

# Signs, Stories, & Superheroes: Creating Neon Comics

## Educator Guide



[www.neonmuseum.org](http://www.neonmuseum.org)

### Grades

3 - 5

### Time Frame

3 - 6 hours

### Vocabulary

- Character
- Setting
- Plot
- Theme
- Conflict
- Resolution
- Comic
- Illustration
- Neon
- Sign

### Materials

- *Green Lantern: The Light King Strikes!* by Laurie Sutton
- Comic templates
- Trading Card Worksheet
- Images from Neon Museum collection
- Drawing materials

### Lesson Objective

Students will read *Green Lantern: The Light King Strikes!* and analyze and discuss the characters, setting, and plot. Using signs from The Neon Museum collection, students then create characters and write their own story that they will illustrate and compile into a comic book.

### What's Included?

In this lesson plan you will find the lesson procedure, NVACS standards for ELA and Visual Arts (grades 3-5), blank comic templates, a story elements worksheet, a “trading card” worksheet, and a rubric for assessment.

### Resources

- Amara, Philip. *So You Want to Be a Comic Book Artist? The Ultimate Guide on How to Break Into Comics!* Aladdin/Beyond Words, 2012.
- Sutton, Laurie S. and Dan Schoening. *Green Lantern: The Light King Strikes!* Mankato, MN: Stone Arch Books, 2011.
- UNLV Neon Survey (2002): [http://gaming.unlv.edu/v\\_museum/neon\\_survey/](http://gaming.unlv.edu/v_museum/neon_survey/)
- Vintage Las Vegas: <http://vintagelasvegas.com/>
- Online Nevada Encyclopedia: <http://www.onlinenevada.org/>
- Neon Museum Online Guide: <https://www.neonmuseum.org/education/resources/educator-resources/online-guide>

For more lesson plans and educator resources  
please visit [www.neonmuseum.org](http://www.neonmuseum.org).

## Part 1: Analyzing Story Elements

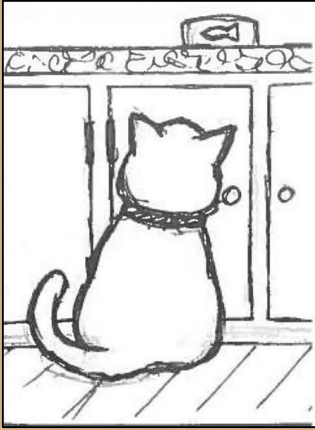
1. Read *Green Lantern: The Light King Strikes!* as a class.
2. Students complete the “Analyzing Story Elements” worksheet throughout the reading.

Optional: Break into groups and have students act out the beginning, middle, and end of the story to the class.

## Part 2: Writing the Story

1. Distribute images of signs from The Neon Museum collection and have students discuss the following in groups:
  - What features do you notice right away?
  - What place and time period does it look like it’s from?
  - What kind of character might it represent?
2. Students can take turns sharing one word that comes to mind when viewing the sign.
  - Students should come up with powers, a hero or villain name, sound effects, etc. for their sign “character”. They should then complete the Trading Card Worksheet, similar to the one for Dr. Light at the back of the book.
  - Write dialogue and headings/titles that use action verbs, temporal words, prepositions, adjectives, etc.
  - The setting of their stories should include the Neon Boneyard. Comic templates are provided in the Materials section that include illustrations of the boneyard as well as blank templates.
  - Explain illustration techniques and how to show action:
  - Students come up with a beginning, middle, and end for their stories.
3. Students write a basic story and illustrate it based on their sign(s).
  - Students should come up with powers, a hero or villain name, sound effects, etc. for their sign “character”. They should then complete the Trading Card Worksheet, similar to the one for Dr. Light at the back of the book.
  - Write dialogue and headings/titles that use action verbs, temporal words, prepositions, adjectives, etc.
  - The setting of their stories should include the Neon Boneyard. Comic templates are provided in the Materials section that include illustrations of the boneyard as well as blank templates.
  - Explain illustration techniques and how to show action:
  - Students come up with a beginning, middle, and end for their stories.
4. Students make their finished stories and illustrations into a short book/graphic novel, about 3-5 pages.
5. Students present their finished books to the class. Things to consider during presentations:
  - Did the story have a clear beginning, middle, and end?
  - Did the illustrations show action and excitement?
  - How is the story similar or different from the *Green Lantern* book?

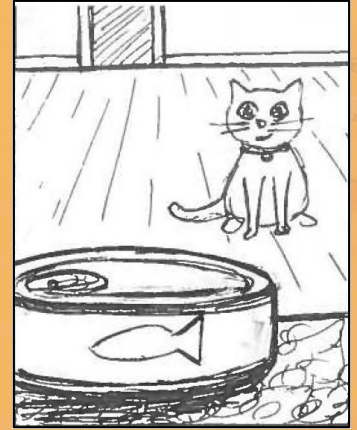
## Drawing Tips



Always fill the space as much as possible. Draw big!



Diagonal lines and shapes like zig zags help show action.



Create a variety of poses, views (above, below, eye-level), and distances (close, far, in-between).

## Assessment

1. Use the attached rubric in this lesson plan for student's projects. There is a space for written teacher feedback at the bottom. Students could also complete the rubric as a self-evaluation.

## Lesson Extensions

1. Incorporating Research: Have students research the history of the signs and properties they came from that they used in their stories or the history of neon signs in general and write a brief summary paragraph. Please note that not all signs will be easy to research but some information for most of the properties is available online.
2. Fiction vs. Nonfiction: Is Green Lantern: The Light King Strikes! fictional or nonfictional? What elements seem fictional, and what elements seem nonfictional? Have students discuss and answer these questions in groups.

## NV Academic Content Standards: 3rd Grade

### English Language Arts (ELA):

- **W3.3:** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- **W3.4:** With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.
- **W3.7:** Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.
- **RL3.3:** Describe characters in a story and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
- **RL3.7:** Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story.

### Visual Arts:

- **VA:Cr1.3.1:** Elaborate on an imaginative idea.
- **VA:Cr2.3.3:** Individually or collaboratively construct representations of places of every day life.
- **VA:Cn10.3.1:** Develop a work of art based on observations of surroundings.

## NV Academic Content Standards: 4th Grade

### English Language Arts:

- **W4.3:** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- **W4.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **W4.7:** Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- **SL4:** Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.
- **RL4.2:** Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
- **RL4.3:** Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.
- **RL4.7:** Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.

## NV Academic Content Standards: 4th Grade (cont'd)

### Visual Arts:

- **VA:Cr2.4.3:** Document, describe, and represent regional constructed environments.
- **VA:Re7.4.2:** Analyze components in visual imagery that convey messages.
- **VA:CN10.4.1:** Create works of art that reflect community cultural traditions.

## NV Academic Content Standards: 5th Grade

### English Language Arts:

- **W5.3:** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- **W5.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **W5.7:** Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- **SL4:** Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.
- **RL5.2:** Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.
- **RL5.3:** Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.
- **RL5.7:** Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text.

### Visual Arts:

- **VA:Cr2.5.3:** Identify, describe, and visually document places and/or objects of personal significance.
- **VA:Re7.5.1:** Compare one's own interpretation of a work of art with the interpretation of others.
- **VA:Cr2.5.1:** Experiment and develop skills in multiple art-making techniques and approaches through practice.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Signs, Stories, & Superheroes Rubric

|                              | <b>4<br/>(Exceeds)</b>  | <b>3<br/>(Meets)</b>  | <b>2<br/>(Approaches)</b>   | <b>1<br/>(Emergent)</b>  |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Character Development</b> | Student created in-depth information about their character(s) and answered all prompts fully.                 | Student created detailed information for their character(s) and answered all prompts. | Student wrote some information for character(s) but did not go into detail or answer all prompts.           | Student didn't create a character(s) or did not provide information about their character. |
| <b>Story Structure</b>       | Story's structure was clear, well-organized, and easy to follow.  | Story had a clear beginning, middle, and end.   | Story's structure is not very clear, but is there and in the right order.                                   | Student did not grasp story structure - is out of order or nonexistent.                    |
| <b>Illustrations</b>         | Student successfully used drawing tips and speech bubbles to show action and fill the comic panels.           | Student drew characters and used speech bubbles to fill the comic panels.             | Student attempted to show action and fill space in the comic panels.  | Student did not use drawing tips or speech bubbles. Did not attempt to fill the panels.    |
| <b>Comic Book</b>            | Student successfully completed a comic book with at least 3-5 pages, detailed illustrations, text, and cover. | Student completed a 3-5 page comic book with illustrations, text, and a cover.        | Student partially completed comic book - may be too short or missing some illustrations, text, or the cover | Student did not create the comic book, or left it mostly unfinished.                       |
| <b>Total</b>                 |   |   |   |  |

Comments:

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Story Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## Story Elements

Setting

Characters

Beginning

Middle



End



Conflict

Resolution

