

# HCI and Design

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# Admin

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Assignment 2 is due Thursday March 1st, 11:59pm.

Submit ONE REPORT per PAIR.

Submission available on Blackboard.

# Storytelling

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Stories are an effective and inexpensive way to capture, relate, and explore user experiences in the design process.

Two methods for storytelling:

1. **Written scenarios**

Written accounts and narratives of an experience

2. **Storyboards**

Visual storytelling with rough sketches/cartoons/comics

# Scenarios

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Short, written stories about people using technology in context

They use narrative as a design tool

Allow the user to imagine themselves in a particular situation

- Similar to books

- Imagination plays a role

Use **personas** as characters to develop empathy

# Components of a Scenario

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## Motivation

What prompted the persona to embark on the scenario?

## Context

Where is the person while the scenario is taking place? Does it change? Who else and where else is involved?

## Distractions

What kinds of distractions or interruptions typically occur and how does the persona deal with them?

## Goal

What is the persona's goal? Information seeking? An artifact? An emotion?

# Scenario Example

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Mr. and Mrs. Macomb are retired schoolteachers who are now in their 70s. Their Social Security checks are an important part of their income. They've just sold their big house and moved to a small apartment. They know that one of the many chores they need to do now is tell the Social Security Administration that they have moved. They don't know where the nearest Social Security office is and it's getting harder for them to do a lot of walking or driving. If it is easy and safe enough, they would like to use the computer to notify the Social Security Administration of their move. However, they are somewhat nervous about doing a task like this by computer. They never used computers in their jobs. However, their son, Steve, gave them a computer last year, set it up for them, and showed them how to use email and go to websites. They have never been to the Social Security Administration's website, so they don't know how it is organized. Also, they are reluctant to give out personal information online, so they want to know how safe it is to tell the agency about their new address this way.

# Storyboarding

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Storyboards are illustrations that represent a story.  
Images are arranged together to visualize the story.  
Invented by Walt Disney in the 1920s.

Visual storytelling with rough sketches/cartoons/comics.  
[A great way to bring a story to life!](#)

Storyboards can be used to:

- Describe a user's current situation (pre or post design).
- Describe a user's hypothetical experience using a new technology/design.

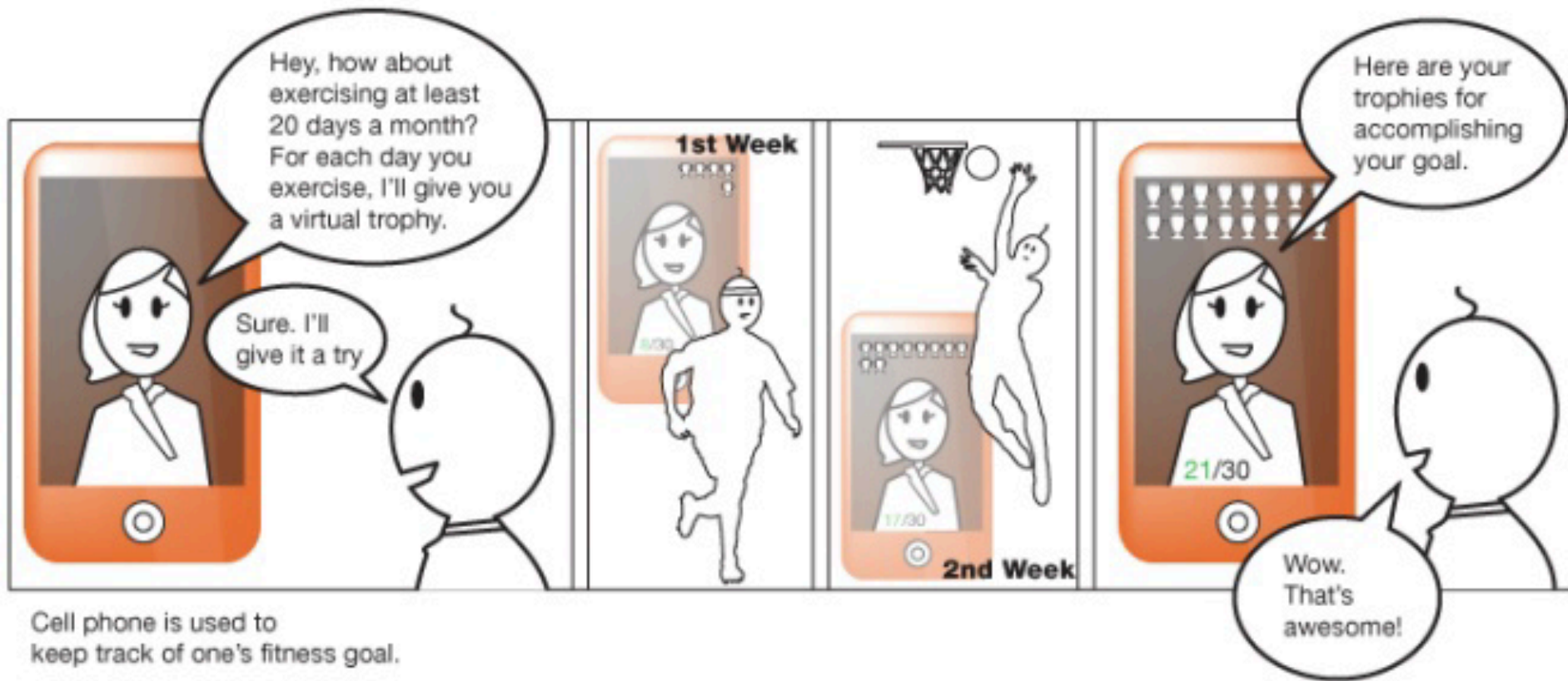
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Storyboarding is **NOT** the same as Paper Prototyping

We will cover paper prototyping next lecture.



# Storyboarding Example



# Storyboarding

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## Challenges:

Determining WHAT to draw is often hard

Drawing the wrong thing puts the focus on the wrong thing

Can be challenging to represent some things

e.g., time, attention

## Usefulness:

If done right, storyboards can give you quick, valuable feedback on early ideas

MUCH quicker/easier than building the whole app, system, or prototype

# Storyboarding

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Goal: Understand how your product or application fits into a larger context.

- Show a single scenario / tell a single story
- Use different storyboards to tell different stories
- Start by setting the stage:
  - Who? What? Where? Why? When?
- Then show key interactions
- Zoom back out and show the consequences of using the system/design/application
  - Could be satisfaction, but also think about errors

# How to make a storyboard?

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Figure out the story you want to tell

- Iterative process with lots of drafts

Do a lot of brainstorming

Define a scenario and break it into segments

- Start with simple text (captions) and arrows
- Add emotions
- THEN sketch visuals on paper

Generate more polished versions only when you have refined/finalized the story!

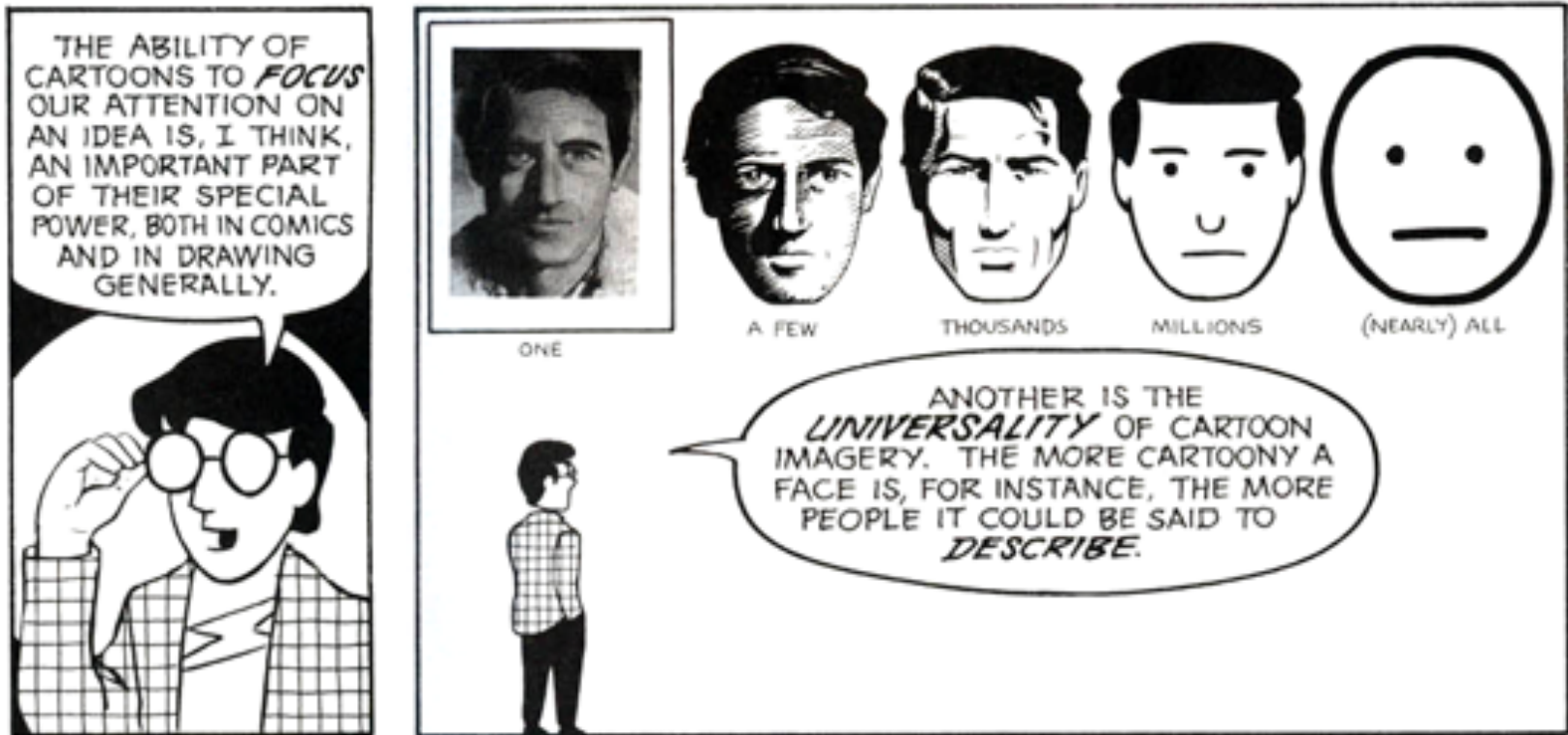
# Elements of a Storyboard

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Five key elements:

1. Level of detail
2. Inclusion of text
3. Inclusion of people (personas!) and emotions
4. Number of frames
5. Portrayal of time

# 1. How much detail?



Caution: Too much detail can lose universality!

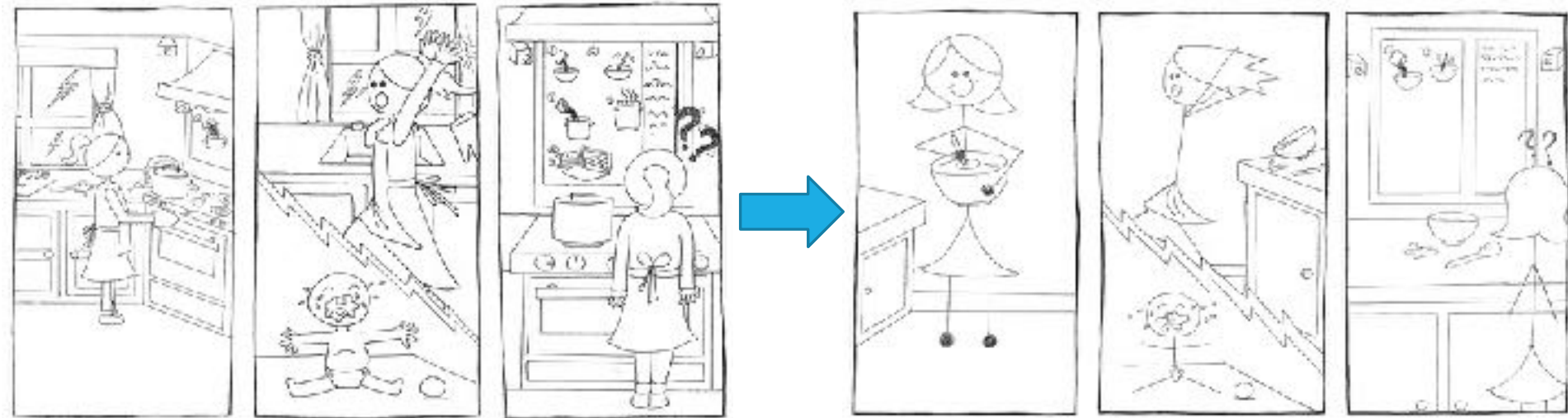
# 1. How much detail?

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I can't draw!!

Drawing *is* hard... But it doesn't have to be

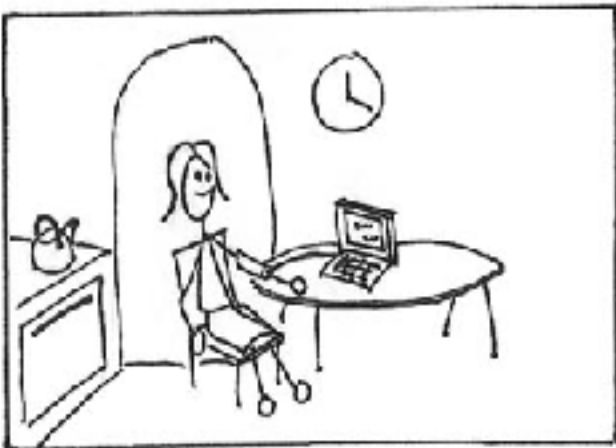
Spending too much time drawing details is unnecessary!



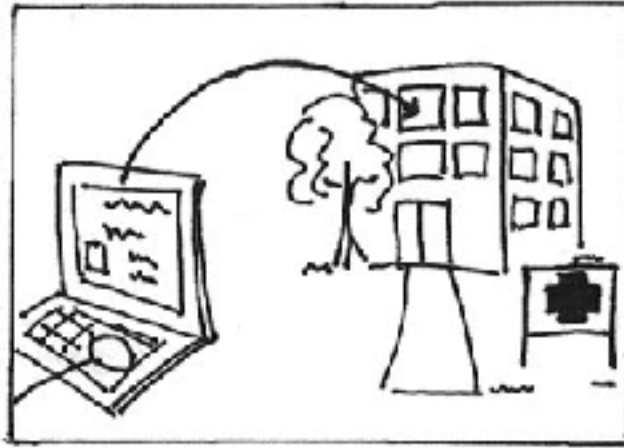
## 2. Use of Text

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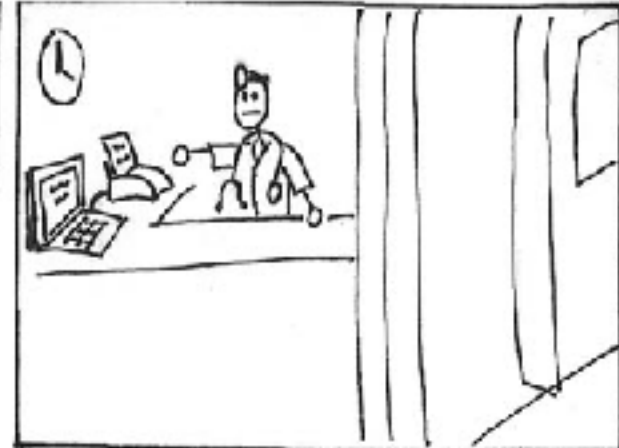
It is often necessary, and captions help  
BUT... keep it short!



1. At home, Mary checks her blood pressure.



2. After a few simple key presses, her blood pressure readings get sent to a clinic.



3. The information is made available to her doctor.

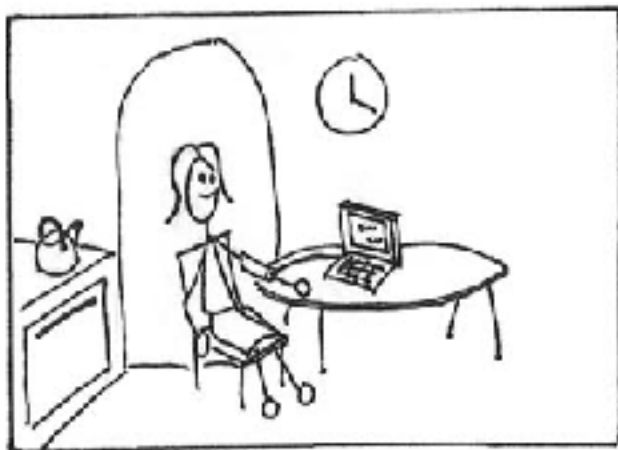


# 3. Include People and Emotions

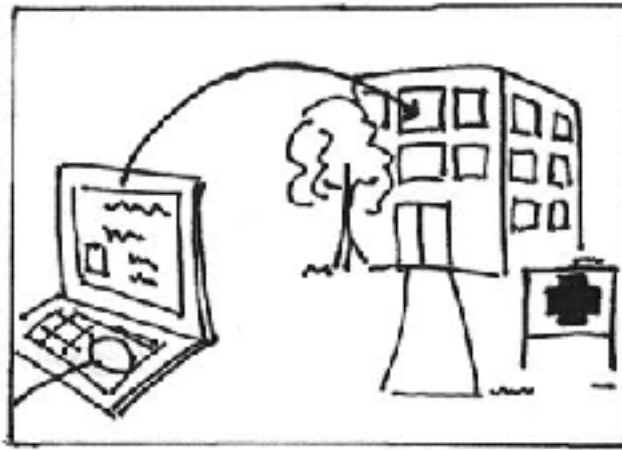
The point of storyboards is to convey the experience of using the system!

Include people experiencing the task/situation/design and their reactions to it.... Both good and bad!

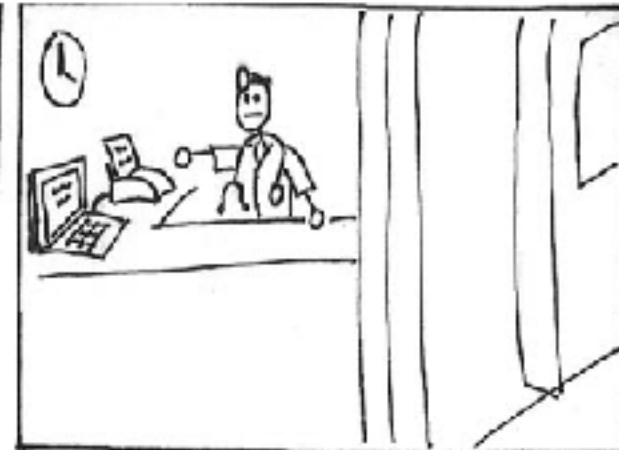
**Use personas!**



1. At home, Mary checks her blood pressure.



2. After a few simple key presses, her blood pressure readings get sent to a clinic.



3. The information is made available to her doctor.

# 4. How many frames?

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Generally speaking, try to use fewer frames

(e.g., 4-6 frames per story)

More is not always better

- May lose focus of the story

- May lose reader's attention

Limit it to the important steps

Other advantages of short storyboards:

- Less work on the designer

- Forces you to succinctly tell the story / what really matters

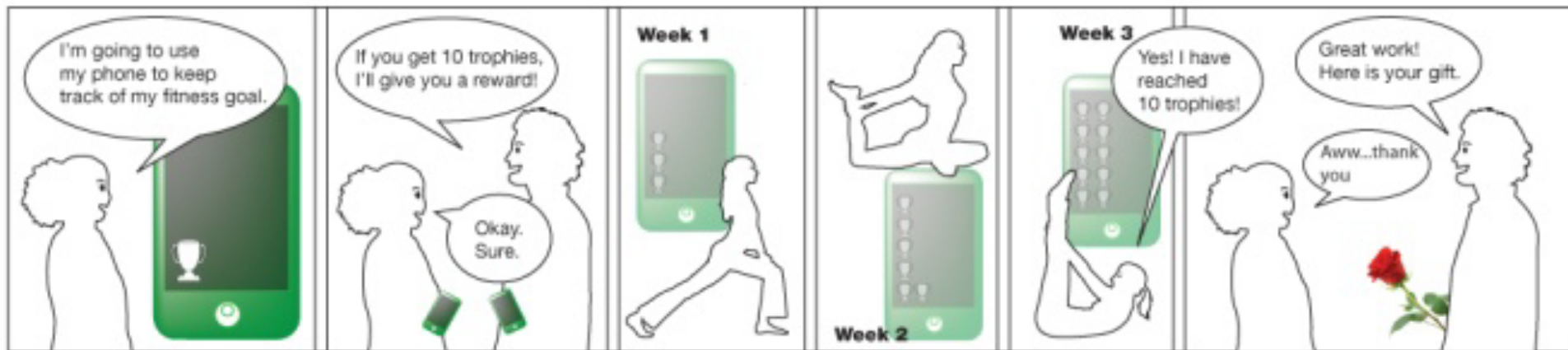
# 4. How many frames?



# 5. Passage of Time

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Only include it if it is a necessary part of the story!



# Making drawing easier....

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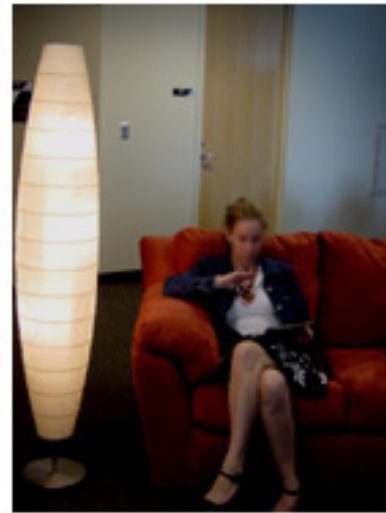
Ok ok....It doesn't have to (always) be drawing!



IT IS SO DARK JANE CAN  
HARDLY READ HER BOOK



SHE GESTURES IN FRONT OF HER  
SPECIAL PENDANT TO TURN ON  
THE LIGHTS



THE LIGHTS TURN ON!



FINALLY, SHE CAN  
READ HAPPILY.

# Summary

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Storyboards are a great way to bring a story to life.

Good for pitching/communicating ideas

Describe a user's current situation.

Describe a user's hypothetical experience using a new technology/design.

Make different versions of your storyboards

Explore different options for presenting sequences of drawings

Think carefully about what you want to tell / achieve

The wrong storyboard puts the focus on the wrong thing!

# Let's practice

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Create storyboard solution(s) for the following design concept:

**A navigation system that helps long-distance cyclists find restaurants and other services**

1. Write a short narrative scenario.
2. Create a storyboard for this design concept (stick figures are fine).
  - Start with text and arrows
  - Add emotions
  - Then draw pictures to create the storyboard

## Keep in mind:

Use of personas and emotions, Passage of time

Usage of text captions, Level of detail

Number of frames (4-6 per storyboard)

