

HOLIDAY HOUSE & PIXEL INK



ZAP!

A GUIDE TO USING

SNAP!

GRAPHIC NOVELS

ZOINK!

IN THE CLASSROOM

WHAM!

WHAT ARE GRAPHIC NOVELS?

Graphic novels are books that tell a complete story or multiple stories (anthologies) using a combination of text and illustration—visual arts. Graphic novels use comic-strip format and characteristics, including panels, frames, speech balloons/bubbles, and thought balloons/bubbles, in a sequential way to develop a story in readers' minds.

WHY INCORPORATE GRAPHIC NOVELS INTO THE CLASSROOM?

GRAPHIC NOVELS ARE POWERFUL. They facilitate and support students' abilities to visualize and comprehend complicated ideas and connect to texts. Using graphic novels in the classroom improves learning outcomes, making reading more interesting, meaningful, and engaging. Graphic novels are more approachable for students than traditional word-heavy texts. Images support comprehension and increase the success rate of reading critically and finishing books.

GRAPHIC NOVELS DEMONSTRATE A VARIETY OF STORY ELEMENTS—setting, plot, character development, and central themes and ideas. They also contain elements of visual arts, allowing students to develop literacy by interpreting images for meaning. By reading graphic novels, students develop varied insights into how meaning is communicated and interpreted.

STUDENTS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN READING by linking images to a narrative, making inferences from panel to panel. This type of book allows readers to pay greater attention to what authors state explicitly and where they need to infer, or read between the lines, to come up with details and the bigger picture.

GRAPHIC NOVELS ARE WRITTEN TO INCORPORATE LITERATURE TIES across genre, themes, and curriculum content areas, adding another layer to lessons. The visual format and elements in graphic novels support all readers, including struggling students who are apprehensive about engaging with literature.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GRAPHIC NOVELS

LAYOUT—The layout is the configuration of all the elements on the page—the way the frame, panels, speech bubbles, etc. are arranged to tell the story.

PANEL—The panel is the box containing the image and text in a graphic novel or comic.

WORD BALLOONS/SPEECH BUBBLES—Word balloons/speech bubbles are where the characters speak. It is where you find the dialogue or conversations between characters in a scene. It looks like a bubble and is coming from the character's mouth.

THOUGHT BALLOONS/THOUGHT BUBBLES—Thought balloons let us know what the characters are thinking. It is usually shaped like a cloud and is coming from the character's head.

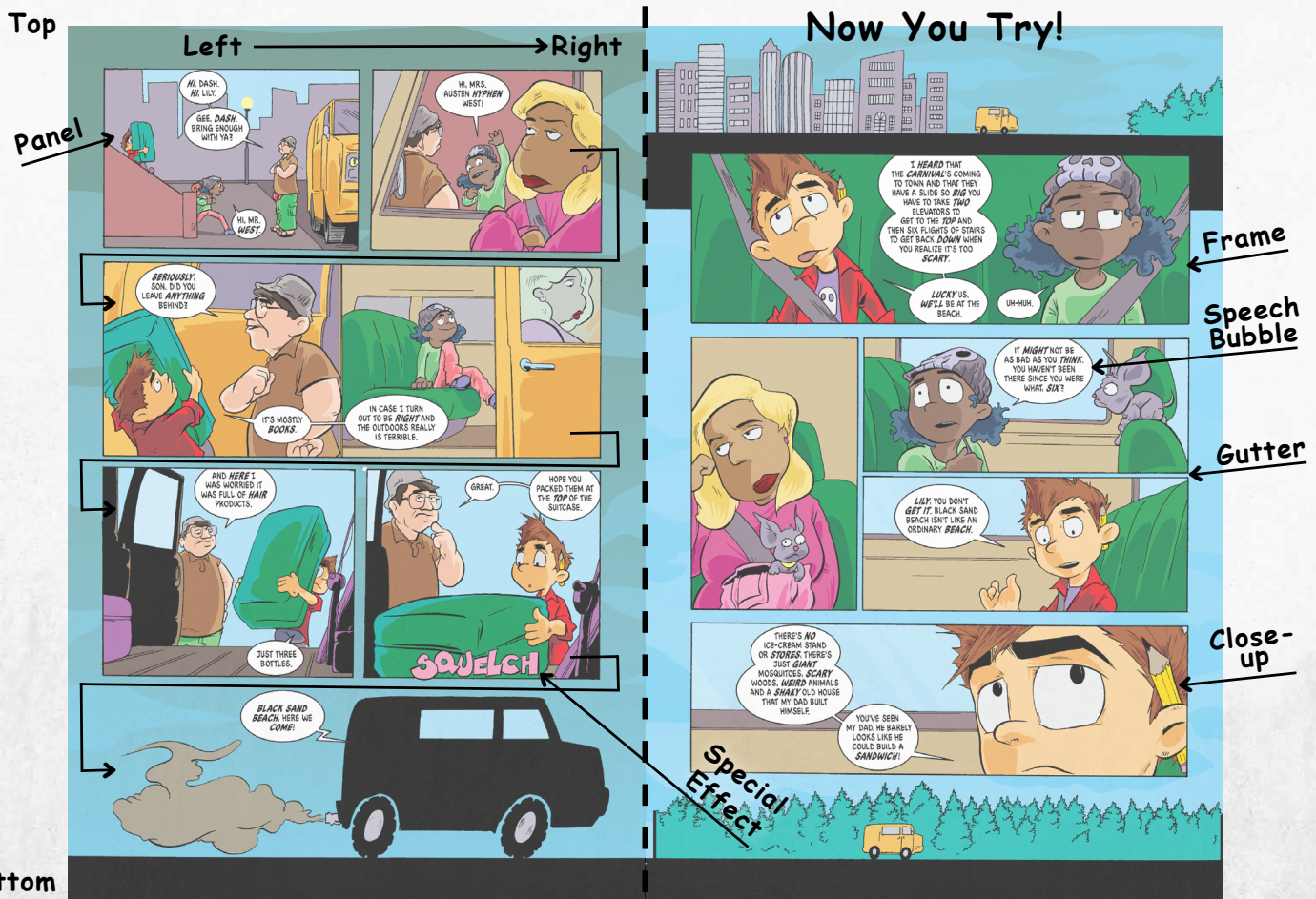
CAPTION—A caption is a box or a section of text that gives detail on the background and setting of the scene. It is separate from speech and thought bubbles, and it sits at the top or bottom of the panel.

FRAME—The frame in a graphic novel is the border around the panel.

GUTTER—The gutter is the space in between the panels. Gutters separate panels in a graphic novel.

SPECIAL EFFECTS—Special effects can be sounds or anything happening in the background. Examples are laughing (HAHAHAHAHAH) or a car coming to a halt (SCCCRREEEEECCHHH!). These words are usually bolded and easy to identify.

CLOSE-UP—A close-up is a special effect that zooms into an image, like a character's face. This effect conveys a personal connection between the reader and the character when a character reveals his/her thoughts or feelings.



© 2020 by Richard Fairgray from Black Sand Beach #1: Are You Afraid of the Light?

NOW IT'S THEIR TURN: ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENT COMPREHENSION

Here are several activities to use with your students. They can be modified and applied to any graphic novel and can be used in a classroom setting or as part of individual instruction. See the following reproducible sheets you can easily share with students.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Ask students to compare and contrast the characteristics of *Noodleheads Fortress of Doom*, Carlton Crumple Creature Catcher #1: *Catch the Munchies!*, Dolphin Girl #1: *Trouble in Pizza Paradise*, and Black Sand Beach #1: *Are You Afraid of the Light?*.

This activity can be used with all graphic novels, comparing and contrasting whichever you are using in your classroom, for as many as you wish. See separate sheet.

GRAPHIC NOVEL VS. MOVIE

Reading a graphic novel is like watching a movie. Ask students to imagine that *The Postman from Space* is a movie. Discuss the questions as a group or use this as a writing activity. Please add to or omit questions as applicable. See separate sheet.

INFORMATIONAL-MYTHOLOGY AND NONFICTION GRAPHIC NOVEL SPOTLIGHT

Some graphic novels teach us about mythology or things that happen in the world of science and social studies. Students may think of them as film documentaries.

Read *I Am Hermes! Mischief-Making Messenger of the Gods* by Mordicai Gerstein, a new twist on stories from Greek mythology, or *The History of the World in Comics* by Jean-Baptiste de Panafieu, illustrated by Adrienne Barman, a journey through time told with humor. Students can answer the questions, "Graphic Novel vs. Movie," as applicable, and consider the unique characteristics of informational text as well. See separate sheet.

GENERAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR AFTER READING

- How is reading a graphic novel like watching a movie?
- What kind of inferences did you make as you were reading? Go back to the text and find specific examples.
- Go back to a specific scene and discuss how this scene impacted the book.
- Discuss the themes from the story. Find scenes that reflect the central ideas and themes that are introduced in the text?

CREATIVITY CORNER: CREATE A COMIC

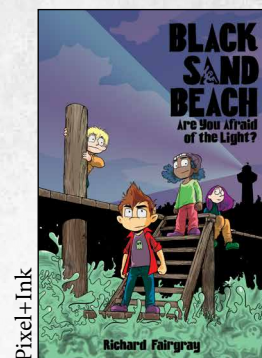
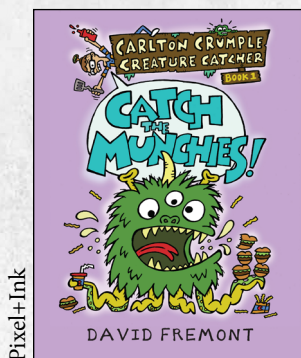
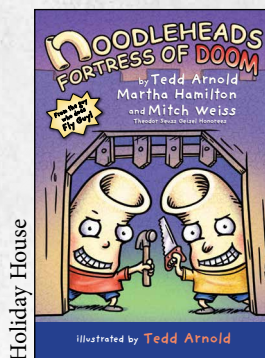
Ask your students to think of a simple story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. Using the sample reproducible sheet (students can also create their own, using a ruler and a pencil), they can create their own comic! This can be on a nonfiction topic you're teaching in the classroom or any topic of their choosing.

Guide written by Marla Conn, MS, Ed., reading/literacy specialist and educational consultant.

Name _____

GRAPHIC NOVELS—LET'S COMPARE AND CONTRAST!

Here are some awesome new graphic novels. Use these or your own favorites to get started.



	TITLE	TITLE	TITLE
LAYOUT			
PANELS			
SPEECH BALLOONS			
THOUGHT BALLOONS			
CAPTIONS			
FRAME			
GUTTER			
SPECIAL EFFECTS/ CLOSE-UP			

Name _____

GRAPHIC NOVEL VS. MOVIE

READING A GRAPHIC NOVEL IS LIKE WATCHING A MOVIE. Imagine that *The Postman from Space*, or another favorite graphic novel, is a movie. Discuss the following questions or write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

GRAPHIC NOVEL TITLE _____

1. Who is the story about?
2. Who is the main character? How do you know?
3. Who are the supporting characters? How are they related to the main character?
4. Who is telling the story? What is the point of view? Does the author use more than one narrator?
5. Where does the story take place? Does the setting change during the story?
6. When does the story take place?
7. Is the setting important to the plot? Why?
8. What do the characters do, say, think, and feel? Find examples from the graphic novel.
9. How does the dialogue between the characters help their development? What does it say about their personalities?
10. How do the actions of the characters affect the plot? How do the characters' personalities affect the outcome?
11. As you read the graphic novel, what types of predictions are you making about the characters and the plot?
12. What are the characters' strengths and weaknesses?
13. What is the problem or conflict?
14. What is the most exciting part of the story? What does the turning point or climax reveal?
15. How does the problem get resolved? Summarize the conclusion.
16. How does the author show growth or change in the characters throughout the story?
17. Does the author use flashback, flash-forwards, or foreshadowing in the story? Why? What does this accomplish?
18. Which events does the author emphasize? Why?
19. What are some of the features of the graphic novel? How does the illustrator show emphasis?
(Captions, close-ups, special effects?)

Name _____

INFORMATIONAL—MYTHOLOGY AND NONFICTION GRAPHIC NOVEL SPOTLIGHT

Some graphic novels teach us about things that happen in the world of science and social studies. When you read these texts, it is also like watching a movie, but more like a documentary.

Read *I Am Hermes! Mischief-Making Messenger of the Gods* by Mordicai Gerstein, a new twist on stories from Greek mythology, or *The History of the World in Comics* by Jean-Baptiste de Panafieu, illustrated by Adrienne Barman, a journey through time told with humor. Answer the questions, “Graphic Novel vs. Movie,” as applicable, and consider the unique characteristics of informational text below. You can write your answers on a separate page.

1. What is the purpose for writing this graphic novel?
2. How does the author introduce the topic?
3. What is the main idea?
4. If the main idea is not explicitly stated (which it most likely is not), how do you know what it is?
5. Summarize the text as you read. What is the author saying about the topic?
6. What do you find interesting?
7. Have you ever learned about this topic before?
8. What do you already know about the topic?
9. What images or visuals are helpful to understanding the topic?
10. What is the tone of the graphic novel?
11. How does the author present his/her ideas? How does the illustrator demonstrate these ideas visually?
12. What informational text features are used to support meaning?
(headings, diagrams, glossary, labels, charts, maps, timelines, etc.)

Name _____

CREATIVITY CORNER: CREATE A COMIC

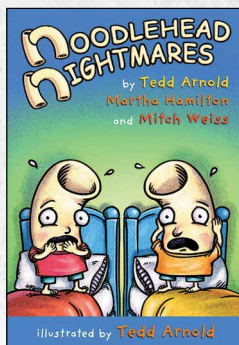
Think of a simple story that you can tell using 5 to 7 panels. Use the sample panel below or create your own design using a ruler and a pencil. Make sure your story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Do the same for a nonfiction topic you are learning about.

The comic strip template consists of a large rectangular frame divided into seven panels. The top row contains three panels of equal size. The middle row contains a large panel on the left and a smaller panel on the right. The bottom row contains a small panel on the left and a large panel on the right.

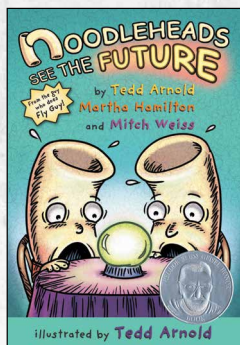
ADD THESE GRAPHIC NOVELS TO YOUR CLASSROOM LIBRARY!

GRADES 1-4

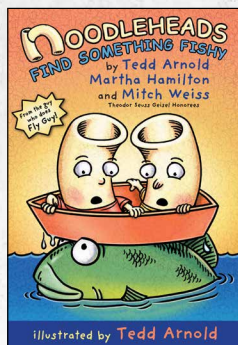
The Noodlehead Series (All: Holiday House)



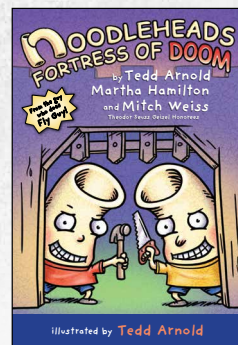
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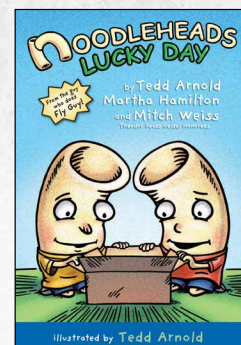
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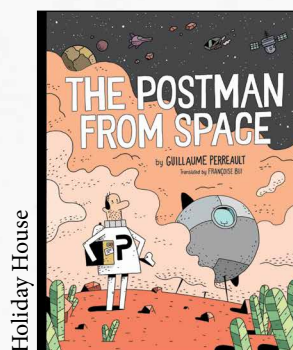


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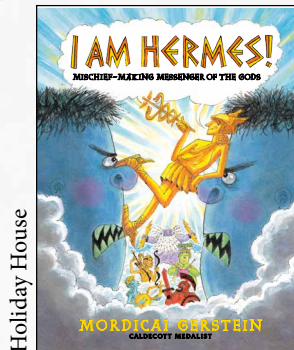
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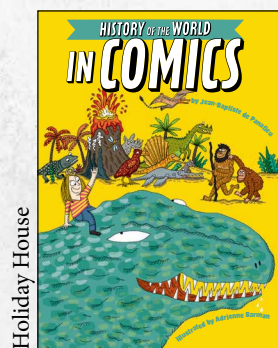


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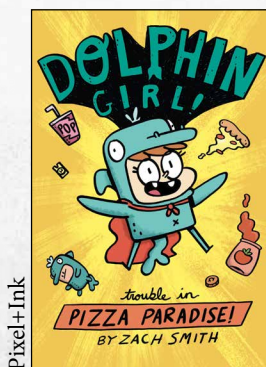


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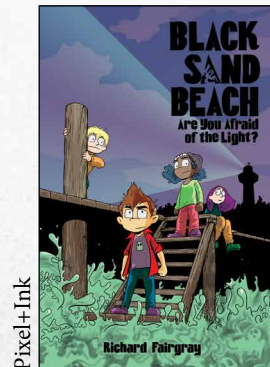
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