

Using Graphic Novels with Confidence

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OLA Superconference, January 31st, 2013

What are you afraid of?



Common Concerns about Graphic Novels

- ▶ They're not 'real' reading
- ▶ Will encourage children to read **ONLY** graphic novels
- ▶ Parents / administrators / everyone else will complain
- ▶ They're full of inappropriate content – sex & violence!
- ▶ They're too 'easy'
- ▶ They're poor quality & disposable
- ▶ ***I'VE never read a graphic novel***



Comics' Cultural Baggage

- ▶ Dr. Frederick Wertham writes *Seduction of the Innocent* (1954)
- ▶ The Comics Code Authority established (1954)
- ▶ Decades of censorship
- ▶ Stigma of being **LOW CULTURE**



We've come a long way!

- ▶ Graphic novels featured on bestseller lists
- ▶ Graphic novels have won prestigious awards
- ▶ Graphic novels have been made into successful television shows and movies

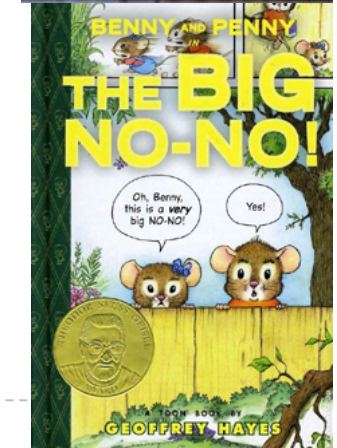
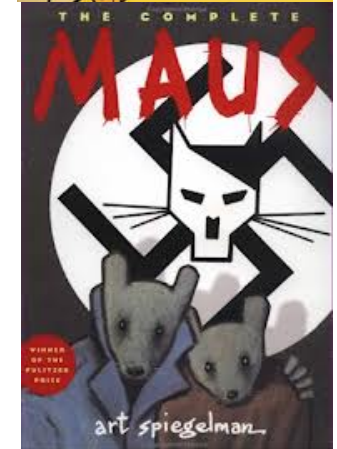
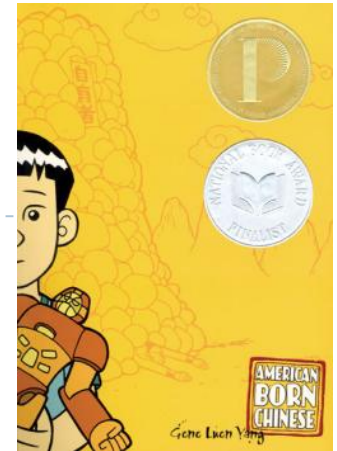
The New York Times
Monday, October 15, 2012

Best Sellers

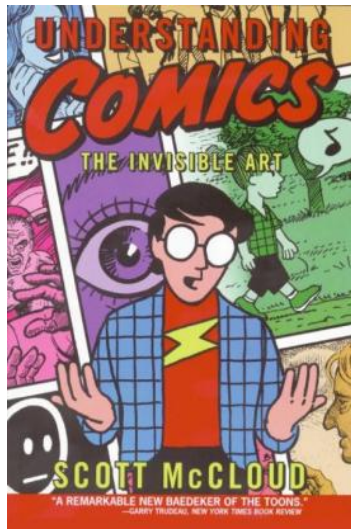
Hardcover Graphic Books

1. **BUILDING STORIES**, by Chris Ware
2. **MADELEINE L'ENGLE'S A WRINKLE IN TIME**, by Hope Larson
3. **AMERICAN VAMPIRE, VOL. 4**, by Scott Snyder and Rafael Alburquerque
4. **JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA: THE RISE OF ECLIPSO**, by James Robinson and Brett Booth
5. **SAILOR TWAIN, OR THE MERMAID IN THE HUDSON**, by Mark Siegel

[Complete List »](#)



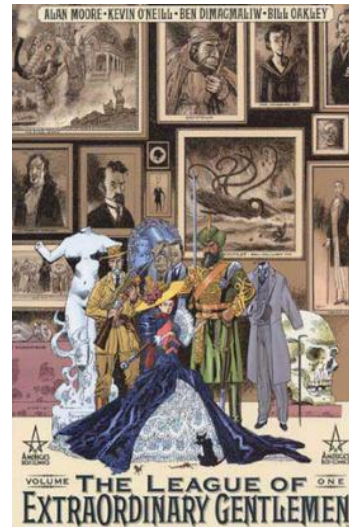
What are you waiting for?



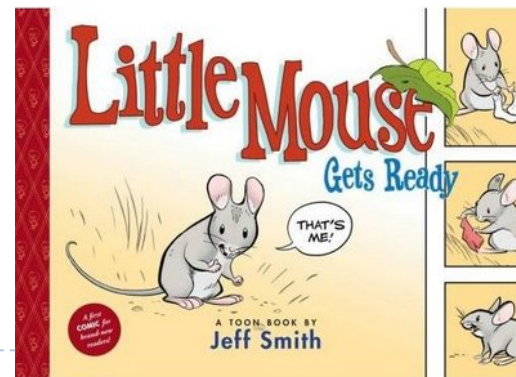
Understanding Comics
By Scott McCloud



Hicksville by
Dylan Horrocks



The League of
Extraordinary
Gentlemen by Alan
Moore & Kevin
O'Neil



Little Mouse
Gets Ready by
Jeff Smith

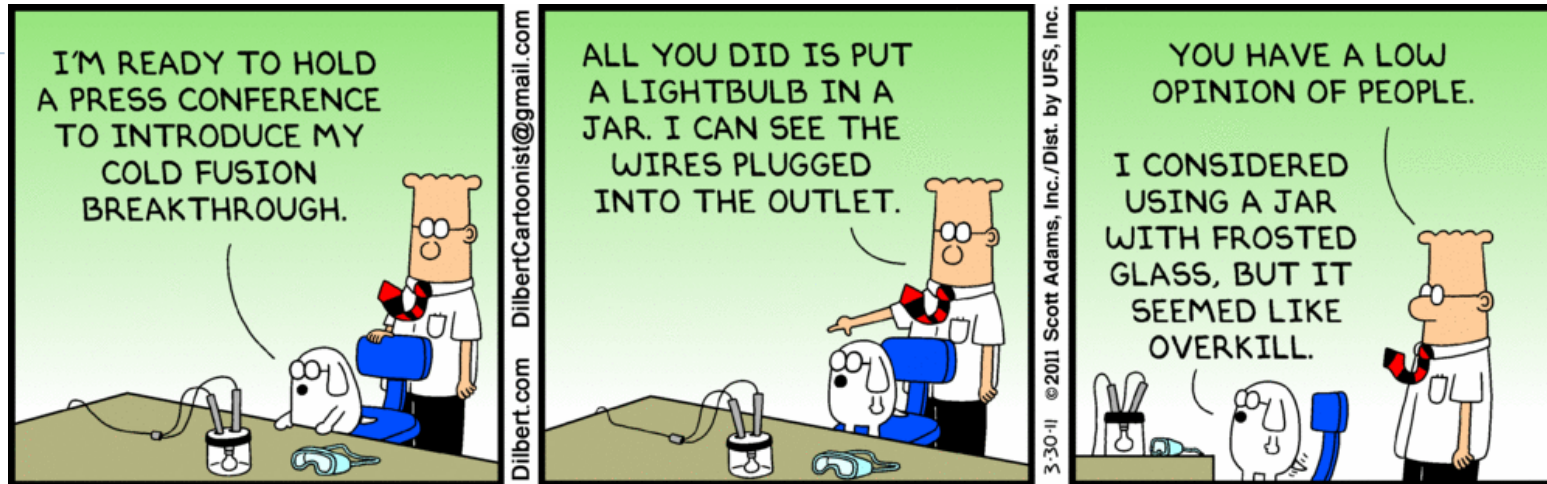


Smile by Raina
Telgemeier



COMICS 101





COMIC STRIP

- short, often 3 panels
- focus on the gag, not an ongoing story
- found in newspapers, online, etc.



COMIC BOOK

- usually 32 pages, monthly, standard size
- often one chapter of a larger story
- stapled, no spine
- found in bookstores, comic book shops, libraries





GRAPHIC NOVELS

- usually more than 48 pages, varying sizes
- stand-alone or part of series
- book format, has a spine
- found in bookstores, comic book shops, libraries





MANGA

- Japanese comics
- usually 100+ pages, uniform size (digest)
- published serially like comics, but in magazines
- serial chapters collected in book format
- series can be long, but have ending points



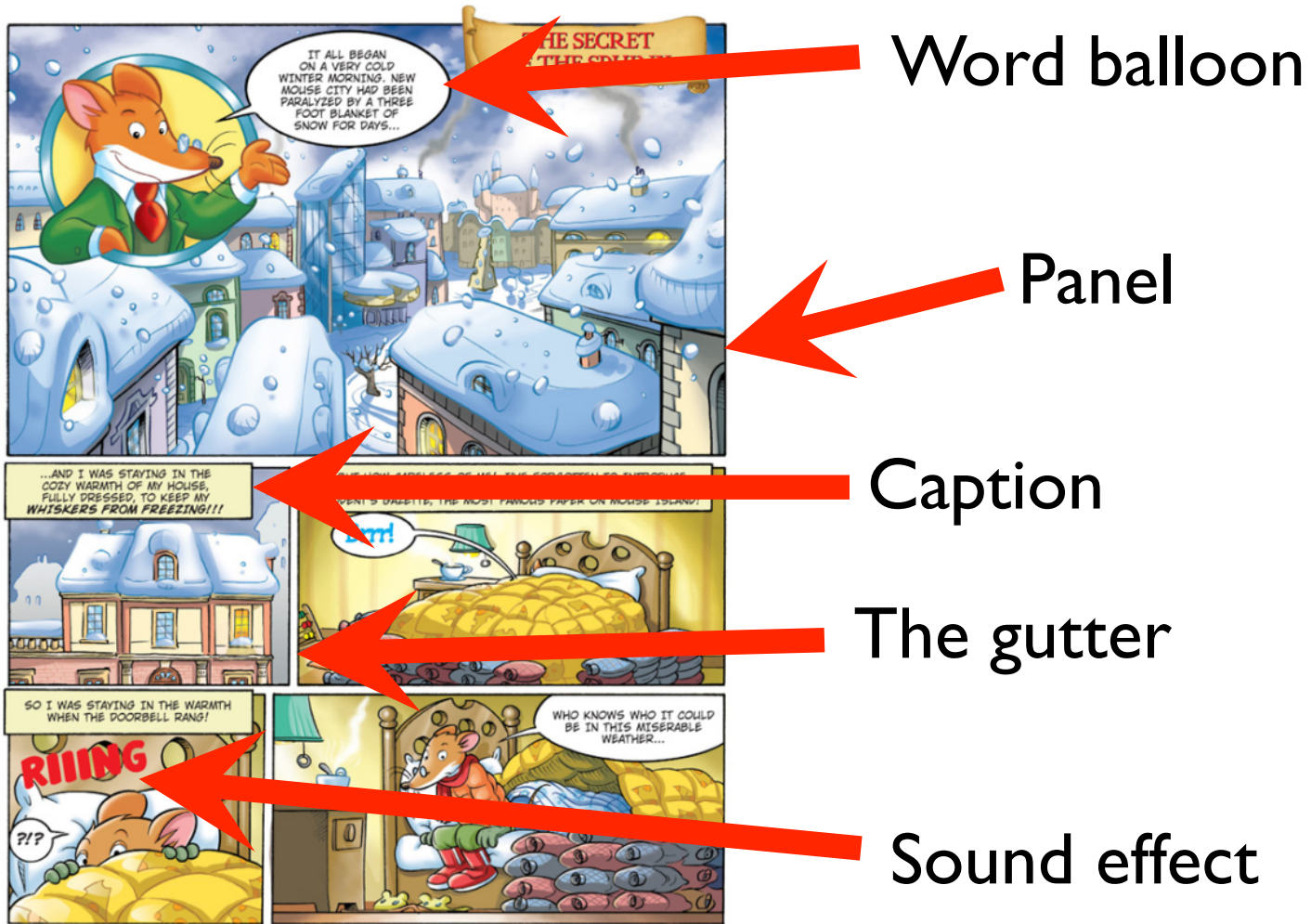
-
- Comic Strip
 - Comic Book
 - Graphic Novel
 - Manga



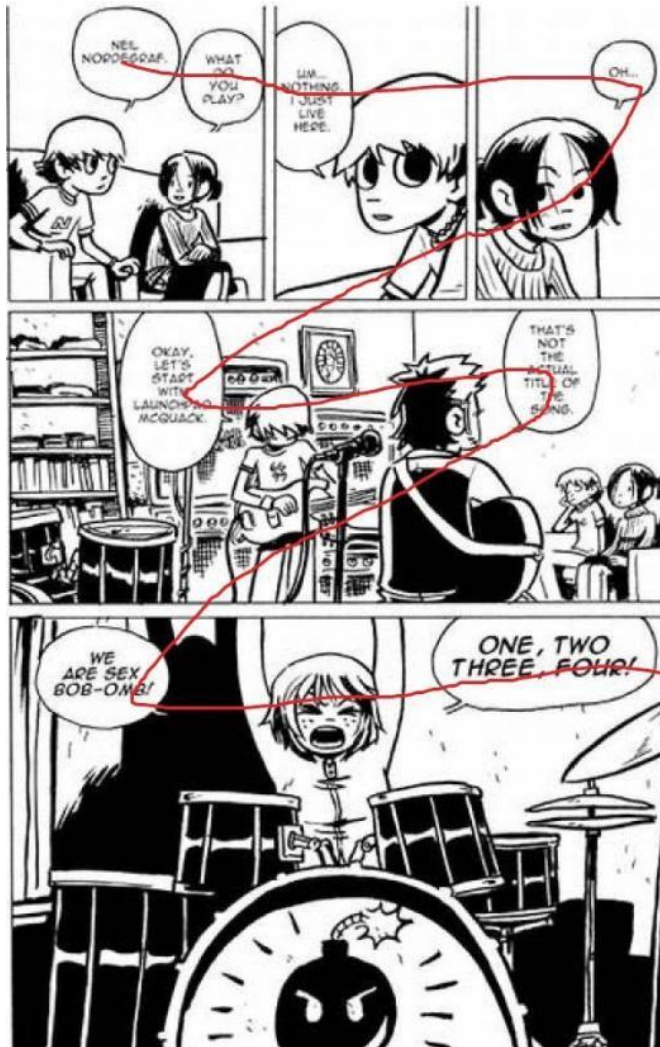
COMICS



Parts of a Graphic Novel



How to Read a Graphic Novel



- Read from left-to-right, top to bottom
- Most *manga* is read right-to-left
- A well-crafted graphic novel should create a natural path for the eye to follow
- A different kind of reading – digesting the words and pictures at the same time

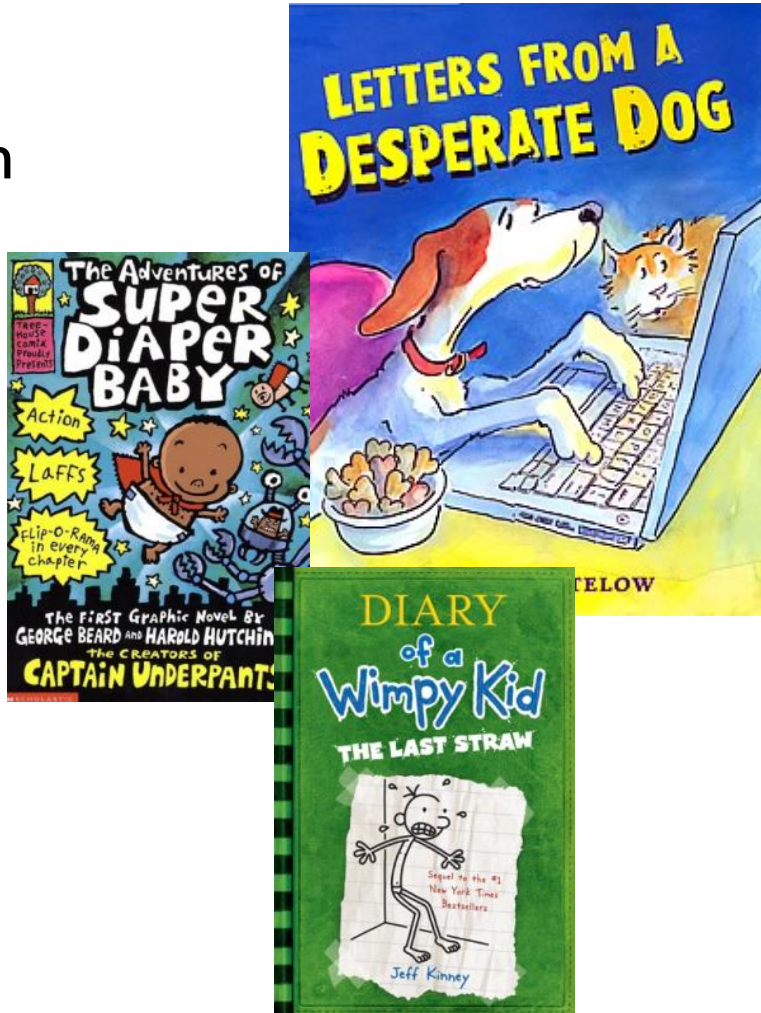


**SELECTION &
EVALUATION**



Selecting Graphic Novels for your collection

- ▶ Assess what GNs you may already have in your collection
 - ▶ Picture Books
 - ▶ Hybrids
 - ▶ Pre-GNs
- ▶ Consult with GN allies
 - ▶ Graphic Novels for Libraries listserv:
gn4lib@yahoogroups.com
 - ▶ Local comic book stores
 - ▶ 'Hidden' allies



Selecting Graphic Novels for your collection

- ▶ Consult booklists and bibliographies, print and online
 - ▶ *Graphic Novels for Young Readers: A Genre Guide for Ages 4-14* by Nathan Herald
 - ▶ *The Librarian's Guide to Graphic Novels for Children and Tweens* by David Serchay
 - ▶ *Best Books for Kids and Teens Magazine* (Canadian Children's Book Centre, published twice a year)
 - ▶ *Good Comics For Kids* blogs.slj.com/goodcomicsforkids/
 - ▶ *No Flying, No Tights* www.noflyingnotights.com
 - ▶ *The Graphic Classroom* www.graphicclassroom.org/



Selecting Graphic Novels for your collection

A Parent's Guide to the Best Kids' Comics

- ▶ 100 reviewed titles
- ▶ Arranged by grade level
- ▶ Variety of genres
- ▶ Content concerns
- ▶ Educational tie-ins
- ▶ Read alike
- ▶ Index



Building your Graphic Novel collection

- ▶ Mix award-winners & literary titles with popular choices
- ▶ Select both new and classic books
- ▶ Pay close attention to media tie-ins
- ▶ Select titles with curriculum ties to suit your library's needs
- ▶ Pay attention to the diversity of your collection
 - ▶ Books for all age levels
 - ▶ Books with both boy and girl appeal
 - ▶ A mix of genres



Evaluating Graphic Novels

- ▶ Use print & online resources mentioned previously
- ▶ Consult reviews in library & publishing journals
 - ▶ School Library Journal
 - ▶ Library Journal
 - ▶ Publisher's Weekly
 - ▶ Kirkus
 - ▶ Voice of Youth Advocates
 - ▶ Library Media Connection
 - ▶ Quill & Quire

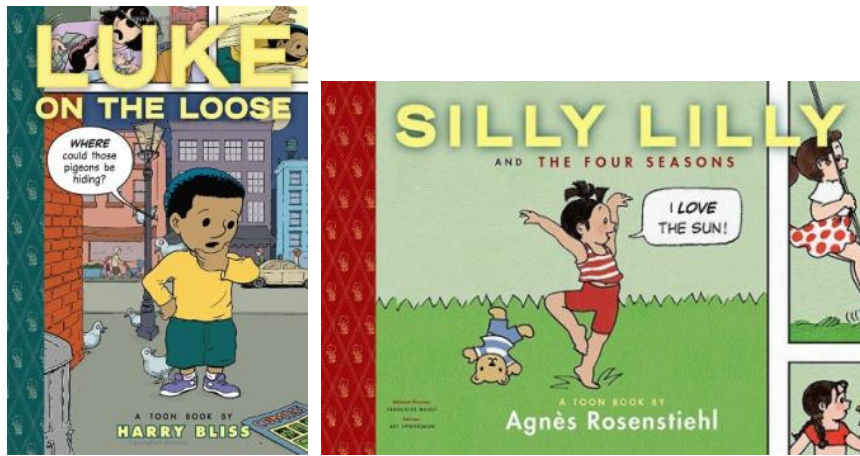


Evaluating Graphic Novels

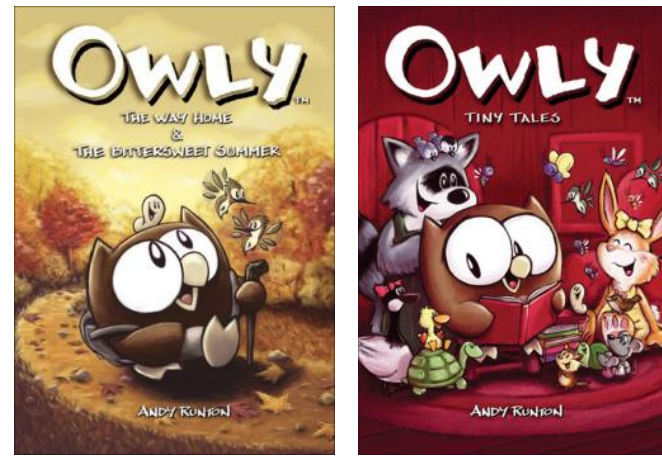
- ▶ Evaluate them on your own
 - ▶ Readability – panel layouts and sequencing make sense?
 - ▶ Text – density and size appropriate for age level?
 - ▶ Art – appealing and clear?
 - ▶ Content (Language and story) – accessible and appropriate?
 - ▶ Do the text and art work together to move the story forward?



Getting started with your GN collection



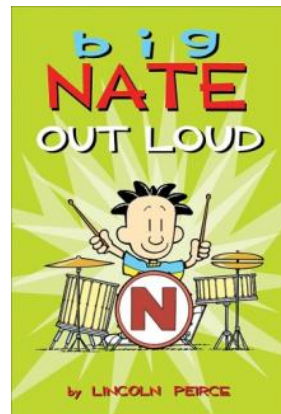
Toon Books



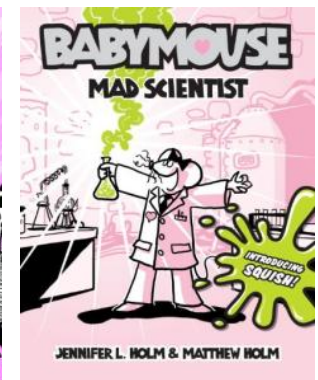
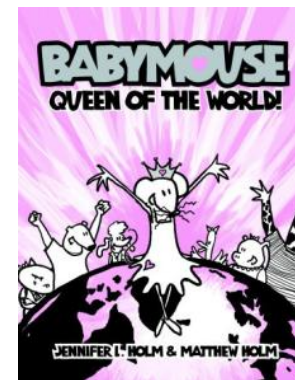
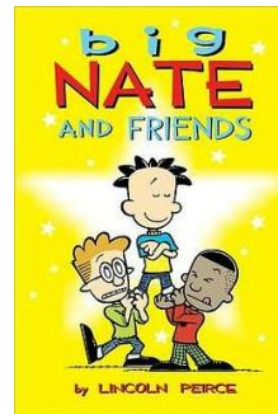
Owly



Adventures in Cartooning



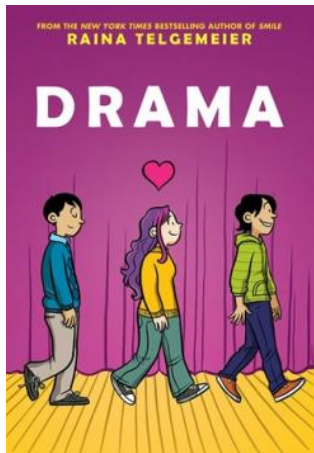
Big Nate



Babymouse



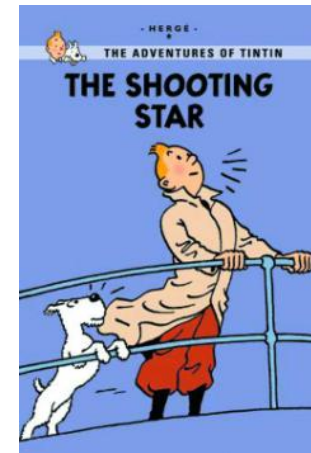
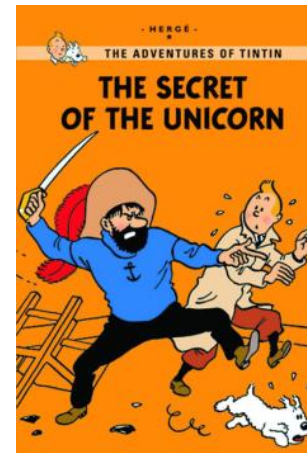
Getting started with your GN collection



Raina Telgemeier



The Secret Science Alliance



Tintin

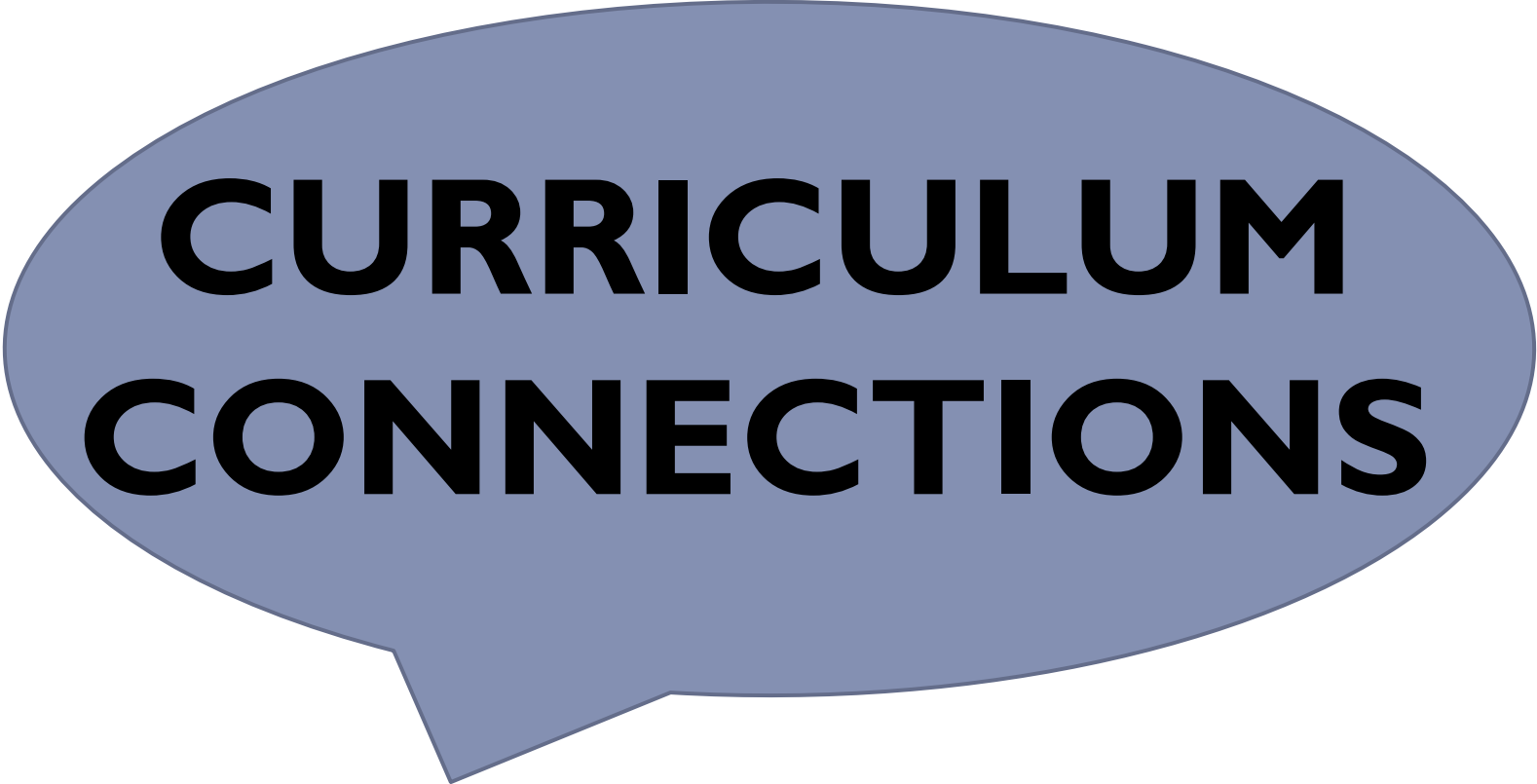


Amulet




Bone





**CURRICULUM
CONNECTIONS**



Graphic Novels: A Powerful Tool

Interdisciplinary

Intertextual

Interactive



Graphic Novels for Everyone

- ▶ Expansive tool for learners at all literacy levels
 - ▶ Reluctant readers
 - ▶ Second-language learners
 - ▶ Readers that have difficulty with visualization
 - ▶ Readers with learning or reading difficulties
 - ▶ Advanced readers
 - ▶ Everyone else!

Reading graphic novels **encourages stronger recreational reading habits** and **motivates students to read independently**



Graphic Novels and Multi-Modal Literacy

▶ **CONTENT**

- ▶ Text – word balloons & captions
- ▶ Expanded vocabulary – exposure to more rare words, visual clues to help define words
- ▶ Images – visual literacy, decoding symbols & icons

▶ **FORM**

- ▶ Text and image in sequence – how they relate to one another also how form affects meaning
 - ▶ panel shapes, panel/page layouts, word balloon shapes, the gutter
- ▶ Inferring, predicting, making meaning – cause/effect, action, emotion, mood



Graphic Novels and Narrative

- ▶ Identifying elements of story
 - ▶ Setting, characters, conflict, climax, etc.
- ▶ Identifying story structure
 - ▶ Beginning, middle, end
- ▶ Identifying key literary terms and devices
- ▶ Identifying elements of genre
 - ▶ Wide variety of genres, plus genre-blending
- ▶ Dialogue
 - ▶ Character development
- ▶ **Creative writing opportunities!**



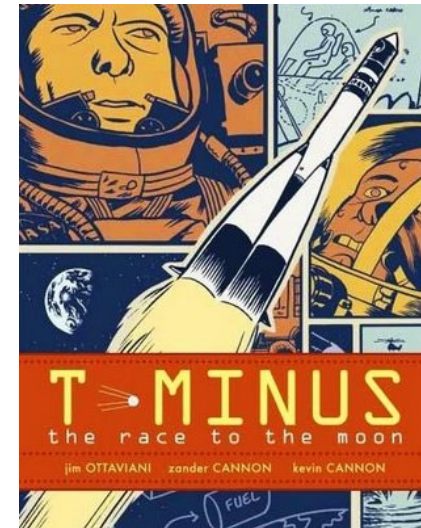
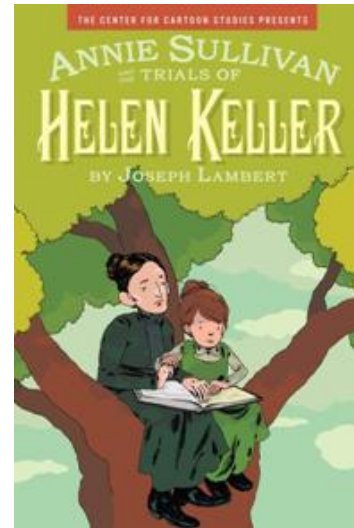
Graphic Novels and Art

- ▶ Exploring art appreciation and critique
- ▶ Identifying art & film terms in the context of comics
- ▶ Using literary terms and applying them to narrative image
- ▶ Identifying various art styles
- ▶ Exploring character design
- ▶ Examining how composition & colour can affect mood & atmosphere



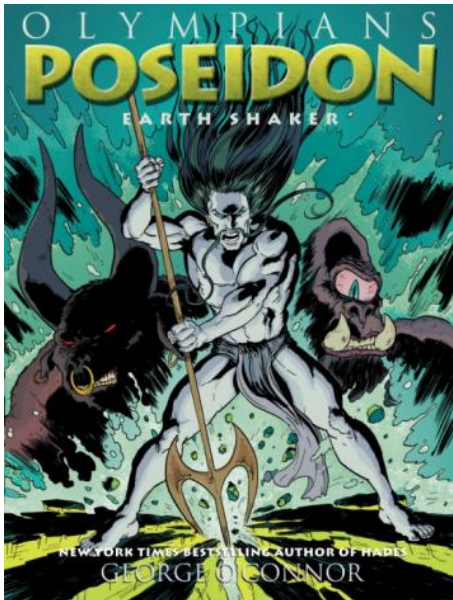
Enhance Your Curriculum with Graphic Novels

- ▶ Introduce or simplify complex or confusing topics
- ▶ Enhance discussion or comprehension
- ▶ Introduce and explore different viewpoints or cultural experiences
- ▶ Biographies
- ▶ Graphic adaptations of classic & current literature
- ▶ Science
- ▶ Social Issues
- ▶ Manga



Graphic Novels as Reading Gateways

- ▶ Graphic novels successfully act as springboards to other texts – both other comics and traditional texts
 - ▶ Authors
 - ▶ Genres
 - ▶ Non-fiction



- For example: follow Poseidon with...
 - other books in the *Olympians* series
 - novels that feature Greek mythology, ie. *Percy Jackson* series
 - D'Aulaires Book of Greek Myths
 - nonfiction books on Greek mythology
 - nonfiction books on Ancient Greece
 - and more!



Recommended Resources

- ▶ Adventures in Graphica by Terry Thompson, Stenhouse Publishers, 2008
- ▶ Teaching Early Reader Comics & Graphic Novels by Dr. Katie Monin, Maupin House, 2011
- ▶ The Graphic Novel Classroom by Maureen Bakis, Corwin Press, 2011
- ▶ Graphic Novels In Your Media Center by Allyson Lyga, Libraries Unlimited, 2004
- ▶ Diamond Bookshelf www.diamondbookshelf.com
- ▶ Reading with Pictures www.readingwithpictures.org
- ▶ Publisher & creator websites – **FREE** lesson plans



References

- ▶ Reading Lessons: Graphic Novels 101 by Hollis Margaret Rudiger
archive.hbook.com/pdf/articles/mar06_rudiger.pdf
- ▶ Why Comics Make Reading Fun by Martha Cornog
graphicnovelreporter.com/content/why-comics-make-reading-fun-feature-stories
- ▶ More Than Just Funny Books: Comics & Prose Literacy for Boys
www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Reports/LessonsInLearning/LinL20100721Comics.html
- ▶ Graphic Novels Across the Curriculum by Mel Gibson
www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/Graphic%20novels%20across%20the%20curriculum_tcm4-402928.doc
- ▶ Bringing Graphic Novels into a School's Curriculum by Katherine T. Butcher & M. Lee Manning
www.jstor.org/stable/30197687



Thanks for listening!



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Good Comics for Kids

blogs.slj.com/goodcomicsforkids/

Growing a Reader

[torontopubliclibrary.typepad.com/
kids-books/](http://torontopubliclibrary.typepad.com/kids-books/)