

DIY Comics Workshop A Success!

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By Marnie Ross

The kids of Rideau Lakes and Leeds and the Thousand Islands had a great time this March Break learning to draw comics with U.K. cartoonist and illustrator David Parkins. The event was a gift from Lakes and Islands Lifelong Learning, the Rideau Lakes and Leeds and Thousand Islands Libraries, and David Parkins and took place in 5 locations: Lombardy, Seeley's Bay, Elgin, Lansdowne and Portland.



The wonderful thing about David is his ability to make the complex, simple; he makes drawing look easy. He started with the traditional circle face and advanced to other shapes. Then he showed how to change expressions simply by changing the eyebrows and mouth. It was magical the way the expressions changed. "It was awesome!" said seven year old Ben Alan. "I also liked the teacher's funny faces". The children showed remarkable talent creating their own characters using these tips.

Then David went on to show that you need to draw heads the same size for all sizes of characters - just change the body size to show how large they are. Then he showed how to make the character look very large or small just by changing the horizon line. He explained everything so simply that everyone from the age of 4-60 understood. The beauty of it was it seemed so logical and easy to do.

Then the kids made up a joke or story on the theme: "What's That Smell?" which is for a comic strip contest in this month's edition of Owl Magazine which librarian Vicki Stevenson noticed. From that, they made a comic, 1-4 blocks long by putting in the captions and narrations first and making characters and talking bubbles next. No two were alike. The two hours flew by and it was amazing to see kids as young as four concentrate for that length of time especially considering we had groups of 20 or more at most libraries.

It was so good of David to donate his time to the children. We wish him luck in all his illustrating/graphic design ventures. Most of the kids, felt like participant 10 year old Simon Start when he said, "I wished there was more lesson time."