

Comics in the Classroom!



The Use of Comics as an Educational Tool

Comics are the format not the genre!

GRAPHIC NOVELS!



What? How? Why?

What is a Graphic Novel?

- Juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer. (Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, p. 9)
- “An expensive or long comic book” – Alan Moore

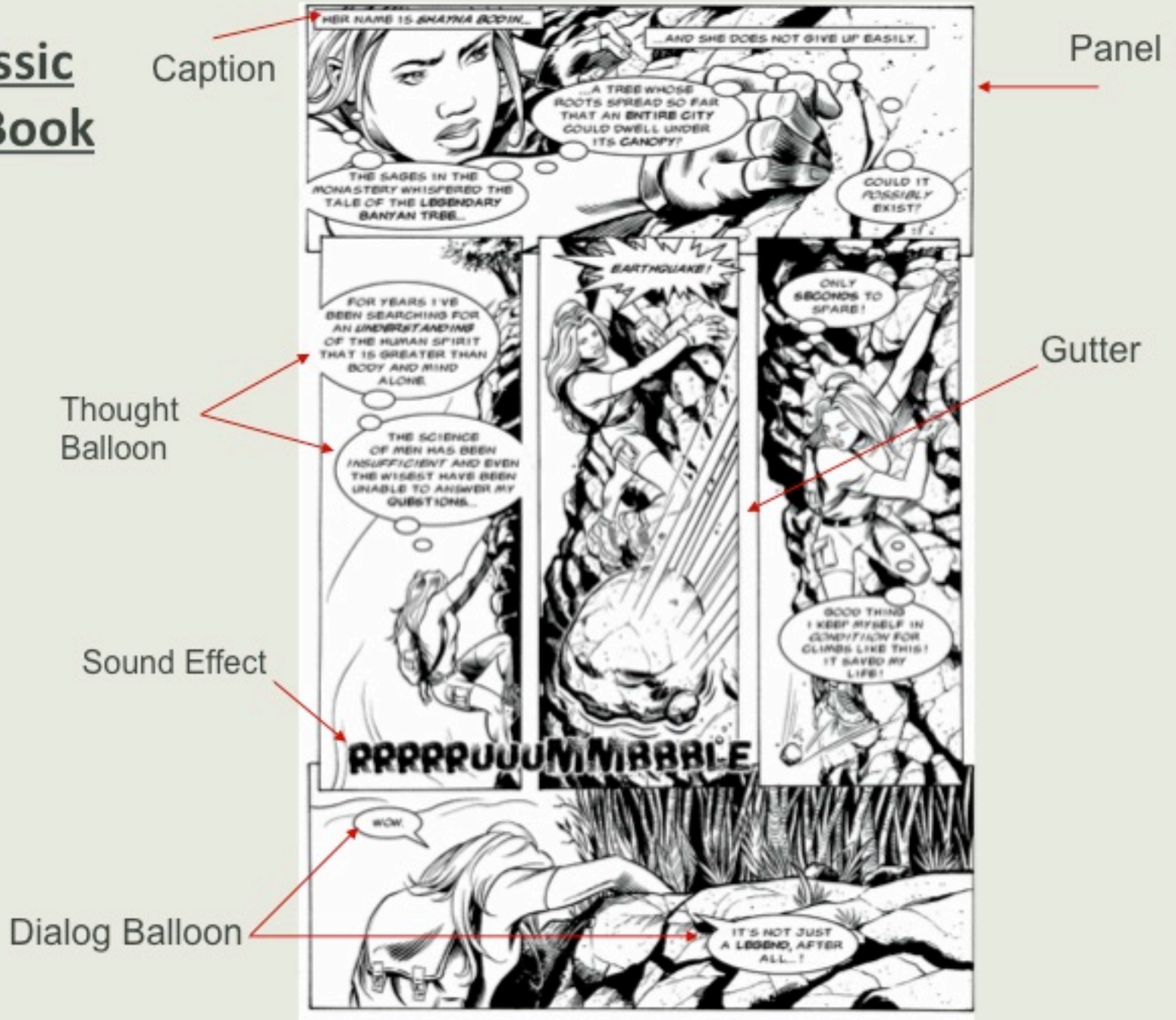
What is a Graphic Novel?

- A way to express ideas
- A communications medium like film, writing and painting
- A container of Ideas
- A narrative which includes visuals as part of the story

What is a Graphic Novel?

- It has the same format as comic books
- Comics contain text & illustrations that present information
- Book-length, usually contain one story
- Comics and graphic novels are the *Medium*, NOT the genre

The Classic Comic Book Format



Different genres of graphic novels

- The many different genres of comics already tell us how versatile the medium is for story telling.
- There are so many different genres for comics and graphic novels that it would be impossible to mention all. Here are some of the major ones.

Why have graphic novels become so important?

- The quality of comics and graphic novels has increased substantially. Authors and artists use the medium to express all kinds of ideas and narratives.
- Children and young adults have learned to follow and understand a story visually rather than textually. (television, video-games, computers, electronic billboards, etc...) (Allison Lee, *Graphic Attraction – Graphic novels in libraries*, 2004)

Why have graphic novels become so important?

- Graphic novels lure teen boys, while retaining the qualities beloved by teen girls.
- They work for ESL (English as a Second foreign Language) students (Krashen 54), teach visual literacy (Gorman 9-10) and sequencing, above all else, they are wildly popular with an adolescence audience.
- They attract reluctant readers to read and also encourage them to explore other literary mediums.

Why have graphic novels become so important?

- Graphic novels have evolved from the superhero narrative into more complex analogies incorporating topics of discussion such as child abuse, domestic violence, environmental damage, sexuality and also homelessness, to name a few.
- Graphic novels include a range of reading levels. The material can be as rigorous as a physical textbook or as vapid as a tween movie adaptation.

What benefits do graphic novels bring to the school's Curriculum?

- They can cover a multitude of topics. Such as: Art, English, Maths, Science, Social Sciences, literature, etc...
- Graphic Novels can also be used as the basis for discussion regarding difficult or controversial political, economic or social issues.

What benefits do graphic novels bring to the school's Curriculum?

- Develop and increase interest in general reading
- Increase literacy
- Develop language skills (wide and varied vocabulary)
- Create interest in a variety of different genres
- Stimulate creativity
- Develop art appreciation

What benefits do graphic novels bring to the school's Curriculum?

- Develop the ability to discuss art and writing
- Increase the understanding of visual literacy (gaining meaning from images)
- Improve understanding of pop culture and other media
- Make difficult concepts or texts more comprehensive

Conclusion

- So are teachers just supposed to give up on regular books and give students graphic novels or comics?
- Of course Not. Teachers should not present graphic novels as an alternative to regular text-only reading, but as a different useful format.

Conclusion

- Students with access to a variety of reading materials have higher average reading scores.
- Graphic Novels challenge readers of more traditional literature
- Comics help students embrace the nature of a multimedia world
- Graphic Novels fulfill the NCTE's (National Council of Teachers of English) "21st Century literacies" (multiple streams, simultaneous information)

Conclusion

- Graphic novels are another tool in differentiating reading instruction.
- Graphic novels can be an effective way to engage students who might not necessarily be interested in particular subjects.
- Graphic Novels present complex material in readable text
- They serve as a bridge to more difficult reading

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