

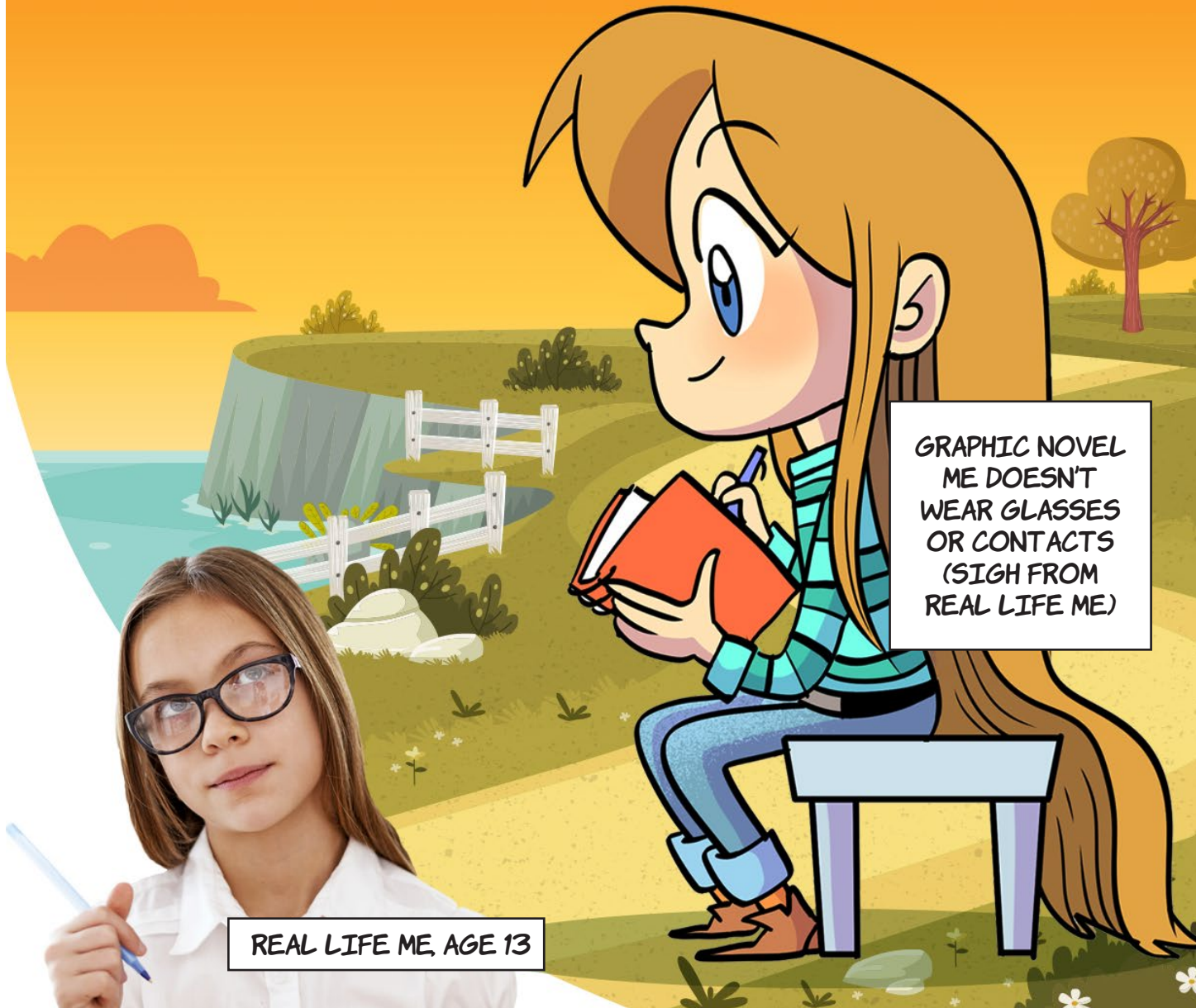


GWEN'S GRAPHIC NOVELS

EVERYONE HAS A STORY TO TELL



Hi, I'm Gwen, and I'm working on ONE BIG GRAPHIC NOVEL about my life -- things that really happen and things I make up (because let's face it, I'm a fantasy nerd). The stories usually start with a problem or opportunity in my REAL life (live action), then I draw about it in my GRAPHIC NOVEL (animation), and we go back and forth between the two until the end of the story. Mom says my graphic novels are full of "LIFE SKILLS" like empathy and problem-solving and creativity and communication (Mom is big on self improvement). Me? I'm just trying to tell a great story!



GWEN



Hi, me again, Gwen. I'm 11, I'm a little (a lot) shy, and I want to be a graphic novelist when I grow up. A FAMOUS graphic novelist. A famous AWARD-WINNING graphic novelist. I'm shy, but not about my dreams.

Also? I think being a storyteller makes me a better person. I feel what my characters feel, which gives me, what's that word Mom loves? EMPATHY!

Like the time I was drawing a story about how annoying my brother was and I started crying. I'm not even kidding. Seeing things from HIS point of view? I felt sad for him -- and annoyed at his bossy big sister (whoever SHE is).

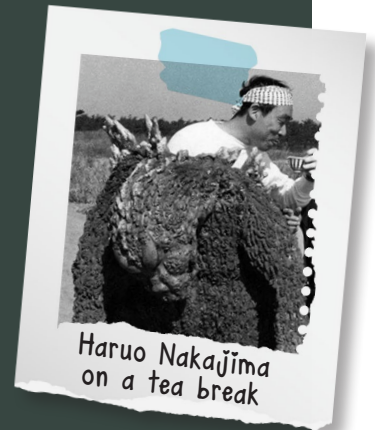
I used to think my life was boring. But when you see your life as a STORY? You notice things about yourself (and your world) you never knew before. I love that.

GODZILLA DREAMS

It all started when Walter watched an OLD Godzilla movie. No CGI, just a guy in a rubber suit. Still, it gave Walter nightmares. EVERY night. I'm not even kidding. Mom tried to tire him out by "playing" at the park. With mom, that's like a WORKOUT. Walter fell right asleep... but woke crying at 2 a.m. I guess what tires out the body doesn't always tire out the brain.

I did some research then started a graphic novel about Haruo Nakajima, the guy INSIDE the Godzilla suit. The suit weighed 200 pounds, so he could barely move. When he fell down he couldn't get up! I drew a bunch of stories about Haruo. Walter laughed so hard he almost peed his pj's. But at 2 a.m. the nightmares came back. Dad tried to replace Godzilla in Walter's head with happy movies. Aunt Zoe sang him "courage songs." Nothing worked.

One night, I couldn't sleep either so I kept working on the graphic novel. In the story, I gave Haruo a day off -- and Walter took his place INSIDE the Godzilla suit. I didn't know it at the time, but I had just drawn the cure to Walter's nightmares! What happened next was kind of amazing...



QUICK TIP

Google around and collect a TON of reference pics. Trust me, it helps to have some ideas BEFORE you start -- and it's fun too!



BOOK REVIEWS

There are WAY too many drawing books out there, I'm not even kidding. Check out my reviews and find the best books for you!

