

KIMMI

Queen of the Dingoes



FAVEL PARRETT

TEACHERS RESOURCES

KIMMI

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Teachers Resources by Robyn Sheahan-Bright

Introduction	3
Themes & Curriculum Topics	3
Science	
Humanities & Social Sciences (HASS)	
English Language & Literacy	
Visual Literacy	
Creative Arts	
Learning Techniques	
Mathematics	
Further Topics for Discussion and Research	7
Conclusion	7
About the Author	8
About the Author of the Notes	8
Worksheets	9
Bibliography	13

INTRODUCTION

'Kimmi has great hope that one day soon, all dingoes will be free again. And until that day, she will watch over the sanctuary – her home. She will show all the Humans who come to visit that dingoes are the most incredible animal in the world.' (p 129)

A tale of incredible courage and survival, this is the true story of Kimmi, Queen of the Dingoes, told with passion and heart by one of Australia's most beloved storytellers and dingo advocates. The perfect companion to *Wandi*, also by Favel Parrett.

On the night of a full moon, a small tropical dingo cub is born. And it is her destiny to travel far from home to change things for her kind.

Kimmi sleeps with her mama at her back, her aunty at her front and her three brothers squeezed in beside her. They are a family. But when the farmer who took her father returns to threaten the rest of them, Kimmi is separated from her mama.

In an incredible act of determination, Kimmi's mama runs over mountain tops and dusty red earth to spend one last day with her cub and share with her the knowledge that will one day make her a queen.

This is Kimmi's story, the story of how she became Queen of the Dingoes in a sanctuary that saves them from extinction. It is her mama's story, too. But mostly it is a story that goes back thousands of years, and follows the long line of female dingoes they belong to.

An inspiring true story of survival and courage from one of Australia's best-loved writers.

'You know, I was thinking we could name you Kimberley, after the place you were born. Your home. What do you think?' She didn't move. 'No,' Lyn said. 'Maybe that isn't right. What about Kimmi for short?' (p 94)

THEMES & CURRICULUM TOPICS

SCIENCE

'Australian Curriculum: Science' <<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/science/>>

DINGOES

Discussion Point: This novel reveals many facts about dingoes. 'You just wait. People will come to see you, and they'll learn how intelligent and important you are. Tropical dingoes are the most intelligent of all dingoes, and dingoes are the most intelligent dog species on this Earth.' (p 102) Later Kimmi meets Aussie who says: 'I am an alpine dingo! Can't you tell? Look at my thick coat and bushy tail!' (p 107) Research further facts about dingoes.

Discussion Point: Kimmi learns from her mother Ding how to swim and to value her female strengths. What else does she learn from her mother?

Discussion Point: Did you know that dingoes can climb? This is referred to in the novel: 'She leapt up and desperately searched for a safe place. She had to get to higher ground. She jumped up onto a kind of ledge, and as she landed, lots of things tumbled onto the ground. She

continued to climb, and more things fell.’ (p 93) What other unusual facts about these animals have you discovered?

Discussion Point: Dingoes are not popular in some parts of rural Australia where they are considered pests and where eradication is recommended. ‘The world’s longest fence, a 5,600km barrier in place since the late 19th century, runs from western SA through the Strzelecki Desert and across southern Queensland in an attempt to keep dingoes away from grazing land in the south-east.’ (Morton, 2021) But in contrast, Landholders for Dingoes is an organisation recently formed by beef producers and property owners promoting the importance of dingoes in their property management. Why and how should we protect them? Should there be an education program to teach people about the role dingoes play in our ecosystem?

Discussion Point: Kimmi’s mother answers her question: ‘Why did the other Human want to kill us?’ Her mama sighed. ‘There are good Humans and bad Humans. There are Humans who hate us and Humans who understand us.’

(p 23) Discuss how this quote relates to the action in this novel. Research the treatment of dingoes by humans. Dingoes receive poor current media coverage due to the incidence of attacks on humans in places such as K’gari (formerly Fraser Island) in Queensland. Research human attitudes to dingoes.

Discussion Point: Protection of dingoes from human destruction often means separating members of a family. In this novel, the kind female human has been able to find sanctuary for Ding’s family but only in different facilities: ‘I know, me too. But we just can’t keep them all safe here. He will find them and kill them. I just wish I could find a place to take them all so they could be together. I’ve tried everywhere.’ (p 27) Is it kind to separate dingo families, even when they are to be better cared for?

Discussion Point: Ding evinces the incredible instincts of a dingo. ‘But one early one morning, she finally smelt it. Home. She was close – maybe three days travel, if she was fast.’ (p 57) What did you learn about the instincts of dingoes in reading this novel?

Activity: At the end of the book, there is a special information section ‘Tropical Dingoes – Australia’s Climbing Canids’ by Kevin D Newman Sanctuary supervisor, and Kimmi’s favourite climbing frame, at the Dingo Discovery Sanctuary and Research Centre (p 133). Discuss the information contained in this section and encourage students to research these topics further. [See also **Worksheet 2 Quiz.**]

Discussion Point: Students can meet Kimmi, Wandi, Aussie and other rescued dingoes at the Dingo *Discovery, Sanctuary, Research and Education Centre* and on their website here: <<https://dingofoundation.org/our-dingoes/>> Research this topic further.

FEMALE STRENGTH AND INTUITION

Discussion Point: “You must leave, daughter, so that you survive. So that your cubs survive,’ her mama explained. ‘You come from a long line of strong females. A long line of queens. We are the most intelligent female dingoes in the land. We are strong, and special. And our line must go on. Do you understand?’ She nodded. Deep down, she did understand. Somehow, she could sense her female ancestors, feel their power inside her.” (p 69) What did Ding imply about female power in this quote?

Discussion Point: Discuss the following quotes: ‘They didn’t sleep, because there was one more thing her mama had to tell her. One more gift from her female ancestors that she would need to truly be a queen: how to use her intuition. Her mama told her that if she really concentrated, if her heart connection was true, she could use it to communicate, just like her aunty and mama

could. They could be in different places and still sense each other.’ (p 79)

‘Intuition is a tool and a weapon if we need it. It is a way to survive. And your intuition is strong. I can feel it.’ (p 80)

‘Courage does not mean you do not get frightened. Courage means you go ahead even when you are terribly afraid, and this is how you grow more powerful.’ (p 81)

‘As a queen, you will rule. But you must rule kindly,’ Lyn said.’ (p 102)

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES (HASS)

‘Australian Curriculum: HASS’ <[https:// www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/humanities-and-social-sciences](https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/humanities-and-social-sciences)>

FIRST NATIONS CULTURAL BELIEFS

Discussion Point: The novel opens with an acknowledgment of country on the imprint page, acknowledging and paying respects to the custodians of that land.

How do First Nations peoples regard the dingo? Do they have particular beliefs about the role which a dingo plays in the landscape?

Discussion Point: *Dingo Culture* <<https://www.dingoculture.com/about>> is an organization founded ‘to provide the First Nations’ voice specifically to the Dingo debate in Australia and create change in legislation to protect culturally significant native fauna and flora. ate change in legislation to protect culturally significant native fauna and flora.’ Study their work.

FRIENDSHIP

Discussion Point: These are my dingoes,’ it said. ‘I know them.’ The tall animal did not move. ‘Get away!’ it shouted. ‘These are wild dogs! They’re not your pets!’ (p 11) Kimmi is told by her mother that the humans call her Ding and her sister (and her Aunty) Toto. The mother and child become their friends and later Kimmi finds a friend in Lyn at the Sanctuary. Read more about the importance of the relationship between dingoes and humans.

Discussion Point: Kimmi becomes friends with Aussie and Rio at the sanctuary. What attracts her to either character?

FAMILY

Discussion Point: Ding faces a moral dilemma when Toto is injured and their journey home to the babies is halted: ‘Dear sister’, she said, ‘if you have any chance of seeing your cubs again, you have to go now. You must try, Ding. You must go on without me.’ Ding’s heart felt like it would tear apart. She needed to see her babies but she could not leave her sister. For one of the first times in her life, she did not know what to do.’ (p 46) How would you have felt if faced with a similar dilemma?

Discussion Point: What does Kimmi’s family represent to her?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERACY

'Australian Curriculum: English' <[https:// www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/english/](https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/english/)>

The text of this book might be studied in relation to the following aspects:

Activity: This novel is written in third person, past tense. Re-write a section as if written by Kimmi.

Activity: Invite students to write an expository text about a dingo. There are different types of expository writing, eg. descriptive, sequential, cause/effect etc. [See **Bibliography**.]

Activity: Test your students' comprehension by asking them questions about the written text. [See also **Worksheet 2**.]

Activity: Write a lyrical poem about a dingo using models written by published poets. [See **Bibliography**.]

Activity: Invite students to write a simple cumulative text as the basis for a picture book about Kimmi and Aussie, using repetition, rhyme and rhythm.

Activity: Write an acrostic poem using the letters in Warrigal Kimmi.

VISUAL LITERACY

Australian Curriculum: Visual Arts <[https:// www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/visual-arts/](https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/visual-arts/)>

Activity: The cover of the book depicts a portrait of Kimmi wearing a crown. Design an alternative cover and make a classroom display of all the images.

Discussion Point: Create a storyboard for illustrating the picture book text you wrote under **English Language and Literacy** above. [Discuss the conventions of the picture book story format before embarking on this exercise.]

Activity: Several black and white drawings enhance this text. Invite students to create their own drawings of Kimmi. [See **Bibliography**.]

Activity: Create a drawing of a scene in this book. [See **Worksheet 1**. below.]

Activity: Create a comic page based on an incident in this book. [See **Worksheet 4**. below.]

CREATIVE ARTS

There are many creative activities suggested by this text:

1. **Craft:** Make a **Model** of Kimmi, using fimo clay. [See **Bibliography**.]

2. **Craft:** Make a **Dingo Mask**. [See **Worksheet 3**.]

3. **Writing and Illustration:** Create a **Dingo Scrapbook** to take note of fun facts about and responses to dingoes. Paste into the notebook any stories you unearth about dingoes in the

newspaper. Write down any reviews of books you read about dingoes. Include any drawings of dingoes that you do while studying this novel. [See **Bibliography**.]

4. Craft: Create a **Shoebox Diorama** depicting a dingo in its habitat. [See **Bibliography** for relevant resources.]

5. Script: Create a **Book Trailer** to promote this book. [See **Bibliography** for relevant resources.]

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES

Activity: Research topics suggested in these notes, online.

MATHEMATICS

Activity: Have fun investigating mathematical facts about dingoes such as their population numbers, their longevity, etc.

FURTHER TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH

- Visit Favel Parrett's website and view some of the other writing projects she has engaged in.
- Students might research this book in comparison to picture books, fiction and non-fiction books such as those listed in the **Bibliography**.
- Investigate any other topic suggested by this text.

CONCLUSION

Kimmi is another heartfelt plea for protection and understanding of dingoes by the author of *Wandi*. It is a moving and emotional tale of a family of dingoes separated but who remain in touch via their inner bonds and with the culture they represent.

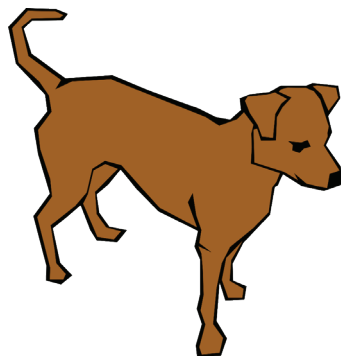
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In 2011, Favel Parrett's career was launched with her critically acclaimed debut *Past the Shallows*. A heart-breaking novel, it was sold internationally, shortlisted in the prestigious Miles Franklin Literary Award and won the Dobbie Literary Award. Favel herself won the ABIA Newcomer of the Year Award in 2012. Her next novel, *When the Night Comes*, was also critically acclaimed and further consolidated Favel's reputation with booksellers and readers. Favel's short stories have been published in various journals including *Island*, *Griffith Review* and *Wet Ink*. *There Was Still Love* was Favel's eagerly awaited third novel. *Wandi* is her first novel for children. *Wandi* was published in 2021.

For more information, visit favelparrett.com.au or twitter.com/favelparrett.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE NOTES

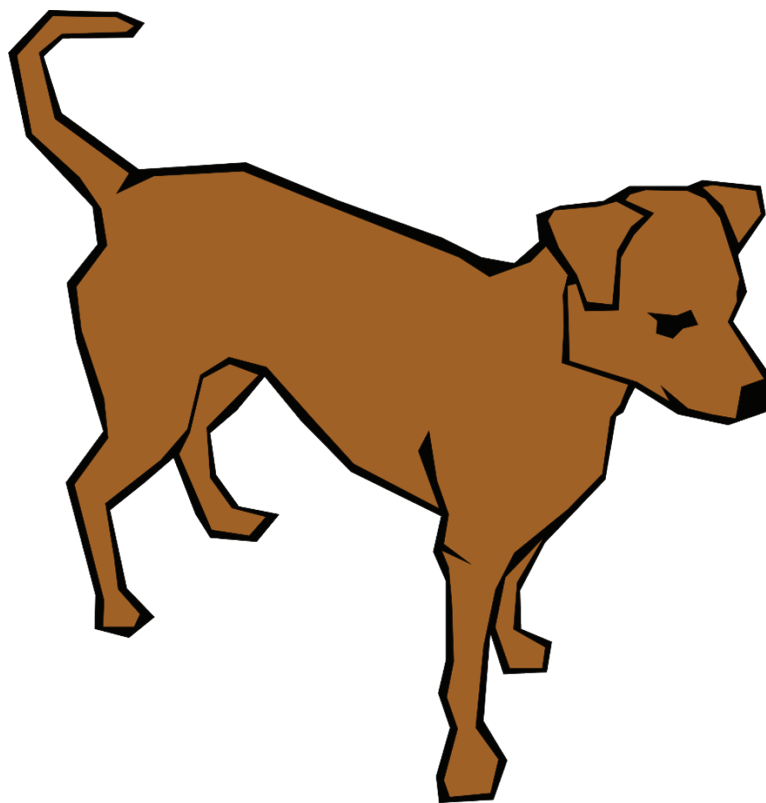
Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright operates justified text writing and publishing consultancy services, and is widely published on children's literature, publishing history and Australian fiction. In 2011 she was the recipient of the CBCA (Qld Branch) Dame Annabelle Rankin Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Queensland, and in 2012 the CBCA (National) Nan Chauncy Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Australia, and in 2014, the QWC's Johnno Award. In 2021 she was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia.



WORKSHEETS

WORKSHEET 1: CREATE A DRAWING

Use this image of a dingo as the basis for a drawing based on an incident in this book, by filling in the background (and other characters) if you wish. You can add a caption or dialogue below the image.



WORKSHEET 2: QUIZ

Answer these questions in the right hand column.

Question	Answer
1. What's the difference between alpine and tropical dingoes?	
2. Why do tropical dingoes love to climb?	
3. What role do dingoes play in the environment?	
4. In what ways can farmers protect livestock without killing or endangering dingoes?	
5. What type of dingo is Kimmi?	
6. How do dingoes communicate?	
7. How often do dingoes breed?	
8. When did dingoes arrive in Australia and the Oceania region?	
9. How long can dingoes live in the wild?	
10. Are dingoes polygamous or monogamous?	

Answers: 1. 'Alpine dingoes (like Wandji) have big, thick, fluffy coats in winter to help them survive the cold environments where they live – sometimes even snow! Tropical dingoes such as Kimmi don't need these big thick coats; instead, they have a much thinner and rougher coat.' (p 134) 2. 'Tropical dingoes love climbing, as this means they can chase food much more easily!' (p 135) 3. 'Part of their role in our environment is to make sure there aren't too many grass-eaters, or herbivores. Dingoes may also help control invasive species like feral cats or foxes.' (p 136) 4. 'Guardian animals, predator-proof fencing and stable dingo families are all different ways pastoralists could help reduce their stock loss while still protecting the dingoes!' (p 139) 5. A tropical dingo. 6. Via wolf-like howls. 7. Once a year. 8. Evidence suggests that they arrived in Oceania at least 8,300 years ago. 9. Up to ten years. 10. Monogamous.

WORKSHEET 3: DINGO MASK

Enlarge this on a photocopier. Then glue to craft paper. Cut it out, add elastic to each side, and you have a dingo mask to wear!

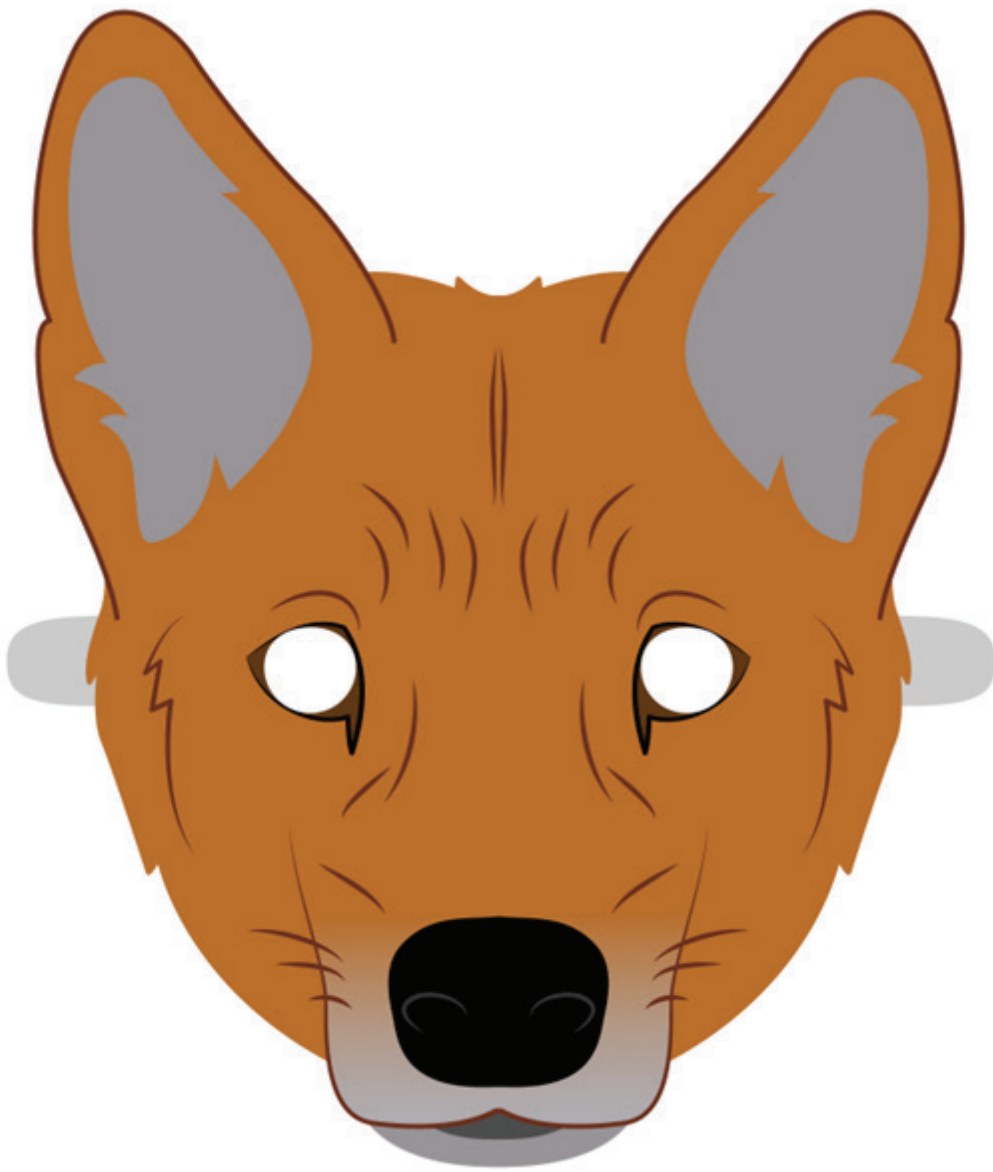


Image from: <www.supercoloring.com/paper-crafts/dingo-mask-template>

WORKSHEET 4: COMIC

Create a comic or graphic novel page of an incident in this novel. Use the devices of comics such as sound bubbles, captions etc.

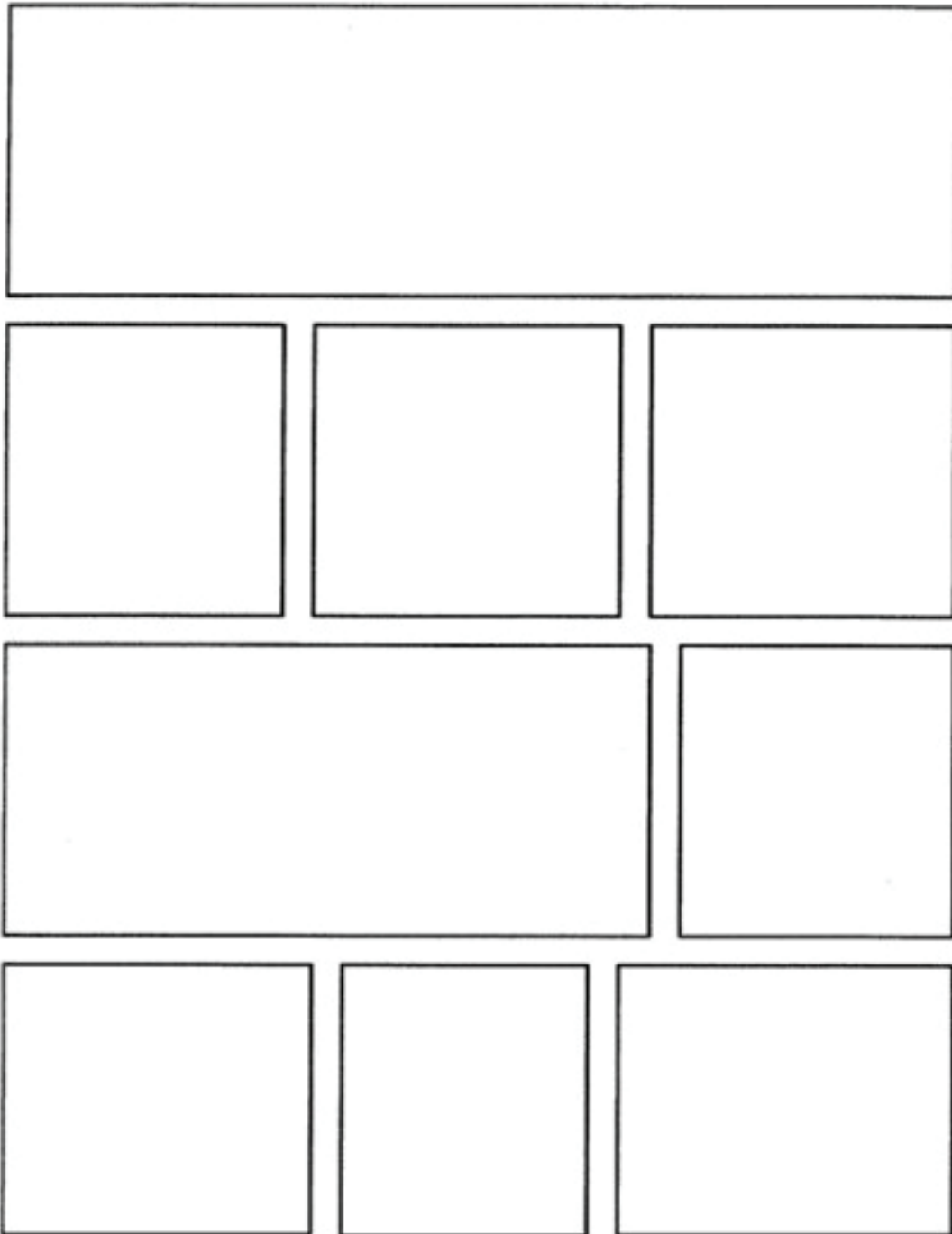


Image from: <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/3D/d5/2f/3dd52f68d81487824323f70cbe182a9a.jpg>

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