

Karinn's 5.3 Tracing Understanding

A note from Karinn: I am reading the graphic novel "Book 2: Ghost Stories" by Jeff Lemire. I chose the image on p. 129. My teacher photocopied it so I could trace a rough image. It's not as good as Jeff Lemire, but it's something to work with. Most of this page is for the What section of the "What? So What? Now What?" chart.

Lou's face is creased and lined sharply with dark lines and shadows to show his age (he is quite old), and his unhappiness, unhealthiness

Lou's eyes are wide open and alert, looking straight ahead in frame 1 and 2—like he's looking at the world again, and is out of his head/memory and in reality

close up view of Lou's face

before this, Lou has flashback to when him an Vince were kids playing ice hockey

Lou has a dark shadow attached to him, dark shadows on his face and in his environment—a seriously desolate atmosphere

close up brings me to reality at same time Lou "returns" to reality from being spaced out.

shadows make the lines on his face stand out—emphasize his old age? Wrinkles are a sign of aging

Lou is only standing up to his ankles in the river where he played hockey as a kid in the winter—in frames p. 128, 127, he was "drowning" in the same river. Shows he isn't aware of reality, is potentially unsafe—Where is Vince, his younger brother? Vince is dead—Lou is retelling a story about him and his brother.

Lou seems haunted by his past and maybe not a happy person (he just "returned" from having a memory about his younger brother Vince)

River: maybe metaphor for Lou being drowned in a childhood memory about him and his bro.

Lou- skinny and fragile

The reality is that Lou drown in a memory, not the real river, but this is still unsafe—who looks after Lou? No one has, except him.

Forgot to draw it here, but Lou is smiling in this frame, like he enjoyed the memory even if up to his ankles in the river.

On p. 126-128—Lou talks about memory, age (having a hard time remembering things or having clarity in old age)—is going senile? Maybe, because of old age.

Graphic weight here—Lou is centered in composition of each frame (the focus of 1, 2, and 3). Could mean Lou has found focus or feels good? He is smiling in frame 2 about the nice memory about ice hockey + Vince.

Lou is "back" now, from his happy memry—Gutter tells reader that between frame 2 and 3, Lou must have exited the water, and made it back to the house in his soggy boots like nothing happened.

Only text on page—Lou is pretty deaf—are "slosh" noises here cuz Lou hears them in this moment, or to show no one else is around to hear the funny sound? Kinda sad, cuz it shows Lou's loneliness and isolation. No one else is there!

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Karinn's 5.3 Tracing Understanding (continued)

- main purpose—character and story development (Lou is the main character or narrator)
- After first memory about relationship between Lou and Vince as kids) — establishes setting, characters and relationships

So What? Granma started having Alzheimer's when I was younger

- at first she remembered me when we visited
- later, she only remembered sometimes, then eventually never (had times like Lou, where she was just somewhere else in her own mind)—made relationship tough
- hard on my mom—she couldn't talk to my grandma like a mom anymore
- hard on my granma too—illness isolated her mentally from family as her ability to communicate broke down—Lou finds it frustrating to verbally speak with others because of his deafness—he writes things down that are short and choppy—keeps his feelings of loneliness and isolation to himself.

Now What? Text draws attention to the effects of age in this image

- effects on mental state, personal relationships, and unsafe effects of isolation on elderly
- elderly need more help, love and attention than they sometimes get.

Hi Karinn,

There wasn't enough room on your diagram page to make any notes, so I will leave you a few here about this part of your work. Good work on spotting the visual metaphor of the river that occurs on p. 124-126. That is a very complex idea, but graphic novel artists use visual metaphors all the time—they are mainly identified by **abstract visual details**. Your first clue, for instance, is on p. 125 when you can see Lou's tears, despite him being "underwater" in the river. On p. 126, Lou's tears are shown as creating the hockey ice in the beginning of his memory. This is physically impossible, but it brings the reader into this flashback effectively. You have made some very solid observations about the visual details in your chosen images and how they affect the story, and it is clear you understand graphic weight, and how the gutters in graphic novels work.

One part of your work that is unclear is your idea about theme. You mentioned many small themes running throughout the book, like issues around old age and isolation, but if you had to pin down the main message or theme of the book with what you've observed and read, what would it be?

Abstract visual details are visual details that do not make sense in reality. Salvadore Dali painted scenes of wristwatches that looked as if they were melted in a hot sun—painting the watches unrealistically created abstract visual details.

Karinn's 5.3 Tracing Understanding: Paragraphs

Paragraph 1

Notice here, Karinn has merged both her "So What?" and "Now What" paragraphs. You can also do this, but regard the feedback from Karinn's teacher about keeping the two paragraphs separate.

This is a large and awkwardly worded sentence that is run-on. Identify individual ideas (clauses) and delete the comma before "because". Consider re-wording it so it reads smoothly and clearly.

That you chose this is interesting, despite lots of bigger visual effects at play in these three frames. This is a good idea, Karinn, and emphasizes Lou's isolation.

[1] My grandma had times where she remembered everything, and you could tell by the look on her face if she was in reality or not in reality in her brain. [2] My grnama was old and went through things like Lou does mentally. [3] Hers was more permanent, and called Alzheimers and I think Lou is just having moments where his thoughts are very distracting and making him forget stuff (like what he's doing, or where he is). [4] This reminds me of Lou in frame one, where you can see he is back in reality after having a flashback to a memory in his past. The author's trying to show problems that elderly people have. When people get old, things start to change, physically and mentally. These changes affect their relationships with people, because they can't communicate good anymore like my Grandma or no one will really pay attention to them like Lou. It's weird because children aren't mentally or physically all there and they get loads of help with everything mostly, and the elderly don't, and some need it just as much. The visual element effective to me, was the "slosh-slosh-slosh" noise because Lou can't hear it. No one else around to hear that funny noise and know that he might need help getting his feet dry. Lou was senile enough to unwittingly step into the river, where he could have drownd, but no one is there to look after him.

In your paragraph, you write about your grandmother, then Lou and the similarities they share, as well as the issues that older people have. Your concluding sentence does not bring your conversation to a close effectively. Think of a way to sum up what you said that states the most important point you want your reader to realize at the end of your paragraph. Use this as a concluding sentence here.

Is Lou senile? Reconsider your word choice—you may need to look further into this.

Karinn, you have some good ideas here, I think, but it seems like they could be organized more effectively. I numbered your sentences so you can see what I mean. Sentence 2 would be a good way to start your paragraph because you are introducing your grandma and Lou and saying there is a connection. From that, you could use sentences 1 and 3 to elaborate further. Sentence 4 could still come last, but can you elaborate any further on this?

The elderly have already lived the parts of life that you and I currently are living—I do not think they want to be helped in all the same ways we help children. You may need to clarify this comparison.

This sentence reads awkwardly because it needs transition from your previous sentence.

Karinn's Tracing Understanding Assignment		
Value	Tracing Notes & Observations	"So What? Now What?" Paragraphs
Excellent	<p>-Your notes for each frame are <i>thorough</i> and demonstrate <i>insightful</i> understanding of story elements and visual effects communicating theme.</p> <p>-Your inquiry questions and answers demonstrate <i>impressive</i> learning skills.</p>	<p>-You provide <i>perceptive</i> ideas with precise support about theme in the graphic novel studied.</p> <p>-You present a <i>logical</i> idea about relevance of the author's theme in the world today.</p> <p>-You use <i>frequently effective</i> words, sentence structure, and grammar.</p>
Proficient	<p>-Your notes for each frame are <i>detailed</i> and demonstrate <i>thoughtful</i> understanding of story elements and visual effects communicating theme.</p> <p>-Your inquiry questions and answers demonstrate <i>effective</i> learning skills.</p>	<p>-You provide <i>thoughtful</i> ideas with convincing support about theme in the graphic novel studied.</p> <p>-You present an <i>appropriate</i> idea about relevance of the author's theme in the world today.</p> <p>-You use <i>effective</i> words, sentence structure, and grammar.</p>
Satisfactory	<p>-Your notes for each frame are <i>general</i> and demonstrate <i>basic</i> understanding of story elements and visual effects communicating theme.</p> <p>-Your inquiry questions and answers demonstrate <i>adequate</i> learning skills.</p>	<p>-You provide <i>appropriate</i> ideas with adequate support about theme in the graphic novel studied.</p> <p>-You present a <i>general</i> idea about relevance of the author's theme in the world today.</p> <p>-You use <i>basic</i> words, sentence structure, and grammar.</p>
Limited	<p>-Your notes for each frame are <i>incomplete</i> and demonstrate <i>weak or confused</i> understanding of story elements and visual effects communicating theme.</p> <p>-Your inquiry questions and answers demonstrate <i>superficial</i> learning skills.</p>	<p>-You provide <i>questionable</i> ideas with incomplete support about theme in the graphic novel studied.</p> <p>-You present an <i>undeveloped</i> idea about relevance of the author's theme in the world today.</p>

		- You use frequently <i>ineffective words, sentence structure</i> , and grammar .
Resubmission Needed	Your attempt to respond is insufficient. Contact your teacher to discuss suggestions for improvement and resubmission of work.	
Total: 22.5 /30 = 75%	12/15	10.5/15
Assessment	Areas of Strength... <i>You have a great understanding of visual elements in graphic novels. Visual cues you noted about shading, lines, and centering of the character in the frame, as well as your explanations are very perceptive.</i>	
	Might I Suggest... <i>Your inquiry questions were great, but I was hoping you might develop your answers more thoroughly. Read feedback comments for suggestions about wording, sentence structure, and organization. Paragraphs should be organized as conversations—with a beginning, middle, and end (conclusion). Please give more attention to the editing process, especially for your personal response in the next workbook.</i>	