

Graphic Novel Activity Suggestions for *BINKY THE SPACE CAT*

Use these activities and discussion topics to explore the concepts introduced in *Binky the Space Cat*, including art, visual literacy, writing and creativity. For ages 7–10.

Activity Materials

- paper
- pencils, regular and colored
- pens
- photocopies of activities on pages 2, 3 and 4

Before Reading

A **graphic novel** is different from a picture book because it uses words and pictures in multiple sequential panels per page to tell a story. Introduce your group to the key elements of a graphic novel using the labeled example page from *Binky the Space Cat*.

1. Panel — a boxed picture that represents a moment in time or a single action

2. Word balloons — the bubble-shaped spaces in a panel that contain a character's spoken words

3. Captions — a rectangular box containing text that describes something related to the panel

4. Sound effects — words used in a panel to bring emphasis to a noise or sound

Ask the children in your group if they have ever read a graphic novel and what they enjoyed about it?

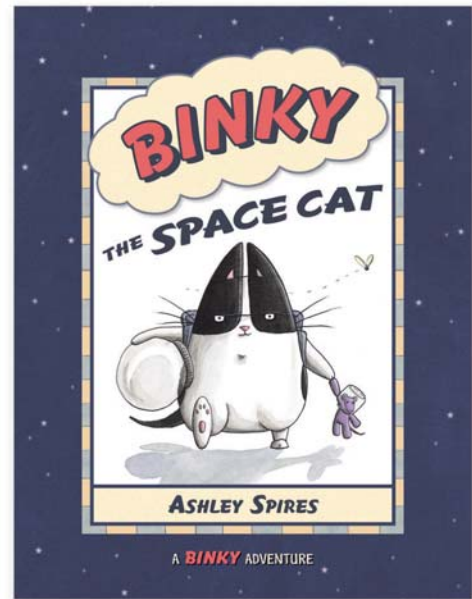


During Reading

Graphic novels tell a story through visuals and text. There are many ways to interpret what's happening from panel to panel and page to page. Have your group pay close attention to the following elements in their reading of *Binky the Space Cat*:

- facial expressions
- body language
- dialogue
- sequences
- sound effects
- captions
- visual points of view
- panel shapes

1. Ashley Spires uses three different panel shapes in *Binky the Space Cat*. What do each of the panel shapes and



their content tell the reader about what is happening in the story?

2. Find examples of Binky's different facial expressions. What is he feeling in each of the examples and how does it relate to what is happening in the story?

3. Binky does not speak in words or sentences but uses symbols or sounds to communicate. Find examples of symbols and cat sounds used to show what Binky is trying to say.

After Reading

Encourage creativity and further participation with the following printable activities:

1. How to Draw Binky the Space Cat

Using the step-by-step instructions on the provided activity page, have your group draw Binky. This should give the group an idea of how simple shapes can be used to create a character.

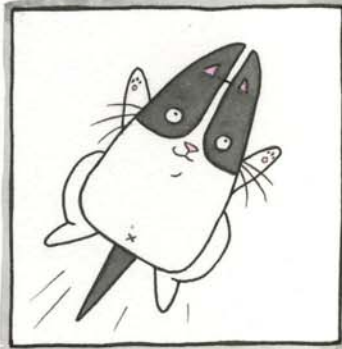
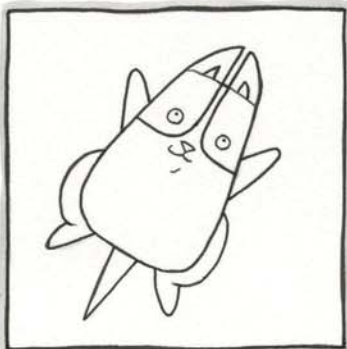
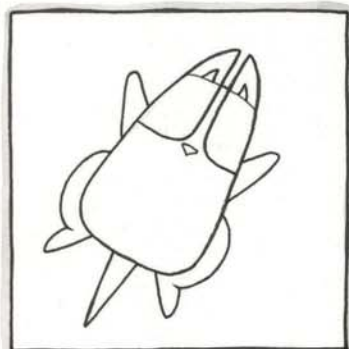
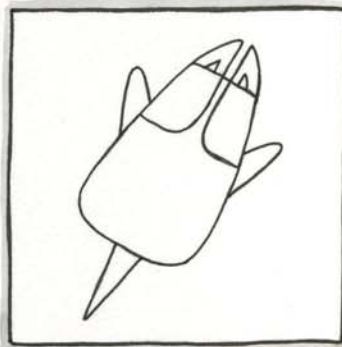
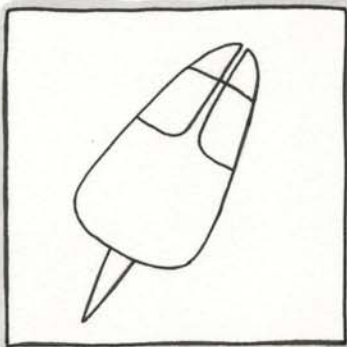
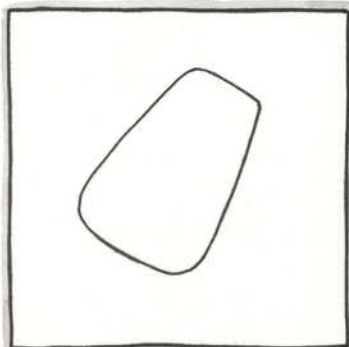
2. Graphic Novel Writing Activity

Using the reproduced page from *Binky the Space Cat*, have your group fill in new captions and dialogue to create their own scene. If they want, they can also add more sound effects.

3. Create a Secret Identity for Your Pet

With all of the skills learned, encourage your group to create their own comics using their pet (or the pet they'd like to have) as the main character. Have them come up with a secret identity — some suggestions might include a superhero, a spy or an alien.

Draw Binky in 6 Easy Steps!*



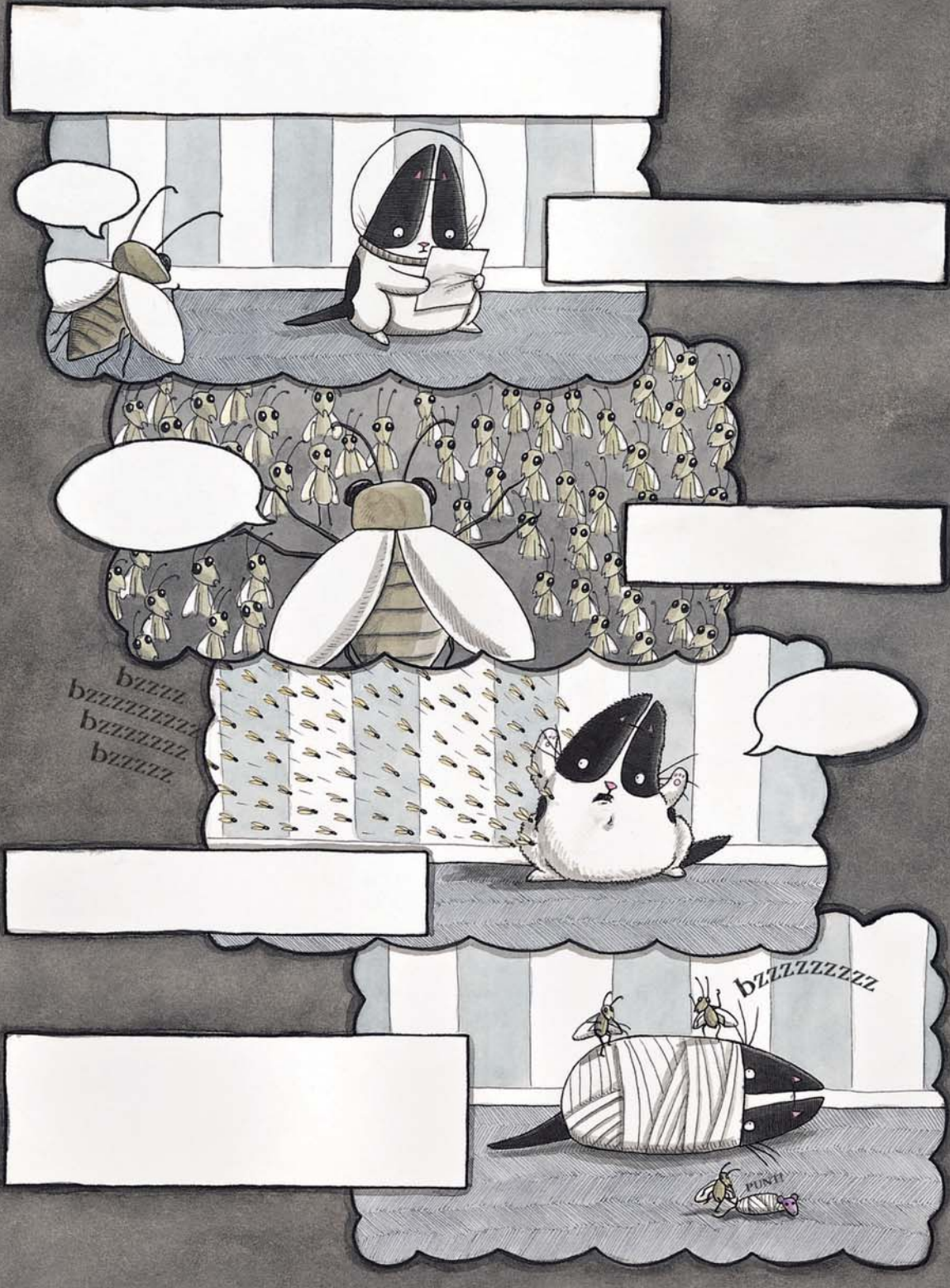
**This is a top secret document and is not intended for alien use.*

**Your drawing
goes here!**



Write the Next Binky Adventure!

Fill in the captions and word balloons below. Add sound effects for more excitement!



Create Your Own Comics Adventure!

Create a secret identity for your pet and use the panels below to draw your own comics. Be sure to include word balloons, captions and sound effects for an exciting graphic novel adventure.

