

Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture: Exploring Manga and Comic Cons

Manga Comic Convention

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	120 minutes
		Duration	2 periods

Essential Question

How do manga and Comic Cons engage the community and attract customers?

Summary

Students will be immersed in the world of manga and Comic Con by exploring key concepts and analyzing an ICAP interview with a local comic book store owner. They will be introduced to the history, cultural impact, and fan engagement aspects of both manga and conventions (cons). Finally, students will apply their knowledge by developing their own conceptual Comic Con, designing themes, events, and attractions to showcase their understanding.

Snapshot

Engage

Students participate in an ABC Graffiti on what they know about manga and Gallery Walk samples of manga.

Explore

Students watch an ICAP interview and take notes using Triangle, Square, Circle. Students read a “Manga 101” article and complete a Card Sort.

Explain

Students review a Wakelet to read articles and view videos about participating in and planning comic conventions.

Extend

Students use a Choice Board and Planning Template to plan a conceptual comic convention.

Evaluate

Students create a List of 8 most important aspects of planning and running a successful comic convention.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 9)

7.W: Writing: Students will create multimodal texts to communicate knowledge and develop arguments.

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Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 12)

12.7.W: Create engaging multimodal content that intentionally enhances understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence for diverse audiences.

Attachments

- 3-2-1—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.docx
- 3-2-1—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.pdf
- ABC Graffiti Poster—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.pdf
- Card Sort—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.docx
- Card Sort—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.pdf
- Choice Board—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.docx
- Choice Board—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.pptx
- Manga 101—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.docx
- Manga 101—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.pdf
- Planning Template—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.docx
- Planning Template—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.pdf
- Triangle-Square-Circle—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.docx
- Triangle-Square-Circle—Pages, Panels, and Pop Culture.pdf

Materials

- 3-2-1 (attached; 1/2 page per student)
- ABC Graffiti Poster (attached; one per group)
- Card Sort (attached; one set per pair)
- Choice Board (attached; 1/2 page per student)
- Manga 101 (attached; one per student)
- Planning Template (attached; one per group)
- Triangle-Circle-Square (attached; one per student)
- Sticky Notes (Gallery Walk)
- Markers (ABC Graffiti)
- Cardstock (Card Sort)
- Pens, pencils, highlighters
- Chromebooks

15 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note

In preparation for this part of the lesson, go to your school or local library and check out a variety of manga novels, preferably 7-10, so there is a wide variety. Check with your librarian and look through the books to establish the appropriateness of your choices for your students.

Introduce the lesson by displaying the title **slide 2** from the attached **Lesson Slides**.

Display **slides 3–4**. Review the essential question and the learning objectives.

Display **slide 5**. Students will form groups and complete an ABC Graffiti poster with the prompt “What do you know about manga?”

Display **slides 6-8** and use three-minute timers on the slides for up to three different rounds.

Display **slide 9**. Students will complete a Gallery Walk and examine 7-10 manga novels around the classroom. Distribute several sticky notes to each student. Direct them to write one thing they noticed and one thing they wondered about the manga covers. Set a timer and instruct students to move around the room looking at covers and leaving sticky notes on at least three of the novels.

25 minutes

Explore

Teacher's Note

Before beginning this phase, ensure that the ICAP interview video is accessible and functioning. Consider previewing the video yourself and noting points you might want to emphasize or clarify. The Triangle, Square, Circle strategy helps students organize their thinking during the video and encourages personal connections to what they hear. You may wish to pause the video at key moments to let students jot down ideas or ask clarifying questions.

Transition to **slide 10**. Move the cursor to the middle of the slide and Ctrl Click to start the video. Students will take notes using the Triangle, Square, Circle strategy as they view an ICAP interview with a comic book store owner. Transition to **slide 11.** Students will complete the attached **Triangle, Square, Circle** handout and answer the following prompts:

- What are three important points that you have learned from the interview?
- List four things that squared with your thinking, meaning you found them to be interesting or relatable.
- What is one thing that is still circling in your head?

After students have had time to review the video, hold a brief whole-class discussion over student notes.

Teacher's Note

For the reading and card sort portion, print out the cards from the Card Sort attachment, making enough copies for 2 students per set. Print on card stock if available for durability. Make sure each group receives one complete card set: **genre category cards**, **vocabulary/description cards**, and **image cards**. Spend a few moments modeling how to compare vocabulary terms with genre definitions before students begin sorting. Aim to foster collaborative discussion rather than "right" answers—students should be encouraged to justify and explain their reasoning.

Next, students will read the attached **Manga 101** article. Display **slide 12,** passing out one article per student. Instruct students to carefully read the short article.

After reading, allow students to find partners. Using the Card Sort strategy, pass out the cards from the attached **Card Sort** once students are paired off. Move to **Slide 13** and give each pair a set of category, vocabulary, and image cards. They will begin by familiarizing themselves with the content of each card. Next, students will match each vocabulary card to genre categories. Pairs should discuss each card and reach a consensus before placing a card. Finally, students should match each image card to a genre based on visual cues and their understanding of the genres. Have students share and justify their choices as a pair before moving on.

Teacher's Note

After groups have finished sorting, consider facilitating a brief gallery walk or quick presentation where students share one genre with vocabulary and image cards they found most challenging or interesting. This can spark cross-group conversation and highlight the nuance of genre classification in manga.

25 minutes

Explain

Teacher's Note

Before this activity, preview the Wakelet collection to ensure all links are working and age-appropriate. If devices are limited, pair students or assign specific articles/videos to each group to ensure coverage across topics.

Be sure to explain the purpose of the 3-2-1 handout for note-taking: to help students organize information while drawing connections between different sources. Emphasize that this is not just a summary task—students should be looking for patterns in how Comic Cons are organized and how they engage communities. Reinforce that this knowledge will directly support their upcoming Comic Con planning project, so thoroughness here will pay off later.

Display **slide 14**. Students can scan a QR code or pull up the bit.ly link to the Wakelet. Explain to students that the What is Comic Con? Wakelet has articles and videos explaining what a Comic Convention is and how they work. As students read and watch, pass out the attached **3-2-1** handout and have them use the 3-2-1 note-taking strategy to fill it out.

Teacher's Note

After students complete the 3-2-1 note-taking strategy, facilitate a short debrief or group share-out. Ask a few guiding questions such as:

- What surprised you about how Comic Cons are organized?
- What common features did you notice across different conventions?
- What ideas are you already thinking about for your own con booth?

30 minutes

Extend

Teacher's Note

This phase is highly creative, collaborative, and application-focused, so give students time to brainstorm and explore ideas before diving into slide creation. Begin by reviewing the Choice Board with the whole class, clarifying any booth/event types that may be unfamiliar. Reinforce the requirement that students must select three booth types that form a straight line on the board (tic-tac-toe style), encouraging intentional, thematic connections between their choices.

The Planning Template is a critical scaffold. Remind students to refer to their 3-2-1 notes and earlier lesson materials to ensure their booths are informed by real-world examples from conventions. Emphasize both creativity and strategy—students are acting as business owners trying to draw customers in, so each booth should offer something engaging and purposeful.

Display **slide 15**. In groups, have students plan a conceptual Comic Con as small business owners of a comic book store that is supporting the event but also attempting to gain new customers.

Students will choose three aspects of a Comic Con event to plan from the attached **Choice Board**. Each chosen aspect must be connected, vis a vis tic-tac-toe. Students will create a slideshow with slides representing each chosen booth type.

Students may use the **Planning Template** (attached) to inform their research and guide the design of their booth. Be sure to allow groups ample time to do their planning.

Once groups have planned their Comic Con event, have them create slides to facilitate a brief three-minute Elevator Speech.

Teacher's Note

Because of the creative component of this lesson, it additionally adheres to the following information literacy standards:

- **4.12.4** - Use or create an effective method or platform to collect, organize, and present information.
- **5.12.3** - Use information to create products for publication and/or discourse.

Teacher's Note

To support differentiation, consider offering roles within groups (e.g., researcher, designer, presenter, editor) or allow individual projects for students who prefer working independently. For students who struggle with presentation anxiety, offer alternatives such as recording their Elevator Speech or submitting a narrated slide deck.

As students work, circulate to ask probing questions:

- How will this booth attract attention?
- What makes it different from others?
- How is this connected to what you learned from the Wakelet or the ICAP interview?

Provide time for peer feedback before final presentations—this could be done as a gallery walk, small group critiques, or “pitch practice” rounds with another team.

Real-World Extension Idea

Teachers could collaborate with a librarian or community partner to host a Mini-Con event in the school library, hallway, or gymnasium. Students can showcase their booths to peers, younger students, or invited guests like teachers and community members.

15 minutes

Evaluate

Teacher's Note

This final activity offers students an opportunity to synthesize everything they've explored, planned, and presented throughout the lesson. Before starting, display the prompt: "What are the 8 most essential elements of running a successful Comic Con?"

Encourage students to brainstorm individually or in small groups for 2–3 minutes before initiating a whole-class discussion. As students share responses, record them on the board or in a shared document, grouping similar ideas together to avoid repetition. Once a broad list has been generated (aim for 12–15 ideas), guide the class in consolidating it to a consensus "Top 8" list.

This works well as a culmination and informal assessment of their understanding. You might also use it as a springboard to discuss real-world planning priorities: audience engagement, logistics, marketing, staffing, safety, accessibility, etc.

> **Tip:** You can frame this as a pitch to a potential investor or school administrator—*"If you had to defend your con idea, what 8 things would you say make or break the success of the event?"*

Transition to **slide 16**. Explain to students that they will use the List of 8 instructional strategy to consider what the 8 most essential elements of running a successful Comic Con are. Write these on the board or in a document to display as the whole group generates the list. Then ask students to narrow it down to the top eight.

Teacher's Note

To deepen reflection, ask students to choose *one* item from the Top 8 list that they personally think is most important and explain why in a quick write or exit ticket. This can also be done as a journal entry or shared in small groups.

Alternatively, turn the Top 8 into a rubric or checklist for students to use in evaluating their own Comic Con plan or a peer's. This helps tie the reflective process to tangible outcomes and strengthens metacognitive awareness of project quality.

> **Optional Extension:** Have students create a short "Con Organizer's Guidebook" that explains each of the 8 essentials with examples pulled from their planning slides or class discussion. This can serve as a summary artifact for the unit or as a reference for future classes.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). 3-2-1. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/117
- K20 Center. (n.d.). 3-minute timer [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilSP02KPau0
- K20 Center. (n.d.). ABC graffiti. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/96
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Card sort. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/147
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Choice boards. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/73
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Elevator speech. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/57
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Gallery walk. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/118
- K20 Center. (n.d.). K20 ICAP – Small Business Entrepreneurship with Jarrod Tollett [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r7YVg5XNIjw
- K20 Center. (n.d.). List of 8. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/3616
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Triangle, square, circle. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/65
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Wakelet. Tech tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/2180