

# contents

*Acknowledgements* ix

## **Unit one: What are comics?**

**1**

Aim of this unit 1

Historical overview 1

How comic are comics? 4

The components of comics 5

*The panel* 7

*The gutter* 9

*The balloon* 9

*The caption* 10

Summary 12

## **Unit two: Words and pictures**

**13**

Aim of this unit 13

The blend between words and pictures 14

Semiotics and the idea of the sign 15

Looking at words 18

The visual aspect of words in comics 20

Reading pictures 22

Pictures in comics 25

The collaboration between words and pictures 27

Summary 33

## **Unit three: Between the panels**

**35**

Aim of this unit 35

Cartoons, comics and language 35

Cohesion 36

Repetition 37

Coherence 45

Semantic field 46

Inference: bridging the gaps 51

Summary 56

## **Unit four: The voices of comics**

**57**

Aim of this unit 57

Fictional voices: can you hear them? 57

Who's speaking? 59

Thought presentation: reading the characters' minds 60

Voices in comics 62

Thought balloons 65

Summary 69

## **Unit five: The eyes of comics**

**71**

Aim of this unit 71

What does 'point of view' mean? 71

Deictics 72

Summary 84

## **Unit six: Comics and computers**

**85**

Aim of this unit 85

Comics in computers? 85

Cartoons on your desktop? 86

Words and comics 92

Artists with mice 94

Summary 95

*Answers and commentaries* 97

*References and further reading* 103

*Index of terms* 107