



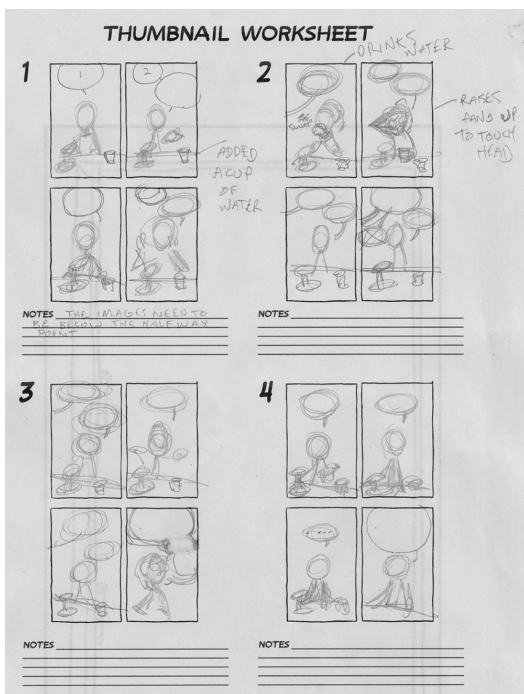
Notes On Thumbnailing

Thumbnailing is one of the first steps towards getting your drawings together for your final comic. Almost all artists do thumbnails before doing their drawings, and most swear by the practice of thumbnailing. In the thumbnailing stage you will concentrate mostly on organizing your ideas and thoughts onto the page before you start concentrating on details. This will help you build a flow into the stream of information you are presenting with your final comic.

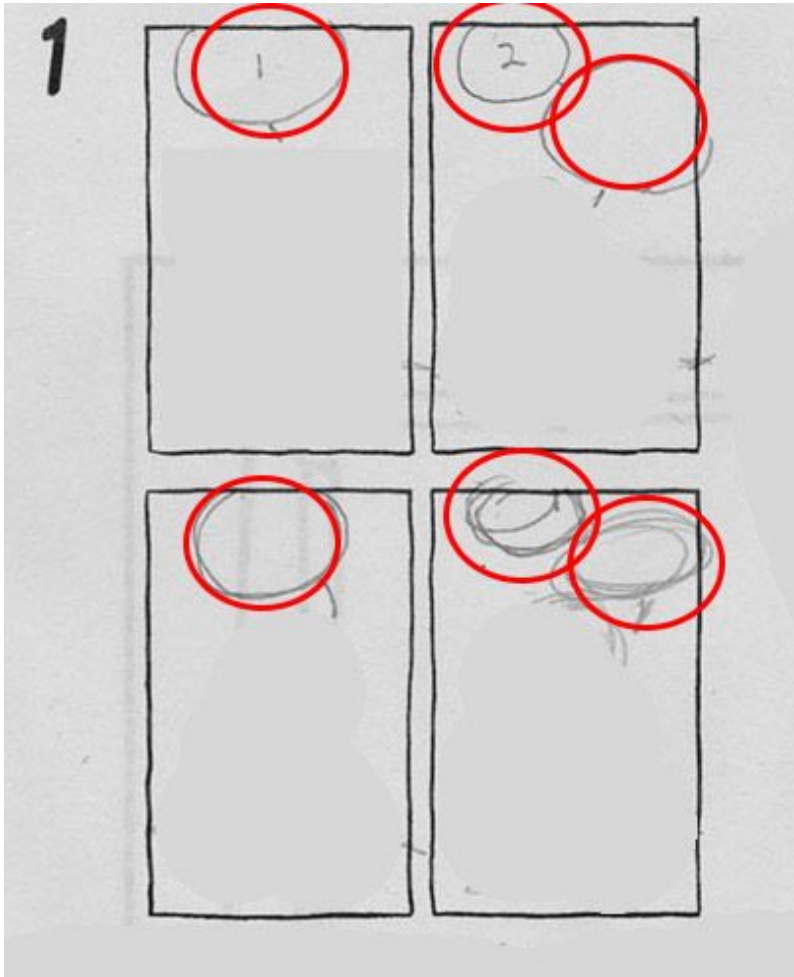
Thumbnailing will also allow you to see if the way you scripted actually works on the printed page. Sometimes you will have too much information in your script and it won't fit into the panel you have designated for it. You will have to decide whether the information that didn't fit will go into the next panel or be cut from the story altogether. Another situation that you could find yourself in is having more room in a certain panel for information and when you decide to shift more information into that panel you will have to alter the script. These are the decisions you will make during the thumbnailing process. It is better to make these structural changes with your loose drawings (thumbnails) than it will be when you have spent hours working on pencils and inks for a page.

1. Remember To Be Loose

This is an example of a finished [thumbnail worksheet](#). Notice how the drawings are tiny, loose, and defined. Notice how the world bubbles don't have words in them, but are still placed on the page. In this tutorial we will walk through the steps to filling out your thumbnail worksheet to look like the one below.



2. Start With Word Balloons



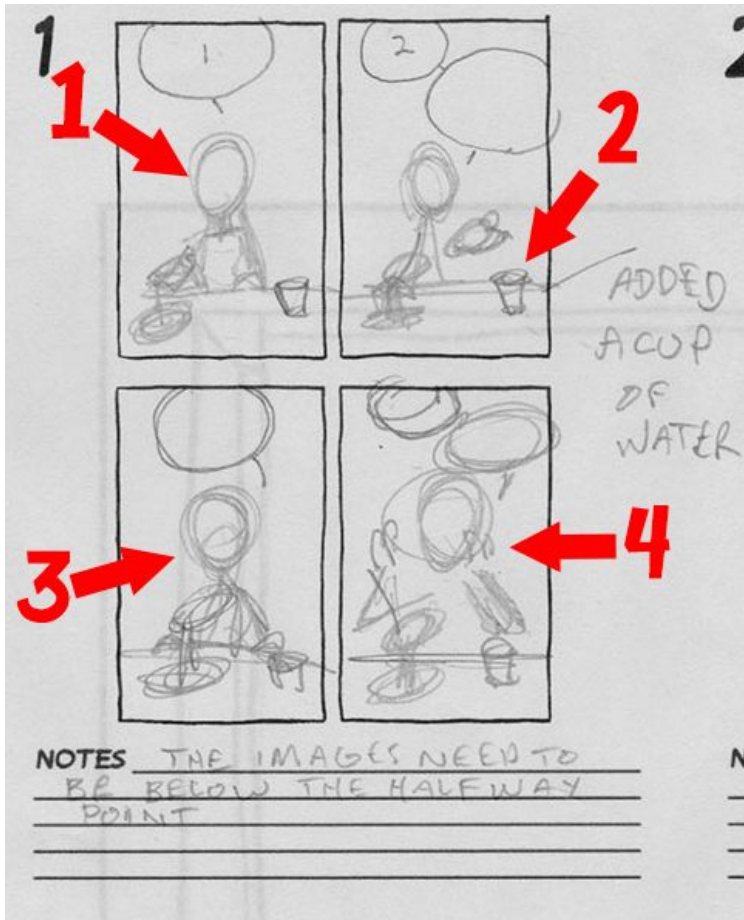
The first thing we are going to look at is word bubble placement. A word bubble is a space on the comic page that indicates to the reader that the written words on the page are being said by somebody on the page. (The tail of the word bubble is the part of the bubble that points to the mouth of the person talking, indicating that person is speaking).

Look at your script. In panel 1 of page one what is being said? Is it a big sentence or a small sentence? Draw your word bubbles to fit how big you think the bubble needs to be to fit all of the words. When doing this first step of thumbnailing also pay close attention to what you will need to draw for images later. Remember to leave room, after adding your bubbles, for an image to fit into the remainder of the panel according to what the script dictates.

3. Draw Simple

In this next step we are going to concentrate on adding simple drawings into the panels. The thing to really concentrate on during this step is drawing quickly and loosely. Remember that thumbnail drawings are mostly notes to yourself for later when you are working on the big pages.

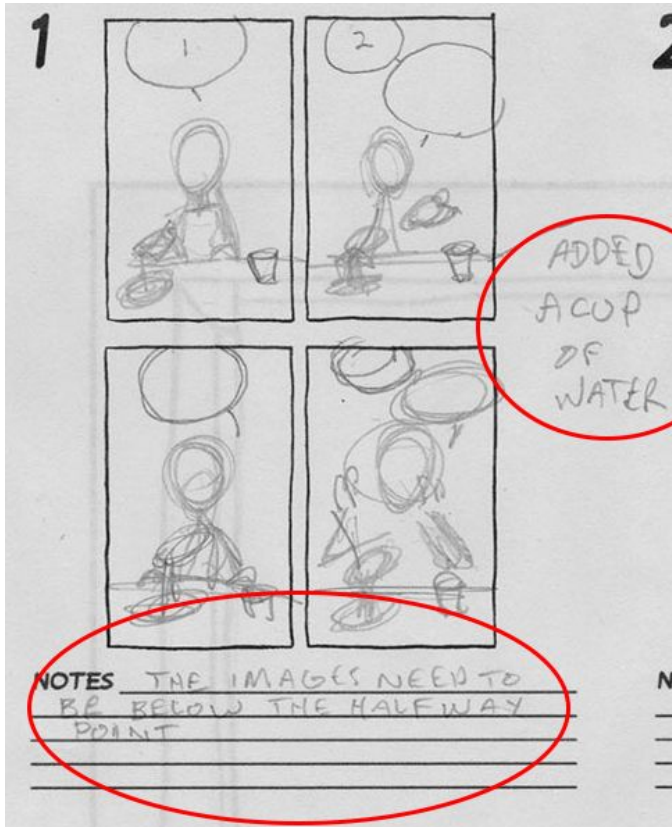
Consistently refer back to your script and make sure that all the necessary drawn elements have **room** in your comic. You do not want to “squish” elements in to fit. During the thumbnail stage you can look at your script and your page an edit to make sure that everything fits together before moving on to the bigger drawings.



1. In this panel all that is needed is the subject (the girl teacher interviewed for the model comic page), the microphone, the table she is sitting at, and a cup of drinking water.
2. In this panel she raises her hand. Notice I indicate that she raises her hand by drawing a blob on the page. That is ok to do because we are thumbnailing. If you think that, later in the process, that you will forget that the hand blob is meant to be a hand, just jot a note down for yourself next to the panel that it is a hand.
3. Check out how loose those drawings are. Remember - details aren't necessary at this stage!
4. In this panel you will notice that she raises her hands to make her fingers make the quoting motion. I did this by making the sketches indicate she is doing this with blob shapes so that I would remember to do it this way for later.

4. Take Notes While You Work

The function of note-taking during the thumbnail process is very important. Remember to add notes as you go so you can remind yourself later that you made these alterations to your material during the thumbnail process. This will help you with communication about what is happening to your group as you make changes to your page.



Notes on this page explained:

You will notice that there are two notes on this page. One says “Added a cup of water” and the other, below the thumbnail says “The images need to be below the halfway point”.

When this page was being created the script did not call for a cup of water. The cup of water was added during the thumbnail creation process as it helps add more to the page. It is ok to come up with new ideas for how to make your comic more dynamic, like this one, as you are doing your thumbnails. This is what thumbnails are for!

The second note refers to the fact that the character, as she is appearing in the same space within all of the panels being created, needs to be below the halfway point within the panel. This is great to realize during the thumbnailing process because it means I can place my illustrations in the correct area when I work on my final art for the comic.

5.

Here is the finished thumbnail workshee for my comic "[Protest Rap](#)" made with the same worksheets you are working with.

THUMBNAIL WORKSHEET

1

ADDED A CUP OF WATER

NOTES THE IMAGES NEED TO BE BELOW THE HALF WAY POINT

2

DRINKS WATER

RAISES HAND UP TO TOUCH HEAD

NOTES

3

NOTES

4

NOTES