

# A Guide to Zines & Higher Education



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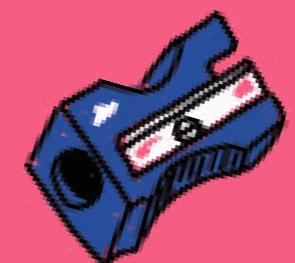
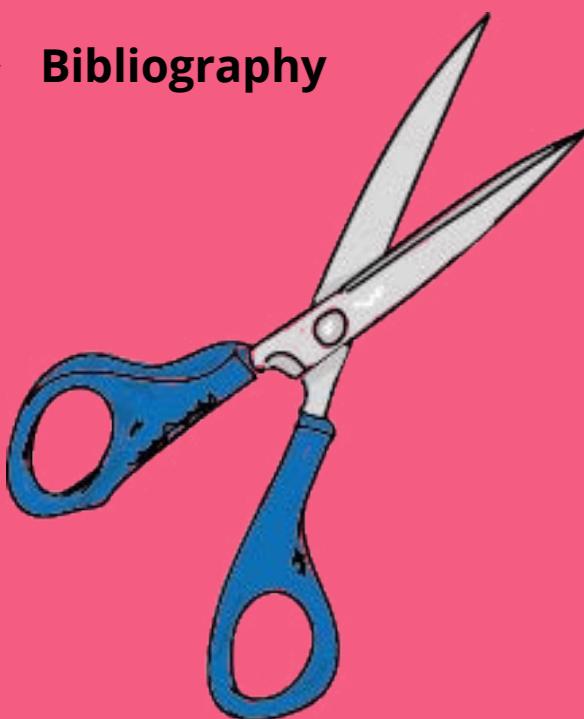
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'Zines are what you make of them' Alex Wrek<sup>k</sup><sup>1</sup>

## Section One

This booklet is intended as an introductory guide to zines and their pedagogical use in Higher Education. This includes a brief overview of zines, a guided example of creating a zine, plus additional resources.

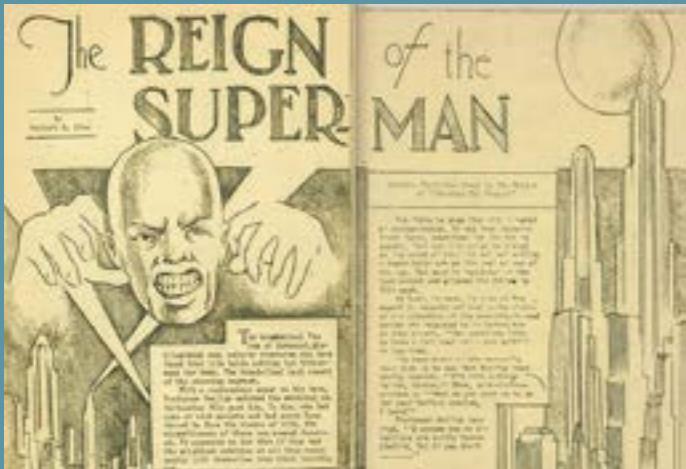
### What is a zine?

A zine, from the word 'magazine' is a small, self-made booklet, made independently from any commercial or publishing business. Usually, zines have a publication of less than 1,000 copies and with zines being self-made, this number is likely to be much less.



Philipp Messner via Flickr // CC BY-NC 2.0

Zines are made to share an individual's experiences, ideas, creativity and knowledge, as well as be open to collaboration with others. They are often used to share subcultures. While many zines are still handmade, they can now be scanned and printed with relative ease, or created digitally using free online software. These attributes are what make a zine an excellent open educational resource.



Science Fiction: The Advance Guard of Future Civilization. First two pages of the "The Reign of the Superman" short story by Jerry Siegel, illustrated by Joe Shuster. This story was self-published by Siegel in his fanzine, Science Fiction #3. circa 1933 //

In 1967, the first media fanzine was created, a Star Trek zine called Spockanalia and thanks to the rise of photocopying shops in the 70s, zines became easier to create and distribute than ever. During the 70s and 80s, zines were heavily entwined with the punk scene with zines like Sniffing Glue and Punk.

Throughout the early 90s, zines were again part of an underground music scene, this time becoming a new feminist movement with Riot Grrrl, that spawned a new generation of zines as a reaction against women portrayed in pop culture.

With the rise of the internet, many zines became e-zines, with the cost of creating them almost nothing. Zines like Crybaby and Polyester allow all kinds of artist to collaborate and share ideas.



Sniffin' Glue first issue cover. Mark Perry. July 13, 1976.

## Brief History

Zines as we think of them today can be traced back to the 1930s with a zine called The Comet by the Science Correspondence Club in Chicago, which started a long-lasting trend of sci-fi related zines<sup>2</sup>.

## Types

There are different types of zines, depending on topic, style, etc. These include:

- ◊ Art zines - usually zines to showcase art and design work.
- ◊ Political zines - zines that focused on a political issue such as gender politics.
- ◊ Fanzine - enthusiasts of a particular thing such as music or films.
- ◊ Perzine - this is personal zine and is usually focused on someones thoughts and struggles.
- ◊ Compzines - these are compilation zines made by more than one person.



"Zines at the zine fest" by arnoose is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

## Styles

While zines are self created and very personal, there are different styles used in their construction and themes. This includes the famous cut and paste aesthetic which most zines are know for. It also includes comic and illustrative styles, collages and, with the development in multimedia technology, digital styles similar to glossy magazines.

As drawing and layout software become easier to access and a number of free programs were available to download, digital zines have gained huge popularity. Zines are used in art and design degrees, and many freelance designers and creators now use zines as promotional material.

## Why use zines in Higher Education?

Zines have unique qualities that allows them to be perfectly suited to Higher Education in the 21st Century. Universities are embracing new digital technologies as we move into a knowledge based society. And zines make excellent open educational resources (OERs). Open Source states that 'Open educational resources (OERs) are learning materials that can be modified and enhanced because their creators have given others permission to do so.'<sup>3</sup> In a sense a zine is already modified as it is a combination of texts and images created to convey information.



Other benefits of zines include the fact that they are low cost or free to create, and easy to access and share digitally. This adds to these resources being sustainable and easy to catalogue. Zines add to the creation of materials (for the benefit of others) on different topics which adds to an ongoing library of zines that are available for everyone.

As zines are self-created pieces of work, this makes them an excellent OER for student focus. Zines can be made by anyone at any time with even limited resources. Zine projects can be cultivated for use in a classroom setting, used for class assignments and as collaboration work between students.

Chelsea Lonsdale states that 'zines can offer students a sense of ownership that other types of writing, especially classroom writing, do not provide'<sup>4</sup>. This ownership Lonsdale discusses refers to a personal voice on topics in higher education that many subjects may not include. The use of zines in courses has the ability enhance student engagement in a subject. A student can compile their own knowledge and research of a topic and dictate their own learning path.

Another aspect of zines in teaching and learning in higher education is innovation. Zines have the ability to express new ways of learning and teaching. Students are able to develop new skills such as digital literacy. Students have an opportunity to learn creative skills and find a new approach to a topic. Zines are easily accessible, free to create and share and encourage openness and creativity.

It is important to consider how zines can be utilized for higher education. Zines have much potential for flexibility and creativity, yet also raise issues of quality and usefulness. This is why planning and research are essential. Knowing what you want to create or have students create, the limitations and design aspects with a zine are all areas to look at. The second part of this guide will explore the basics of zine design and creation.

## Copyright

When creating a zine it is important to consider copyright. In the UK copyright protects your work and stops others using it without your permission. When you create something, copyright protection is automatic. You can mark your work with the copyright symbol (©), your name and the year of creation.

When creating a zine, you could be using and editing someone else's work, so you want to make sure of the copyright. There are some exceptions to copyright when materials are used for educational purposes. This is an in-depth topic which you can find more information on here: [www.gov.uk/guidance/exceptions-to-copyright](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/exceptions-to-copyright)

## Creative Commons

Creative Commons offers different variations of licensing for creative and academic work. Its aim as a non-profit organisation is to allow people to share and access work while ensuring proper attribution to the creator.

More information: [creativecommons.org](http://creativecommons.org)



## Section Two - Making the Zine

The second part of this guide will go through a basic making of zines, however this is really a starting point. There are many different ways to create a zine and all resources will be provided in the Further Resources page.

### What to make a zine about?

While the freedom of writing about anything to make a zine can be liberating, it is often daunting. Where to start?

Firstly, we need to generate some ideas on what to make a zine about. Brainstorming, doodling, mindmaps are all good places to begin for bringing ideas to the surface. Keeping notes of ideas as they come up is good practise and something you can come back to later no.

Once you have an idea or theme it's time to plan your content and the overall feel for the zine.

While zines are loosely a combination of text and images, this is really only a starting point. There are no rules to zines. A rough plan of each page is good practise for when it comes to putting the zine together.

- ◊ Writing - the written content of your zine.
- ◊ Images - adding different media to your text such as photos, drawings and diagrams.
- ◊ Design - the overall look and feel of your zine.
- ◊ Layout - This is where you will consider how to plan the way your content looks and how you want to construct it.

## Putting it together

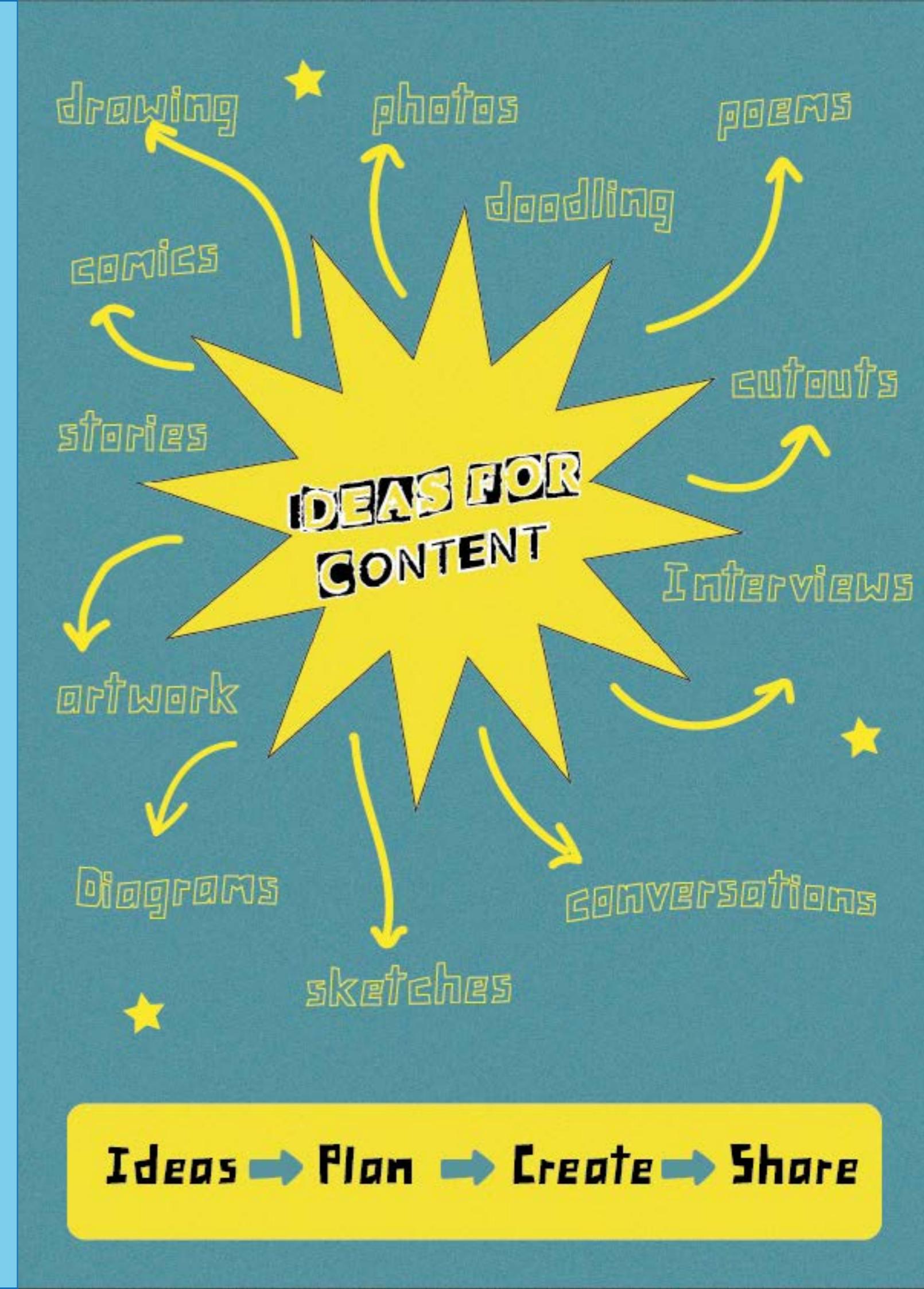
Here are some brief guidelines of creating a physical zine. This can be printed, photocopied, scanned or digital. This booklet was created using Adobe Illustrator and InDesign, however there are many design software applications free on the web.

Some free recommended applications include:

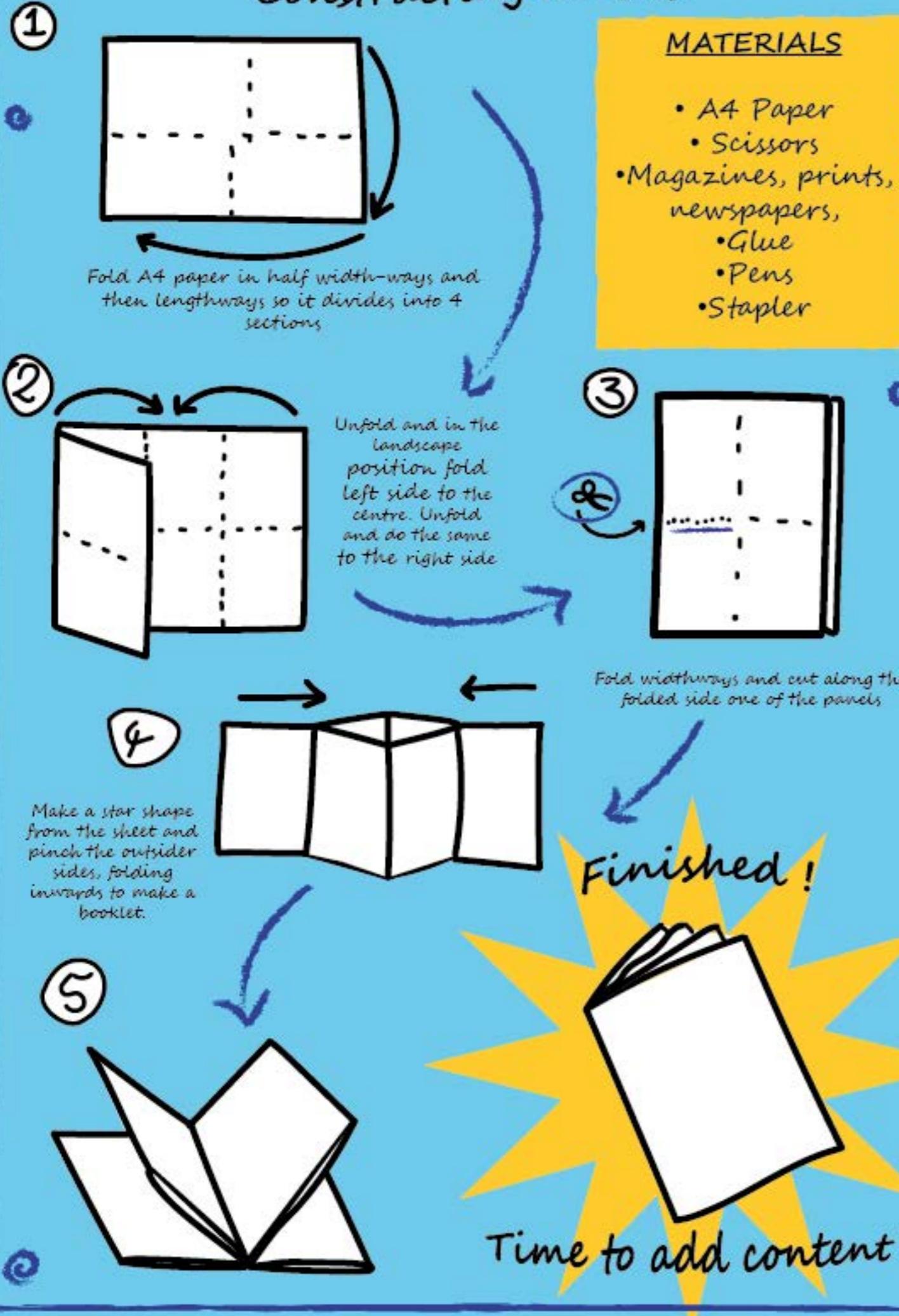
- ◊ [www.canva.com](http://www.canva.com)
- ◊ [www.krita.org/en/](http://www.krita.org/en/)
- ◊ [www.gimp.org/](http://www.gimp.org/)
- ◊ [infogram.com/](http://infogram.com/)

## Sharing

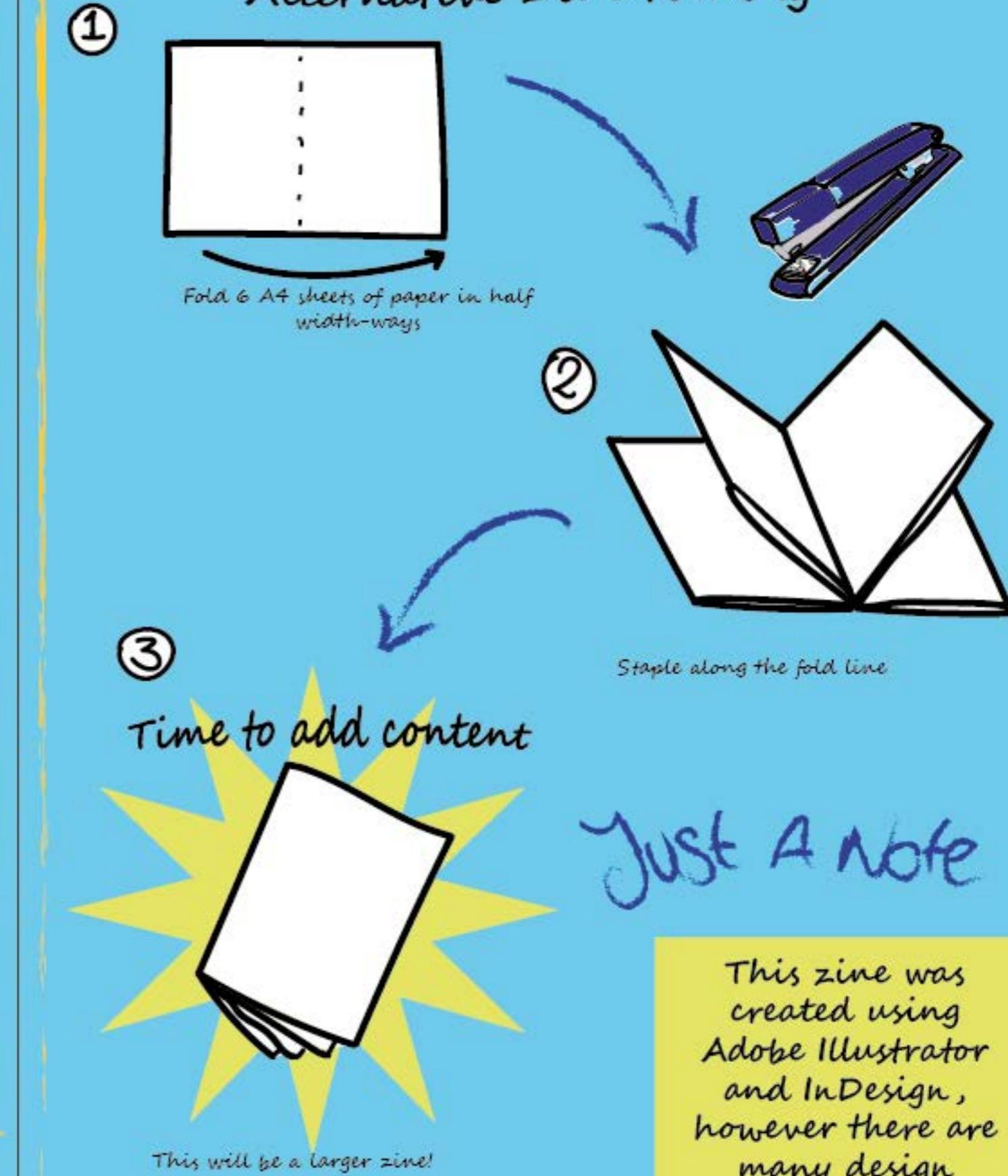
Zines were made for sharing. Zines go hand in hand with a whole community of like minded people who want to participate in a creative and open endeavour. There are zine libraries, zine distributors and events all over the world. With the advancement of technology, it is easier than ever to share zines.



## Constructing a Zine



## Alternative Zine Folding



**JUST A NOTE**

This zine was created using Adobe Illustrator and InDesign, however there are many design software applications free on the web.

BRAINSTORMING TO MAKE A

**ZINE!**

USE THIS SPACE TO BRAINSTORM IDEAS FOR YOUR ZINE

**THEMES & IDEAS**

**CONTENT**

**DESIGN & STYLE**

## Further Resources

### Zine Info

- ◊ <http://zinelibraries.info>
- ◊ <https://stolensharpierevolution.org/>
- ◊ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zine>
- ◊ <http://www.zinebook.com/index.html>

### Making Zines

- ◊ [thecreativeindependent.com/guides/how-to-make-a-zine](http://thecreativeindependent.com/guides/how-to-make-a-zine)
- ◊ <https://www.indesignskills.com/tutorials/how-to-make-a-zine/>
- ◊

### Education

- ◊ [opensource.com/resources/what-open-education](http://opensource.com/resources/what-open-education)
- ◊ <https://www.oecconsortium.org/about-oec/>
- ◊ <https://www.oercommons.org/>

## Bibliography

- ◊ Lonsdale, Chelsea (2015) "Engaging the "Othered": Using Zines to Support Student Identities," Language Arts Journal of Michigan: Vol. 30: Iss. 2, Article 4.
- ◊ Wrekk, Alex (2020) Stolen Sharpie Revolution, Silver Sprocket,
- ◊ Kristin G. Congdon and Doug Blandy, (May, 2003) Zinesters in the Classroom: Using Zines to Teach about Postmodernism and the Communication of Ideas, Art Education, Vol. 56, No. 3 , pp. 44-52

## Endnotes

1 Wrekk, Alex, Stolen Sharpie Revolution, Silver Sprocket, 2020

2 Arnold, Chloe, A Brief History of Zines, 19/11/2016

<https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/88911/brief-history-zines>

3 <https://opensource.com/resources/what-open-education>

4 Lonsdale, Chelsea (2015) "Engaging the "Othered": Using Zines to Support Student Identities," Language Arts Journal of Michigan: Vol. 30: Iss. 2, Article 4.



All text and artwork created by Sarah Mannix 2020 unless otherwise stated.