

Why Should Kids Read Graphic Novels

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Kids who read graphic novels read more overall.

Graphic novels and comics are less intimidating to some readers than large blocks of text. Many kids who say they don't enjoy reading do enjoy graphic novels, and the love of reading they develop spurs them on to read more traditional texts. Research shows that kids who read comics enjoy reading and read more of all kinds of books.

Graphic novels are **multimodal texts** that require readers to make meaning by combining print and visual literacy skills.

Reading graphic novels engages the brain in a different way than text alone.

The comics format requires readers to actively make meaning from the interplay between text and images, as neither the images nor the text carry meaning alone. Readers must process information both sequentially and simultaneously within and across panels and pages.

Graphic novels provide access for all readers.

The images in graphic novels provide a scaffold for decoding text, which supports beginning, emerging, and developing readers and English learners. With graphic novels, all readers can enjoy the emotion, action, and detail of great stories and practice high-level reading comprehension skills.

Analysis of graphic novels strengthens critical thinking and visual literacy.

The comics format requires readers to use higher-level thinking skills such as inference and synthesis as they analyze how the text and images work together and infer what happens between panels. Graphic novels are complex texts that include literary devices such as metaphor, symbolism, juxtaposition of images, manipulation of time and sequence, and multiple levels of meaning. Graphic novel analysis also requires visual literacy skills such as interpretation and evaluation of images using the elements of art and design.

Graphic novels build social-emotional skills.

Dialogue, facial expressions, and body language all help readers connect to a character's feelings and perspectives. These connections are both emotional and cognitive, helping readers develop both an awareness of and empathy for others, as well as self-awareness and a deeper understanding of communication and relationships.

Graphic novels help learners access and understand content.

Graphic novels are excellent tools for learning in the content areas because they convey a great deal of information in a short time while allowing the reader to control the pace of reading and rereading. Factual information, academic vocabulary, and concepts are presented in visual context.

Research shows that learners who read text and images together:

- have better attitudes toward learning
- recall information more effectively
- transfer their learning to new problems