

# Some Graphic Novel Basics

- Graphic novels use text and pictures to present information
- Graphic novels use the same format as comic books
- Graphic Novels differ from comics in that they usually contain stand-alone stories with complex plots
- For more information on graphic novels, visit:  
[Graphic Novels in Middle & High School Classrooms](#)

# Parts of a Graphic Novel

A graphic novel consists of:

cover

and

inside pages



# A Graphic Novel Page

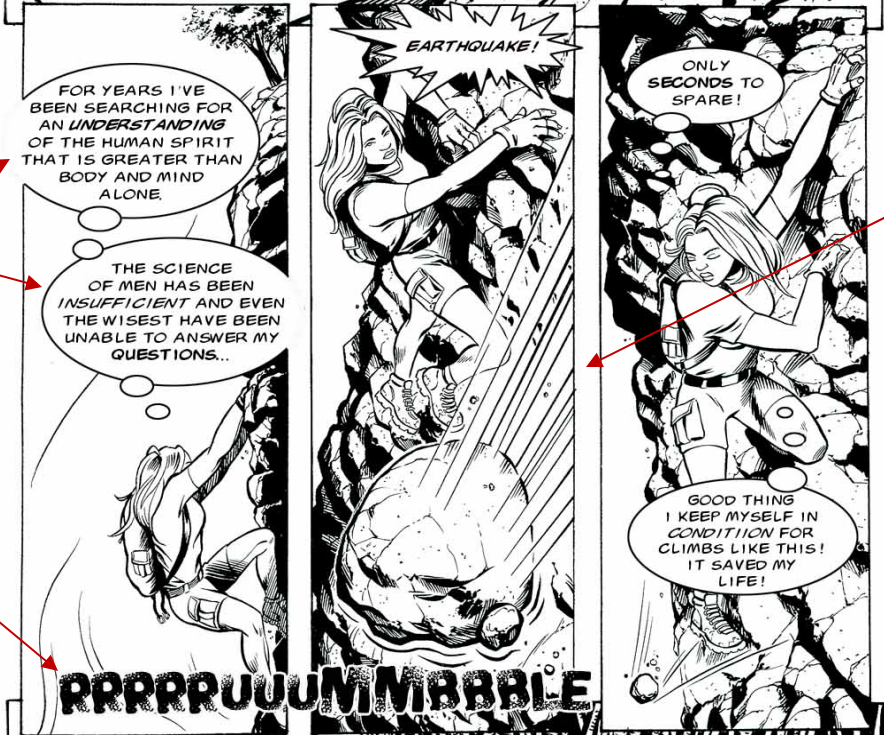
Pages consist of a variety of elements

- Panels-squares or rectangles that contain a single scene
- Gutters-space between panels
- Dialog Balloons-contain communication between/among characters
- Thought Balloons-contain a character's thoughts
- Captions-contain information about a scene or character
- Sound Effects-visual sound clues i.e.. Wonk! Pow!



Caption

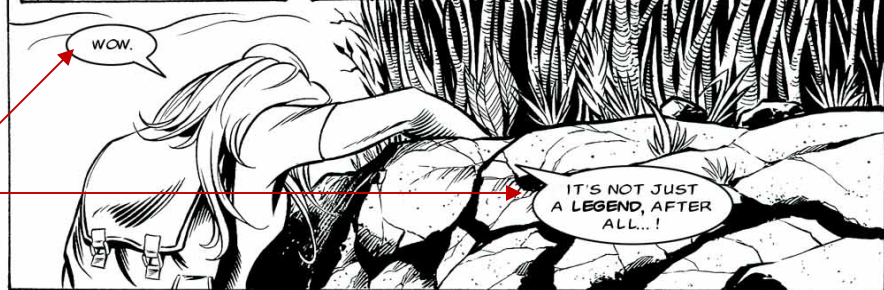
Panel



Thought Balloon

Gutter

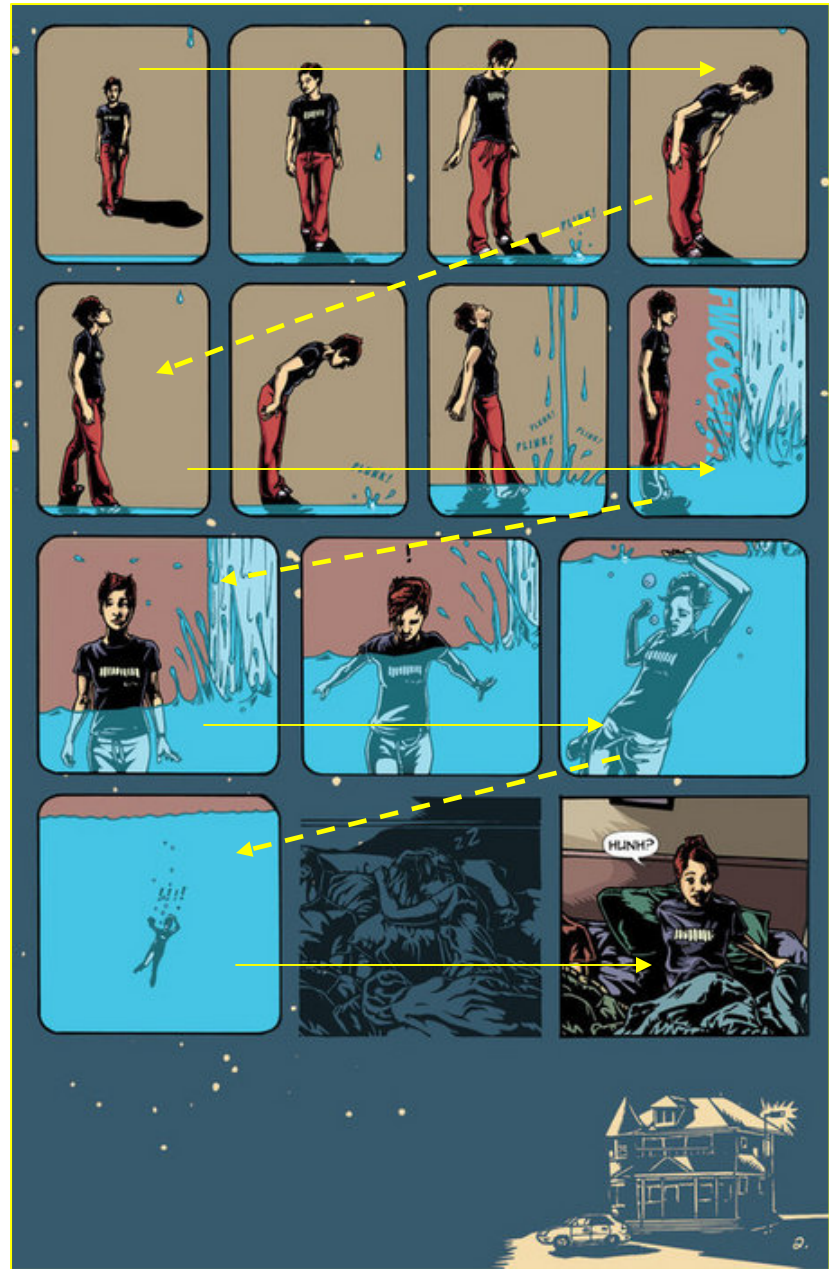
Sound Effect



Dialog Balloon

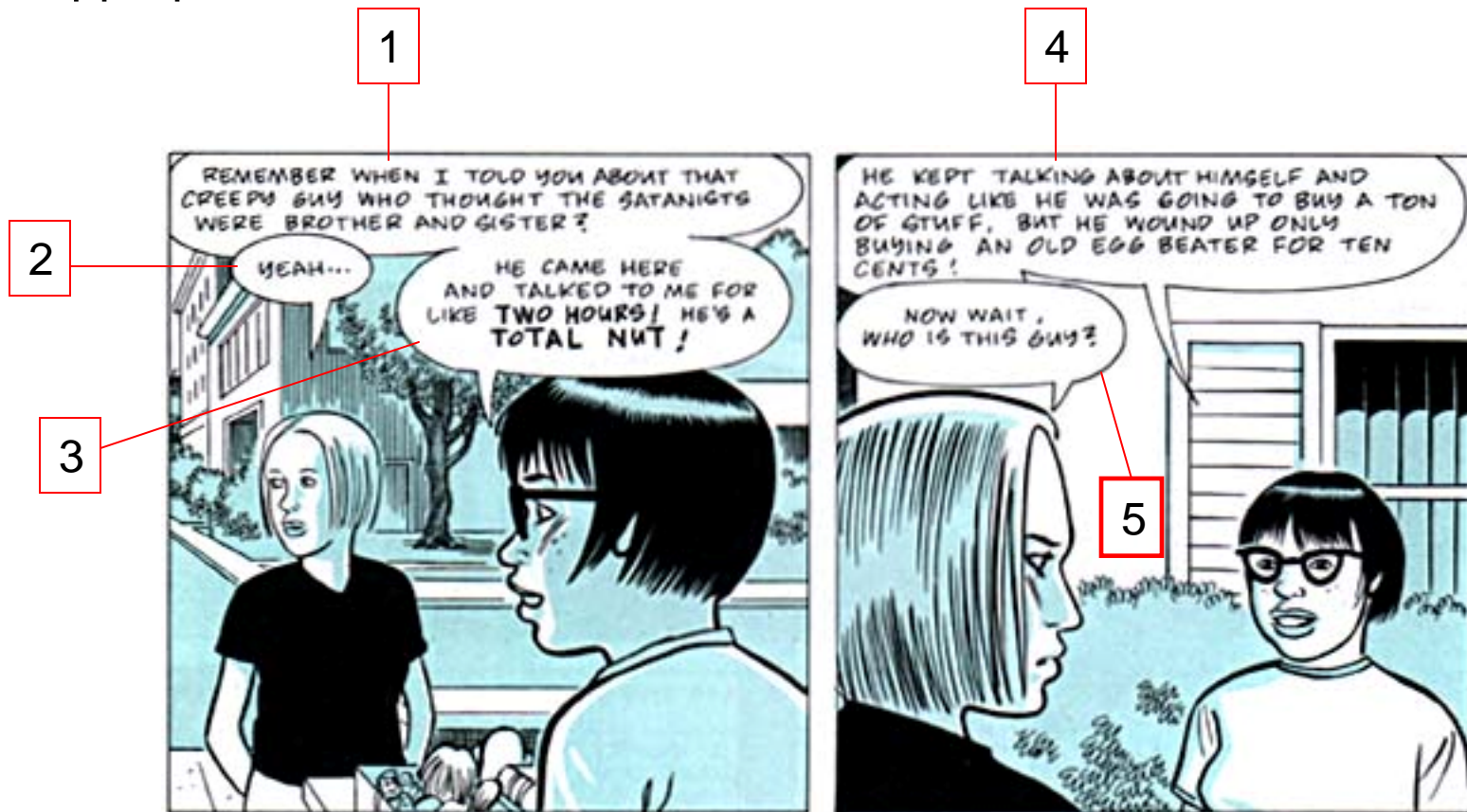
# How to Read a Graphic Novel Page

Graphic novels are read left to right, just like traditional texts



# Dialog Balloons

dialog balloons are read left to right or top to bottom as is appropriate.

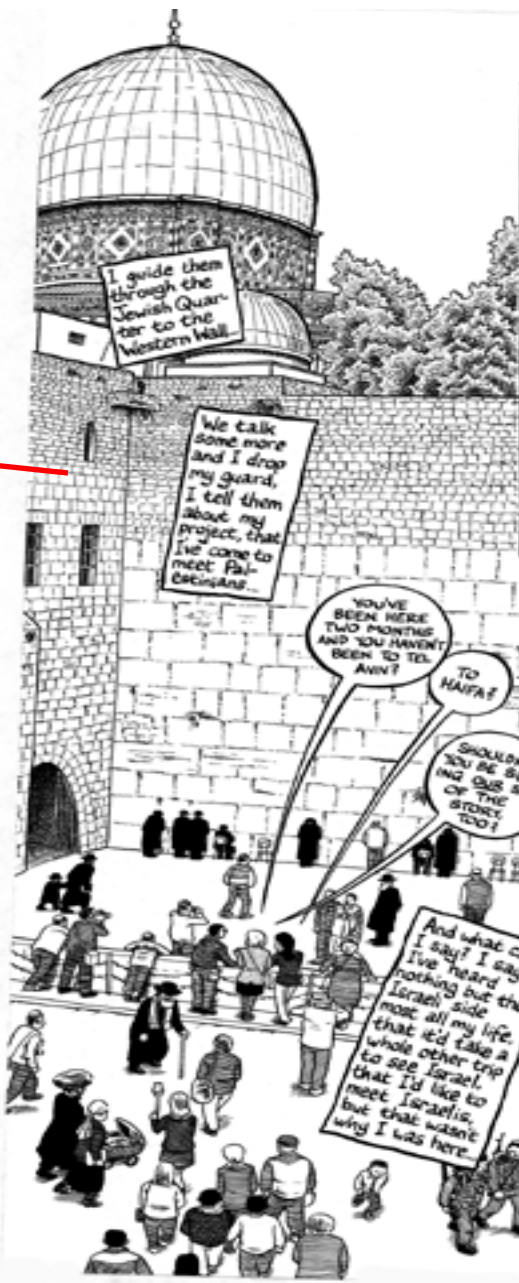


Sometimes it can get a little more complicated...





2



1



3

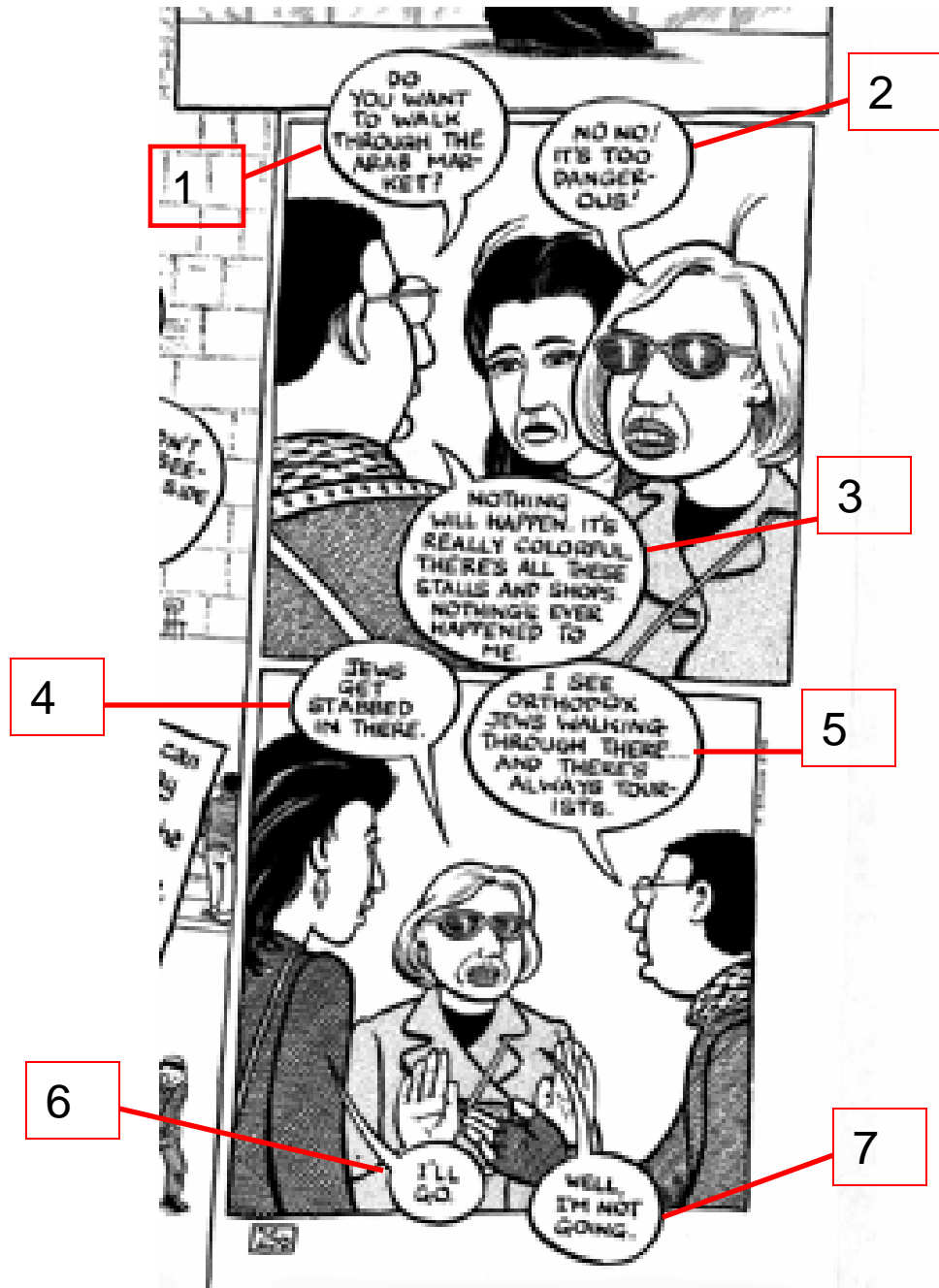


4

But the basic left to right rule still applies to panels



and dialog balloons  
as well



# Further Reading

For more information about Graphic Novels, take a look at these books, articles and websites

- Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art by Scott McCloud
- Faster Than a Speeding Bullet: The Rise of the Graphic Novel by Stephen Weiner
- Comics and Sequential Art by Will Eisner

- Crawford, Philip. "Using Graphic Novels to Attract Reluctant Readers and Promote Literacy." Library Media Connection. February, 2004 Volume 22, Issue 5, p26-28.
- Schwarz, Gretchen E. "Graphic Novels for Multiple Literacies." Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy. November, 2002 Volume 46, Issue 3 p282-285.
- Little, Drego. "In A Single Bound: A Short Primer on Comics for Educators" March, 2005. New Horizons for Learning. [www.newhorizons.org/strategies/literacy/little.htm](http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/literacy/little.htm)

- [Get Graphic! with the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library](#)
- [History of Sequential Art](#)
- [Diamond Comics Bookshelf](#)