Graphic Novels in the Classroom

Suggested Titles, Teaching Strategies & Resources

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Contents

Why Graphic Novels? ..............................................3
Teaching the Parts of a Graphic Novel .................4
Suggested Teaching Strategies .............................6
Graphic Novels Gr. K-2 .......................................8
Graphic Novels Gr. 3-5 ........................................9
Graphic Novels List Gr. 6-8 ...............................10
Graphic Novels List Gr. 9-12 .............................11
Graphic Novels List Secondary Social Studies ...12
Great Sources For More Information .................13
References
Why Graphic Novels?

The term Graphic Novel refers to a format, not a genre. Historical fiction, mystery, memoir, non-fiction, realistic fiction etc. can all be represented in graphic format, allowing for a rich exploration of literature. Because the work's message is communicated partly (or wholly) through sequential art, graphic novels add an exciting layer to the enjoyment of literature.

The Erie & Buffalo County Public Libraries list ten ways graphic novels benefit students on their excellent site www.getgraphic.org (2007):

Reading graphic novels:
- Engages reluctant readers & ESL students.
- Increases reading comprehension and vocabulary.
- Can serve as a bridge between low and high levels of reading.
- Provides an approach to reading that embraces the multimedia nature of today's culture, as 2/3 of a story is conveyed visually.
- Provides scaffolding for struggling readers.
- Can serve as an intermediary step to more difficult disciplines and concepts.
- Presents complex material in readable text.
- Helps students understand global affairs.
- Helps to develop analytical and critical thinking skills.
- Offers another avenue through which students can experience art.

Get Graphic, 2007

In Teaching Early Reader Comics and Graphic Novels (2011), Dr. Katie Monnin describes the graphic novel experience as essential to 21st century communication skills

“Today’s students live in a new media age, a world where it is critical to be able to read words and images together. Thus, today’s reading teacher must teach a shared literacy stage that places emphasis on screen and/or image literacies—computers, televisions, smartphones, email, vmail, videogames, online magazines, the Internet, graphic novels, and comics—alongside print-text literacies”.

Monnin, 2011
Teaching the Parts of A Graphic Novel

Students will engage more deeply with a graphic novel when they understand more about the format.

Dr. Katie Monnin’s *Teaching Early Reader Comics and Graphic Novels* (2011) begins with basic definitions, based on Scott McLeod’s definitive *Understanding Comics* (1993), an engaging graphic novel that teaches about comics.

Get Graphic (2007) illustrates the basic parts of a graphic novel for middle and older readers:

| Panel: The boundary and the contents within it that tell a piece of the story. |
| Gutter: The space between the panels where readers connect two or more ideas into one idea. |
| Balloons: Usually found inside of a panel, balloons typically create visual boundaries that progress the story in terms of dialogue, thought and/or sound. |

Monnin, 2011

Comics (1993), an engaging graphic novel that teaches about comics.

Get Graphic (2007) illustrates the basic parts of a graphic novel for middle and older readers:
Toon, publisher of graphic novels for early readers, also offers examples suitable for younger students, such as the following panels from the Benny and Penny series, by Geoffrey Hayes:

A More Advanced Look at the Parts of a Graphic Novel

Dr. Katie Monnin’s guides for teachers also build on basic terminology to encourage deeper reading and response:
Suggested Teaching Strategies For Full Class Instruction

ELEMENTARY LEVEL: Many approaches to teaching graphic novels incorporate deep reading strategies, grouped into pre-reading, guided/active reading and after-reading. Listed here are some specific examples drawn from recent high quality guides and articles on using graphic novels with elementary school children.

Pre-reading

Exploring Theme: With the theme of the story in mind, ask students what they know about that theme. Keep a list on the board. Then, have students each make a drawing to represent what they know (their own ideas or their peers) (Monin 2009).

Guided Reading/Active Reading

Active Reflection: Divide the story into the “beginning”, “middle” and “end”. After reading each section, have students write and draw about the events so far. Share responses and explain (Monin, 2011).

Reading aloud: When reading aloud as a group or small group, have students “read” the print text as well as the visual text. I.e. for each panel, follow the printed words with a simple explanation of what is seen (the monster is hiding the hat in a hole) (Monin, 2011).

Prediction Strategy: Have students stop reading at predetermined points that lend themselves well to making a prediction. Have them create panels, balloons, drawings etc., predicting what will happen. Have them compare their responses at the end of the reading.
**After-Reading**

**Guided Response:** Write or draw about aspects of the story, such as the main idea or a significant moment or event. Use panels, gutters and balloons when drawing (Use questions to guide student responses) (Monin, 2011).

**Readers’ Theatre:** Give groups of students a small portion of the story and have students retell it. Suggest options such as dialogue, poster paper with balloons and images, or acting out the events (Monin, 2011).

**Reflecting on Characters:** “If you could be a character in the story, which would you be? If you could “jump into” the story, at what point would you jump in? What would you want to say to other characters”? (Monin, 2011).

**Rewrite the story:** What would you change if you could rewrite the story? Have students discuss in small groups then have them retell it through the Readers’ Theatre strategy suggested above (Monin, 2011).

**Sequencing:** Photocopy and cut out select panels. Have students reorder the panels and justify their choices in writing. Or--scan images of characters, balloons, settings, and plot points in the story and display out of order on an IWB. Have students help you re-order the images (Alternative- felt board characters) (Monin, 2011).

**Visual Timeline:** Have students suggest significant points from the story. Keep a list on the board using panels. As a group, decide which five are the most important. Order these five events along the timeline (Monin, 2011).

**Response to the Theme:** Following the story, reflect on the major themes. In small groups, have students select themes, and come up with an original story on their theme. Write a multiple page comic or graphic novel on their theme (Monin, 2011).

**Other examples of Teaching with Graphic Novels at the Elementary level**

**Literary Elements:** Use Graphic Novels to teach common literary elements (setting, characterization, theme etc.) (Tomasevich, 2013).

**Contextual Clues:** Erase dialogue from the bubbles and have students use contextual clues to recreate. Have them justify their choices (getgraphic.org, 2007).

**Study of Non-Fiction:** Use a non-fiction graphic novel to teach non-fiction elements such as headings, captions, glossary, index etc.) (Tomasevich, 2013).

**Summarizing:** Once students become comfortable with panel storytelling, have them create graphic summaries instead of written (GetGraphic.org, 2007).
Creative Writing Prompts: Use wordless graphic novels as prompts (The Arrival, Robot Dreams, Owly).

Descriptive Writing: Help students understand the importance of “show vs. tell” to develop character, setting and other elements (Friese, 2013).

SECONDARY LEVEL: Graphic novels work especially well for thematic units. Relationships, community, coming-of-age, good vs. evil, courage, and heroism are common themes found in the texts recommended below. The wide variety of genres available-mystery, historical fiction, memoir, realistic fiction, fractured fairy tale—also provides a place for graphic novels in any genre-based unit.

Comic Book Adaptation: Have students adapt a print text into a comic- a few panels or multiple pages. It provides an engaging way to process their response and synthesize the most important aspects of the work (Bucky Carter, 2012).

Comparative studies: Use traditional texts juxtaposed with a graphic novel to provide multiple understanding of literary devices such as figurative language, imagery etc. Use a similar approach for genre or technique, such as memoir, satire, or dystopian literature (Bakis, 2012).

Apply the same skills required for reading traditional literature, such as: questioning a text, drawing on prior experience and knowledge, exercising empathy, making inferences, critical analysis and discussion of a text, citing textual proof in writing response, making comparisons, evaluating cause and effect (Bakis, 2012).

Integrate Writing Assignments into Graphic Novel Units: note-taking, personal correspondence, narrative writing, analytical essay writing,

Recommended Graphic Novels (Gr. 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.

Adopt a Glurb. Gravel, Elise. An off-beat “pet manual” about an imaginary pet called a glurb. Follows a non-fiction style, but kids will be drawn to this humourous parody of a subject many are interested in. (Blue Apple Balloon Toons, 2010)

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)
Benny and Penny in Just Pretend. Hayes, Geoffrey. *Benny wants to play pirate but Penny keeps bugging him. When he tries to hide from her he realizes she is braver than he thinks.* (Toon Books, 2010)

**Chicken and Cat.** Varon, Sara. A wordless graphic picture book about friendship. Cat comes the city to stay, and Chicken finds a way to help when cat misses the country. (Scholastic Press, 2006)

**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)

**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.* (Toon Books, 2009)


**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 (Toon Books, 2008)

**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* (Toon Books, 2008)

**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. (Toon Books, 2008)

**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. (Clarion Books, 2001)

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**Recommended Graphic Novels (Gr. 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 series. (Graphix, 2008) Three volumes.

**Artemis Fowl: The Graphic Novel (Series).** Adapted by Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin. The bestselling 2001 series about a criminal mastermind reappears as a graphic novel. (Hyperion, 2007).

**The Babysitter’s Club: Kristy’s Big Idea.** Telgemeier, Raina. A well-reviewed adaptation of the very first novel that started the popular series boasting 100+ titles. The girls keep their friendship strong while dealing with secrets, parents, and out-of-control toddlers. (GRAPHIX 2006)

**Bumperboy and the Loud Loud Mountain.** Huey, Debbie. Humour and a suspenseful adventure that will keep children in grades 2-4 and even older engaged. Bumperboy’s mission to save a lonely, talking mountain includes a nod to Seuss’ Lorax with creatures who protect the trees.

**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. (Knopf, 2009)

**The Adventures of TinTin.** Herge. Translated from French by Leslie Lonsdale-Cooper & Michael Turner. A young reporter and his dog visit a different international location in each volume, with plenty of action and a rich experience of exotic locales.
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**

Spiral Bound: Top Secret Summer. Renier, Aaron. A cast of endearing young animals busy themselves with individual projects over the summer, shadowed by the town’s dark secret about the monster in the lake. Fun adventure. **F Ren.**

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 money 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 through-provoking conclusion. **F Var**

Wild Ride: A Graphic Guide Adventure (Series: Graphic Guide Adventure) O’Donnell, Liam. Part adventure story, part survival manual. Two kids are on a small plane in B.C. when it crashes. They use their survival know-how to deal with many situations and are also immersed in a conflict with the logging company. Canadian. **F ODo**

**Recommended Graphic Novels (Gr. 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 beautifully in this well-research and engaging account. (Hill and Wang, 2010)

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. (GRAPHIX, 2011)

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. (GRAPHIX, 2010)

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. (First Second, 2010).
**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. (SLG Publishing, 2006)

**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. (Candlewick, 2011)

**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. (First Second, 2007)

**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. GRAPHIX 2012.

**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. Winner of the Scott O'Dell award for Historical Fiction.

**The Unsinkable Walker Bean.** A young boy is caught up in an ancient curse that sends him to face pirates and sea-witches in an enticing high seas adventure. (First Second, 2010)

**The Invention of Hugo Cabaret.** Selznick, Brian. Technically a huge picture book, owing to its separate text and illustrations. The award-winning, 550 page adventure tells of an orphan who hides in a train station in 1930’s Paris and guards his father’s secret contraption. Now a major film.

**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 called Calamity Jack is equally appealing.

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**Recommended Graphic Novels (Gr. 9–12)**

**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.


**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 styled to match the setting and theme. Rich opportunity for discussion with its hidden layers and use of satire.

**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.

**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.
**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. (Atheneum, 2010)

**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).

**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.

**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.

**Darwin**

**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)


**V for Vendetta,** Moore, Alan. Set in a totalitarian England, where a lone bomber is bent on destroying the government’s grip on society. Lends itself well to classroom study and discussion. Some violence and slight nudity that School Library Journal describes as “fitting well with the Story”. There are also numerous examples of classroom use with this title. Parallels to Orwell’s 1984.

**Graphic Novels in the AB Social Studies “Literature Connections” Documents**

http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/sslc/html/index.html

Gr. 7: **Louis Riel: A Comic-Strip Biography.** Brown, Chester. Captures the events leading up to the Red River Resistance and Second Métis Uprising. Building of the CPR, immigration policies, and of course Riel’s execution are all covered. The research is evident in the detailed endnotes provided.

Gr. 8: **The Yellow Jar: Two Tales from Japanese Tradition. v. 1.** Atangan, Patrick. Two stories from Japanese tradition, exploring the themes of perseverance, individuality and equality (NBM Publications, 2004).

Gr. 8: **Mesoamerican Myths.** West, David. Three myths are told in graphic format, representing Aztec, Mayan and Mexican Indian. The myths contain some violence (such as beheading), making for some bloody scenes (Rosen Publications, 2006)

Gr. 8: **Elizabeth I : The Life of England's Renaissance Queen.** Shone, Rob. Highlights key events and conditions during her reign, as well as the focus on arts and social reform that shaped the future. Includes historical notes, maps, images. Rosen Central, 2004.

Gr.9 **The Wall.** Sis, Peter. The author tells his story of growing up in Czechoslovakia alongside a timeline of events from the cold war, ending up in the fall of the Wall. Provides insight into growing up in a harsh totalitarian regime (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007).
Gr. 9: The Arrival. Tan, Shaun. Wordless graphic novel depicting a man leaving his family to immigrate to a new world. The pictures are fantastical and bizarre, but readers come to understand that this confusion in not unlike that experienced by many who arrive in a totally new country (Arthur A. Levine Books, 2006).


10-1, 10-2, 10-4: Sticks and Stones. Kuper, Peter. Short, wordless graphic novel. A Stone Giant demands the allegiance of all around him. He conquers the nearby wood civilization and plunders its resources, until he is met with resistance and eventual demise. Well-suited to discussions on imperialism and marginalization (Three Rivers Press, 2004)

10-1: Alia’s Mission: Saving the Books of Iraq. Stamaty, Mark Allan. Briefly tells the story of Alia, the Librarian at the Basra Central Library, and how she smuggled out 3/4 of the 40,000 book collection before the library was bombed in the 2003 war on Iraq (Alfred A. Knopf, 2004).

20-1 Maus. Spiegelman, Art. Must-read graphic biography (Pullitzer Prize winner- the only graphic novel to receive this honour). The author illustrates the story of his father, a Holocaust survivor, representing the Nazis as cats and the Jewish people as mice. For mature readers (Knopf Doubleday, 1986).

20-1, 20-2, 20-4 The Wall. Sis, Peter. The author tells his story of growing up in Czechoslovakia alongside a timeline of events from the cold war, ending up in the fall of the Wall. Provides insight into growing up in a harsh totalitarian regime (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007).

30-1 & 30-2: 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. (First Second, 2007)

30-1 & 30-2: Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea. Delisle, Guy. A French-Canadian cartoonist spent two months in Korea in 2001 to supervise the production of a television show. He documents his experiences with humour, yet conveys the bleakness of this totalitarian society (Drawn & Quarterly, 2005).

30-1 & 30-2: Escape From East Berlin. Downey, Glen R. Follows the story of a desperate mother and her two children as they try to escape over the Berlin Wall in 1963. Supplementary text and maps. Note: There are violent scenes. (Rubicon Publications, 2007).

GREAT SOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

BOOKS

The Graphic Novel Classroom: Powerful Teaching and Learning with Images, by Maureen Bakis. Written by a high school English teacher and includes strategies and and examples from specific graphic novels, including Persepolis, V for Vendetta, American Born Chinese, A Contract with God and The Arrival (Corwin, 2012)

Teaching Early Reader Comics and Graphic Novels, by Katie Monnin. An excellent source for encouraging deeper reading of visual texts. Monnin gives a great framework for teaching the parts of a graphic novel as well as some specific lessons for grades K-6. (Maupin House, 2011)
Teaching Graphic Novels: Practical Strategies for the Secondary ELA Classroom, by Katie Monnin. As with her text for younger readers, this highly practical guide shows teachers how to engage students in a rich exploration of literature using graphic novels (Maupin House, 2009).

Adventures in Graphica, by Terry Thompson. Focus is on using Graphic Novels in reading instruction and provides examples of teaching specific skills: visualization, self-monitoring, making inferences, vocabulary, and fluency. The titles he refers to tend to be leveled titles specifically for the school market as opposed to established selections of graphic literature (Stenhouse Publishers, 2008).

Understanding Comics, by Scott McLeod. Every introductory guide for teachers refers to this graphic introduction to comics- the history, variations of the format, and the deep psychological layers comics can embody. Highly readable, light and a must-read for truly appreciating the art of comics. Good for sharing with secondary students especially (William Morrow, 1993).

ONLINE

Get Graphic (column), by Librarian Michele Gorman. Michele’s regular column appears in the publication Library and Media Connection. You can access the full text articles with a Chinook Arch Public Library card at www.chinookarch.ca through the Academic Search Elite Database (Under Digital Content-General). Do an author search for Michele Gorman. Her “Best of [year]” columns are an excellent way to keep up with new titles, and she sorts them according to grade level.

Graphicclassroom.org. Started by teacher Chris Wilson to review and recommend graphic novel titles for classroom use. Includes recommended lists by age range. Also visit graphicclassroom.com, a separate site with good links to other material on graphic novels in the classroom.

Getgraphic.org: YALSA’s Graphic Novel site, with a tab for teachers. Includes a list of suggested teaching strategies, support material for developing collections, and background information for promoting graphic novels in the classroom.

TOON into reading- TOON BOOKS. http://www.toon-books.com. Fabulous resource for gr. K-2. Includes free well-written lesson plans and activities with contributions by Dr. Katie Monnin (Teaching Early Reader Comics and Graphic Novels, 2011). Click on the pdf images to download. Also includes Online Readers- under For Parents and Kids. This selection of 12 TOON titles can be projected to a group or read independently with optional narration.

Google! Search [graphic novel title] lesson plans. For the majority of titles listed above, you will see at least some lesson material, offered mostly at publisher and author websites. Some established titles also yield excellent examples of work by other teachers.
Graphix Teacher Site (Scholastic)
http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/collection/graphix-teacher-site: The recently posted web-cast features 3 prominent authors for Gr. 5-8. There is also a link to their helpful teaching guide, Using Graphic Novels with Children and Teens.

Readwritethink.org: Sponsored by the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English. This site is a great resource for English Language Arts material. Search for the term graphic novel to find some useful ideas.

Makebeliefscomix.com/Comix/ An easy-to-use online comic creator. Diverse characters with multiple poses for each. Limited to choices available, but will appeal to some students. No registration; free.

Printable Blank Panels for Student responses/creations.
http://donnayoung.org/art/comics.htm Scroll down this page to find a variety of printable cartoon panels.

Diamond Bookshelf. Publisher site with a link to lesson plans. Search by title. Most plans are fairly brief but include suggested themes for pursuing with students.

Book Trailers-Short promotional videos designed to preview the work and hook readers. These are great classroom tools! Search Google for [title] book trailer or access Teachingbooks.net (see next entry).

LearnAlberta.ca Use the Online Reference Centre tab to access Teachingbooks.net. Type in a book title to get support info. such as author interviews, links to lesson plans and book trailers.

Graphicnovelsandhighschoolenglish.com Maureen Bakis, author of Graphic Novels in the Classroom, posts superb information on her blog and site. The Voices from the Classroom section links to valuable examples of teacher approaches and student work. Scroll through the blog to find her links to presentation material: her slideshows are excellent and many slides could easily be used in a secondary classroom.

REFERENCES


