A. Vocabulary

1. The Definition of Vocabulary

People communicate with each other by using a language. Moreover, every language contains a huge number of vocabulary, so that it is needed to master more than sufficient vocabularies of a language to be able to use the language in a communication. Then, what is vocabulary? Here are some definitions of vocabulary according to some experts.

According to Hornby (2003: 1506), vocabulary is all the words in a particular language. Meanwhile, Kartika (2008:6) states that vocabulary is the total number words that make up a language. The definition of vocabulary is also stated by Hatch and Brown (1995: 1). Both of them stated that vocabulary refers to a list of words for a particular language or a list or set of words that individual speakers of a language might use.

From the definitions of “vocabulary”, it can be concluded that vocabulary is all words that become an essential part of a language that is used by people to communicate.
2. The Type of Vocabulary

A language contains so many vocabularies that are required by someone to communicate with each other. These all vocabularies are divided into two types according to Kartika (2008:7-8) in her thesis, namely:

a. General vocabulary, which consist of everyday words widely acknowledge meaning in common usage.
   Example: school, hospital, house, table, go, eat, etc.

b. Special/technical vocabulary, which is made up words from everybody, general vocabulary which takes on specialized meanings when adapted to a particular content area or particular subject matter field.
   Example: chlorophyll, stethoscope, etc.

Meanwhile, Hatch and Brown (1995: 370) mentioned two types of vocabulary, namely:

a. Receptive or passive vocabulary, which is defined as words that the student recognizes and understands when they occur in a context, but which he cannot produce correctly.

b. Productive or active vocabulary, which is defined as words that the student understands, can pronounce correctly and use constructively in speaking and writing.

From both vocabulary divisions, the researcher come into a conclusion that vocabulary can be divided into 2 types based on the
easiness to understand and produce. First, vocabulary that is easily to understand and produce. It is a combination between general vocabulary and productive vocabulary. Second, vocabulary that is hard to produce both in speaking and writing because of the spelling, but it is not impossible to understand. This type is the combination between special/technical vocabulary and receptive vocabulary.

3. **The Aspects of Vocabulary**

The learners can learn five aspects from English vocabulary. Those are as follows:

a. **Meaning**

Meaning is really important aspect in vocabulary. Everyone who learns vocabulary expects to know the meaning of the word they learn. Sometimes a word has various meanings so that a teacher has to decide wisely which meaning to teach first to the students.

b. **Spelling**

Spelling is an aspect of vocabulary dealing with reading and writing skill. Someone needs to know the spelling of the vocabulary learned to be able to use it in a readable written form.

c. **Pronunciation**

Pronunciation is the way to say words or letters. It deals with speaking skill. Different pronunciation can produce different
meaning of an English word so that someone must be carefully learning the pronunciation of the vocabulary learned.

d. Word Classes

Word classes are categories of word such as noun, verb, adverb, adjective, and preposition. It is an important feature in semantic analysis.

e. Word Use

Word use is the way a word, phrase, or concept is used in a language. Lexicographers gather the sample of written or spoken instance where a word is used and analyze to determine pattern of regional or social usage as well as meaning.

4. Teaching Vocabulary

First of all, the term of teaching is defined in the following lines. Brown (2007:8) defines the word teaching as “showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand.” In addition, Amanullah (2006:5) in his thesis cites that teaching is a transfer of knowledge served by the teacher to the learners using appropriate method, so that the learners know something. In short, teaching can be defined as some activities in the purpose of making someone know and understand knowledge.
According to Mckay and Mckay in her post in http://artofmanliness.com (2012), there are five easy steps to learn Vocabulary, namely:

a. Read

It is stated that reading is the single biggest thing someone can do to increase his/her vocabulary. The meaning of the new words can be found while the reading itself based on the context.

b. Listen

Someone can pick up a new word from the people you talk with and listen to. The two Mckays states that the effectiveness of this listen-to-learn method depends on who you surround yourself with. In other words, someone should be familiar and common with all things concerning the target language to listen.

c. Write down words read and heard that are unknown

Sometimes, someone cannot directly find the meaning of a new word he/she read or hear. That is why writing down words read and heard becomes a need to do to keep it and find the meaning later.

d. Look up the word in a dictionary and write down its meaning in a vocabulary

Not all words found from reading and listening can be guessed the meaning by the context, so a dictionary is needed to know the
meaning and the expansion of the word itself that cannot be guessed by the context.

e. Use the new word several times in conversation as soon as someone can

This step will help someone remember the word more effectively.

Other various ways to teach vocabulary are also stated by Hammer in Ramadhani (2010:6-8), as follows:

a. Using Real Object

This technique is an effective technique to teach vocabulary. However, this technique is limited to a certain single thing or word that can easily be taken into the classroom.

b. Showing Picture

Picture such as wall pictures, charts, flash cards, can be used in so many ways, so it can be a good medium to teach vocabulary.

c. Mime, Action, and Gesture

It will be difficult for the teacher to use real object or picture when she/he teaches verb like eat, cry, swing, and walk. To solve such problem, the teacher can teach those words by using mime, action, and gesture.

d. Contrast

To teach vocabulary, the teacher can compare two words that students can understand.

Example:
big>< small
high>< low
man>< woman
e. Enumeration
When teacher finds difficulty in explaining words, for example when teacher wants to teach the word “animal”, he/she can enumerate a number of animals like lion, tiger, horse, cow, etc. the word “animal” will be clearly understood.
f. Explanation or definition
The teacher can introduce a word by giving the definition of the word. For example: dictionary  a kind of book which contains words and its meaning.
g. Translation
Teacher sometimes has to translate the word into the students’ language.
For example:
nice  baik
From the explanation, it can be concluded that for teaching vocabulary, a teacher can use some ways mentioned above related with the type of the words delivered. Those steps can be good ways to teach and learn vocabulary.
B. Comic strips

1. The Definition of Comic Strips

Now comic (comic books) is a common word known by many people especially teenagers. How is about comic strips? Even though they are familiar with the word ‘comic’, only some know the meaning of comic strips itself. So, the writer perceives it is necessary to discuss the definition of comic strips here.

First of all, Cary in Baker (2011:12) stated that “there are four different types of materials under the heading of comics: cartoons, comic strips, comic books, and graphic novels.” Here we can see that comic strips belong to comics and it is different with comic books. The difference is in the form of it. Comic strip is not in the form of book, while comic book is in the form of book/thin paper booklet bound with staples (Baker: 2011:6). Cary (2004:48) also differentiates the four kinds of comics above based on the size; cartoons are only in a panel; comic strips are built in some panels; comic books are available in about thirty pages; while graphic novels are much larger, book-length. Then, what is comic strip?

Based on Purnamasari (2010: 17), a comic strip is a sequence of cartoons that tells a story, often humorous, though action-adventure, science fiction and soap opera like dramas are also prevalent. Meanwhile, Liu in TESOL QUARTERLY (2002: 226) defines comic strips as a series of pictures inside boxes that tell a story.
Purnamasari also stated that comic strips can be used to teach speaking, reading, writing, translation, vocabulary, and grammar. It means that vocabulary teaching can be facilitated by using comic strips. Moreover, Brown (1994: 365) in Csabay in English teaching forum (2006: 25) stated that “the best internalization of vocabulary comes from encounters (comprehension and production) with words within the context of surrounding discourse”. By this way the students will be able to recall and apply it better than just learning a single word with a corresponding meaning. Meanwhile, according to Csabay in English teaching forum (2006: 25), comic strips are authentic, and using authentic material is very important in language teaching and learning. This research focus on two aspects of vocabulary learned by comic strip namely meaning and word use.

In conclusion, comic strip is a sequence of pictures combined with words telling a story that can be read in a short period of time.

2. The Advantages of Comic strips

Some advantages have been proven by some people conducting research concerning comic strips in other skills of language and other language components.

It is stated by Rohaeti (2010: 13-14) that there are three advantages of using comic strips namely:
a. Comic strips can make students happy, so that they will develop oral skills and arouse motivation to learn. Moreover, the material delivered by the teacher can be more clearly understood.

b. Teaching method will be more various so that the students will not get easily bored.

c. By using comic strips, the students can do more activities in learning. Therefore by applying comic strips in teaching-learning activities, it is expected that they can overcome the exercise or assignment from the teacher.

Comics also help the readers to learn every material inside of it easily like Cary in Baker (2011: 14) stated that “comics benefit many readers, including beginning readers, because of their reduced texts. Many students embrace comics because they are viewed as being more manageable than text-only literature.” That means comics increase the students’ reading interest which can open opportunities to grasp huge amount of new vocabularies.

In short, those all advantages are the strength points of using comic strips that can be successive points of teaching vocabularies.

3. The Characteristic of Comic strips

Comic strips are different with other types of comics. It is needed to know the characteristics of comic strips for sure before teaching using this medium. There are some characteristics of comic strips, namely:
a. Comic strips are drawn.

As stated by Csabay (2006), this means that comic strips are visual which will make the learners recall and memorize it easily. Moreover, Jun Liu, an associate professor of English at The University of Arizona, in TESOL QUARTERLY (2002: 226), also strengthens this theory by stating that “visuals in text facilitate reader’s comprehension and memory.”

b. Purnamasari (2010:19) states that the pictures drawn tell a story by sequence of image. Comic strips also have the domination of pictures over words. Moreover Speech balloon and boxes (callout) are used.

c. Some panels used to be the frames of the pictures.

Therefore, those all characteristics of comic strips give clearer view of comic strips itself compared with other kind of media.

4. Teaching Vocabulary Using Comic Strips

Here are will be explained some procedures to teach vocabulary using comic strips.

a. In Exploration

1) Both in groups and individual, the students will get a comic strip.

2) The teacher will read the conversation by him/herself or have some students read that while the others are listening.
3) The teacher discusses the comic strips read together with the students.

b. In Elaboration

1) The students are working both individually and in group.

2) Each group or student will get a comic strip prepared by the teacher in a certain form based on the activity that will be conducted.

3) The students or the group will compete with each other or each group to finish the instruction related with the comic strips.

4) The best student or group will get a reward from the teacher.

Here are some examples of activities related with using comic strips:

a. Teacher cuts apart the comic strips based on the panels and put them into an envelope. Each group gets an envelope with different comic strips cut apart. The students must arrange the comic strips into a good order of story. Then, each group must retell the story either in written form or as a speaking exercise. (Csabay: 2006)

b. The same activity with example “a” using an envelope, but it is inserted a simple crossword inside the envelope. Then after the students finish arranging the comic strips, they must complete the crossword with some words inside the comic strips. The clues are the meaning of those words in the comic strips.

c. Csabay also gives another example. In a variation of the “a” activity, the teacher removes the speech or thought bubbles of the
comic strips, hands out copies of both the comic strip and the text of the bubbles to the students. The students’ task is to figure out the proper order of the speech or thought.

5. Previous Relevant Research

There have been some research related to Comic strips in English classroom. First, a research conducted by Eviana Kusumawati in 2009 with the title “The Effectiveness of comics for teaching Vocabulary (an experimental study on the second grade of SMP N II Sokaraja academic year 2008/2009)”. The population of this research is the eighth grade students of SMP N 2 Sokaraja in academic year 2008/2009. The researcher took class 8G as the control class, and 8B as the experimental class. For collecting the data, the researcher only used test (pre-test and post-test) which consist of 40 items of each test in the form of objectives test. After doing the treatment (teaching vocabulary using comics) to the experimental class, the researcher found a progress in this class not only in the result of the test but also in the affective aspect of the students namely the students’ activeness in following the learning activity.

Second, a research conducted by Ade Irma Purnamasari in 2010 entitled The Effectiveness of Comic Strips for Teaching Student’s Writing Recount Text (An Experimental Study at Second grade of MTs Yaspika Karangtawang Kuningan in Academic Year 2009/2010). The researcher took a method of non-equivalent quasi-experimental
class, so the sample was taken by the consideration of the researcher herself. Class VIIIA was the experimental class, and class VIIIB was the control class. Test was the only instrument used by the researcher. In the end, this research is proven effective to teach writing recount text.

Both research were conducted in Junior High School, meanwhile this research will be conducted in Senior High School.

C. Basic Assumption

All explanation above brings the writer to a conclusion that comic strip is a kind of medium which is good to teach English vocabulary. Comic strip is a visual medium that can give effect to the students’ memories in remembering and recalling the vocabularies learned. Sometimes, the vocabulary meaning will be defined with the pictures and the story line so that when the students read the comic strips, they will start to recognize new vocabularies. Furthermore, the picture drawn in comic strips becomes a fun thing in this medium and it can make the students interested to learn more.

D. Hypothesis

Comic strip is effective to teach English vocabulary for the tenth grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Purwokerto in academic year 2013/2014.