

How Graphic Novels Can Get Students Reading – and Learning

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The days of teachers dismissing graphic novels as "not real [reading](#)" are over. The [evidence](#) is just too strong that they can turn reluctant readers into independent readers, visual learners into successful readers, and [history-and biography-averse students](#) into nonfiction lovers. Parents and caregivers—including ones I know—can also [attest to their power](#).

If you're still not convinced, consider this: Graphic novels can build confidence in students who feel intimidated by prose-only texts and have trouble finishing a book. It takes less time to read a graphic novel, which lets the reader experience the satisfaction of reading a whole book. The visual component adds to the comprehension of plot and characters, with panels focusing on close-ups of facial expressions to amplify characters' feelings, adding to kids' social and emotional learning.

Still skeptical? The Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, recognizes the value of graphic novels and has awarded [Newbery Medals and Honors](#) to them in recent years, including Jerry Craft's relatable middle school story [New Kid](#) and Cece Bell's visual memoir of growing up deaf, [El Deafo](#).

So don't be shy about weaving graphic novels into your curriculum. They can improve literacy, turn non-readers into readers, and teach students about creative storytelling, world-building, plot,

and character development, in addition to providing points of comparison between different mediums.

Here are some of our resources and recommendations for all ages:

- Our wide-ranging [Graphic Novels](#) list is a great place to start!
- If you need something related to specific historical periods or events, try our [Graphic Novels That Teach History](#) list. Teachers have found John Lewis' memoir [March: Book One](#) an excellent introduction to the civil rights movement that really makes history come alive.
- And there are books that didn't start as graphic novels but now have versions available, like [A Wrinkle in Time](#) and [Slaughterhouse-Five](#).

Graphic novels aren't just super accessible, they're one of the most creative, innovative, inclusive, and lucrative genres in publishing today. Publishers Weekly reports that consumer sales of graphic novels in the United States and Canada increased by 76% in 2021, to an estimated \$1.47 billion. So they're not going anywhere ... but up.