

Making an Instant Asian American Comic Book

(Using Images from the Little Tokyo Mural, “Home Is Little Tokyo”)

By Tony Osumi

In 60-75 minutes, we’re going to create an instant Asian American comic book. I’ve planned for 10 to 11 groups with 5 members each. Because sharing and learning from each other is important, we’ll save some time for each to present.

Materials

- 5 photocopies of historical images from the Little Tokyo Mural — see following website for the full Little Tokyo Mural:
www.kuidaosumi.com/murals/jtmural-article.html
- 6 coloring book pages (2 square, 2 oval, 2 blank)
- 1 coloring book cover — inside the square page give your book a title; provide some images or designs and list the members of your group
- Use the 5 remaining sheets (1 square, 2 oval, 2 blank) for the pages of your comic book
- Paper clips — to help keep the papers straight when tracing images from the mural
- Crayons at the front of the class (for coloring your comic book)
- Provide your own pencils and pens for drawing and writing

Have each member of your group choose one of the following 5 jobs:

Organizer – Like all good leaders this person makes sure everyone in the group is heard and their ideas shared. She/he will help guide the group to decide which 6 images and text will be used in the comic book.

Historian – Every community has its historians. Your group’s historian will share their knowledge of the mural’s images and if needed will visit other groups to gather more information.

Text Writer – Comic books have little to no writing. This person will take the lead in crafting just the right sentences (maximum 2 per page) for each image. The text should educate, entertain, and inspire. Don’t be afraid to be creative.

Drawer – Everyone has an artist inside of them, and this person will do the majority of the drawing. Their job is to draw the black lines for each image by tracing, drawing freehand or a combination of both. Try keeping the images fairly large.

Presenter – Practice makes public speaking easier. This person will take responsibility for presenting the comic book to the rest of the class. Please bring up your whole group and help hold the book for the presenter.

TIP: Remember, this is a comic book, so keep it simple. Have fun!