

University of
Lethbridge



Faculty of Education

Literature Fair 2013

Reading the Word: Reading the World

SESSION: *Graphic Novels in the Classroom*

PRESENTER: *Beth Cormier*

Recommended for Early Elementary (K-2)

TOON books and Balloon Toons are two early reader publishers to look for. Both are aimed at new readers. Several have won the Theodore Seuss Geisel award for beginning reader books.

- BabyMouse** (Series). Holm, Jennifer L. & Matthew Holm. A small Klutzy mouse imagines herself in exciting situations while dealing with the daily challenges of school and friends. Popular with gr. 2-5 **F Hol**
- Benny and Penny in the Big No-No.** Hayes, Geoffrey. *A young brother and sister know it is wrong to sneak into their new neighbour's yard, but they wonder who it can be and their imaginations run wild.* (Toon Books, 2010) **F Hay**
- Chicken and Cat.** Varon, Sara. A wordless graphic picture book about friendship. Cat comes to the city to stay, and Chicken finds a way to help when cat misses the country. (Scholastic Press, 2006) **F Var**
- Hiccup**, by Mike Herrod. A bunny gets a bad case of the hiccups right before the school play and tries every possible cure to get rid of them. A fun read with great visuals. (Blue Apple Balloon Toons, 2012) **F Her**
- Little Mouse Gets Ready.** Smith, Jeff. *A delightful and humorous story of a mouse who keeps his mother waiting while he carefully puts on each piece of clothing.* **F Smi**
- Luke on the Loose.** Bliss, Harry. Luke chases after a flock of pigeons while his distracted father chats in the park. His newfound freedom takes him on a whirlwind adventure of New York City. **F Bli**
- Mo and Jo: Fighting Together Forever.** Haspiel, Dean & Jay Lynch. *iblings Mo and Jo fight about everything, but have to learn to cooperate when a treasured superhero costume is torn in half.* **F Has**
- Squish #1: Super Amoeba.** Holm, Jennifer & Matthew. *The escapades of an amoeba as he navigates school, bullies, siblings and parents. Highly comic, with mild gross-out humour that many kids love.* **F Hol**
- Stinky.** Davis, Eleanor. A little monster named Stinky is determined to keep kids away from his swamp, knowing that they don't like smelly, slimy things like him. When a boy wanders into his swamp, Stinky's efforts to scare him away end up in a new friend. Warm and entertaining. **F Dav**
- The Three Pigs.** Weisner, David. This Caldecott-winning picture book contains elements of a graphic novel that will appeal to fans of the format. The pigs jump out of the story before the wolf can eat them up. **F Wei**

Recommended for Grades 3-5

- Amulet** (Series). Kibuishi, Kazu. A monster in the basement lures a family into another world. Hooks readers with a blend of fantasy, mystery and high adventure with good action scenes. Characters and setting well developed. Fans of Bone enjoy this. **F Kib**
- Artemis Fowl: The Graphic Novel** (Series). Adapted by Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin. Bestselling 2001 series about a criminal mastermind now a graphic novel. **F Col**
- The Babysitter's Club: Kristy's Big Idea**. Telgemeier, Raina. A well-reviewed adaptation of the first novel in a popular series boasting 100+ titles. The girls keep their friendship strong while dealing with secrets, parents, and out-of-control toddlers. **F Tel**
- Binky the Space Cat**. Spires, Ashley. Binky orders a space manual and builds a rocket ship out of household items, then sets off to protect the world from space aliens. Grades 2 to 5 will be especially drawn to the adventure and charming illustrations. **F Spi**
- Lunch Lady and the League of Librarians**. Krosoczka, Jarrett. When she is not serving lunch in the school cafeteria, this intrepid heroine is battling villains and foiling dark plots. Full of action and humour, the Lunch Lady series is very popular. **F Kro**
- Amelia Rules! The Whole World's Crazy**. Gownley, Jimmy (2 v.). A friendship story featuring a girl who has moved to a new town with her recently divorced mother. Focuses on the hilarious mishaps with her new band of quirky, local friends and explores the subject of divorce sensitively. **F Gow**
- To Dance: A Ballerina's Graphic Novel**. Siegel, Siena Cherson. Siegel's memoir tells the story of her first fascination with ballet to her experiences with the New York Ballet. Appeal for dancers, dreamers and older readers as well. **708.2 Sie**
- That Darn Yarn!** Millionaire, Tony. Two different stories told side by side eventually merge. Story one: a sock monkey starts to unravel as he rambles around a big house. Story two: a girl sits in her big house and knits a sock monkey. Simple, clever with gorgeous illustrations. **F Mil**
- Jellaby** (multi-volume). Soo, Kean. A young misfit discovers an adorable dragon-like creature and becomes friends. When she stands up to bullies they gain one more friend, and begin a journey to return the creature home. Strong themes around bullying and loss of a parent. **F Soo**
- Bone: Out From Boneville**. Smith, Jeff (Series: Bone). The Bone Cousins leave their home in search of adventure. A humorous, warm fantasy sprinkled with suspense and mystery. **F Smi**
- Tower of Treasure**. Chantler, Scott (Series: The Three Thieves). An orphaned acrobat joins two troupe-mates in a plot to steal the Queen's jewels...and find her missing brother. Engaging action and strong characterization. Canadian. **F Cha**
- Robot Dreams**. Varon, Sarah. When Dog takes his Robot swimming, the Robot rusts and can't move. Dog reluctantly leaves him lying on the beach. The wordless story shows how each friend experiences the loss: dog through guilt and failed new friendships, and Robot through lying on the beach dreaming. Deep and moving, with a satisfying yet thought-provoking conclusion. **F Var**

Recommended for Grades 6-8

- Anne Frank: The Anne Frank House Authorized Biography.** Jacobson, Sid and Ernie Colon. The historical context of Anne's confinement and the events leading up to and after her death are portrayed sensitively in this well-researched account. **940.53 Jac**
- Bad Island.** TenNapel, Doug. A family is shipwrecked on an island and must quickly discover the truth about its dark secrets in order to survive. Gripping, suspenseful, and explores themes such as relationships, community and good/evil. **F Ten**
- Ghostopolis.** TenNapel, Doug. A young boy is accidentally sent to the city of Ghosts and discovers powers that he can use to combat the evil ruler. Darker themes and sophisticated imagery make for good classroom discussion. **F Ten**
- Little White Duck: A Childhood in China,** Lui, Na. Graphic memoir set just at the end of the Cultural revolution. The stories capture important history about China under Chairman Mao, but its universal childhood emotions and scenes of daily family life are what will draw readers into this culture different than their own.
- Zeus: King of the Gods** (Series: The Olympians). O'Connor, George. Vibrant art and thrilling action bring Greek Mythology to life in this well-reviewed series.
- Agnes Quill.** Roman, Dave, Telegmeier, Raina, Zornow, Jeff and Ho, Jason. Short stories about a teenaged detective, the haunted city she lives in, and the ghosts that help, hinder, or just annoy. Great for a unit on mystery and suspense.
- Around the World.** Phelan, Matt. Phelan weaves a single fictional tale around three real-life figures who became caught up in the late nineteenth century obsession with circumnavigating the globe. He explores their attempts and motives in a multi-layered, perceptive story. **F Phe**
- Laika.** Abadzis, Nick. The beautiful and heartbreaking story of the stray dog that became part of the Russian Space Program, and was never intended to return. Explores the bond between humans and animals and captures a small piece of the Soviet era.
- Cardboard.** TenNapel, Doug. A cardboard box is the worst birthday present ever, but Cam uses it to create a cardboard man. When the creature magically comes to life, the neighbourhood bully gets involved and sets a course for destruction. Characters are complex and the art is fascinating. **F Ten**
- The Storm in the Barn.** Phelan, Matt. The dust bowl setting comes alive in this richly visual story set in 1930's Kansas. A young boy discovers that the shadowy figure lurking in the barn is really the rain. Historical Fiction award winner. **F Phe**
- Rapunzel's Revenge.** Hale, Shannon and Dean Hale. The classic "Damsel in Distress" tale reinvented. Rapunzel escapes confinement, tricks her handsome rescuer, and discovers a wild west world of outlaws and dust outside the castle walls. Highly engaging example of a fractured fairy tale. A second book, **Calamity Jack** is also appealing. **F Hal**

Recommended for Gr. 9-12

Always preview carefully.

The subject material may not be appropriate for the context in which you teach.

- Anya's Ghost.** Brosgol, Vera. A Russian-immigrant teen is desperate to fit in at her new boarding school. She befriends a ghost but soon realizes her new friend's motives are sinister and frightening. Spooky and gripping with themes of self-acceptance. **F Bro**

The Arrival. Shaun Tan. A Wordless telling of an immigrant's first experiences in a new world. Captures the complexity of the experience with emotional depth and prompts avid discussions about imagery. Poignant in a nation built by immigrants. **F Tan**

The Eternal Smile: Three Stories. Yan, Gene Luen & Derek Kirk Kim. Three distinct stories explore themes of fantasy and how we use it to escape the drudgery of our everyday lives. Fascinating art stylized to match the setting and theme. Rich opportunity for discussion with its hidden layers and use of satire. **F Yan**

Castle Waiting. Medley, Linda. Rich in Medieval imagery with an entertaining and imaginative cast of Characters. Set in Sleeping Beauty's Castle after she wakes up and runs off with her Prince, leaving three loyal subjects who turn the Castle into something of a refuge for those in need. **F Med**

I Kill Giants. Kelly, Joe and J.M Ken Namura. Combines fabulous renditions of imagined monsters and battles with the emotional depth of a misfit whose real battles are slowly illuminated.

Maus. Spiegelman, Art. Must-read graphic biography (Pulitzer Prize winner). The author illustrates the story of his father, a Holocaust survivor using mice to represent the Jews and Cats to represent the Nazis. **940.5318 Spi**

Mercury. Larson, Hope. Two interconnected stories: Tara, whose Nova Scotia family home has just burnt down, and Josey, Tara's ancestor who was courted by a gold prospector. The stories merge as Tara chooses to search for the gold rumoured to be hidden on the property. Magical realism & a coming of age story.

Persepolis. v. 1 Satrapi, Marjane (graphic memoir). Recounts the author's life in Tehran during the Ayatollah's revolution. Simple graphics, engaging narrative, and an important look at another culture (Pantheon, 2004). **955.054 Sat**

Stitches. David Small. Award-winning children's illustrator tells the story of his horrific childhood in a dysfunctional family, and the surgery that left his vocal cords maimed. Disturbing yet told in a powerfully detached manner- a survival story some teens will relish. **818.6 Sma**

American Born Chinese. Yang, Gene Luen. 3 engaging stories featuring Chinese-American characters whose experiences connect in a surprising way. Opens cultural discussion and explores themes related to racism, shame and friendship. Winner of the prestigious Printz award for young adult Literature. **F Lue**

The Plain Janes. Castellucci, Cecilia. When Jane moves to the suburbs she joins a group of outcasts- all named Jane. They start a secret art club and cause a stir with random displays of public art. Some stereotypical characters, but the main characters and themes are well developed. (DC Comics, 2007) **F Cas**

Support for Teachers

Bakis, M. (2012). *The graphic novel classroom: powerful teaching and learning with images*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press.

Graphic novel resources For educators. (n.d.). *Get Graphic: The World In Words and Pictures*. Retrieved February 20, 2013, from <http://www.getgraphic.org/teachers.php>

How to read comics (n.d.). *TOON into Reading with TOON Books*. Retrieved February 20, 2013, from <http://www.toon-books.com/how-to-read-comics.html>

Monnin, K. (2011). *Teaching early reader comics and graphic novels*. Gainesville, FL: Maupin House Pub.