

LEARNING OUTCOMES

SEC 5.3d "I can render the illusion of form and depth of objects and figures in foreshortening".

SEC 5.3j "I can draw objects in their right shape and proportions through the correct use of proportional measurements (measuring at arm's length)".

SEC 6.3a "I can select from primary and secondary sources the right material to enrich my creative investigation". I can even work with my peers.



Pamela Sunstrum: Seated Figures



Shanice Farrugia: Observational Work

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Focus on **SDG 4** during lesson 1 and **SDG 6** during lesson 2.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

* Individual Work, Pair Work and Self-Evaluation

Introduce students to the human figure and explain that the artist must first be knowledgeable about how to draw it in order to be able to stylise it. Explain how it could be simplified or altered to create a cartoon.

Ask: What do you know about the human's figure proportions? How would you approach figurative drawing? Which shapes could you identify within it? Any ideas on how to make it look cartoonish?

Lesson 1: Give a general theoretical introduction and explain body proportions: mid-point, 7-8 heads etc. Students will learn how to observe, and how to simplify the human figure in basic shapes. They will do two 20-minute studies of the standing human figure, one from visuals and another from real life (work in pairs).

* **Homework:** Do two studies of 20 minutes each to study the standing figure (secondary sources/real life).

Lesson 2: An explanation will be given on how to draw the seated human figure and on foreshortening. The students will draw another two 20-minute studies, one from secondary sources, and another from real life (work in pairs). Explain how such practice will ultimately help them in developing their cartoons.

* **Homework:** Do two studies of 20 minutes each to study the seated figure (secondary sources/real life).

LINKS

Environment and Student's Life: The students will conduct some real-life studies and they will work in pairs to portray each other in their immediate surroundings or contexts.

Art History and Artists: Gottfried Bammes, Pamela Sunstrum and Shanice Farrugia

ART VOCABULARY

Basic Shapes, Volume, Contouring, Proportions, Fast and Real-life Drawings, Lines, Blocks, Foreshortening

ART ELEMENTS

Line, Shape, Form, Space

ART PRINCIPLES

Balance, Movement, Proportion, Variety

RESOURCES (R) AND PREPARATIONS (P)

* Teacher

R: Presentation, visuals and some printed visuals.

P: Find different images of the human figure.

* Students

R: Art journal, A3 papers (white, earthy tones or textured), pencils, pens, pencil colours, white chalk or sanguine and charcoal.

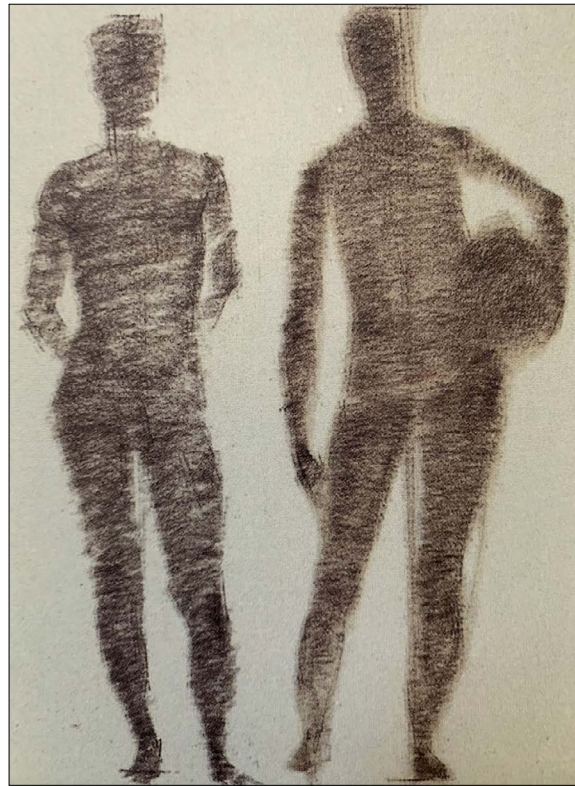
P: No preparations are required.

VISUAL REFERENCES

THE HUMAN FIGURE



Gottfried Bammes: Human Figure and Proportions



Gottfried Bammes: Guide to Life Drawing



Pamela Sunstrum: Standing Figures



Shanice Farrugia: Observational Paintings of People

SCHEME OF WORK

SECONDARY LEVEL: YEAR 10 ART OPTION

WEEK 4 — 2 Double Lessons

Theme of Activity 4: The Character Model Sheets

Identifying the main characters of the story and drawing them as cartoons from different angles.

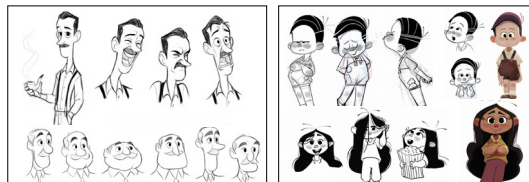
Drawing: mixed media.

VISUAL REFERENCES



Emma Galea Naudi: Character Designer

Emma Galea Naudi: Character Designer



Luigi Lucarelli: Character Designer

Mayan Engelman: Character Designer

LEARNING OUTCOMES

LOF 1.2 “I can undertake an independent study of artists and designers, choosing and using a wide range of sources and reference material”.

LOF 1.7 / SEC 1.3e “I can explore ideas and work inventively in a range of visual processes”; “I can produce work that reflects my personal interpretations”.

LOF 3.2 / SEC 3.3c “I can consider, select and appropriately use a wide range of media”, and “transform accidents to good use in the development of my work”.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Focus on **SDG 7** during lesson 1 and **SDG 9** during lesson 2.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

* **Individual Work, Self-Evaluation and Group Discussion**

Introduce them to character design and to the practice of developing character model sheets.

Ask: How are cartoon characters related to the human figure? How would you approach character design? What do you think a character model sheet is? Which angles or facial expressions should be explored?

Lesson 1: Students will be given an explanation on character model sheets and they will look back at the story they wrote to identify its main character/s. They will think of, and portray specific traits which match both the character’s personality, and the storyline itself. They should design their own cartoon character/s.

* **Homework:** Finalise the design of your cartoon character/s until next lesson - full length figure.

Lesson 2: An explanation will be given on how the cartoon character/s they invented will be drawn from different angles, expressions and possibly, postures. Hence, they will be developing a model sheet for every main character they included in the story. They should plan their cartoon in terms of colour as well.

* **Homework:** If the character model sheet/s is not finished, make sure to finalise it as well.

LINKS

Popular Culture and Student’s Life: The way the students will design their cartoon character might reflect their personal interests or even aspects from popular culture.

Art History and Artists: Emma Galea Naudi, Luigi Lucarelli and Mayan Engelman

ART VOCABULARY

Basic Shapes, Volume, Proportions, Characteristics, Traits, Expressions, Angles and Block Colour

ART ELEMENTS

Line, Shape, Form, Colour, Texture, Value

ART PRINCIPLES

Balance, Emphasis, Proportion, Variety

RESOURCES (R) AND PREPARATIONS (P)

* Teacher

R: Presentation, visuals and character model sheets as examples.

P: No preparations are required.

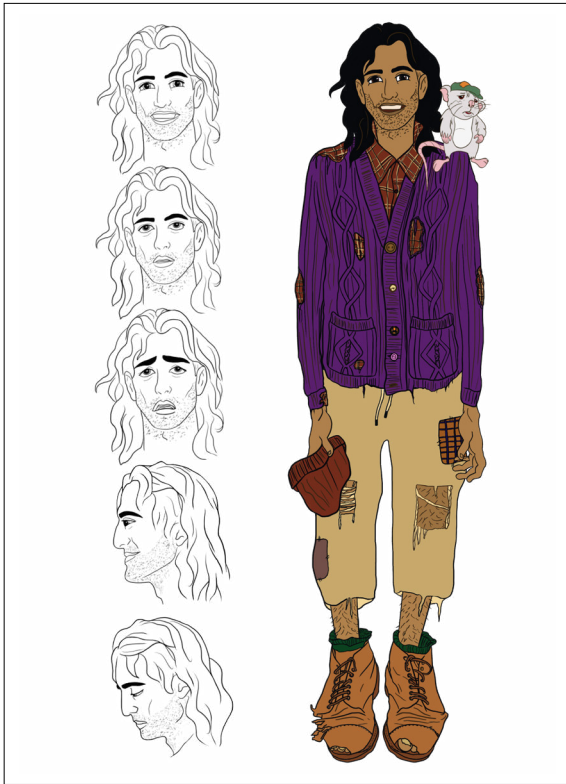
* Students

R: Art journal, A3 papers (pastel or textured), pencils, pens, pencil colours and watercolours.

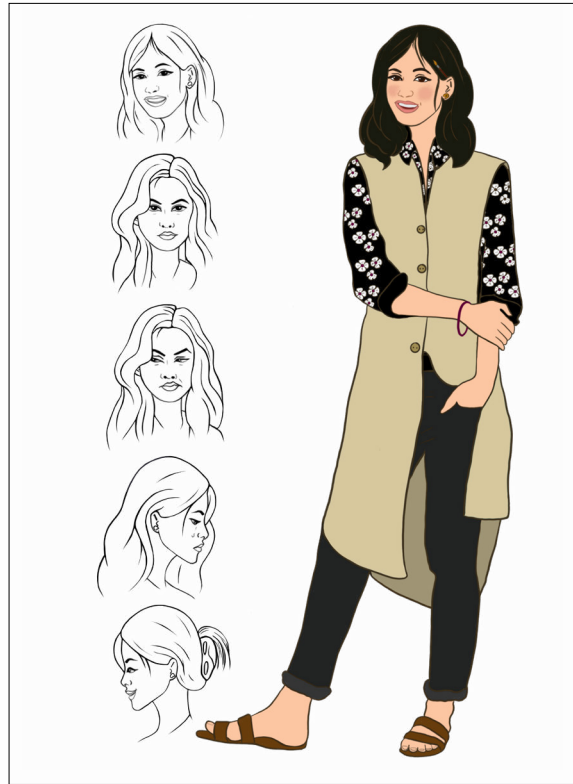
P: Research a relevant cartoonist to find your style. Print visual references for the 2nd lesson.

VISUAL REFERENCES FROM THE PROJECT

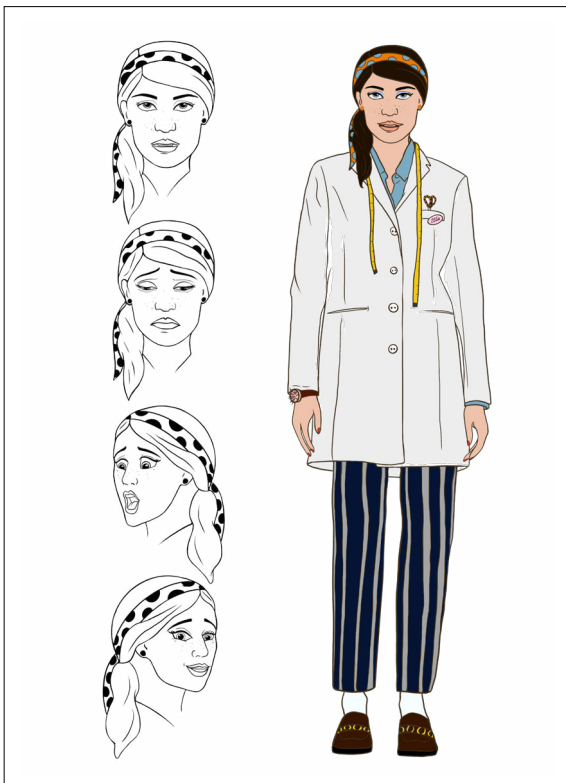
THE CHARACTER MODEL SHEETS



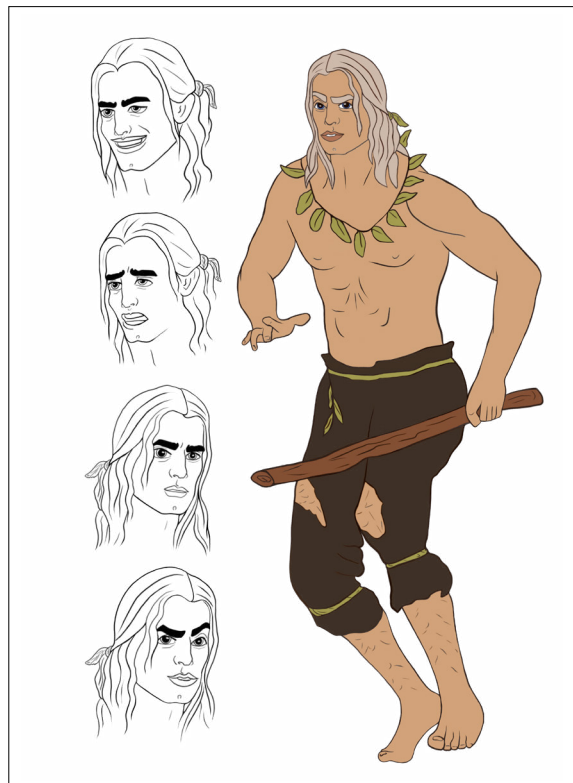
Character Model Sheet for **Story 1**



Character Model Sheet for **Story 2**



Character Model Sheet for **Story 3**



Character Model Sheet for **Story 4**

SCHEME OF WORK

SECONDARY LEVEL: YEAR 10 ART OPTION

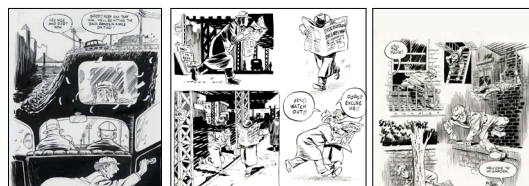
WEEK 5 — 2 Double Lessons

Theme of Activity 5: Designing the Comic Strips

Producing and designing the actual cartoon book's pages: incorporating the cartoons, scenery and text.

Drawing: dry media.

VISUAL REFERENCES



Will Eisner: Cartoonist and Comic Books



Helen E. Hokinson: Cartoonist

Ben Gijsemans: Graphic Novels

LEARNING OUTCOMES

LOF 1.5 "I can use a combination of results to create and design final works, to be able to communicate ideas, emotions, and solutions to problems".

LOF 3.6 "I am able to present my work in a way that demonstrates how my ideas have developed. I am able to show how I can modify and refine my work".

SEC 4.3b "I can integrate self-expression and aesthetic qualities with craftsmanship, skills and techniques to create a personal visual artwork".

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Focus on **SDG 10** during lesson 1 and **SDG 11** during lesson 2.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

* **Individual Work, Self-Evaluation and Group Discussion**

Introduce students to some comic strip artists and to how text could be incorporated with drawing.

Ask: What have we mentioned about comic strips so far? Any ideas on how you could juxtapose text and image? Which text bubbles are you aware of? How could you infuse what we learned about cartoons?

Lesson 1: They will be given a detailed explanation on how they could experiment with the comic strips' panels and text. Through a comparative exercise, students will be made aware of the difference between speech, thought and shout bubbles. Then, they will start working on the design of their two comic strip pages.

* **Homework:** No homework will be given yet, but students are to be encouraged to find additional visual references if necessary.

Lesson 2: The students will continue developing their two comic strips using pencils. Throughout, they should remember what they have already learned about perspective, angles and expressions, and cartoon characters. Include text and make sure that it is legible.

* **Homework:** Make sure to finalise the outline of your two comic strips in pencil before the next lesson.

LINKS

Cross-Curricular Subjects, Society and Environment : Whilst developing their comics strips, the students will be linking art and language. Through them, they will reflect on current societal or environmental concerns.

Art History and Artists: Will Eisner, Helen E. Hokinson and Ben Gijsemans

ART VOCABULARY

Comic Strips, Layout, Panels, Text, Image, Speech, Thought/Shout Bubbles, Perspective, Cartoons

ART ELEMENTS

Line, Shape, Form, Space

ART PRINCIPLES

Balance, Emphasis, Movement, Proportion, Variety, Unity

RESOURCES (R) AND PREPARATIONS (P)

* Teacher

R: Presentation, visuals and design examples.

P: No preparations are required.

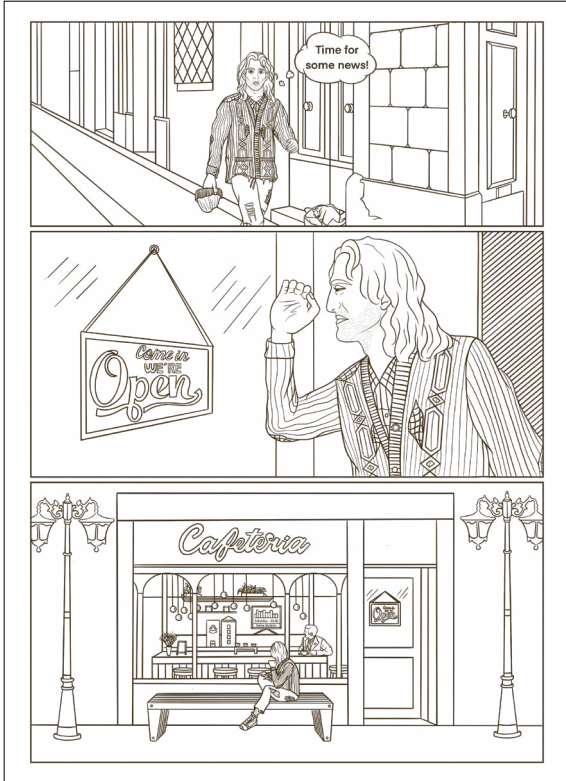
* Students

R: Art journal, A2 paper/s (textured, white or pastel coloured), all preparatory work, shading pencils and long ruler.

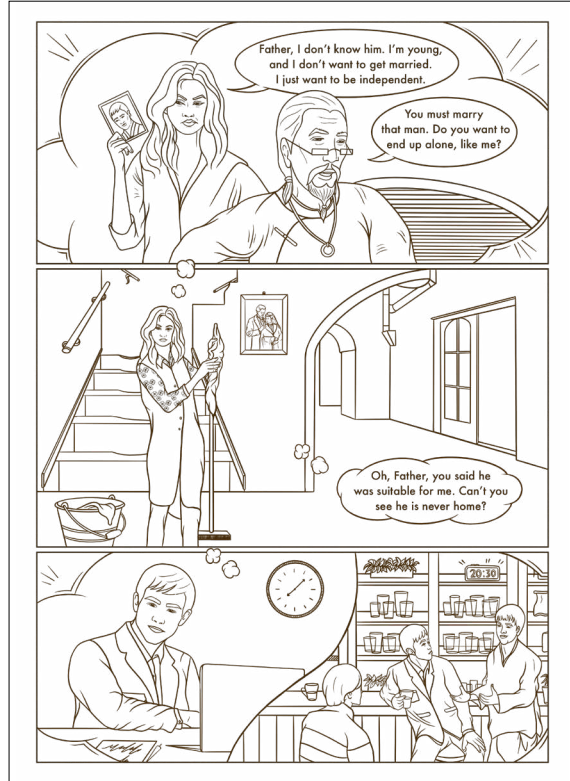
P: Bring any other required visual references.

VISUAL REFERENCES FROM THE PROJECT

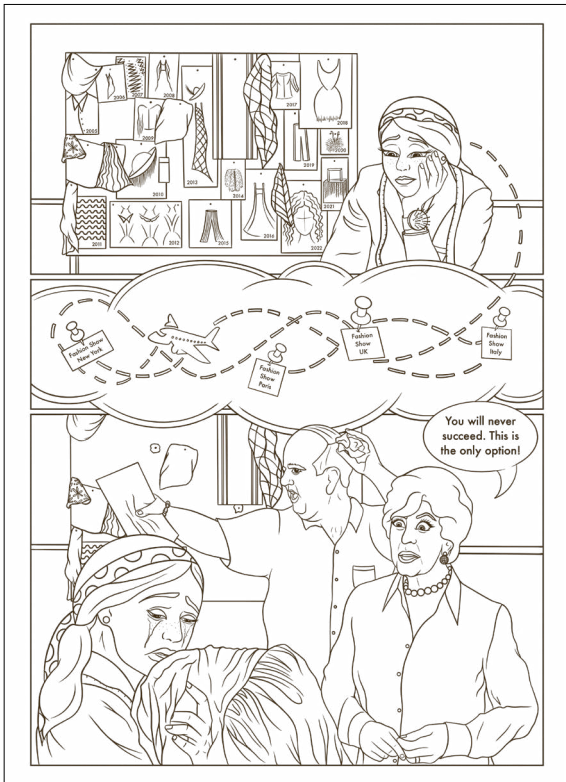
THE STORIES' DESIGNS



A Comic Strip's Design From **Story 1 (SDG 1)**



A Comic Strip's Design From **Story 2 (SDG 5)**



A Comic Strip's Design From **Story 3 (SDG 8)**



A Comic Strip's Design From **Story 4 (SDG 15)**

SCHEME OF WORK

SECONDARY LEVEL: YEAR 10 ART OPTION

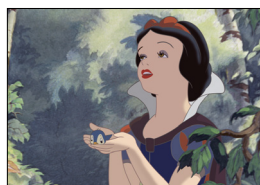
WEEK 6 — 2 Double Lessons

Theme of Activity 6: Colouring the Comic Strips

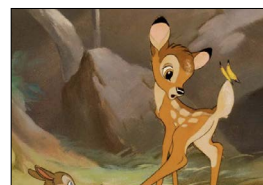
Developing and refining the actual cartoon book's pages: colouring and outlining its text and images.

Drawing and painting: mixed media.

VISUAL REFERENCES



Disney Classics: *Snow White*



Disney Classics: *Bambi*



John Tenniel: Cartoonist and Illustrator

LEARNING OUTCOMES

SEC 5.3a "I can make use of the basic colour theory (the colours of the prism), warm/cool colours, juxtaposition of colours, to convey the desired atmosphere and mood in my artworks".

SEC 5.3f "I can make use of the right tonal values to express form, texture and tactile value".

SEC 8.3a "I can take risks and experiment with ideas, materials and techniques to express my creative insights".

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Focus on **SDG 12** during lesson 1 and **SDG 13** during lesson 2.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

* Individual Work, Self-Evaluation and Peer-Evaluation

Introduce them to some Walt Disney classics and to the colouring style of John Tenniel.

Ask: How is colour being approached in the work of these artists? How does the colouring of the figures differ from that of the background? Which art materials could be used to create such an aesthetic?

Lesson 1: The students will be given an informed explanation on how they could make use of different media to achieve the desired contrast and aesthetic. They will be encouraged to outline their drawings and their text, and then, progress with the colouring. They will be supported in reflecting critically on how their work is developing.

* **Homework:** Make sure that both the design and text are finalised in terms of outline. Use a fine line marker, a pen or even pencil colours.

Lesson 2: They will continue colouring their two comic strips and throughout, they are encouraged to experiment with the media at hand. At the end of the lesson, the students should conduct a brief peer-evaluation to discuss each other's strengths, and to suggest any possible improvements.

* **Homework:** Finish the colouring of the two comic strips.

LINKS

Local Environment and Student's Life: The way the students will colour their two comic strips might reflect the environments they are familiar with. Hence, the local context might influence their colour choices.

Art History and Artists: Disney Classics (*Snow White* and *Bambi*) and John Tenniel

ART VOCABULARY

Comic Strips, Outline, Colour, Text, Image, Block Colours, Light and Shade, Tones, Contrast, Details

ART ELEMENTS

Line, Shape, Form, Space, Colour, Texture, Value

ART PRINCIPLES

Balance, Emphasis, Movement, Proportion, Variety, Unity

RESOURCES (R) AND PREPARATIONS (P)

* Teacher

R: Presentation, visuals and cartoon book.

P: No preparations are required.

* Students

R: Art journal, A2 paper, all preparatory work, pencil colours, paints, watercolours, inks, pen or fine line marker, palette, brushes and cloth.

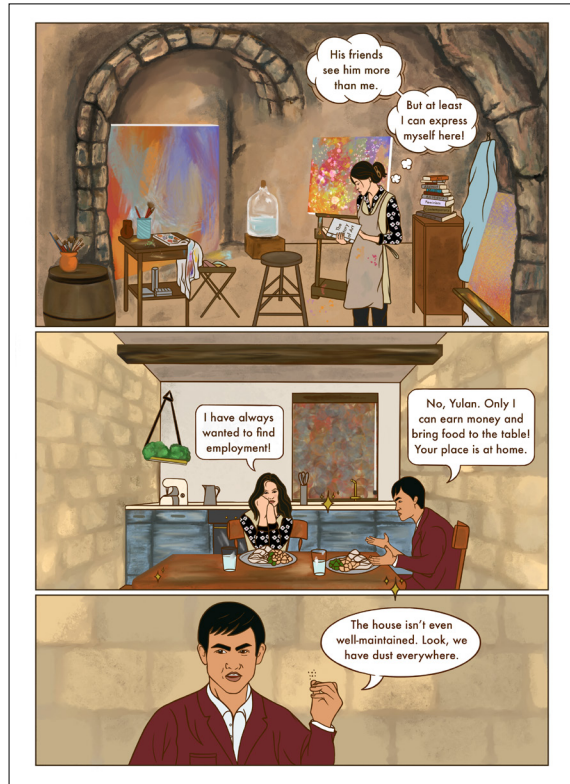
P: Find some relevant note-worthy artists.

VISUAL REFERENCES FROM THE PROJECT

THE COLOURING OF THE PAGES



A Comic Strip From Story 1 (SDG 1)



A Comic Strip From Story 2 (SDG 5)



A Comic Strip From Story 3 (SDG 8)



A Comic Strip From Story 4 (SDG 15)

SCHEME OF WORK

SECONDARY LEVEL: YEAR 10 ART OPTION

WEEK 7 — 2 Double Lessons

Theme of Activity 7: Creating the School Exhibition Poster

Introducing poster design/art and collaborating as a whole class to produce an effective exhibition poster.

Drawing, painting and collage: mixed media.

VISUAL REFERENCES



Shepard Fairey: Art Activist



Barbara Kruger: Explores Matters Related to Gender and Identity

LEARNING OUTCOMES

LOF 2.6 "I can give and receive constructive criticism and I can document how and why my work has changed in response to evaluation".

LOF 4.11 / SEC 1.3b "I can research and investigate contemporary Maltese" and international art; I can discuss environmental, "political and/or social connotations found in a number of works of art".

SEC 7.3c "I can record my personal analytic response through annotations, sketches, drawings concerning current events, ideas and social issues in my work journal".

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Focus on **SDG 14** during lesson 1 and **SDG 16** during lesson 2.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

* Individual Work, Group Work, Peer-Evaluation and Group Discussion

Introduce them to poster art, poster design and to the idea of participating in a collaborative exhibition.

Ask: Which are the key elements of a poster? What makes an effective poster design? What is the main intention of this exhibition? How could the exhibition poster be approached from the perspective of a whole class?

Lesson 1: The students will engage in a whole class discussion to identify the exhibition's name and the information that will be included within the poster. Following this, they will individually sketch their ideas, design their own title, choose an effective colour palette etc. At the end of the lesson, they will critically analyse and select the most effective ideas for their poster (composition, colours, fonts, textures etc).

Lesson 2: The students will produce the actual poster (A2) to raise awareness on SD and the 17 SDGs. Every group will have one of these specific roles: drawing the scene/object, preparing the background, writing the title and the text, creating textures etc. Through the collage technique, their work will be combined altogether.

* **Homework:** Make sure that all of the creative process is documented within the art journal until the exhibition and find one or two exhibitions and/or contemporary artists who have advocated for SD.

LINKS

Cross-Curricular Subjects, Society, Environment and Student's Life: They will use their communication skills to raise further awareness within school and their work will reflect today's society and environment.

Art History and Artists: Shepard Fairey, Barbara Kruger, Poster Art/Design

ART VOCABULARY

Poster Art/Design, Social or Environmental Message, Colour Scheme, Outline, Colour, Text, Image

ART ELEMENTS

Line, Shape, Form, Space, Colour, Texture, Value

ART PRINCIPLES

Balance, Emphasis, Movement, Repetition, Proportion, Variety, Unity

RESOURCES (R) AND PREPARATIONS (P)

* Teacher

R: Presentation, visuals and comic book.

P: Place within the school for the exhibition.

* Students

R: Art journal, A2 paper, all preparatory work, pencil colours, paints, watercolours, inks, pens or fine line marker, palette, brushes and cloth.

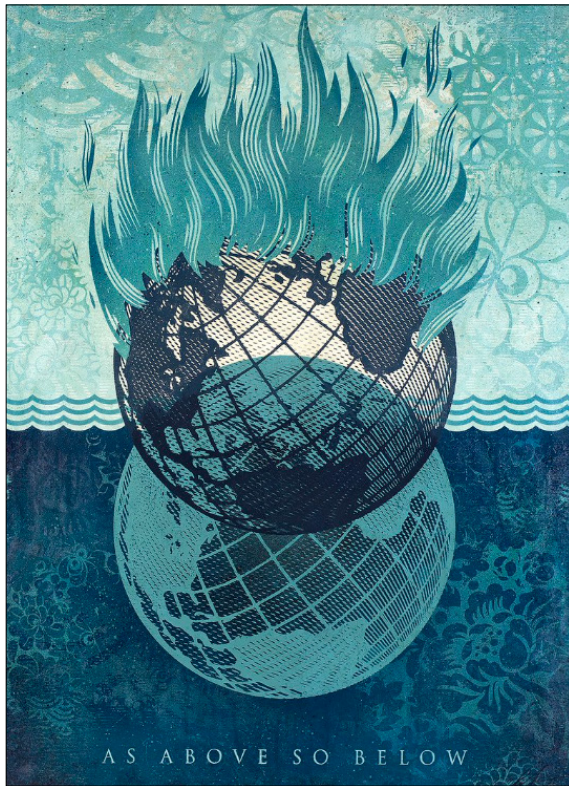
P: Visual references for the design of the poster.

SCHEME OF WORK

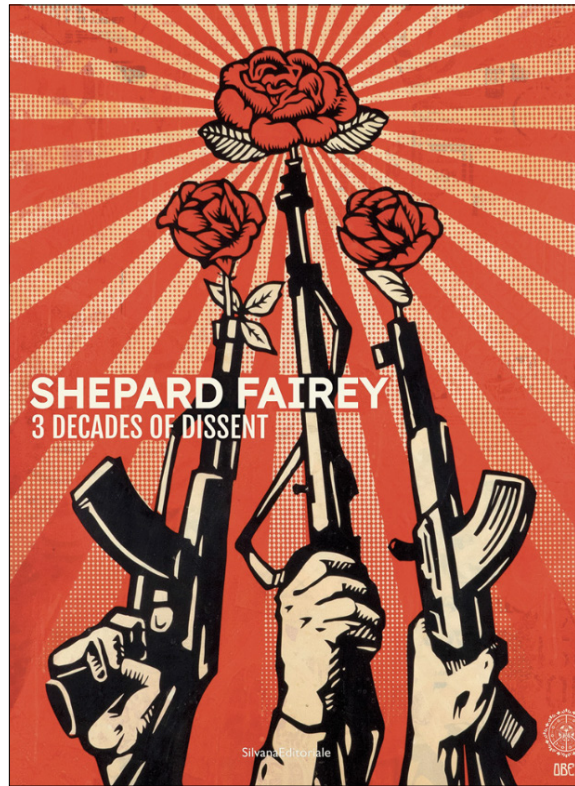
SECONDARY LEVEL: YEAR 10 ART OPTION

VISUAL REFERENCES

THE EXHIBITION POSTER



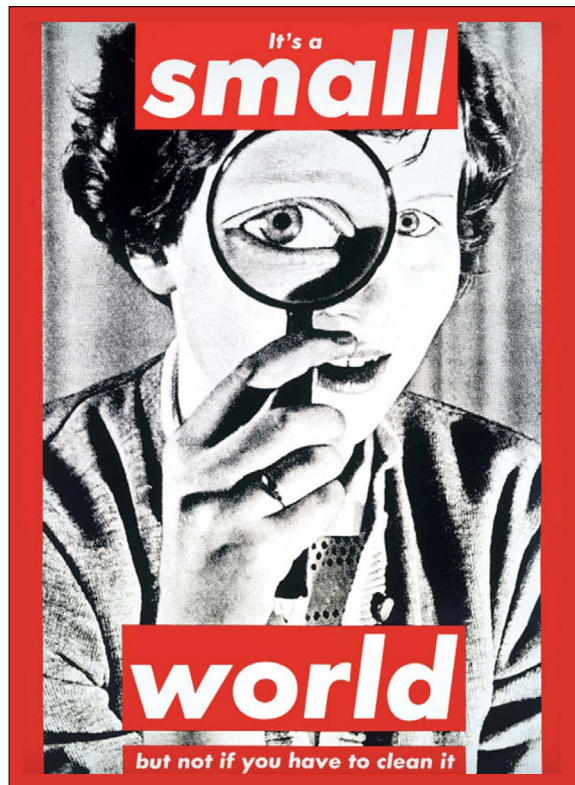
Shepard Fairey: Environmental Protection



Shepard Fairey: Art Activist who Advocated for Peace



Barbara Kruger: Examines Stereotypes



Barbara Kruger: Comments on Social/Cultural Issues

SCHEME OF WORK

SECONDARY LEVEL: YEAR 10 ART OPTION

WEEK 8 — 2 Double Lessons

Theme of Activity 8: A Collective School Exhibition

Discussing and planning the exhibition space in which the students will exhibit their work (comic-strips).

Presenting the students' work: mixed media.

VISUAL REFERENCES



Venice Architecture Biennale 2021: Resilient Communities, Italian Pavilion



Sustainability Stories 2021: Exhibition

SDG Global Festival of Action

LEARNING OUTCOMES

LOF 1.3 "I am motivated to participate in the organisation of a school-based art exhibition".

LOF 3.1 / LOF 3.3 "I can confidently use a variety of ways of recording, showing skills in different media"; "I can think creatively to solve problems".

SEC 8.3b "I can analyse the works of old and contemporary masters to come up with my own personal solutions to problems encountered in the process of my technical and creative work".

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Focus on **SDG 17** during lesson 1 and give an **overview of the 17 SDGs** during lesson 2.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

* Individual Work, Group Work and Group Discussion

Introduce students to some relevant art exhibitions and to the notion of exhibiting their work within a school setting.

Ask: Any ideas on how you could exhibit the work within the school? What could be included within this exhibition? How could the set-up reflect the creative process? How could you explain SD verbally as well?

Lesson 1: Show the students some art exhibitions on SD and SDGs. Then, through an onsite visit, they will discuss the set-up of the display boards and of the exhibition's layout. With the aid of some sketches and through group discussions, the students will become more aware of how to utilise the exhibition space appropriately, and how to present their work effectively. A tentative date for the exhibition will be agreed upon.

Lesson 2: The students will be divided into small groups to prepare the following: the information that will be given to the rest of the school about SD and the SDGs to raise further awareness (PowerPoint presentation), the presentation of the creative process that was undertaken to engage with issue-based art, and the presentation of the comic-strips (depends on the display possibilities: installation, book etc).

* **Homework:** Conclude any remaining preparations for the exhibition depending on your role.

LINKS

Cross-Curricular Subjects, Society, Environment and Student's Life: They will present their work and use their communication skills to raise awareness amongst the school population. The exhibition will reflect the 17 SDGs.

Art History and Artists: Venice Architecture Biennale 2021, Sustainability Stories 2021 and SDG Global Festival of Action

ART VOCABULARY

Poster, Sustainable Development, SDGs, Exhibition Space, Collective Exhibition, Raising Awareness

ART ELEMENTS

Line, Form, Space, Colour, Texture

ART PRINCIPLES

Balance, Movement, Variety, Unity

RESOURCES (R) AND PREPARATIONS (P)

* Teacher

R: Presentation, visuals, preparatory work, comic book and poster.

P: Place within the school for the exhibition.

* Students

R: Art journal, all preparatory work, final work, art materials and other necessary tools.

P: Any tools and materials for the exhibition.

SCHEME OF WORK

SECONDARY LEVEL: YEAR 10 ART OPTION

VISUAL REFERENCES

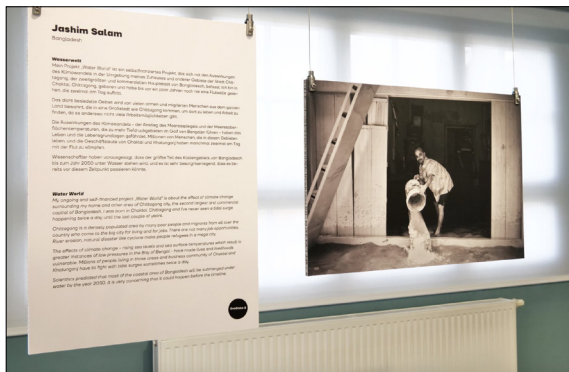
THE EXHIBITION



Venice Architecture Biennale 2021: Giuseppe Penone



Sustainability Stories 2021: The Exhibition



Sustainability Stories 2021: The Exhibition



SDG Global Festival of Action: Vipin Dhunoo