

WAYS OF LOOKING, WAYS OF TELLING.
LEARN TO READ AND TELL A VISUAL STORY

Had you ever thought that images tell stories?



This comic strip is using images and text to tell a story.
Would this still be a story **without** the cartoon bobbles?

Here is an example of a visual story without words.



What is going on here?
Pay attention to:

- the facial expression of characters
- actions
- context
- recurring elements in all the three images
- clothes

From the very beginning of humanity, images have been used to tell stories and transmit knowledge.



Giotto, Scrovegni Chapel, Padua, 1305

Giotto painted the walls of the Scrovegni Chapel with biblical stories in 1305. Like comic stripes, the fresco cycle is “read” from left to right and from top to bottom. This is a *convention*.

These are all examples of **linear** visual narratives. They tell stories in a **sequential** and **chronological** way.

But images can also tell stories that are happening **at the same time**. They can be insights of daily life of a particular **city, culture, and time-period**.



Sophie Blackall, New York Subway, 2012

Let’s zoom in and look at the many things that are going on in this drawing of New York subway.

Does this image have to be “read” from left to right?

Can you see a red ball bouncing?

Can you see musical instruments?

How many animals can you find?

Can you find these scenes in the image of the whole painting?

Pay attention to:

- subjects and their interactions
- clothes
- objects
- facial expressions



Can you see
the image
within the
image?

NOW IT IS YOUR TURN!

Draw a visual story starting from this image! You can choose to tell a story that develops in time, or draw a representation of a specific moment.

