
examples of three-scene storyboarding
narratives of learning-for-living

Bill Law

The Career-learning CAFÉ

quick start

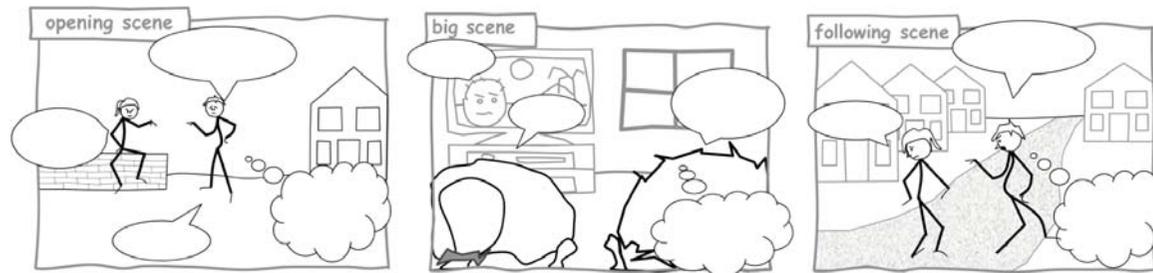
Three-scene storyboarding frames a process for reflecting on experience. It can be adapted to face-to-face, curriculum, and community-project use. People reflect on their own experience and develop a special episode into a narrative. They are helped to 'round out' their story by asking themselves all the who-what-when-where-how-why questions.

The questions may be about what that goes on at school-or college, at home, on the street, or on a visit. Each three-scene episode hinges on a turning-point. That is a time when there could be a change-of-direction in what this person is doing with his or her life. A turning point brings into view another way to go – it is often a surprise. It becomes the 'big scene' - in a three-scene scenario, between an 'opening scene' and a 'following scene'.

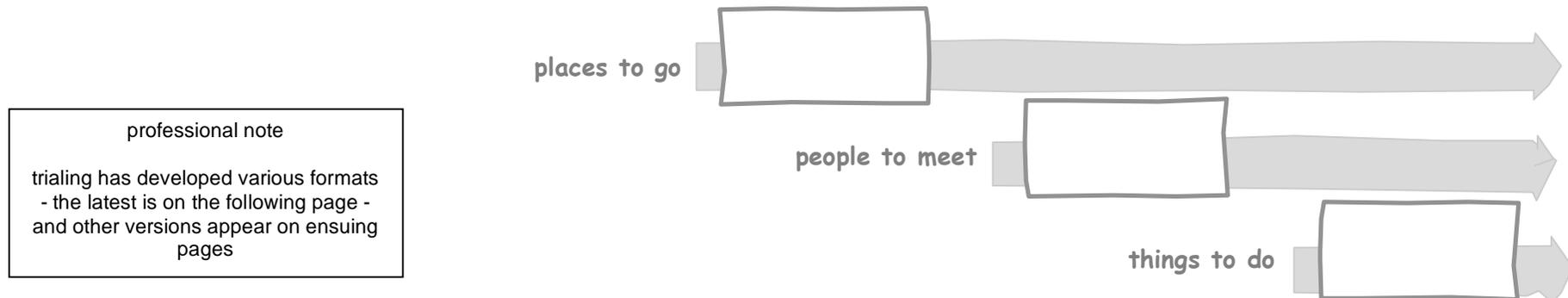
step one - remembering: jot down notes for the big scene, then for the opening and following scenes



step two - showing: put those thoughts and feelings into a words-and-pictures 'movie'



step three - futuring: collect your thoughts about what you can now do about the episode



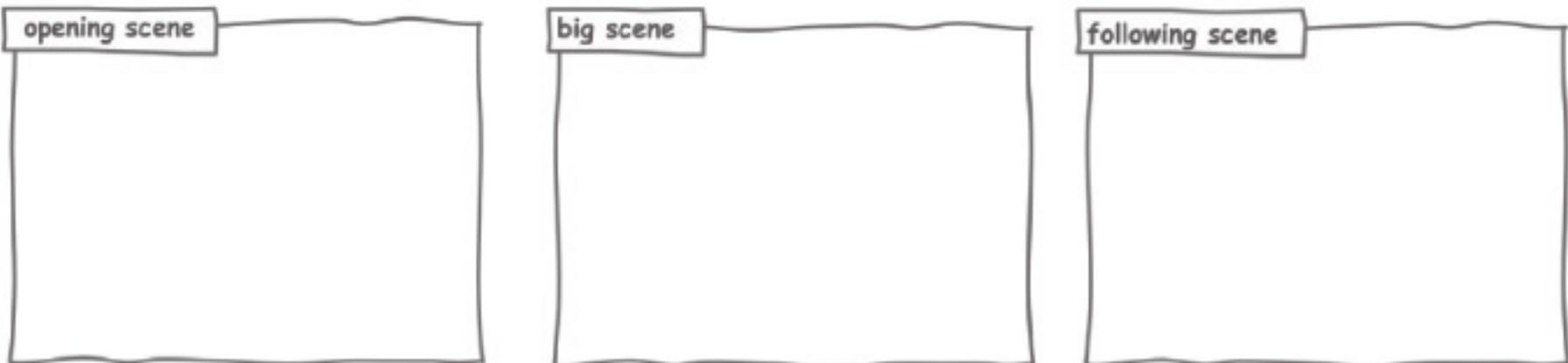
s c e n e s i n m y l i f e

1
remembering

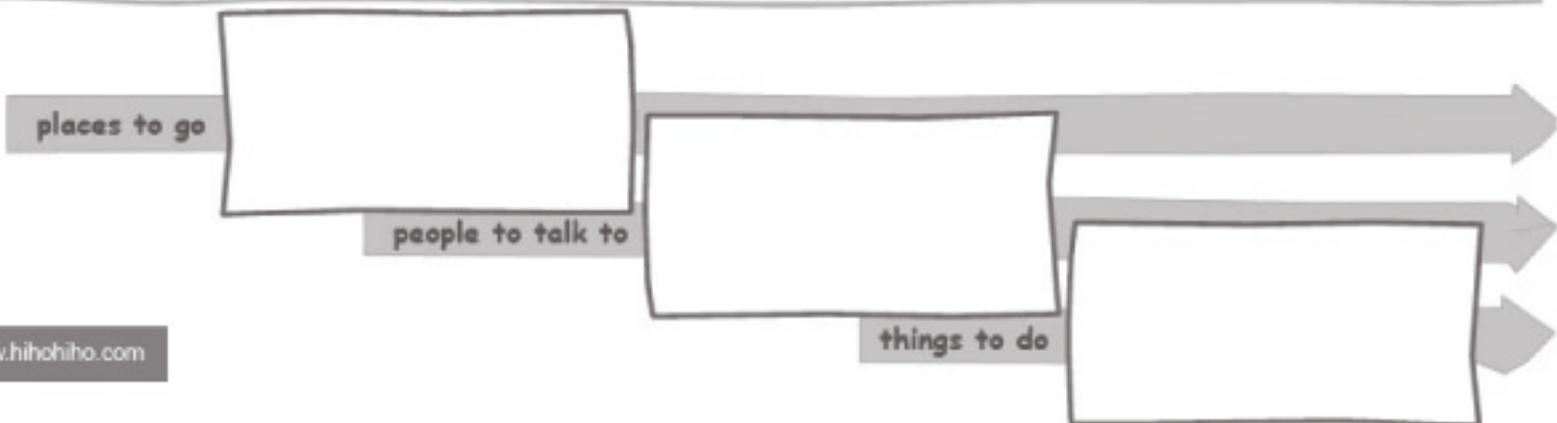


my ID

2
showing



3
futuring



Some people readily take to it. They may want just to get on with it, learning how by trial-and-error. In some cases it can be completed in an-hour-or-so. However, the process can be taken deeper - and over more than one session. Examples of what completed formats can look like are set out on the following pages.

twelve worked examples

The twelve examples are each introduced by case notes, which an educator, adviser or researcher might set down.

the examples

name	notes by	turning point	page
Will	teacher	tv	4
Sarah	adviser	sleepover	6
Sean	researcher	street	8
Lucy	adviser	lesson	10
John	adviser	tv	12
Stanley	teacher	the net	14
Mark	adviser	home	16
Errol	researcher	home	18
Marjorie	teacher	friend's house	20
Alice	teacher	project	22
Mary	researcher	adviser	24
Joey	researcher	home	26

What is noted by a professional and set down by the person is the same story, but told in different ways. Storyboarding helps us to see how professional expertise and personal experience can make different sense or what is going on – leading to different ideas about what needs to be done.

That is be useful in conversation between the professional and the person - giving each a basis for questioning the other, and helping each better to understand the other.

find a short account of design features, with links to more information, on pages 28-29

1: Will - saving whales with science

teacher's notes

Will - 5 May

Quiet lad. No trouble at school. A few close friends - who keep themselves to themselves.

Both parents at home. Seem to work in clerical and service industry work. Quiet and grateful for any help that we can give. Say they don't understand qualifications these days - it's all so different

Says he's bored at school. Wants to leave as soon as possible.

Median grades. Expected to do well enough. No particularly strong subjects or weak ones.

Has done the tests and inventories. Flat profiles. Slight preference for outdoor activities. Higher scores on spatial abilities. Shows no interest in any of the suggestions that come out of this.

1

Says the only job idea he has is in science. Came to him while watching tv. Seems to be about marine-life conservation.

Had a quick look at a brochure about marine biology. Agreed to take it - but without much enthusiasm.

The most animated moment in this whole conversation was Will talking about boring science. He said if marine biology means staying to do A-level science forget it.

2

scenes in my life

1 remembering

ideas for my opening scene

science lesson on marine life
I'm bored
My Mates are bored
the whales are bored

ideas for my big scene

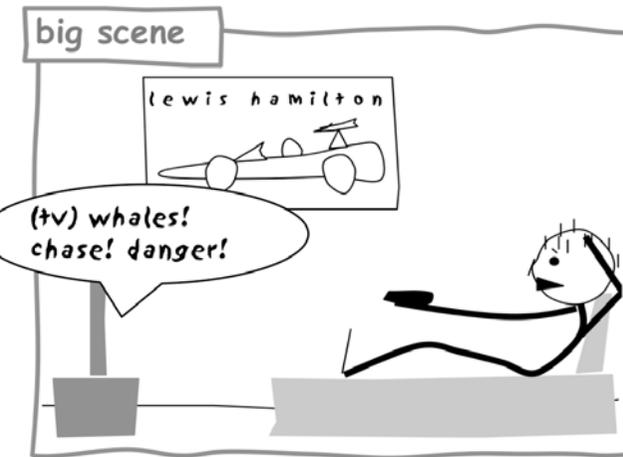
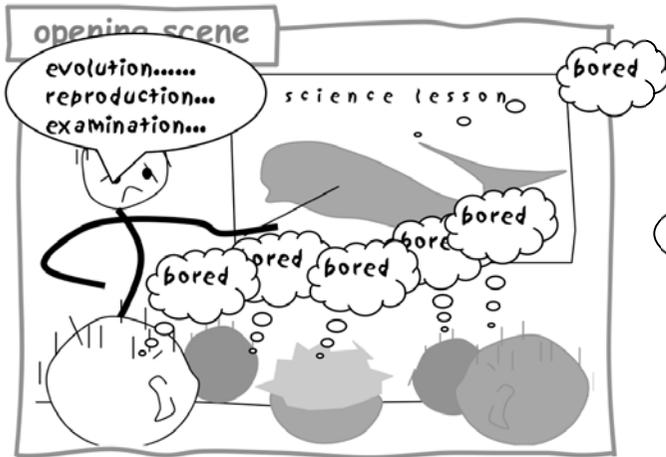
same day - coincidence - on tv about whales being chased by big boats - for food
woman scientist with 'world wild-life something-or-other' - dangerous work!

ideas for my following scene

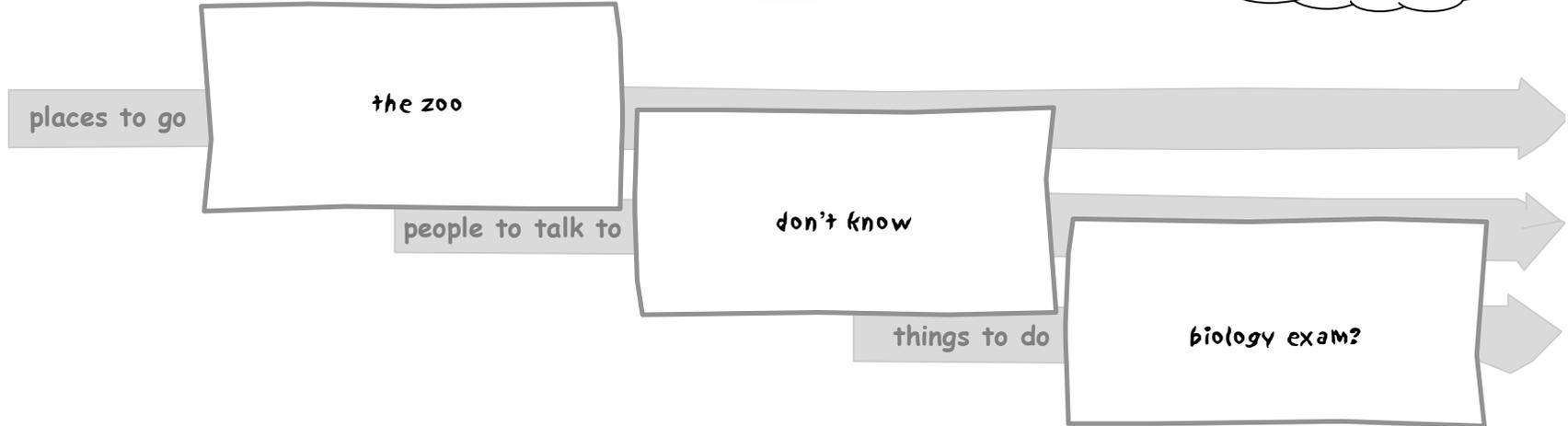
tried to tell my mates about programme
they were all watching the football
they say I must be mad
I don't care

my ID
yesiwill

2 showing



3 futuring



2: Sarah - going to uni

adviser's notes

Sarah - 15 September

Sarah hasn't said much about her background. But she is well-turned-out and seems settled and steady enough.

She says that the main thing that worries her about careers is upsetting her best friend - Paula. They live in the same street and went through primary school together. Sleepovers are a frequent part of their relationship. From the way Sarah talks about it, there is no reasons to suppose that this is an issue for either family.

But some weeks before we met, Sarah had been on sleepover at Paula's house and briefly met Paul's sister Jane. Jane is several years older, and seems to be starting university in a few weeks. She came into Paula's bedroom briefly to say hello to Sarah. She was carrying her joining booklet - all that Jane needs to know before she goes up.

1

Sarah finds it hard to talk about it. It has made quite an impression - Jane was so excited about everything and the booklet looked so 'cool' to Sarah.

But, she says, Paula and she - maybe for a year now - have had this plan that they would both be dress-designers. And that they would work in the same place and be friends forever.

And now Sarah wants to change her mind - and go to university instead. Like Jane.

But, Sarah, says - right at the end of our time - Paula doesn't like Jane. P & J argue about everything!

So Sarah doesn't know whether she has changed her mind about her career or not.

2

scenes in my life

1
developing ideas

ideas for my opening scene
at school with Paula
—
best friends
—
We are going to be designers

ideas for my big scene
met Jane at Sleepover
—
Jane showed me uni book
—
Never known anyone like that before

ideas for my following scene
on the way to school
—
tell Paula
—
being best friends does not mean agreeing about everything

my ID
Supersarah

2
storyboarding



3
futuring



3: Sean - me and Jason

researcher's notes

Sean - 7 October

No clear impression of family life - Sean is unforthcoming about it. May be a single mother. No mention of sibs. Sean is courteous - restrained in dress and manner.

Talks a lot about his friend Jason. They seem to spend a lot of time together - just wandering the streets - laughing and talking. There are 4-5 others in their group.

An incident on the street when they are accosted other boys - one with a knife. Seems to have been a gesture rather than a real threat. Shocked Sean.

What upset him most was the way Jason and the others started talking about 'sticking together', 'looking after each other' and - worst of all - 'carrying weapons for protection'.

I

Sean says it is 'mucking up' all his plans. Their talk has been of going to college together - different courses but one place. That way they will still meet up and maintain their friendship.

Sean says he can't see how that can happen now, He doesn't want to spend any more time with this group. He says they are only friends because they live near each other. He doesn't like them very much - except Jason.

It means that that he has to think again about career. The local college is out.

Sean doesn't talk about the other gang. And when he does it isn't with fear. His feelings of shock are at the reaction of his own group.

But his mainly about Jason insisting on loyalty to the group. Sean fears that their friendship is over.

2

loosely based on Alexander Rose: <http://www.battlefront.co.uk>

my - scene - page

1
developing ideas

ideas for my opening scene

hanging with my friends - especially Jason

having a laugh

we look out for each other

ideas for my big scene

on the street

kids I've never seen before - one pulls a knife

I walk away

ideas for my following scene

next day

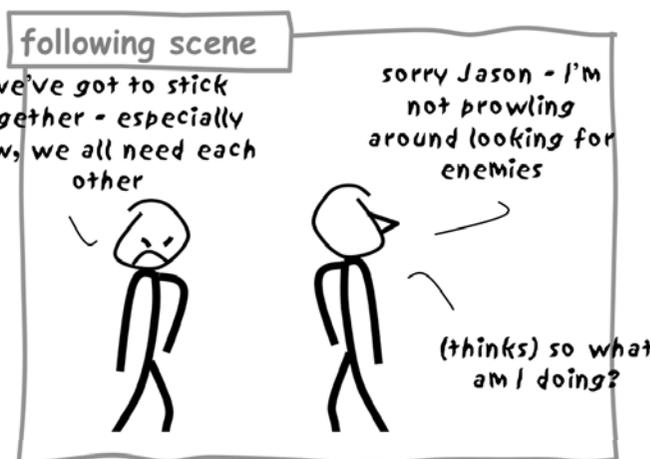
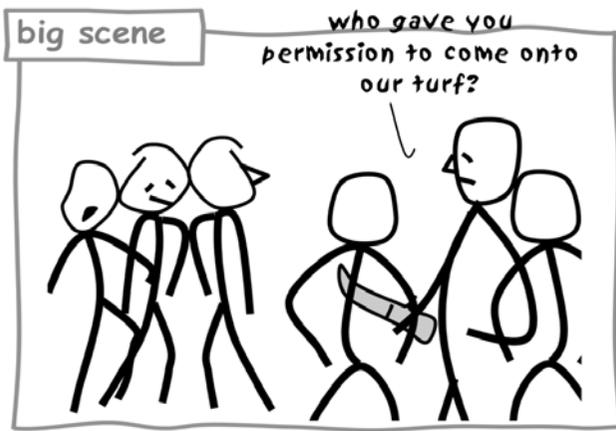
tell Jason I don't want to hurt anyone

he says we should all stick together

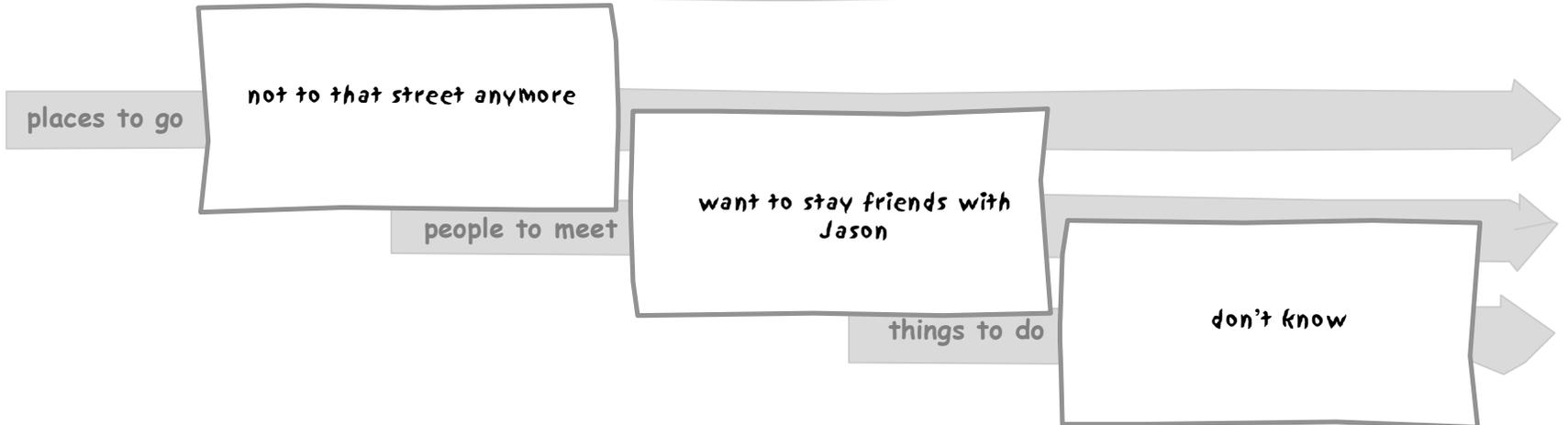
my ID

Sean

2
storyboarding



3
futuring



4: Lucy - pattern maker

adviser's notes

Lucy - 8 June

When people asked me what I want to do I always said 'dentist'. It was dad's idea. He used to say 'that's where the money is!'

We all wanted to be rich.

But now I say 'pattern maker'. Dad doesn't like me saying that. He says that Mum's dad worked hard as a woodworker and never had two pennies to rub together. He and nan still live in a council house!

But we had this bloke come, in history, to talk with us about his job. He said he used to be a pattern maker - til he got redundant. He said it was the best thing he had had ever done. He is older than me dad - but I really liked him.

He brought this little wooden thing in a plastic bag. He said it was a test-piece - or something. He said he made it when he was not much older than us.

1

And it was so great - small and so smooth. And with tiny little grooves and ridges - all exact and perfect. Just think of being able to make something like that.

He said that every test piece is unique. That means nobody else has got a piece like this. It made me feel funny - like I might cry or something.

So that's why I now say 'pattern maker'. Nobody knows what it means - except me.

And maybe granddad.

I hope so.

2

my - scene - page

1
developing ideas

ideas for my opening scene

I always said 'dentist'

it was dad's idea

we all want to be rich

ideas for my big scene

visitor to school

older than me dad

brought this tiny wooden thing he made

so cool

reminded me of granddad

ideas for my following scene

now I say 'pattern maker'

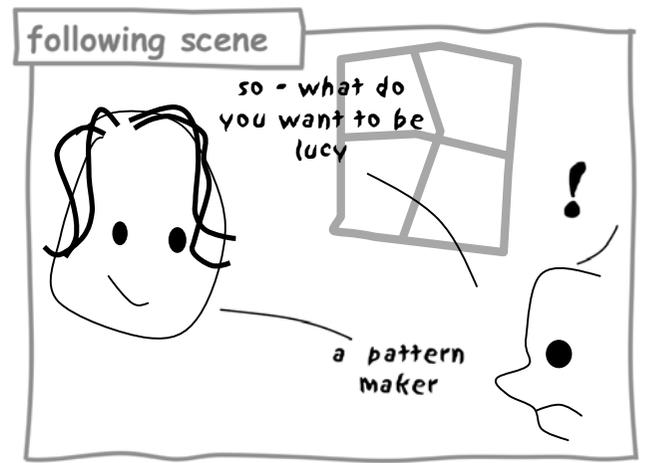
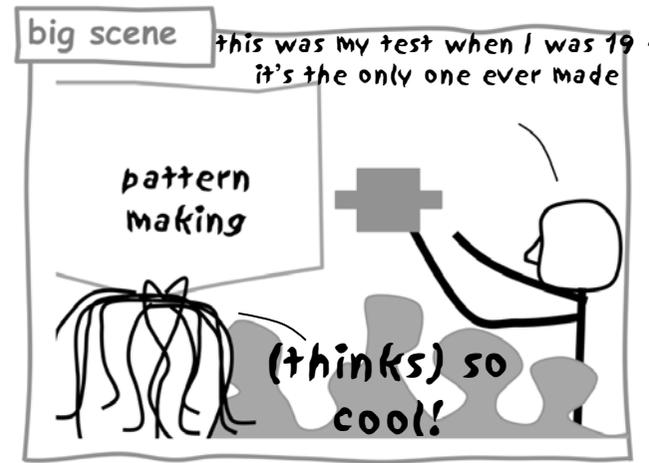
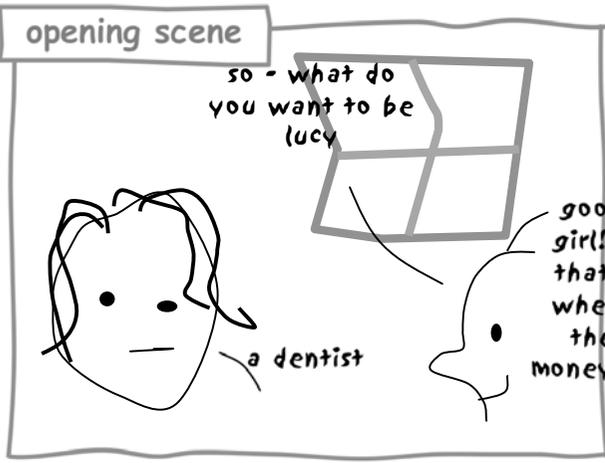
nobody knows know what it is

I do - I think!

my ID

shoes-on Lucy

2
storyboarding



3
futuring



5: John - rock star

adviser's notes

John - 8 June

No very clear career plans - has considered driving but doesn't seem keen now.

Very stable home life - extended family, all on one street. Mostly manual workers. Not sure what.

Does well enough at school - middle of the range in most results. Teachers say he could do better - bright kid, but lacks aspiration. Stays out of trouble.

Offered an interest inventory - but John said he already knows what he's interested in. When I asked what? He said 'driving' - he likes the free-and-easy life.

I see no point in pushing things. Not now anyway.

I said my door is always open - anytime he wants to come back and do some serious thinking about the future.

He said 'yes, thank you' - very politely.

my - scene - page

1
developing ideas

ideas for my opening scene

everybody in our house is a driver - mum drives a bus, granddad a lorry - I planned to drive a limo

ideas for my big scene

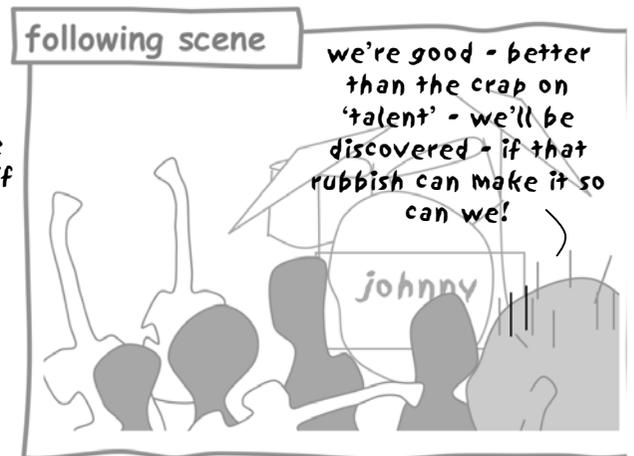
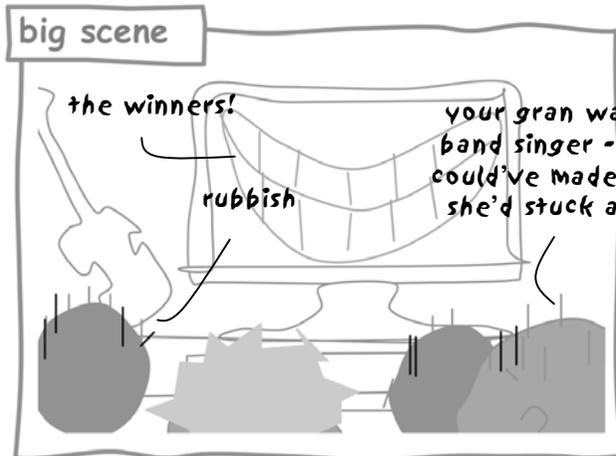
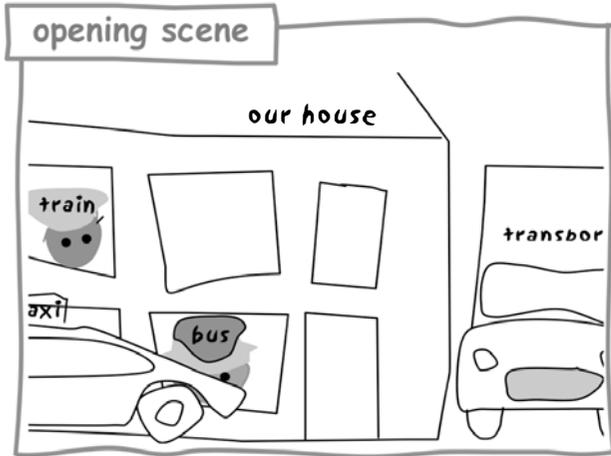
then we saw this really bad band win 'talent!' - and dad said gran was a singer before I was even born

ideas for my following scene

so forget driving - if that crap band can make it, so can we - it's only fair

my ID
Johnny guitar

2
storyboarding



3
futuring



6: Stan - for poor people

teacher's notes

Stanley - 14 February

Stanley says that he has been thinking of doing mostly vocational courses next year - he had more-or-less settled on information technology, tourism and English.

He doesn't like academic work. He gets quite animated about this - 'it's boring because it doesn't have anything to do with real people doing real things. It's just stuff to write down from books and worksheets'.

But now, for reasons that aren't clear to me, he is considering changing his options. He'd like to do geography and asks are there any other subjects he could do like that?

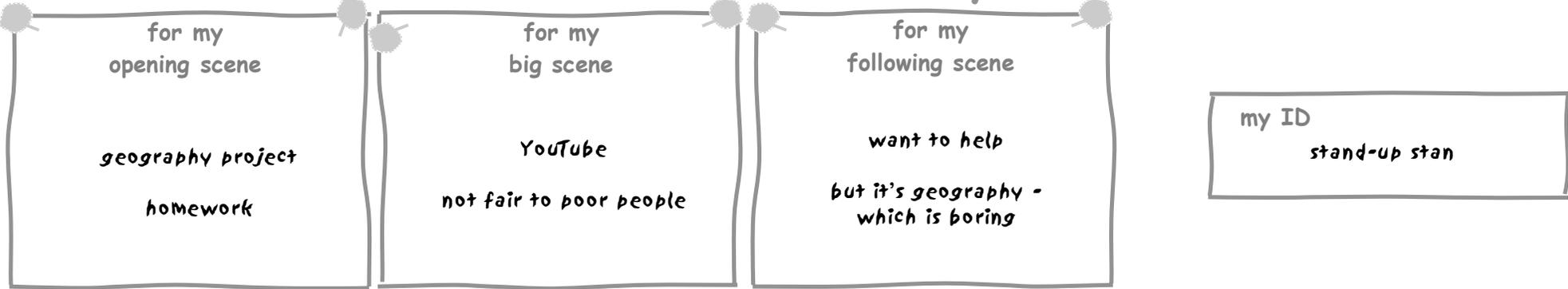
I asked about the reason for the change of direction and he said it was something he found on YouTube. ('Does the Tube teach geography or other subjects like that?')

I need to talk to colleagues to see what they say. His results suggest that he could do well - whatever he wanted to do - if he puts his mind to it. The geography teachers is mystified by his wish to do it.

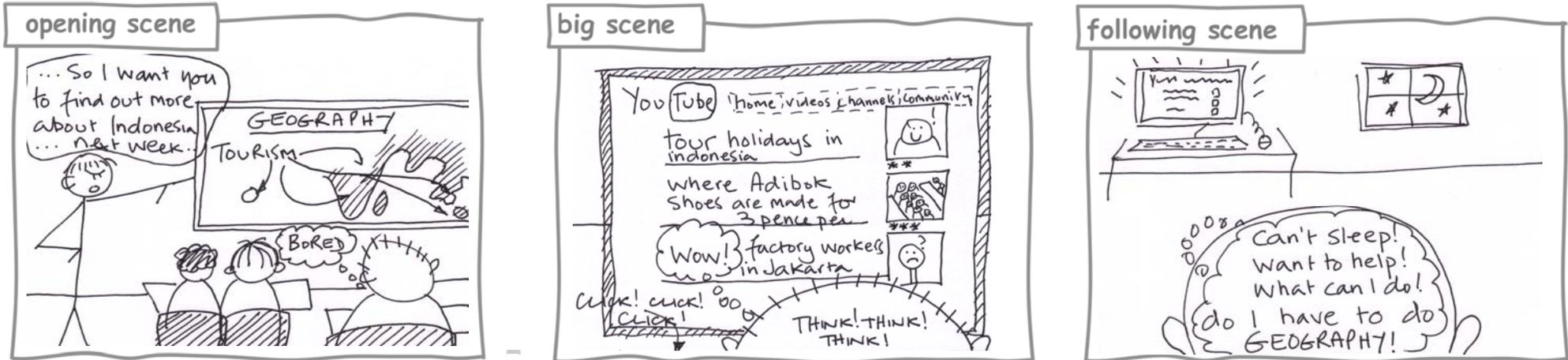
We only had five minutes - I'd like to see Stanley again.

scenes in my life

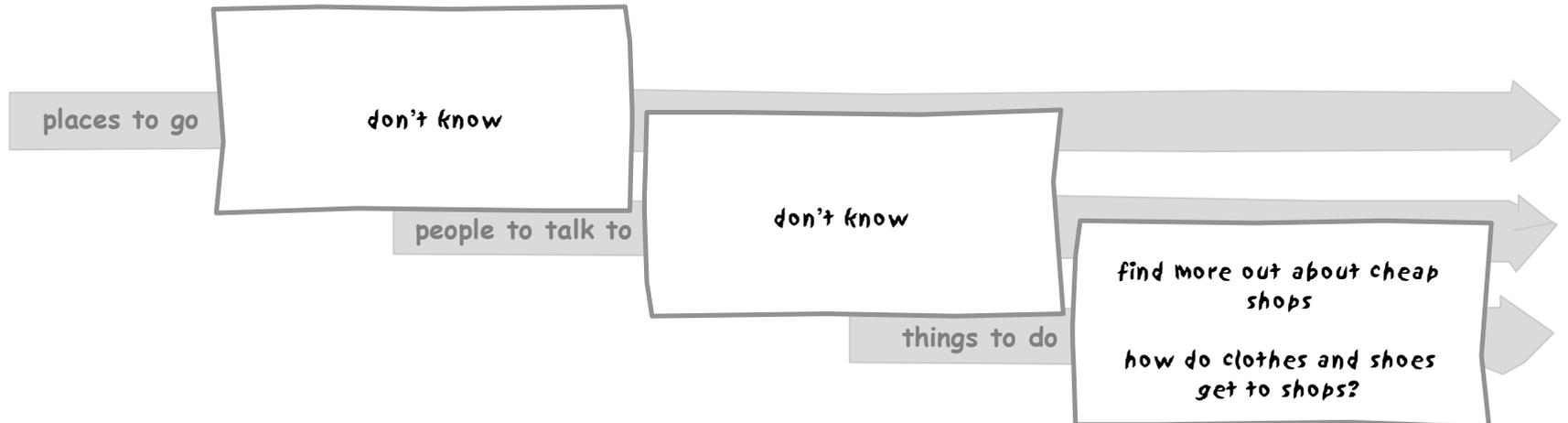
1 remembering



2 showing



3 futuring



7: Mark - and the tests

adviser's notes

Mark - 8 June

Mark says he just wants me to find him a job. He says he has never intended to stay at school beyond this year. He has been waiting for this for a long time.

Eventually agreed to do the on-line preference schedule - once I told Mark 'there are no right answers - just your feelings'. Said he didn't need to do the ability tests.

Top of the list of recommendations was 'lighthouse-keeper!' - and I mentioned it as if it were a joke. But Mark said 'fine - who do I talk to about that?'

He lives in Peterborough!

1

When he'd got what he called 'a solution' he just stuck to it. He wrote down all the leads I was able to give him. I'm sure he will follow up in the information centre.

There's more going on here than he's telling me about. I want to see him again. He's not too keen.

2

my - scene - page

1
developing ideas

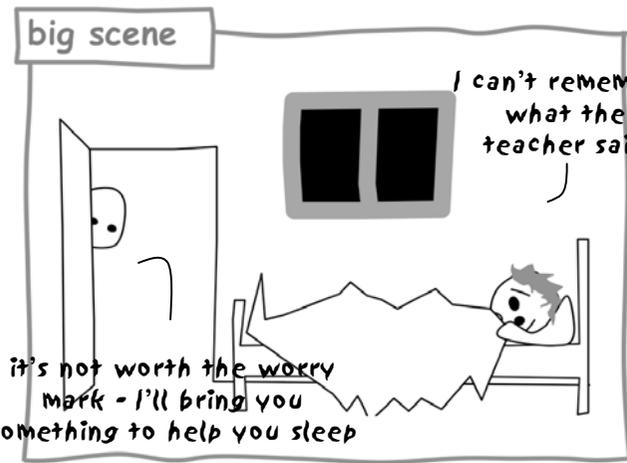
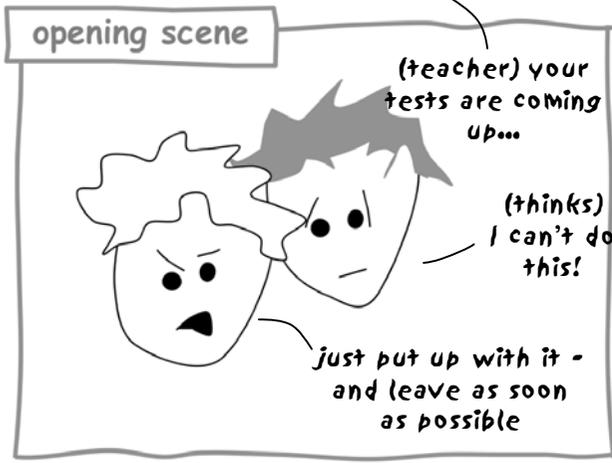
ideas for my opening scene
teacher telling us about tests
worrying
Alec doesn't care

ideas for my big scene
night before test
can't sleep
MUM says it's not worth the worry

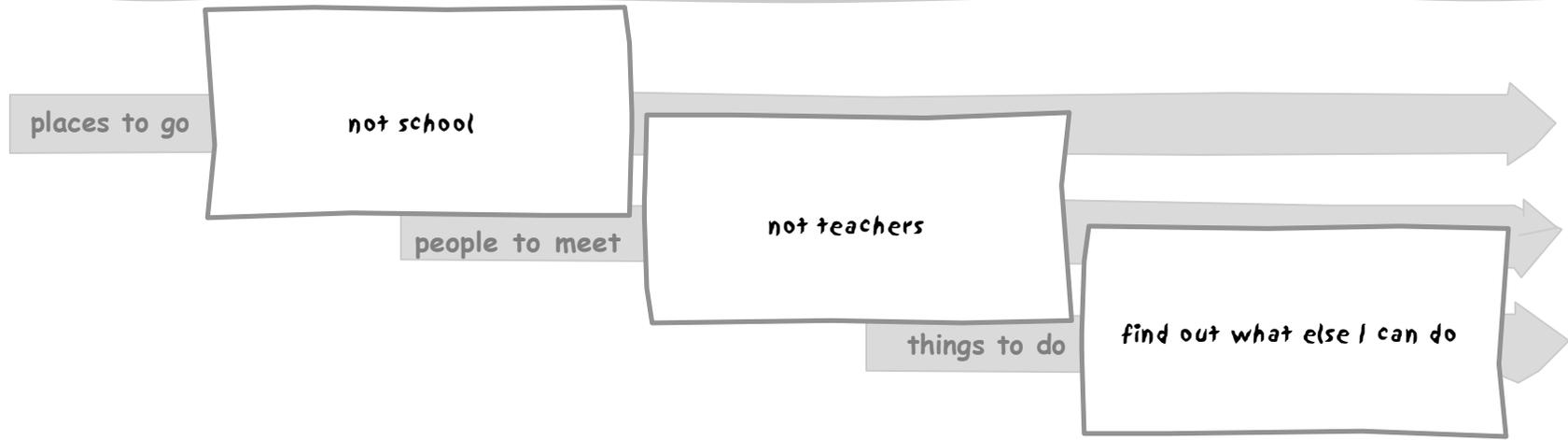
ideas for my following scene
this is too much
I know I'm going to leave as soon as possible

my ID
Mark Jones

2
storyboarding



3
futuring



8: Errol - formula-one driver

researchers' notes

Errol - 4 April

Errol's postcode has no labour market to speak of - some families have people who have been out-of-work since the late eighties. Nearby primary-industry sites have been taken over as business centres and theme parks. Errol's address is in the middle of a high-crime area - feeding a widespread use of class-a drugs.

We didn't bring up the drugs issue - Errol did. He insists he is not a user. We don't think he is trying to hide a habit. This is genuine outrage.

Didn't want to talk about family. Gave names, relationships (his mother has a live-in partner). Said his mum told him that his dad left to look for work and never came back. Says he doesn't know anything else.

1

Errol is evasive on career plans. Says he has plans - but that they are his business. We both got the feeling that he doesn't want anybody pinching his idea.

He says he doesn't need any advice. He is getting to know people who will help him.

A very self-contained and determined young man. With a lot of self-control. He believes he knows what he wants, what he has to do, and what he can expect to get out of it - or, at least - he tells himself that.

We really don't know that he is wrong about this.

2

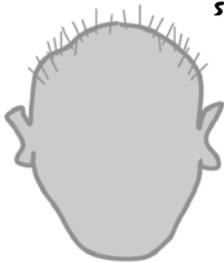
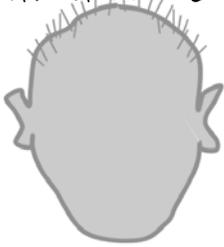
my - scene - page

1
developing ideas

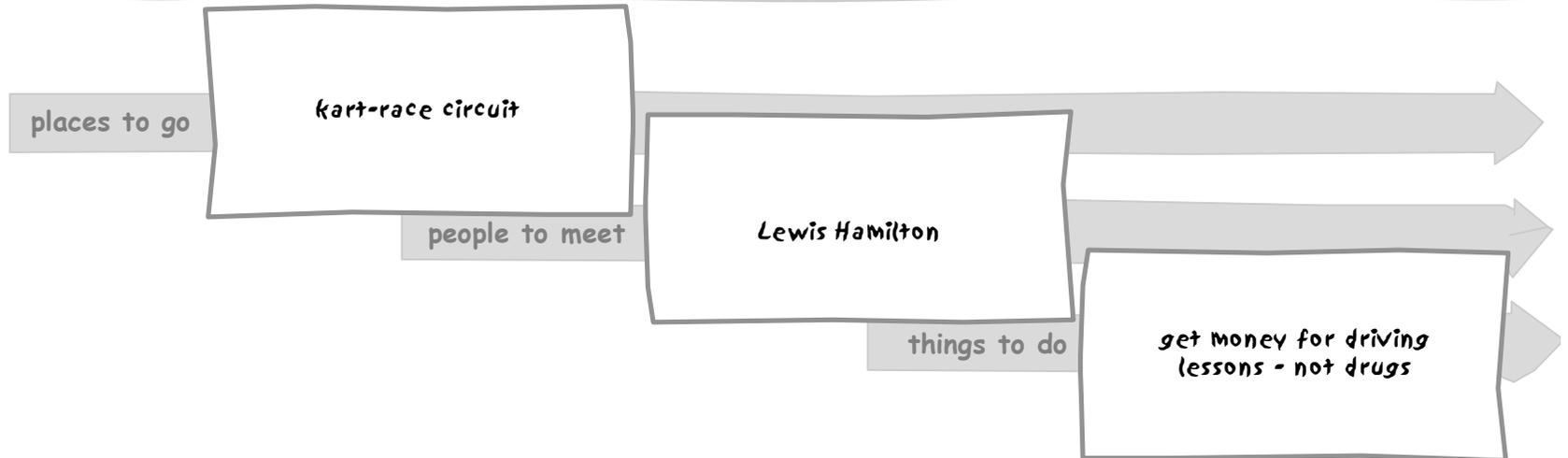
ideas for my opening scene nobody asks me what I want to do	ideas for my big scene I find out I'm going to get no help at home	ideas for my following scene so I'll do it by myself
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my ID
errol

2
storyboarding

opening scene if anybody ever asked me what I wanted to do I'd say 'formula-one driver' 	big scene (copper) sorry madam - your man has driven a car into a shop window - were holding him on a drugs charge  (her) he's been out-of-work for eighteen months - most of the time he doesn't know where he is loser!	following scene I want a proper life - I don't know anybody who's got one  and I'm not letting mum's bloke teach me to drive
--	--	---

3
futuring



9: Marjorie - and motherhood

teacher's notes

Marjorie - 1 June

She's three months gone. She says she intends to have the baby.

I don't think anybody ever expected this of Marjorie. It will certainly put any career plans she has on hold.

I asked her whether she understood the pshe lesson on contraception and she said she did.

The last time we talked about her career plans she seemed unhappy and withdrawn. She said that she wanted to do something in retail - which seemed suitable enough.

I don't think she will be coming to school after the baby arrives.

She was a quiet student - with few friends. But she seemed happy enough to me. I liked her.

1

my - scene - page

1
developing ideas

ideas for my opening scene

jobs go to pretty-pretty girls

they think they are somebody

ideas for my big scene

Alice's sister has a baby, money and a flat

she has a life - she is somebody

ideas for my following scene

a mother is a real person

but sex?

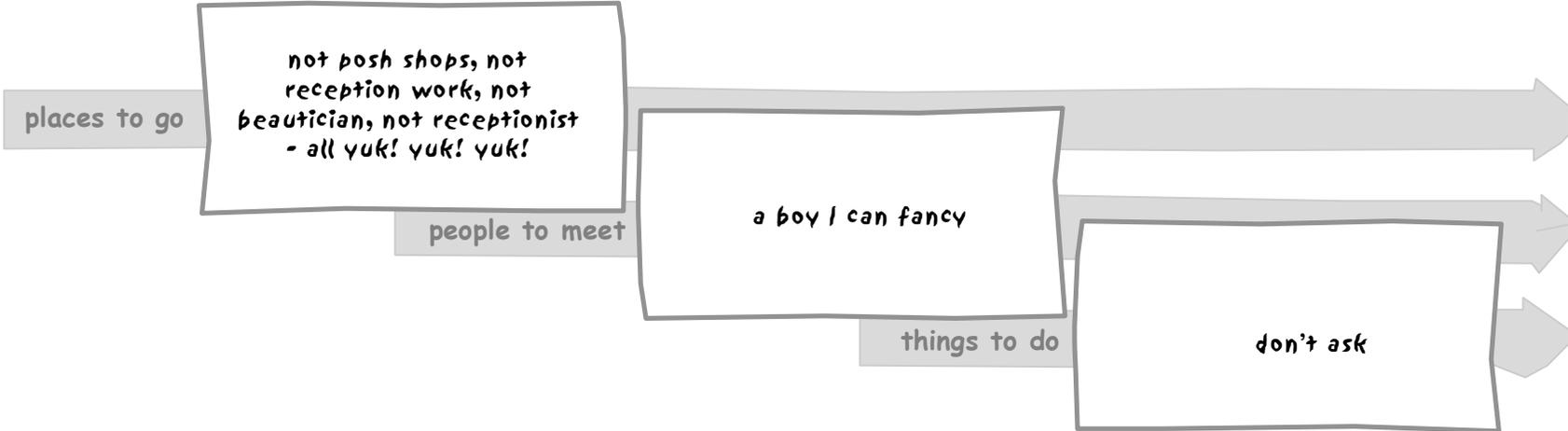
my ID

margarine

2
storyboarding



3
tutoring



10: Alice - rich kid

teacher's notes

Alice - 2 February

We've had a complaint from Alice's mother. She says our 'Get-to-Know-You' project was 'very unfortunate'.

Apparently Alice has become firm friend with another of our girls - Natalie - who lives on the New Bishop Estate.

The mother insist that Alice's has been conned into believing that it is alright to live like 'these people'. Alice 'actually' wants to bring 'this Natalie person' to her family home. And she has been come critical of the family's attitudes to poor people.

She says that if the scheme is to be repeated next year then we should take care to pair-off students in a more suitable way - so that 'like spends time with like'. She says that she did not send her daughter to school to be turned into a 'riff-raff'.

1

Alice has also told her parents that she is changing her mind about career. She does not want now to follow her father into financial services. She is thinking about social work.

Her mother claims that her husband is 'aghast'. But we haven't heard from him directly.

Mr Timms (adviser) confirmed that Alice had dropped in to search the data-base on 'work that helps others!'.

Somebody should talk to Alice.

And we must reply to the mother's letter.

2

my - scene - page

1
developing ideas

ideas for my opening scene

our house

the chav's estate

bike pinched

ideas for my big scene

'the get-to-know' scheme

Natalie

Natalie's life

ideas for my following scene

Mum hopes I won't see Natalie again

But I might

I was wrong - pure ignorance
everybody at home was wrong

my ID

Alice

2
storyboarding

opening scene

open on good house in Clapham - show car, garden, street

show chavs walking by

me saying 'you can always tell them from what they wear, how they walk and their makeup'

show me worrying about 'get-to-know-you' project

big scene

I am paired with Natalie - and I don't like it

I go to Natalie's house - feeling nervous

We show each other our home pages - and we start to laugh and joke

Natalie tells me about her family - her mother and her little brother she looks after

following scene

show Mum saying 'I do not want you to see Natalie again' - I think I might!

show me thinking 'I was wrong - it was pure ignorance'

show me working out what to say to Mum and dad - 'we were all wrong'

3
tutoring

places to go

I ought to know more about the people who live on the estate - they are not scary

people to meet

I want to meet Natalie again - but I can't tell her what I thought before I met her

things to do

I can't exactly see myself becoming a social worker - I don't know what I exactly can do about this

11. Mary - and the maths teacher

researcher's notes

Mary - 15 November

My mother and father have never given the slightest credence to any doubts about my future as a poet. 'Shit, you can do whatever you feel like, Pokey', Daddy would say, while my mother would claim 'those idiots at school wouldn't know poetry from piss ants'.

But Mr Briggs is telling me that I'll need math more than I know. 'Actually', I say, 'I intend to be a poet, sir'...

'How you plan to get folks to pay you for it?'. This stumps me a minute. Finally, I say, 'I'll sell my books'.

'How much you think that'll make you?' he says... I want to say he's being unfair. But I can't quite locate the unfairness of it... I peel the bottom of one sweaty thigh up from where it's stuck to the chair and tug down my skirt...

1

Briggs waves his hand saying, 'Let's drop the poet thing. It's true you don't need math to write poetry. But any other task you undertake will require a thorough grounding in mathematics'...

My own silence nudges me to the edge of tears...

I know better than to invite Mr Briggs into the various lives I've constructed for myself - an apartment in New York, a beachcomber's hut, a Victorian mansion surrounded by a maze-like garden.

2

based on: Mary Karr (2001). 'Girl's stuff'. The Guardian Weekend, 16/06/2009

my - scene - page

1
developing ideas

ideas for my opening scene

the farm
Mom and Dad
being a poet

ideas for my big scene

at school
Mr Briggs
made me sweat and cry - so I know what I'm going to do

ideas for my following scene

so everything I do will be aimed at getting what I want most of all
and I have Mr Briggs to thank for that

my ID

Contrary Mary

2
storyboarding

opening scene

they know nothing Mary

whatever you want Mary

I'm going to write and sell poems

you've got to do better at math

following scene

florida

edinburgh

thanks Mom - thanks Dad - I'm really gonna be a poet

famous past students

he doesn't believe me - but he's wrong - I WILL do this

I'll never forget Mr Briggs

3
futuring

places to go

I so need to see New York as soon as possible

people to meet

I've never actually met a poet who sells books

things to do

stop worrying about math

12: Joey - his teachers and their boffs

researcher's notes

Joey - 9 September

Us lads found each other in Year Eight. We had our own ways of seeing things and doing things. We got drunk round each other's houses, and knocked each other about at school. We cheered each other up and took the piss out of the boffs. We're the grown ups, the boffs are children, and the teachers are our enemies. It makes you feel alive.

I asked me Mum what she wanted me to do for work - and she said there'd be no point in telling me. 'You'd do what you like anyway. And anyway you'll hate work - like I hate it'. So I thought 'Ah well!'. We'll all be labourers and things like that. You can enjoy anything if you push the bad things aside and have a laugh.

1

That's the most important thing in life. You'd go berserk if you couldn't have a laugh. It's not the teachers who give you your future. I couldn't survive on the money I'd make from any job they could help me get. They're no better than us. What matters is the kids you go with: we live now - the boffs have got to wait a bit before they start living. We know what we're doing and why we do it. We never stop talking about it. There are not many people like that.

We're special!

2

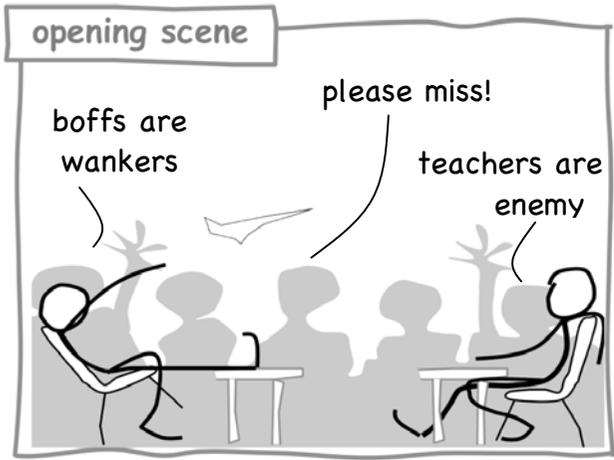
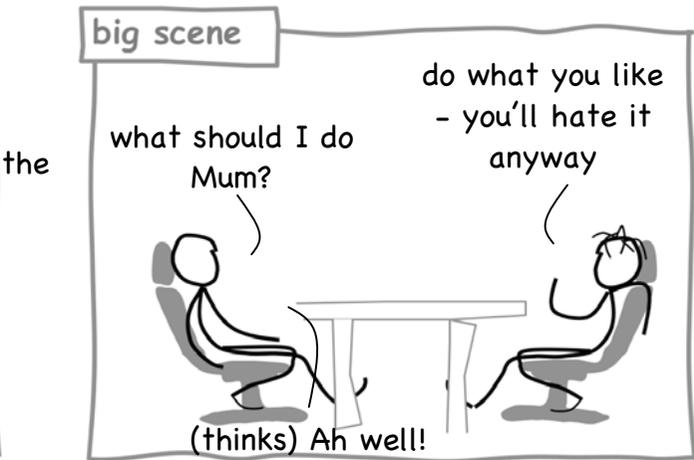
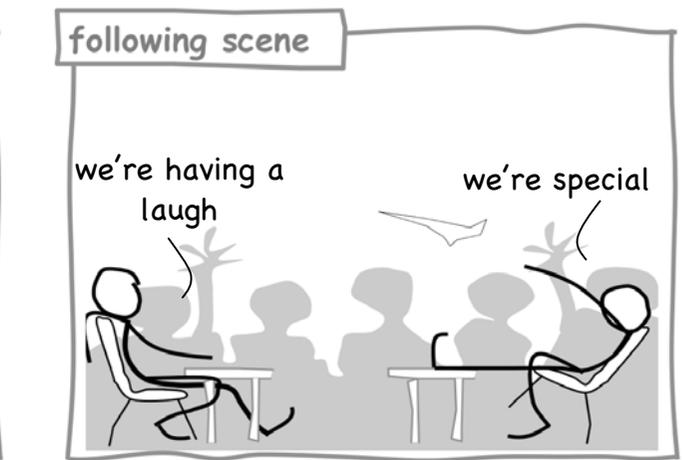
based on: Paul Willis (1978). Learning to Labour - How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs. Farnborough: Saxon House, 1978 - abstracted at: <http://www.hihohiho.com/magazine/reallives/cafjoeey.html>.

my - scene - page

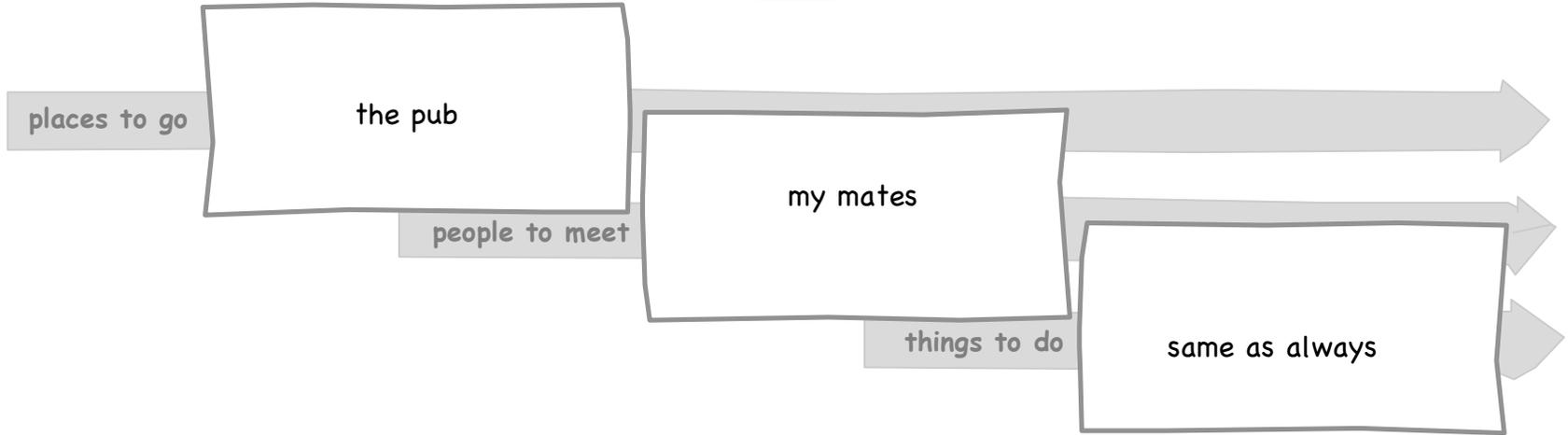
1 developing ideas

<p>ideas for my opening scene</p> <p>friends for a long time</p> <p><u>drinking and laughing</u></p> <p>boffs and teachers</p>	<p>ideas for my big scene</p> <p><u>Mum</u></p> <p>why should I care?</p>	<p>ideas for my following scene</p> <p>getting your life the way you want it now</p>	<p>my ID</p> <p>Pal Joey</p>
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2 storyboarding

<p>opening scene</p> <p>boffs are wankers</p> <p>please miss!</p> <p>teachers are the enemy</p> 	<p>big scene</p> <p>what should I do Mum?</p> <p>do what you like - you'll hate it anyway</p> <p>(thinks) Ah well!</p> 	<p>following scene</p> <p>we're having a laugh</p> <p>we're special</p> 
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3 futuring



why like this?

graphics

The filmic framing of three-scene storyboarding calls on both words and images. Images have a language of their own - not least for showing locations, relationships and feelings. And, although a storyboard can be assembled without drawing, drawing has a way of physically engaging an embodied person.

journey and race

The format sets in motion an exploratory process. It is not looking for immediate answers to competitive questions. It is inviting people on a journey, rather than entering them in a race. It looks for new possibilities – enlarging thinking and feeling.

But life does sometimes call for a person to look good in selection and recruitment situations. And having your own distinctive story can help with that – especially when the most searching question come up....

- ... 'what gave you the idea of applying for this?'
- ... 'why do you want to join us?'
- ... 'what is it that you have particularly to bring to us?'

Recruiters and selectors are looking for distinctive responses to questions like these. They are not impressed by ready-made clichés. Storyboarding elicits a narrative which is distinctively each person's own.

voice

All of this means that storyboarding opens a conversation which cannot be structured in advance. There can be no ready-made effectiveness criteria.

Storyboarding is evaluated, not in terms of imposed criteria, but in terms of the uses that people actually make of it. And, for that, we have to wait for them to tell us. Each storyboard express each person's distinctive voice.

continued/...

.../continued

learning for living

Storyboarding sets down both formal and informal experience. No matter how confusing and pointless that experience may seem, storyboarding enables people each to attribute their own meaning to it, and to realise their own purposes out of that meaning.

It is, then, learning how to learn – necessary if people are to take on-going control of their own lives.

well-being

Storyboarding is designed to engage students in reflecting on how they might move on - from a remembered past to an imagined future. The focus on a turning-point opens doors to unforeseen possibilities and ready-for-anything flexibility. This is an enabler of personal and social well-being – life-wide and life-long...

- ... noticing what might otherwise be missed - learning from surprise
- ... knowing what to hold onto, and what to let go
- ... finding what drives, and grasping hope for its realisation
- ... getting fired-up for sustained commitment to that action

professionalism

The learning is also professionally useful – it can be...

- ... **in helping:** an additional method for engaging learning from experience
- ... **in enquiry:** collected into a collated account – useful for reform

for a detailed account of the theory-and-practice of storyboarding go to:

<http://www.hihohiho.com/storyboarding/sbL4L.pdf>

a presentation at:

<http://www.hihohiho.com/storyboarding/sbstrybrd.ppt>