

### Class level

First class upwards

### Learning objectives

The child will be enabled to:

- know the function of storyboarding in film-making
- draw their own storyboard

### Methodologies

Paired work and group work

### Resources

- Storyboard from *The Boy from Mercury* and corresponding film
- Television, VCR, DVD player
- Scissors, glue, paper

### Time

Two 40-minute class sessions

### Curriculum links

**English:** Oral and writing: *Captions and dialogue*

**Visual arts:** Drawing: *Storyboards, comic strips*

**Drama:** Exploring and making drama: *Role-playing scenes, freeze-frames*

### Suggested films

*The Boy from Mercury*

### Film portfolio

Samples of storyboards



## Introduction

Show the children the storyboard from *The Boy from Mercury*. Talk about each frame, i.e. each picture.

- What picture can you see in each frame?
- Can you tell the story from looking only at the frames?
- What other information is given in the frame?

Now show the children the corresponding clip from the film. Did they guess the storyline correctly?



## Development

### Storyboards

When a director is making a film, they plan out the story in picture form. It looks a bit like a comic strip. This is called a storyboard.

- A storyboard is a series of pictures and words that help the director to visualise the film. It also helps to guide the filming schedule.
- Each picture is drawn in a frame. Basic shot details and dialogue will be included.



**Camera position:** Close-up or mid-shot of Mucker (with boys in the background).

**What is happening:** He's looking even more angry.

**What is being said:** Mucker says, "I'm not afraid of you. Come on!"



**Camera position:** Close-up or mid-shot of Harry (with boys in the background).

**What is happening:** Harry has turned to look at Mucker. Boys are staring at him in shock.

**What is being said:** Harry says, "I'm giving you your last warning, Maguire. Shake hands and go home."



**Camera position:** Close-up or mid-shot of Harry (with boys in the background).

**What is happening:** Harry looks up. The boys around him do the same, and their faces show shock and fear.

**Sound, special effects:** A rumbling noise can be heard in the background. It gets louder. Stirring music begins. The colour fades to black-and-white.



**Camera position:** Mid-shot or close-up shot showing spaceship.

**What is happening:** The spaceship is slowly coming into shot.

**Sound, special effects:** Rumbling getting louder. The spaceship appears to move across the sky. Stirring music continues. Black-and-white colouring.



**Camera position:** Mid-shot or close-up shot showing Harry and spaceship, with boys watching.

**What is happening:** Harry has changed into Mercury Man and is standing proudly while the spaceship moves above him.

**Sound, special effects:** Rumbling and buzzing noises of the spaceship. Stirring music continues. Black-and-white colouring.



**Camera position:** Close-up or mid-shot of Harry.

**What is happening:** Harry has turned to look at Mucker. Boys are staring at him in shock.

**What is being said:** Harry (Mercury Man) says, “I tried to warn you. No-one ever messes with Mercury Man.”

**Sound, special effects:** Rumbling and buzzing noises; music as before. Black-and-white colouring.



**Camera position:** Close-up shot of spaceship.

**What is happening:** A laser beam comes out of the ship and “zaps” Mucker.

**Sound, special effects:** Rumbling and buzzing noises as before, with added crackling and a loud “zap” when the laser beam shoots out. Black-and-white colouring.



**Camera position:** Close-up shot on Harry (Mercury Man) smiling.

**What is happening:** Harry (Mercury Man) is looking at the after-effects of the “zap.”

**Sound, special effects:** Stirring music as before.



**Camera position:** High-angle, close-up shot.

**What is happening:** Mucker has been “zapped,” and all that remains are Maguire’s smouldering shoes.

**Sound, special effects:** Smoke coming out of shoes. Music becomes more triumphant. Black-and-white colouring.



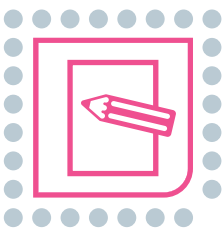
**Camera position:** Mid-shot.

**What is happening:** Harry turns and waves triumphantly to the ship which shoots off into the distance.

**Sound, special effects:** “Whooshing” of the space ship leaving. Triumphant music as before. Black-and-white colouring.



*“The Boy from Mercury”  
(images courtesy of Irish  
Film Archive and Venus  
Productions).*



## Further extension work

### **Visual arts / English / ICT: More storyboarding**

The children can use storyboards to picture fairy tales, stories from their class reader, scenes from films, etc. (See the film activity sheet, “Storyboards”).

1. In groups, choose a story. The children decide on the main points of the story and scenes through discussion. They then decide on the picture for each frame.
  - How many frames will they use?
  - Put a caption with each
  - Ask them to draw a storyboard
  - Display it around the classroom

2. The children can create their own storyboards, using images from a disposable camera or digital camera.
3. Create a photo diary – a storyboard of events of one day in the life of the children. They photograph a day in their lives. They can also bring the camera on field trips or outings. Display in the form of a storyboard around the class.
4. The children can create scenes using clay or cardboard figures, and other props (lollipop sticks, etc.). They can photograph the “characters” in different positions or movements, and use these in their storyboards (stop-motion).

### **Drama: Freeze-frames**

Select a story with the class. Divide the class into groups. Ask each group to choose a scene to represent the beginning, middle, and end.

Discuss the most important moments in each scene. The children position themselves to capture this moment in a freeze-frame.

Other children in the class act as the audience and are asked to decide what is happening in each scene. To support this activity, a child or the teacher could capture each drama freeze on camera.

### **Comic strip activities**

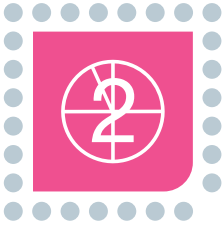
**Note for teacher:** Storyboards resemble comic strips in that they use drawings and minimal dialogue to tell their story. Below are several comic strip activities that could be used in parallel with the storyboarding activities or as a support to help the children develop visual skills.

### **Visual arts / English: Comic strip activities (paired work)**

1. Give the children an incomplete comic strip. Ask them to finish the story by drawing the pictures from the rest of the sequence.
2. Give the children comic strips with empty speech bubbles. Ask them to write the dialogue.
3. Cut up comic strips and ask the children to rearrange the story. Compare the completed stories with other groups in the class and the original story from the comic strip. (You will find that many stories are completed differently and sometimes even tell a different story.)

### **Looking and responding to the work of artists**

Pop art, particularly works by Andy Warhol or Roy Lichtenstein, are similar to comic strips: for example, *As I Opened Fire* by Lichtenstein is a drawing of a cannon being fired. This artwork can be used as a stimulus for completing a storyboard sequence with a class.



## Film activity sheet

Name: .....

Date: .....

Title: .....

Scene: .....

### Film activity sheet: Storyboards

Camera position:

What is happening?

What is being said?

Camera position:

What is happening?

What is being said?

Camera position:

What is happening?

What is being said?

Camera position:

What is happening?

What is being said?

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