Graphic Novels 101

Selecting and Using Graphic Novels to Promote Literacy for Children and Young Adults.

A Resource Guide for School Librarians and Educators

Philip Charles Crawford

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to:

My partner, Joshua Keels
His love, support, encouragement, and advice have been invaluable throughout this project.

My first library mentor, Sheldon Atwater,
a great colleague and friend.

The memory of Dr. William Moulton Marston,
creator of Wonder Woman.
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Preface

SETTING: A public middle school library in San Francisco. The room is quiet and there is limited activity. Abruptly, a stream of urgent boys make a beeline to a shelf somewhere in the middle of the Deweys.

Shouts ring out!

STUDENT ONE: Move, Alvin!

STUDENT TWO: You have room! I was here first!

THE LIBRARIAN: (hushed, yet firm) Gentlemen, this is a library!

The students silently exchange meaningful glares as each reaches for...our graphic novel collection.

Eventually, the frantic enthusiasm that accompanied the initial arrival of book length comics simmered down, but even now, graphic novels capture my students’ interest in a way no other medium does. Every day during their lunch, diehard manga fans re-read DragonBall Z or Gundam Wing with riveted eyes.

I marvel at their enjoyment. Part of my challenge as school librarian is to get my students into our library. Too often, I leave work gazing at full bookshelves and feel frustrated that the library is underused. Graphic novels are a major component of my push to increase student use of the library. Their fun format and connection with movies and TV have a magnetic pull on reluctant readers. A lot of times, the same kids who used to have no interest in the library now check in with me at lunch to see what comics are available. And it’s not just reluctant readers who are caught up in comics. Our school’s star students are also zealous about their favorite graphic novels. They like to carry them around and kind of show off what they are currently reading. I am frequently presented with lists of suggestions and interrogated as to when Inu-Yasha 12 will arrive. There is a whole underground circuit of manga exchanges that circumvents my circulation procedures. I feign dismay at their disobedience, but I’m a sucker for kids who like books.
How can I resist? As a school librarian, I know that by hooking my patrons into what libraries have to offer, I increase the likelihood that they will graduate from middle school with stronger reading skills. Or they will at least like the library more, and I believe in the power of libraries to influence lives. Graphic novels get students into the library - from there I can guide them to branch out to other types of books. So as my students keep reminding me of their requests for our collection, I thrill at their interest in the library and aim to keep them satisfied.

Some of my colleagues question the value of purchasing graphic novels for our school library. They see them as having limited literary merit. Indeed, some of the titles are a bastion of silliness, but the discrete educational value in graphic novels outweighs their apparent triviality. For example, my school, like most in California, is populated with recent immigrants who speak English as their second language. Comic books are frequently the most accessible medium for students who are just learning our language. The graphics help the youth make sense of the text, and voila! Before our delighted eyes, English Language Learners’ vocabularies develop as they explore this "lesser" medium.

If increasing student vocabulary and use of the library still leaves teachers unconvinced, advocates for graphic novels in school libraries now have a powerful resource that will sway the doubters—Philip Crawford’s Graphic Novels 101. Philip’s book combines the historical tradition of comics with current educational research to show that graphic novels belong in school libraries. As readers will see, his argument is balanced, thoughtful, and compelling.

For those of us who already believe in acquiring a graphic novels collection, Graphic Novels 101 can be used as a reliable selection source. Choosing these books for a school library is tricky business. Comics often include violence and questionable depictions of women. As I explored different types of graphic novels, I faltered over which titles were appropriate for my program. Philip’s guidance made a huge difference to me; his breadth of knowledge helped me make selection decisions. Now that he has gathered that wisdom in a book, I plan to devour his bibliographies and use them to improve my collection.
I hope many readers will take advantage off this resource. Philip’s encouragement and enthusiasm for comics have helped me appreciate them more. By reading Graphic Novels 101, every school librarian can become more prepared to "get graphic" and get the kids in the library.

Enjoy!

Elaine Moskowitz
Librarian and Literacy Specialist
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Author’s Introduction

My childhood was filled with many books. I grew up reading a wide-variety of materials ranging from picture books like the Curious George and Madeline to classics such as Little Women, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and Alice in Wonderland. I also loved to read fairy tales, mythology, and series fiction like Nancy Drew and the "Oz" books. Despite a wide exposure to a diverse range of juvenilia, comic books held my interest more than any other type of reading material. I loved comics and read them voraciously, my favorites being Wonder Woman, Batman, The Legion of Super-Heroes and the Fantastic Four.

Comic books helped me deal with a world that I didn't always understand and had little control over. One comic character in particular helped assure me that my perception of the men and women was not faulty. In the pages of Wonder Woman comics I found powerful independent women who challenged the status quo and an Amazon heroine who talked about how the world should be, not as it was.

Wonder Woman comics presented a fictional world where women were just as capable as men; they didn't spend their time, like Lois Lane, conniving to marry the superhero or perpetually fainting like Sue Storm, the Invisible Girl. Wonder Woman helped develop my feminist consciousness. The influence of positive female role models such as Wonder Woman, Nancy Drew, and Jo March helped to shape my perception of the world and undoubtedly had some influence my decision to pursue an undergraduate degree in Women Studies.

Comics became part of my professional adult life when I began teaching at School of the Arts. I helped to develop a collection of graphic novels for the school's library and began using Maus in my courses on multicultural fiction and American literature. My students loved reading Maus and I soon began to discover the value of using comics and graphic novels to teach literary concepts.

One of my students, I’ll call him "John," loved comics and asked to write his senior paper on the graphic novel, Batman: The Dark Knight Returns. Never a
particularly strong student, he wrote a very lengthy paper on the Batman book which clearly demonstrated his ability to read, analyze and construct meaning from fiction. John was a special education student with pronounced learning disabilities and a strong appetite for comics. Allowing John to write his paper on a graphic novels opened up a world for him that conventional literary works never did and provided him with a medium he took seriously. The result was a student who excelled in a subject in which he had previously floundered. John’s story provides an example of the power that comics and graphic novels can have on young people and the positive effects they can have on reading development and academic achievement.

Graphic novels are beginning to appear in school library media centers across the country. Librarians and educators must welcome this new breed of comics and embrace the positive effects they can have on young readers. Graphic novels are invaluable for attracting reluctant and struggling readers and can be a powerful reading tool for students struggling with language acquisition. They are a favorite among boys, but equally enjoyed by girls. I have yet to find a school library where graphic novels did not literally "fly" off the shelf. Simply put, most young people like comics and will read as many as they can get a hold of.

I have written this book to help educators and school librarians gain a better understand of the world of comics and graphic novels and their value in education. The basis for this book began as a handout for my professional development workshops on graphic novel. The success of my workshops in San Francisco and at the California School Library Association Annual Conference led to the preparation of this book. I have attempted to replicate all of the information that I cover in my workshops and hope that readers find these resources useful.
A Concise History of Comics and Graphic Novels

Comics have been an important part of 20th century popular culture, both in their original print format and their many paraliterary forms including: films, cartoons, video games, trading cards, board games, and promotional tie-in merchandise for restaurant chains like McDonalds and Burger King.

Comic characters such as Superman, Batman and Mickey Mouse have become icons that are recognized throughout the world, reduced to a single symbol such as Superman's diamond framed "S," Batman's "bat-symbol," and Mickey Mouse's circular, black ears. Additionally, characters like Wonder Woman, Archie, Betty and Veronica, and the Flash have been around for more than 60 years and are recognized by multiple generations.

Towards a Definition of the Graphic Novel

In 1978 Will Eisner coined the term "Graphic Novel" to describe his collection of illustrated short stories, *A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories* (Kitchen Sink, 1978). Eisner's term was meant to distinguish serious works told in the comic book format from collections of humorous comic strips such as *Peanuts* and *Garfield*. In *101 Best Graphic Novels*, Stephen Weiner explains the development of the form:

The graphic novel grew out of experimentation in the late 1970's and early 1980's and attempted to create a sophisticated story, told in comic book format, in
one full-length book....By the end of the 1980's, several publishers ceased producing serials and concentrated their efforts solely on graphic novels (p.15).

The best graphic novels are serious works of fiction that strive towards the status of literature. Critically acclaimed works such as *Jimmy Corrigan*, *The Sandman*, *The Tale of One Bad Rat*, and the Pulitzer Prize winning *Maus* are sterling examples of this new breed of contemporary visual literature. In recent years, the term has been modified to include trade paperback editions and reprinted collections of comics. In today's libraries and bookstores you will find a wide range of materials including comic strips, anthologies, original works, and various collections that are all loosely called "graphic novels."

To understand the history of graphic novels, we must also examine their close relatives the comic book and the comic strip. This brief history is intended to supplement the slide show, "A Concise History of Comic Books and Graphic Novels from The Yellow Kid to MAUS." The slide show is available online at:

http://www.dailybruin.ucla.edu/db/issues/00/02.29/news.maus.html

The Birth of the Comic Strip

The history of graphic novels really begins with the advent of the comic strip. In 1895 R.F. Outcault's *Yellow Kid*, debuted and became the first successful comic strip character in America. The success of Outcault's strip was followed by Bud Fisher's *Mutt and Jeff* which debuted in the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1907 and ran for 75 years. Between 1905 and 1934 a range of successful comic strip began appearing in American newspapers including *Little Nemo in Slumberland* (1905), *The Gumps* (1917), *Little Orphan Annie* (1924), *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (1929), *Blondie* (1930), *Dick Tracy* (1931) and *Lil' Abner* (1934). By the 1930's comic strips had grown in popularity and were a regular feature in the nation's newspapers.

The Birth of the Comic Book

Comic books were a natural outgrowth of comic strips. During the early 1930's two Kodak employees began assembling comic strips into 64 page tabloid editions that were sold to companies such as *Gulf Oil*, *Proctor & Gamble*, and *Kinney Shoes* who gave them away as premiums for their customers. In 1934 the first
newsstand comic book, *Famous Funnies*, appeared on newsstands. The comic book contained black and white reprinted material drawn from the Sunday comics and cost ten cents per issue. The success of *Famous Funnies* led to *New Fun Comics* the following year and featured new, original material. *Detective Comics* soon followed in 1937, containing original material, stories organized around a single theme and pages printed in color. Comic books proved only moderately successful, but that would change the following year.

**The Golden Age of Comics**

Comics began to flourish after the publication of *Action Comics* (1938), a new anthology series that featured Jerry Siegel and Joe Schuster's Superman. The immense popularity of Superman was followed by a plethora of superhero imitators—the most success being Batman, Captain Marvel, and Wonder Woman. The era also saw the emergence of humor comics, especially those featuring Archie Andrews and his Riverdale pals. During World War II many comics took on a patriotic flavor and it was common to find superheroes such as Wonder Woman fighting Nazis and overtly patriotic heroes such as Captain America and Uncle Sam espousing war time propaganda.

**Comic Books in Post-War America**

In post-war America, the roles of women and men changed radically. As male soldiers returned from the war, women were encouraged to leave the work force and return home. Familiar war-time images like Rosy the Riveter were quickly replaced by those of the suburban housewife and the nuclear family, images that were perpetuated in magazines like *Good Housekeeping and Ladies Home Journal*. Comic books begin to reflect family values just as they had reflected the patriotic values during the 1940's.

The popularity of superhero comics was fading and new types of comics begin to enter the market, most notably horror comics. Perhaps the popularity of horror comics was due to its subversion of the pristine, wholesome image of the nuclear family. Similar to it predecessor the gothic novel, horror comics exposed what was hidden behind the values of the dominate culture.

During the early 1950's, EC Comics released a series of successful horror comics including *Tales from the Crypt* and the humor oriented, *MAD*. These titles

Wertham mounted a national campaign that culminated in highly publicized US Senate trials. Wertham was especially critical of EC horror comics claiming that they incited children towards violence, and superheroes like Batman and Wonder Woman appeared in thinly veiled homosexual tales that would negatively impact the innocent minds of the children who read them. Wertham felt that boys who read Batman would identify with Robin and spend their lives looking for an adult male love interest as symbolized by Batman. Moreover, Wertham believed that girls who read story about Wonder Woman would grow up to become lesbians.

While these claims may sound silly by today's standards, Wertham's claims were taken very seriously and his crusade against comics had a devastating effect on the industry. Sales of comic books dramatically decreased and thousands of comics were burned across the country in an effort to free children from their negative effects.

Fearing that the comics industry would collapse, publishers created the Comics Code Authority, a self-censoring agency designed to evaluate comics and approve titles that were acceptable for young readers. Comics that bore this stamp of approval provided concerned parents with an assurance that these comics were "safe" for their children to read.

The Comics Code had a negative effect on the industry and superhero and horror titles became almost non-existent. EC stopped publishing horror comics and re-packaged *MAD* in a magazine form, eliminating the need for Code approval. Batman and Robin each gained girlfriends, Batwoman and Batgirl, as well as pet dog, Ace, while becoming friends with Bat-Mite, an impish alien trickster. Similarly, Wonder Woman spent much of her time doting on Steve Trevor and dreaming of marriage as her crime fighting and feminist mission took a back seat.

The result was a market filled with funny animal stories, romance comics, western and TV show tie-ins. Superheroes virtually disappeared in the marketplace with the exception of Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman. The once popular superhero had been replaced by comics that focused on heterosexual romance, teen humor, westerns, and TV shows adapta-
tions such as Leave it to Beaver and The Many Lives of Dobie Gillis.

This new breed of comics upheld the values of the day and featured light-hearted stories that were free of references to crime and other social ills.

The Silver Age of Comics

Between 1956 and 1961, superhero comics made a comeback. Hoping to repeat their earlier success with superheroes, DC launched new versions of Golden Age characters like the Flash, Green Lantern, and the Justice Society of America (now renamed the Justice League of America).

The experiment was highly successful and paved the way for the return of the superhero. Prompted by DC Comics success with superheroes, Marvel Comics begin issuing their own line superhero comics such as Spider-Man, The Fantastic Four, and The X-Men.

These characters were fresh and innovative and more realistic than previous superhero characters. They lived in New York City, had family disputes, suffered from teen angst, and the need to pay rent; problems that never effected Batman and Wonder Woman. The success of these new characters restored the popularity of super-heroes who dominated the comic book marketplace by the end of the 1960's.

In the late 1960's, underground comix begin to appear as a result of counter-culture movements. The terms "underground" and "comix" was used and to indicate comics that reflected the political views of the younger generation disenchanted with 1950's conservative culture.

Underground comix were sold primarily in pipe and tobacco specialty stores or "head shops." Artists such as R. Crumb, Gilbert Shelton, and Bill Griffith used the comic book form to discuss topics such as sexuality, anti-war sentiment, and psychedelic drugs. Women cartoonist like Trina Robbins also explored these issues, but also feminist concerns.

The influence of these early underground comix on mainstream comics can be seen in the so-called "relevant" superhero stories of the early 1970's. Comics like Green Lantern successfully tackled issues of overpopulation and heroin addiction, but mainstream attempts to explore feminism in Wonder Woman and The Avengers and racism in Superman's Girlfriend, Lois Lane were largely silly and condescending. However, the influence of underground comix paved the way contemporary
graphic novels from a variety of publishers including Fantagraphics, Drawn and Quarterly, and Vertigo. Even highly lauded works such as *Maus* would not have been possible without the appearance of underground comix.

**1970’s and 1980’s**

By the mid-1970’s nearly all comics produced by DC and Marvel were superhero titles. Romance, westerns, and horror comics were on the wane, and Archie Comics were one of the few remaining, mainstream alternative to superhero comics. Television series such as *Wonder Woman* and *The Hulk*, along with films like *Superman* helped to increase sales of superhero titles through most of the 1970’s.

One superhero series, *The Uncanny X-Men* was fundamental in changing and expanding the readership of comics. Solid writing, strong characterization and a culturally diverse line-up of heroes raised the standard for superhero comics and drew in an enormous readership that included girls and ethnic minorities.

The 1980’s saw the rise of artistic, literary works fueled by post-modern theory. Many writers and artists sought to elevate the quality of comics and make them a legitimate form of art and literature. Early artistic publications such as *RAW* introduced a group of college-educated artists including Art Spiegelman and Charles Burns who would go on to win awards and publish their work in prestigious venues such as *The New Yorker*. These artists helped to elevate the world of comics and prove that the comic form could be used as a vehicle for literary and artistic expression.

The 1980’s also witnessed the “British Invasion,” a group of British writers and artists who would transform the world of mainstream American comics. Titles like Frank Miller’s *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* and Alan Moore’s *Watchmen* brought literary and artistic concerns to the genre of superheroes, deconstructing them for a more sophisticated, mature audience.

Along with works such as Neil Gaiman’s *The Sandman* and Alan Moore’s *Swamp Thing*, superhero comics suddenly began drawing critical praise from mainstream periodicals such as *Rolling Stone* thereby attracting an older audience.

**1990’s and Beyond**

The 1990’s gave rise to Japanese comics and the commer-
cial success of graphic novels. The success of trade editions of *Maus*, *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*, and *Watchmen* led many publishers to begin exploring the viability of marketing graphic novels in mainstream bookstores like Barnes and Nobel. Japanese comics (manga) and animated features (anime) rose in popularity throughout the decade, due in part to well-marketed characters such as Sailor Moon and Pokemon. During this decade, several comics were honored with prestigious awards, most notably the Pulitzer Prize for *Maus*. Original graphic novels and trade editions of re-printed materials begin to appear in mainstream bookstores and public libraries. By the end of the decade, graphic novels had grown in popularity and were becoming an increasing part of the Teen and Young Adult collections of many public libraries. In the fall of 2002 *School Library Journal* featured graphic novels as their cover story and the Young Adult Services Association (YALSA) chose graphic novels as the chosen as the theme for Teen Read Week. The once lowly comic book, now re-packaged as a graphic novel, began showing up in public and school libraries across the country.
A Comics and Graphic Novels Timeline: 1895 - 2000

1895 - The Yellow Kid debuts, the first successful comic strip character.

1907 - Mutt & Jeff debuts, the first successful daily strip.

Birth of the Comic Strip:

Several successful comic strips appear in newspapers across the nation:

1905 - Little Nemo in Slumberland
1917 - The Gumps
1924 - Little Orphan Annie
1929 - Buck Rogers in the 25th Century
1930 - Blondie
1931 - Dick Tracy
1934 - Li’l Abner

Birth of the Comic Book:

1934 - Famous Funnies, the first comic book, contains reprints of previously published comic strips.

1935 - New Fun No. 1, the first comic to contain new, original material.

1937 - Detective Comics No. 1, the first comic to contain a single theme and be printed in full color.

The Golden Age of Comics:

1938 - Jerry Siegel and Joe Schuster’s Superman debuts in Action Comics.
1939 - Bob Kane’s Batman begins in Detective Comics.
1940 - C.C. Beck and Bill Parker’s Captain Marvel starts in Whiz Comics.
1941 - Jack Kirby and Joe Simon’s Captain America debuts.

1st appearance of Jack Cole’s Plastic Man.

Charles Moulton’s Wonder Woman debuts in All-Star Comics.

Archie debuts in PEP Comics.
Post World War II Era c. 1950:

EC Comics launches a new line of comics including Tales from the Crypt and MAD.

Osamu Tezuka's Astro Boy appears in Japan

1954 - Fredrick Werthham's Seduction of the Innocent is published.

The Comics Code Authority is formed.

The Silver Ages of Comics:

1956 - The Flash debuts in DC's Showcase.

1961 - Marvel Comics publishes a variety of successful superhero comics, ushering in a new level of comic book realism:
   • The Fantastic Four
   • The Amazing Spider-Man
   • The Incredible Hulk
   • The Mighty Thor
   • Uncanny X-Men

1968 - Underground comix movement begins.

R. Crumb publishes 1st issue of ZAP!

1970 - Zippy the Pinhead debuts. Trina Robbins publishes the first underground feminist comix.


1978 - Will Eisner publishes A Contract with God, and coins the term "graphic novel" to describe his work.

1979 - Comic book publishers begin to move in the direction of "direct sales" to comic book specialty shops and away from traditional newsstand markets.

The 1980's:

1980 - Art Spiegelman and Françoise Mouly publish RAW.


Katsuhiro Otomo's Akira is published in Japan, appearing in Young Magazine.

1986 - Frank Miller's The Dark Knight Returns is published by DC Comics for the direct sales market.

Alan Moore's Watchmen is published as a monthly, 12 - issue series by DC Comics.

1987 - First Comics begins publishing English translations of Kazuo Koike's Lone Wolf and Cub the
first Manga series to be published in the United States.

1991 - Neil Gaiman’s the Sandman is awarded the World Fantasy Award for the story, “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

1992 - Art Speigelman’s MAUS is awarded the Pulitzer Prize.

2002 - School Library Journal features a cover story on graphic novels.

Graphic novels are chosen as the theme for Teen Read Week.
Glossary of Terms

**Anime (ah-nee-may):** The term refers to all types of Japanese animation.

**The Comics Code:** The Comics Code is used to assure parents that the content of a comic book meets the stringent guidelines of The Comics Code Authority. The "Authority" began in 1954 as a result of Dr. Wertham and the Congressional hearings on comic books and juvenile delinquency.

**Eisner Awards:** Named after Will Eisner, the Will Eisner Comic Industry Awards recognizes the finest stories, publications, and creators in the field of comics.

**The Golden Age:** A term that refers to the late 1930's and the 1940's, an era that saw the birth of the superhero and the enormous success of super-hero comics.

**Graphic Novel:** A complete, book length story that is bound in one volume. Graphic novels can either be original material or reprinted material from monthly comic books.

**Harvey Awards:** This award is named after the co-founder of MAD Magazine, Harvey Kurtzman. The "Harveys" are voted on by a panel of industry professionals who recognize their own peers each year.

**LULU Awards:** Awarded by The Friends of LULU, to bring attention to the year's most women-friendly and reader-friendly comics and to recognize the contribution of past women to the field of comics.

**Manga (ma-n-ga):** Although the term refers to a specific form of Japanese comics, the term is generally used to refer to all Japanese comics.

**Shonen (Shoh-n-en):** A type of anime or manga that is written for boys.

**Shoujo or Shojo (Shoh-joh):** A type of anime or manga written for girls.

**The Silver Age:** A term most commonly used to describe the rebirth of the superhero (and super-
hero comics) in the late 1950’s and the 1960’s. General opinion acknowledges the 1956 revival of the Flash in DC’s Showcase as the beginning of the “silver age.”

**Underground:** The counterculture of the 1960’s produced comic books that were published by small presses. These comics were used to express the ideas of the counterculture and were readily found in tobacco paraphernalia shops rather than the drugstore or newsstands where traditional comic books were sold.
Graphic Novels in the School Library Media Center: A Rationale

The idea of placing comics and graphic novels in schools makes many educators and librarians uncomfortable. Some feel that comics are an inferior type of fiction, more akin to the old dime novel and penny dreadful, than serious works of literature. Throughout most of the 20th century, educators and librarians have rallied against series fiction and comics, such as the Oz books, Nancy Drew, and MAD magazine, arguing that these forms of story telling stunt reading development and produce illiterate, morally inferior citizens. However, reading development and approaches to literacy have changed over the last 25 years; a new generation of reading specialists and literacy advocates are beginning to re-examine the role that comics, newspapers, and series fiction can play in the development of literacy.

From 1999-2003 I served as the librarian for the Helen Boutin Professional Library, a resource library for teachers in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD). Part of my duties included working directly with school library programs and conducting professional development workshops for librarians. One of my most popular workshops focused on graphic novels and literacy. I began working closely with a handful of school librarians, helping them develop a collection of graphic novels for their library.

The results were impressive and it soon became apparent that adding graphic novels to a school library’s collection was a very ef-
effective way to foster students' enthusiasm towards books and reading. I found that including graphic novels in the library's collection boosted circulation and drew in reluctant readers, especially boys. Kay Hones, a SFUSD librarian at John O'Connell High School says, "My students love graphic novels, I can't keep them on the shelf."

Graphic novels can be a valuable tool for aiding language and literacy development of students. They are especially valuable to students who are struggling with language acquisition because the illustrations help provide contextual clues for understanding the narrative aspects of the text. Elaine Moskowitz, an SFUSD librarian and literacy specialist at James Denman Middle School says "I have been especially impressed with the popularity of graphic novels among our students with limited English proficiency."

Achieving Literacy: The Valuable Role of Graphic Novels

High-interest reading materials are crucial in alleviating the literacy crisis facing schools. In The Power of Fiction (Libraries Unlimited, 1993), Stephen Krashen discusses the importance of popular fiction for young readers:

Perhaps the most powerful way of encouraging children to read is by exposing them to light reading, a kind of reading that schools pretend does not exist and a kind of reading that many children, for economic or ideological reasons, are deprived of. I suspect that light reading is the way that nearly all of us learned to read (pp. 47-48).

Young people enjoy diverse reading materials, including periodicals, series fiction, and comic books - materials some librarians have shunned. The prevailing notion that comic books are detrimental to literacy development is false. Research shows comic books as linguistically appropriate reading material, bearing no negative effect on language acquisition or school achievement (Krashen, 1993, Marsh and Millard, 2000, Schwartz 2002).

Graphic novels are typically written at a 4-6 grade reading level, comparable to Time magazine, Young Adult novels, and many New York Times best-sellers. Graphic novels strongly appeal to teens and are an invaluable tool for reading motivation. Betsy Levine, the Teen Services Librarian at San Francisco Public Library says, "The most requested book for teens (both male and female patrons) is
the graphic novel series, *Ranma 1/2*.

**Language Acquisition and Literacy Development**

Providing students with diverse reading materials promotes their transition into lifelong readers. Jeff McQuillan, in *The Literacy Crisis* describes the steps needed for this transition:

"...providing a rich supply of reading matter to children of all ages, as well as a place and time to read, is the first step to bridging the gap between poor and good readers" (p. 86).

Programs like "Sustained Silent Reading" (SSR) create a school-wide environment where students can engage in free reading during school hours. In *The SSR Handbook*, Janice Pilgreen finds that SSR provides "the same or better benefits for students in the areas of comprehension and motivation as traditional skills" do (p. 6). Schools that have implemented SSR report an increase in academic achievement and students who developed a love for reading. When programs like SSR are combined with a strong school library media program, students obtain the requisite materials, encouragement, and environment to help them develop lifelong reading habits.

**The Valuable and Important Role of School Librarians**

A significant number of studies (Lance, Welborn & Hamilton-Pennell, 1993; Lance and Loertscher, 2001) indicate that library media programs have a direct impact on the academic achievements of students. School librarians help students develop a love of reading by providing reading materials, encouragement, and an environment in which to read.

No one in the school is better suited to develop a diverse collection of reading materials that are appealing and accessible to students. Librarians are trained in book selection and their expertise is invaluable for building a collection of reading materials that appeal to all students by cutting across a wide-range of reading levels and interests. Including graphic novels in a school library collection will attract readers of all types and dramatically boost circulation and positively effect academic achievement.
Selecting Age-Appropriate Materials

Many contemporary comics and graphic novels contain material that is unsuitable for children. With the exception of Archie Comics and Bongo Comics, all major publishers offer works that contain adult subject matter. Graphic novels are a visual medium and explicit material is often depicted using both words and pictures. In contrast, young adult novels by Judy Blume and Francisca Lea Block may contain controversial materials, but use only words to describe a particular event or incident. There is a difference between reading Blume's description of "Ralph" and seeing an actual drawing. Imagine the horror of a parent who realizes little Johnny is reading a graphic novel with explicit material.

Some publishers such as Vertigo Comics designate their works as "Suggested for Mature Readers," but many do not. Works intended for mature readers may include any of the following: nudity, sexual situations, adult language, graphic violence, and recreational drug use. Therefore it is important that librarians become familiar with these materials and make wise decisions regarding their materials selections.

The Comics Code Authority is no longer an accurate measure of works intended for readers of all ages. Many code-approved
works feature graphic violence and sexually provocative images of women. Moreover, the Comics Code Authority does not appear on graphic novels, only on comic books.

Types of Graphic Novels

All-Ages Titles: These books are intended for readers of all ages, but are produced with children in mind. They feature interesting stories that are free of objectionable language, explicit violence, and provocative images of women. Examples of all-ages titles include: *Alison Dare, Little Miss Adventures, The Batman Adventures, Bone*, and *Simpsons Comics*.

Mainstream Titles: These titles comprise the majority of titles you will find on newsstands and comic shops. Often focused on superheroes, these titles are suitable for older children and teenagers, but may contain violence, strong language, and provocative images of women. Examples of mainstream titles include: *The Fantastic Four, Superman, Wonder Woman*, and *X-Men*.

Mature Readers Titles: These titles are targeted at older teens and adults. They are suggested for mature readers and may include any of the following: nudity, sexual situations, adult language, graphic violence, and recreational drug use. Examples of mature readers titles include: *Ghost World, From Hell, Love and Rockets*, and *The Sandman*.

10 Tips for Selecting Age-Appropriate Materials:

Considering the variety of graphic novels available, here are some guidelines to follow when developing a graphic novel collection.

1. Learn more about graphic novels and the comic industry by reading reviews in professional journals, exploring websites, and participating in discussion groups such as GN-LIB, a discussion group for librarians interested in comics and graphic novels.

2. Browse the graphic novels section of your favorite bookstore or comics shop.

3. Find out what types of graphic novels your students enjoy reading. Library aides can often provide a wealth of information about graphic novels.

4. Preview all graphic novels before circulating them to the public.

5. Don’t rely solely on the age-level recommendations of
major library vendors, they are often inaccurate and misleading.

6. Learn to recognize publishers of materials for older readers such as Drawn and Quarterly, Fantagraphics, MAX, and Vertigo.

7. Find a comics retailer you can trust. Most retailers are sensitive to age-appropriate issues and will be able to help you select the right materials for your library.

8. Become familiar with authors who write for a mature audience such as Daniel Clowes (ie. David Boring) and Garth Ennis (Preacher).

9. Develop a collection development policy for graphic novels.

10. Be prepared to address any challenges that arise.

Wearing Next-to-Nothing: The Depiction of Women in Comics

Many school librarians and teachers have expressed their concern about the portrayal of women in comics. Women in superhero comics are typically voluptuous and wear skimpily skin-tight costumes, but many, such as Wonder Woman also provide a strong role model for girls. In general, women superheroes have tradition-ally sold poorly, failing to attract a predominately male audience who prefers stories about male superheroes. Comics starring a female protagonist present two unique problems to corporate marketing executives: how do you create a comic that can provide young women with a positive role model, while appealing to the libido of adolescent males?

In order to keep a title in print, publishers often try to appeal to male readers by depicting these characters in very skimpy costumes. In an industry aimed at adolescent boys, large doses of cheesecake increase circulation and guarantee strong sales. A perfect example of this phenomenon is the two Catwoman series. The first, issued by DC Comics in the early 1990’s emphasized a heavy dose of cheesecake and sold extremely well, but the second, current series has toned down the cheesecake value in favor of well-written stories and sales have been poor. However, a wide range of comics exist that will appeal to girls; understanding the differences will help librarians and teachers make informed decisions when selecting materials.

Three basic types of female characters are typically found in comics starring female protago-
nists: superheroines, the pin-up girl, and girl-friendly comics:

**Superheroines:** Superheroine comics are a genre of superhero comics that date back to the early 1940's beginning with *Wonder Woman* and *Mary Marvel*. These comics are often designed to appeal to girls, but most have sold poorly, failing to attract the readership of a predominately male audience. Until very recently, superheroine comics occupied a very small corner of the market. Today there are more superheroine comics than ever before including *Birds of Prey, Wonder Woman, Supergirl,* and *Spider-Girl*. While superheroine comics may feature women in tights (Black Canary) or jumpsuits (Cat-Woman) that grab boys' attention, these comics also contain solidly written stories, good art, and lead characters who are presented as capable and self-sufficient. Superheroine comics are a good choice for middle school and high school collections and offer students an alternative to traditional superheroes like Batman and the Hulk.

**Pin-Up Girls:** This category contains a variety of sexually alluring and provocatively dressed female characters. Alternately called "good-girls," "bad-girls," and "babes" these comics all share some common features: amply endowed female protagonist who fight crime in revealing costumes with the goal of titilating the male adolescent reader. In the 1940's they were originally called "good-girl" comics as exemplified by characters such as Phantom Lady and Sheena. During the 1990's the "good-girl" was replaced by the "babe" and the "bad-girl," a superhero subgenre that features vigilantes, villains, and anti-heroes. These characters are often scantily clad and have a "kill or be killed" approach to life. Bad-girl series include *Lady Death, Electra, Vampirella,* and *Witchblade*. These series feature excellent artwork and solid stories, but are not recommended for school library collections.

**Girl-Friendly Comics:** Girl-friendly series such as *Akiko, Betty and Veronica, Courtney Crumrin, Alison Dare,* and *Go-Girl,* feature female protagonist in stories that appropriate for readers of all ages and are free of graphic violence, strong language and provocative images of women. Titles for older teens include *Death: The High Cost of Living, Love and Rockets, Promethea,* and *Strangers in Paradise*. Girl-friendly titles make excellent choices for all school li-
libraries, providing readers with solid stories that range from tales of adventure and fantasy to humor.

In general, it is nearly impossible to have a graphic novels collections that does not include images of women that some may find objectionable. Graphic novels are best seen as part of a comprehensive collection that includes a wide range of reading materials.

Cataloging Graphic Novels
Dewey Classification

Most libraries assign graphic novels a 741.59 call number for general materials and a 920 or 921 for biographical works. If the graphic novels are shelved as part of a special collection, there is often an additional call number line added to signify the collection, such as "GN" to indicate the graphic novels collection. Here is an example for two graphic novels, Art Spiegelman's *Maus* and Lynda Barry's *The Greatest of Marlys* using the traditional and special collections approach:

Standard Dewey Call Numbers:

Maus:  
920  
SPI

The Greatest of Marlys:  
741.59  
BAR

Some school libraries invent their own special call numbers for graphic novels, a practice that I do not recommend. The call numbers used for graphic novels should conform to the same classification system used throughout the library's collection. Students who are accustomed to locating graphic novels in their school library by way of a special call number may have difficulty locating similar materials in other libraries.

The Verso Page

Finding the verso page in a graphic novel can be a maddening experience. The verso page may be in the front or back of the book; it may be printed on white paper or a dark color such as black. For example the verso page information for Wonder Woman: *The Spirit of Truth* appears at the bottom of the title page, the first interior page of the book. In *the Sandman: A Game of You*, the verso page appears on the back-
side of the title page, using white text on darkly colored paper, and in *Astro Boy* the verso appears after a "Note to Readers," several pages after the title page. To make things even more confusing, many English-language versions of Japanese comics are printed from back to front and the verso is located on the first page of text, which by Western standards is the last page of the book. However, things are beginning to improve for the better and at least one publisher, CrossGen, is now using Publisher's Cataloguing in Publication Data that includes information about the author, artist, title, ISBN number, subject headings and, both, LC and Dewey call numbers.

**Shelving**

Shelving graphic novels can present a variety of problems due to the various sizes and formats that publishers use. Most graphic novels are published in 5" x 7," a format that readily fits on conventional shelving units. However, oversized and digest editions have their own unique shelving issues and can often become "lost" among conventionally sized editions. Many digest-sized editions will fit on a spiral paperback rack, but the large size oversized editions will only fit on shelving that is intended for oversized art books and coffee table edition. Oversized graphic novels are usually thin volumes, containing fewer than 60 pages that can not stand-up easily without damaging the spine. When planning a new graphic novels collection consider these shelving issues and house your graphic novels in an area that can accommodate a full range of sizes and formats.

**Theft**

Many libraries have reported that many of their graphic novels are stolen or simply not returned. There is not easy solution for this problem. Some libraries will adhere a large permanent label on the front cover that contains the school's name. Others will not circulate their graphic novels, a practice that I do not recommend. Many librarians have found that limiting the amount of graphic novels that can be checked out at any time also helps reduce theft. When developing a budget for graphic novels, theft should be factored into the overall cost of maintaining a collection of graphic novels.
CHAPTER 4: SELECTION TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Professional and Trade Journals

The Comics Journal
Founded in 1975, The Comics Journal is one of the nation's most respected single-arts magazines, providing its readers with an eclectic mix of industry news, professional interviews, and reviews of current work on a monthly basis. The journal is published by Fantagraphics Books, which also publishes alternative comics such as Love and Rockets and Eightball.

Knowledge Quest
A column on graphic novels by Philip Crawford, Thought Bubbles, appears regularly. Published by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), a division of the American Library Association.

Library Journal
Steve Raiteri's column reviews and discusses graphic novels.

The Shy Librarian
Stephen Weiner's column, The Comics' Librarian, reviews graphic novels and discusses trends within the industry.

Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)
Kat Kan's long-running column, "Graphically Speaking," appears in every issue.

WIZARD Magazine
Often described as the People magazine of the comic book world, this monthly periodical covers all of the new products in the world of comics, TV animation, and other related items. Reviews of graphic novels also appear in Booklist, School Library Journal, and Publisher's Weekly.
Industry Awards

The two major industry awards are the “Harveys” and the “Eisners” awards. An annual award is given in many categories, but only the awards for graphic novels are listed here.

The Harvey Awards

Named in honor of Harvey Kurtzman, the are voted on solely by those working in the industry, with over 1000 ballots sent out in the first year.

1988 Best Graphic Album: Watchmen
1989 Best Graphic Album: The Killing Joke
1990 Best Graphic Album: Ed the Happy Clown
1991 Best Graphic Album (Original): Why I Hate Saturn
   Best Graphic Album (Reprint): Warts and All
1992 Best Graphic Album (Original): To the Heart of the Storm
   (Eisner)
   Best Graphic Album (Reprint): Maus II
1993 Best Graphic Album (Original): Fairy Tales of Oscar Wilde, Vol. 1
   (Russell)
1994 Best Graphic Album (Reprint): Hey Look! (Kurtzman)
1994 Best Graphic Album (Original): Understanding Comics (McCloud)
   Best Graphic Album (Reprint): Complete Bone Adventures
   (Smith)
1995 Best Graphic Album (Original): Our Cancer Year (Pekar, Brabner and Stack)
   Best Graphic Album (Reprint): Marvels (Busiek and Ross)
1996 Best Graphic Album (Original): Stuck Rubber Baby (Cruse)
   Best Graphic Album (Reprint): Hellboy: The Wolves of St. August (Mignola)
1997 Best Graphic Album (Original): Fax from Sarajevo (Kubert)
   Best Graphic Album (Reprint): Astro City: Life in the Big City
   (Busiek and Anderson)
1998 Best Graphic Album (Original): Sin City: Family Values
   Best Graphic Album (Reprint): Batman: Black and White
1999 Best Graphic Album (Original): You Are Here (Baker)
   Best Graphic Album (Reprint): Cages (McKean)
The Eisner Awards

Named for the creator of The Spirit and author of A Contract with God, are designed to recognize "the outstanding work of the creative people from within our industry" and to "attract public attention to the art form by publicizing to non-comics readers the best work the industry has to offer." Currently, Eisner nominations are selected by a panel of five judges, with some 5,000 voting ballots being distributed to publishers, creators, and retailers.

1988 Best Graphic Album: Watchmen (Moore and Gibbons)
1989 Best Graphic Album: The Killing Joke (Moore and Bolland)
1990 Cancelled due to balloting errors.
1991 Best Graphic Album - New: Elektra Lives Again
    Best Graphic Album - Reprint: The Doll’s House (Sandman #8-16)
1992 Best Graphic Album - New: To The Heart of The Storm (Eisner)
    Best Graphic Album - Reprint: Maus II
1993 Best Graphic Album - New: Signal to Noise (Gaiman and McKeen)
    Best Graphic Album - Reprint Sin City (Miller)
1994 Best Graphic Album - New: A Small Killing (Moore and Zarate)
    Best Graphic Album - Reprint: Cerebus: Flight (Mothers and Daughters, bk. 1) (Sim and Gerhard)
    Best Archival Collection - Complete Little Nemo in Slumberland vol. 6 (McCay)
    Best Graphic Album - New: Fairy Tales of Oscar Wilde, Vol. 2 (Russell)
    Best Graphic Album - Reprint: Reprint: Hellboy: Seeds of Destruction (Mignola)
    Best Archival Collection - The Christmas Spirit (Eisner)
    Best Graphic Album - New: Stuck Rubber Baby (Cruse)
Best Graphic Album - Reprint: *The Tale of One Bad Rat* (Talbot)
Best Archival Collection - *The Complete Crumb Comics, Vol. 11*

1997
Best Graphic Album - New: *Fax from Sarajevo* (Kubert)
Best Graphic Album - Reprint: *Stray Bullets: Innocence of Nihilism* (Lapham)
Best Archival Collection - *Tarzan: The Land That Time Forgot* & *The Pool of Time* (Manning)

1998
Best Graphic Album - New: *Batman & Superman Adventures: World’s Finest* (Dini & Staton)
Best Graphic Album - Reprint: *Sin City: That Yellow Bastard* (Miller)
Best Archival Collection - *Jack Kirby’s New Gods* (Kirby)

1999
Best Graphic Album - New: *Superman: Peace on Earth* (Dini and Ross)
Best Graphic Album - Reprint: *Batman: The Long Halloween* (Loeb and-Sale)
Best Archival Collection - *Plastic Man Archives, Vol. 1* (Cole)

2000
Best Graphic Album - New: *Acme Novelty Library #13* (Ware)
Best Graphic Album - Reprint: *From Hell* (Moore and Campbell)
Best Archival Collection: *Peanuts: A Golden Celebration* (Schultz)

2001
Best Graphic Album - New: *Safe Area Gorazde* (Sacco)
Best Graphic Album - Reprint: *Jimmy Corrigan* (Ware)
Best Archival Collection - *The Spirit Archives, Vols. 1 and 2* (Eisner)

2002
Best Graphic Album - New: *The Name of the Game* (Eisner)
Best Graphic Album - Reprint: *Batman: Dark Victory* (Loeb and Sale)
Best Archival Collection - *Akira* (Otomo)
Websites about Comics and Graphic Novels

Industry Sites


- Diamond’s Bookshelf: Contains reviews and collection develop ideas for graphic novels. Entries are divided by genre and age-level.


Graphic Novel Review Sites


- The Comics Get Serious: A good review source for information about comics and graphic novels. [http://www.rationalmagic.com/Comics/Comics.html]


- Links to Comics and Graphic Novel Sites: Contains a useful list of quality sites that focus on graphic novels and comics. [http://my.voyager.net/~sraiteri/comicslinks.htm]

- No Flying, No Tights: A Website Reviewing Graphic Novels for Teens: A great sites that reviews comics and graphic novels of interest to teens. [http://noflyingnotights.com]
- **Sequential Tart**: An excellent, up-to-date review source for graphic novels and comics. [http://read.sequentialtart.com](http://read.sequentialtart.com)
NOTE: The following annotated bibliography does not include ISBN and pricing information. Publishers frequent re-publish and re-package graphic novels in slightly different formats (ie. new editions, new covers, prices) making the original ISBN information obsolete. If you use the ISBN number from an earlier edition, vendors will often not be able to fill your order, listing the title as “out-of-print” or “not available from publisher.” Having worked with a variety of school library vendors, I do not recommend the use of ISBN for purchasing graphic novels, your fill rate will be greatly increased by using title and author.

Titles for All-Ages:
Grades 3-12

Titles in this section will appeal to young children, as well as, teenagers and are suitable for all school library collections, grades 3-12. Graphic novels that are part of a longer series, such as Akiko, list only the first volume, but the entire series is recommended.

้ว Brennan, Michael. Electric Girl. San Francisco: Mighty Gremlin (AitTPlanetlar), 2000. Virginia, the electric girl, and her dog, Blammo, encounter a series of calamities as they are taunted by Oogleeoog, a mischievous, invisible gremlin.
All-Ages/Grades 4-up
A quest story that will entertain readers of all ages, Akiko is a delightful outer space fantasy series about a young girl and her adventures on the Planet Smoo.
All-Ages/Grades 3-up

All-Ages/Grades 4-up

All-Ages/Grades 4-up

All-Ages/Grades 4-up

All-Ages/Grades 4-up

All-Ages/Grades 4-up

Fox, Gardener and Harry Lampert. The Golden Age Flash Archives, Volume 1. New York: DC Comics, 1999. This volume features the 1940’s adventures of the original Flash, Jay Garrick.
Note: Additional volumes in the DC Archives focus on other characters including Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, Plastic Man, The Legion of Super-Heroes, and Shazam!
All volumes are recommended and suitable for grades 3-up.

*All-Ages/Grades 4-up*

• Gorelick, Victor, ed. *Archie American Series: Best of the Sixties, Volume 3*. Mamaroneck, CA: Archie Comic Books, 1998. This volume is part of a series of reprints that are organized by decade from 1940’s -1990’s. This volume provides a glimpse into the pop culture of the 1960’s in stories that focus on folk music, drag racing, the British Invasion, mini skirts and flower power.
*All-Ages/Grades 3-up*

• Gownley, Jimmy. *Amelia Rules!, Volume 1: In with the In Crowd*. Harrisburg: Renaissance Press, 2002. Reminiscent of the *Peanuts* strips, Amelia and her friends encounter adventure from schoolyard to backyard. These short stories speak in a language that children will love.
*All-Ages/Grades 3-up*

*All-Ages/Grades 3-up*

• Herge. *The Adventures of Tintin*. Translated by Leslie Lonsdale Cooper and Michael Turner. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1992. The “Tintin Three-In-One” series of anthologies are a great way to introduce readers to the adventure stories of Tintin, a young reporter-sleuth and his faithful dog companion. These globe-trotting adventures collect the original comic strip.
*All-Ages/Grades 4-up*

adventure of the “new” Flash, the first new superhero of the “silver-age.” Note: Additional volumes in the DC Archives focus on other characters including Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, Plastic Man, The Legion of Super-Heroes, and Shazam! All volumes are recommended and suitable for grades 3-up.
All-Ages/Grades 4-up

All-Ages/Grades 4-up

Lee, Stan. Essential Uncanny X-Men, Volume 1. New York: Marvel Comics, 2003. Reprints the first 25 issues of the series from the 1960’s. Stories feature the original X-Men, Cyclops, Angel, Beast, Iceman, Marvel Girl and Professor X. Each volume in Marvel Comics’ Essential series is published in black and white and is approximately 500 pages. Note: The "Essential" series reprints the early, hard to find stories about Marvel most popular comic book heroes, including the Hulk, Thor, Spider-Man and the X-Men. Each volume is published in black and white and is approximately 500 pages. All-Ages/Grades 3-up

All-Ages/Grades 3-up
McCloud, Scott and Paul Dini. *Superman Adventures: The Man of Steel*. New York: DC Comics, 1998. These stories are based on the WB Superman cartoon and are similar in style and concept to the *Batman Adventures*. All-Ages/Grades 3-up


Moulton, Charles and H.G. Peters. *Wonder Woman Archives, Volume 1*. New York: DC Comics, 1998. This volume collects the earliest adventures of Wonder Woman, one of the first female superheroes. Adopted as a symbol of feminism in the 1970's, Wonder Woman has been the longest-running and most successful superheroine in the history of comic book publishing. *Note: Additional volumes in the DC Archives focus on other characters including Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, Plastic Man, The Legion of Super-Heroes, and Shazam!* All volumes are recommended and suitable for grades 3-up.

Naifeh, Ted. *Courtney Crumrin and the Night Things*. Portland, OR: Oni Press, 2002. Courtney has a hard time adjusting to her new surroundings, until she discovers a secret world of goblins, ghosts, and ghouls. All-Ages/Grades 4-up

Nichols, Jeff. *Colonia: Islands and Anomalies*. San Francisco, CA: AiT/Planet Lar, 2002. When Jack and his two uncles wash up on the shores of an unchartered island, they unprepared for what they will encounter: Cinnabar, a pirate, Spanish ghosts, mermaids, and a man composed of fish. All-Ages/Grades 4-up

All-Ages/Grades 3-up

All-Ages/Grades 3-up

Robinson, James. Leave It to Chance: Shaman’s Rain. New York: DC Comics, 2000. Chance Falconer wants to follow in her father’s footsteps and become a paranormal investigator, but her father feels the job isn’t right for a teenage girl. These light-hearted stories combine monsters, suspense, and humor with a sense of adventure.  
All-Ages/Grades 4-up

All-Ages/Grades 4-up

---, Rudyard Kipling’s Jungle Book Stories. New York: NMB, 1997. Russell’s adaptation of stories from The Jungle Book include The King’s Ankus, Red Dog, and The Spring Running. These stories are an excellent introduction to Mowgli and his jungle world.  
All-Ages/Grades 4-up

Smith, Jeff. Bone, Volume 1: Out from Boneville. Columbus, OH: Cartoon Books, 1995. Three Bonecousins (Fone, Phoney and Smiley) explore the world outside of Boneville in a humorous Tolkien-meets-Pogo fantasy. This multi-volume series includes the companion volume, Rose.  
All-Ages/Grades 4-up

Smith, Jeff and Charles Vess. Rose. Columbus, OH: Cartoon Books, 2002. In this prequel to the Bone series, Princess Rose embarks on a quest to destroy the dragon who is threatening the Northern Valley.  
All-Ages/Grades 4-up

*All-Ages/Grades 3-up*


*All-Ages/Grades 4-up*


*All-Ages/Grades 4-up*


*All-Ages/Grades 4-up*


*All-Ages/Grades 5-up*


*All-Ages/Grades 4-up*
Middle School and High School Titles

Grades 6-12

These titles are suitable for older children and teenagers, but may contain violence, strong language, and provocative images of women. Grade-level and age-level interest are suggested to help provide a guide when selecting these works.

Allred, Mike. The Superman-Madman Hullabaloo. Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Comics, 1998. This humorous and slightly bizarre story features the first meeting between Dark Horse’s Madman and DC’s Superman. In this cross-dimensional story, Madman and Superman discuss the existence of God, encounter a group of underground mutant street-beatniks, a super zombie, witness a health-food store food-fight, and run into a skyscraper with legs. Unique, charming and delightful to read.

High School/Grades 9-up

Arnoldi, Katherine. Amazing "True" Story of a Teenage Single Mom. New York: Hyperion, 1998. At 17, Katherine is raped and left with a baby. Her boyfriend beats her and her dysfunctional family is no help. By persistently pursuing her dreams, she is able to overcome her past.

Middle School/Grades 7-up


Middle School/Grades 5-up

to Gotham City, becoming a reluctant defender for the city's lost and discarded citizens. Also recommended is Darwyn Cooke's companion novel, *Catwoman: Selina's Big Score.
Middle School/Grades 7-up

**Busiek, Kurt.**
Told from the point of view of an "everyman," as we witness the first appearance of superheroes into his ordinary, everyday world. Ross's realistic, painted artwork is superbly paired with Busiek's narrative.
*Middle School/Grades 5-up

The old wizard, Bafflerog Rumplewhisker, has been ordered by the Dark Council to leave his castle home and locate the missing "Book of the Worse.
*Middle School/Grades 5-up

**Chadwick, Paul.**
The Complete *Concrete.* Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Comics, 1996.
Ron Lithgow is an out of shape, recently divorced speechwriter who is transformed into a seven feet tall, one thousand pound "superhero" known as Concrete. Chadwick's thoughtfully examines the effects of this transformation on the main character and pay homage to the work of Jack Kirby. Other volumes in the series include *Concrete: Short Stories, 1986-1989.*
*Middle School/Grades 7-up

---,** Claremont, Chris and John Byrne.**
*Uncanny X-Men: The Dark Phoenix Saga.* New York: Marvel Books, 1990. Conflicts between the X-Men and the Hellfire Club are explored, as mild natured Jean Grey transforms into the powerful Man, a mysterious figure who maintains a silent protective vigil over his city. Subsequent volumes include *Family Album.*
*Middle School/Grades 8-up*
and deadly Dark Phoenix. Claremont and Byrne excel in this story about power, love, and tragedy.

*Middle School/Grades 5-up*


*Middle School/Grades 5-up*

Peter and Pop Mahn. *Spy Boy: Deadly Gourmet Affair*. Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Comics, 2001. The story of teenage Alex Fleming and how he enters a world of spies, villains and intrigue will have strong appeal for teens.

*Middle School/Grade 6-up*


*Middle School/Grades 6-up*

---. *Robin: Year One*. New York: DC Comics, 2002. The early days of Robin’s career are explored as he encounters the Mad-Hatter and Two-Face for the first time.

*Middle School/Grades 5-up*

---. *Way of the Rat, Vol. 1: The Walls of Zhumar*. Oldsmar, Florida: CrossGen, 2003. Boon Sai Hong is content with being a thief until he steals a magical ring and meets a talking monkey master who guides him on a journey to save the kingdom.

*Middle School/Grades 6-up*
Doran, Colleen. *A Distant Soil*. Orange, CA: Image Comics, 1997. Liana and her brother Jason are ordinary teenagers, except that their emerging psionic powers have caught the attention of a group of behavioral scientists and a few aliens.

*Middle School/Grades 7-up*


*Middle School/Grades 8-up*


*Middle School/Grades 6-up*


*Middle School/Grades 7-up*


*Middle School/Grades 5-up*


*Middle School/Grades 6-up*


*High School/Grades 10-up*
Hinds, Gareth. *Collected Beowulf*. Cambridge, MA: THECOMIC.COM, 2000. Atmospheric and beautifully illustrated, the *Collected Beowulf* is an excellent way to introduce students to this classic Old English epic.

*Middle School/ Grades 7-up*


*Middle School/Grades 5-up*


*Middle School/Grades 7-up*


*All Ages/Grades 4-up*

Kesel, Barbara. *Meridian: Flying Solo, Vol. 1*. Oldsmar, FL: CrossGen, 2003. In this coming-of-age story, Young Sophie has a lot to deal with, her father has died, she’s developed new magical powers, and her uncle is trying to prevent her from becoming the next Minister of Meridian. Subsequent volumes include *Meridian: Going to Ground*.

*Middle School/Grade 6-up*

Kubert, Joe. *Fax from Sarajevo*. Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Comics, 1998. Based on faxes that Kubert received from a friend trapped in Sarajevo during Serbian bombardment. Kubert uses the fax to create a realistic, graphic portrayal of the horrors of war.

*High School/Grades 9-up*


*High School/Grades 8-up*
Lee, Stan and John Romita, Jr. *Spider-Man: Death of Gwen Stacy*. New York: Marvel Comics, 1999. This novel reprints one of the most memorable storylines to ever appear in comic books. This story chronicles the relationship of Peter Parker and his girlfriend, Gwen Stacey, and culminates in a deadly encounter with the Green Goblin. *Middle School/Grades 5-up*

Loeb, Joseph and Tim Sale. *Superman for All Seasons*. New York: DC Comics 1999. This Eisner Award-nominated story focuses on a young Clark Kent and his journey from Smallville to Metropolis. This story features strong characterization and beautiful artwork. *Middle School/Grades 5-up*

---. *Batman: The Long Halloween*. New York: DC Comics, 1999. Any fan of Batman or film noir will be pleasantly surprised at this superb, award-winning retelling of Harvey (Two-Face) Dent’s fall from Gotham City District Attorney to psychopathic criminal. *Middle School/Grades 8-up*

---. *Daredevil Legends, Volume 1: Daredevil: Yellow*. New York: Marvel Books, 2002. The early days of Daredevil’s career are chronicled, as Loeb examines his relationship with his late father and his girlfriend, Karen Page. *Middle School/Grades 6-up*


Messner-Loebs, William and Mike Deodato, Jr. *Wonder Woman: The Contest*. New York: DC Comics, 1995. Upon returning to her native home, the island of Themyscira, Diana finds her home in ruins and learns that a savage band of outcast Amazons have invaded the royal palace to challenge her for the title of Wonder Woman. The story concludes in *Wonder Woman:}*
**The Challenge of Artemis. Middle School/Grades 7-up**


**High School/Grades 8-up**

Mignola, Mike. *The Conqueror Worm*. OR: Dark Horse, 2002. Sixty years ago, the Nazis contacted a space being, the Conqueror Worm, and now it has returned to destroy mankind.

**High School/Grades 10-up**


**High School/Grades 9-up**


**Middle School/Grades 6-up**


**Middle School/Grades 5-up**

Moeller, Christopher. *JLA: A League of One's Own*. New York: DC Comics, 2001. This fully painted story focuses on Wonder Woman and her heroic efforts to save the other members of the JLA from an evil, ancient dragon.
Morrison, Grant and Frank Quitely. *X-Men: E is for Extinction*. New York: Marvel Books, 2001. Morrison takes the X-Men in a new creative direction that removes the lycra and spandex from the story, creating a more "realistic" version of these popular superheroes. Quitely's wonderful art augments the surreal elements of Morrison's text.

*High School/Grades 8-up*


*High School/Grades 9-up*

Nishiyama, Yuriko. *Harlem Beat, Vol. 1*. Translated by Aya Ichikawa. Los Angeles, CA: Tokyopop, 1999. Nate is trying to deal with the pressures of urban living. Gangs, girls, and school work leave him with little time to devote to the competitive world of street basketball.

*Middle School/Grades 6-up*

Otomo, Katsuhiro and Takumi Nagayasu. *The Legend of Mother Sarah: Tunneltown*. Translated by Dana Lewis and Toren Smith. Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Comics, 1996. This quest story focuses on Mother Sarah and her search for her missing children who were separated from her after terrorists attacked their space colony. Set in the future on a poisoned and uninhabitable Earth, Otomo presents a tender and powerful tale about family bonds.

*Winner of the 1995 Parents' Choice Foundation Award*

Pini, Wendy and Richard Pini. *Elfquest Reader's Collection #1: Fire and Flight*. Poughkeepsie, NY: Warp Graphics, 1999. Cutter and his tribe of elves, the Wolfriders, seek sanctuary amid evil trolls and vengeful humans. The ALA has called *Elfquest* "one of the most important works in American fantasy." Other volumes include *Forbidden Grove*, *Captives of Blue Mountain*, and *Quest's End*.

*Middle School/Grades 5-up*

Panther and travels to New York City to investigate the murder of a little girl.  
_Middle School/Grades 7-up_

мышлน, การกา. _Go Girl._  
Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Comics, 2002. Once Lindsay realizes that she has inherited her mother’s ability to fly, she borrows her Mom’s old superhero costume and becomes Go-Girl.  
_Middle School/Grades 5-up_

รุมกิ, แกร์ แอนด์ J.G. Jones. _Wonder Woman: The Hiketeia._ New York: DC Comics, 2002. Wonder Woman provides sanctuary and protection to a young woman, Danielle Wellys, not realizing that she is being tracked down by Batman for the murder of several people.  
_Middle School/Grades 7-up_


สกานะ, _epi. _The Age of Bronze: A Thousand Ships._ Orange, CA: Image Comics, 2001. This well-researched, richly presented literary work is the first part of a seven-volume graphic novel about the Trojan War.  
_Middle School/Grades 7-up_
Sifakis, Carl. *The Big Book of Hoaxes*. New York: Paradox Press, 1996. Explores some of the world’s greatest hoaxes such as the Orson Wells’ *War of the Worlds* and the "autobiography" of Howard Hughes. Additional volumes in the series include *The Big Book of Conspiracies* and *The Big Book of Urban Legends.*

*High School/Grades 8-up*

Smith, Kevin. *Daredevil Visionaries: Kevin Smith*. New York: Marvel Comics, 1999. Under the direction of film director Kevin Smith, the Daredevil origin story achieves an unusually high level of quality in this well crafted story that is filled with many twist and turns.

*Middle School/Grades 7-up*


*High School/Grades 9-up*


*Middle School/Grades 7-up*


*This volume collects MAUS Vol. 1: A Survivor's Tale: My Father Bleeds History and MAUS Vol. 2: And Here My Troubles Began.*

*Middle School/Grades 8-up*


*High School/Grades 10-up*

Note: Some volumes contain very brief scenes that include nudity.

**High School/Grades 9-up**


  - High School/Grades 9-up


  - Middle School/Grades 8-up


  - Middle School/Grades 6-up

- Torres, J. *Sidekicks: The Transfer Student*. Portland, OR: Oni Press, 2002. Terry Highland transfers to Shuster Academy, a school for superhero sidekicks, where the focus is on academics and the use of superpowers is forbidden.

  - Middle School/Grades 6-up


  - Middle School/Grades 8-up

---

Inu Yasha. San Francisco, CA: VIZ Communications, 1998. By the author of *Ranma 1/2*, *Inu-Yasha*, is a fairy tale set in an otherworldly version of ancient Japan. This historical fantasy focuses on Kagome, a typical Japanese high school student who is pulled into another realm by a hideous creature to search for the "Jewel of Four Souls."

**High School/Grades 9-up**


  - Middle School/Grades 8-up


  - Middle School/Grades 6-up

- Torres, J. *Sidekicks: The Transfer Student*. Portland, OR: Oni Press, 2002. Terry Highland transfers to Shuster Academy, a school for superhero sidekicks, where the focus is on academics and the use of superpowers is forbidden.

  - Middle School/Grades 6-up


  - Middle School/Grades 8-up
Waid, Mark. *Impulse: Reckless*. New York: DC Comics, 1997. Bart Allen, the grandson of the Flash, was born in the 30th century and raised in a virtual-reality playpen. Now, Bart has been relocated to Alabama in our present time and must deal with a whole new set of rules.

*Middle School/Grades 5-up*


*Middle School/Grades 5-up*

---, *Ruse, Vol. 1: Enter the Detective*. Oldsmar, FL: CrossGen, 2002. Set during the late Victorian era, these detective stories featuring the suave Simon Archard and his assistant, Emma Bishop, as they explore murder and mayhem against a backdrop of gas lights, steam trains, and horse drawn carriages.

*High School/ Grades 9-up*

Waid, Mark and Alex Ross. *Kingdom Come*. New York: DC Comics, 1998. This highly acclaimed, award-winning graphic novel re-examines the comic book archetypes of Batman, Superman, and Wonder Woman. Well written and illustrated, this story examines the meaning of comic books, superheroes, and heroic values!

*Middle School/Grades 7-up*


*High School/ Grades 10-up*

Windsor-Smith, Barry. *Weapon X*. New York: Marvel Books, 1994. This is the graphic novel that tells what happened to Logan when he received his adamantium skeleton. The artwork and writing are both first rate.

*Middle School/ Grades 5-up*


*Middle Schools/ Grades 8-up*

Yasuhiko, Yoshikazu. *Joan: Book 1*. Translated by Reiko Terui and Kate Bundy. Fremont, CA:
ComicsOne, 2001. Set in Medieval France, young Emil is taken under the wing of Baudricourt, the same man who helped Joan of Arc. Emil begins receiving visions as she strives to unite France. 

*Middle School/Grades 7-up*

**Titles for Mature Readers**

**Adult Books for High School Students**

All of the volumes in this section are highly recommended for older teen readers and represent some of the finest work in the field of graphic novels. However, these titles should be previewed before adding them to your collection. Graphic novels in this section may include any or all of the following subject matter: nudity, sexual situations, adult language, graphic violence, and recreational drug use.

**NOTE:** Please select these titles with care, as you best know your own library and school population.

  
  *Mature Readers/Grades 10-up*

- **_DISPLAY** Cruse, Howard. *Stuck Rubber Baby.* New York: DC Comics, 2000. Set in Alabama during the early Sixties, Cruise’s novel chronicles the life of Toland Polk, a young, white gay man who "comes out" to himself and others at the same time that he is becoming involved in the Civil Rights movement. Cruise’s novel explores 1960’s politics, interracial gay relationships and the sexual politics of coming-out during the late 1960’s.
  
  *Mature Readers/Grades 10-up*

- **_DISPLAY** DeMatteis, J. M and Jon J. Muth. *The Compleat Moonshadow.* New York: DC Comics, 1998. This graphic novel contains the complete story from the two *Moonshadow* series! This award-winning tale is a thoughtful, adult fantasy that follows a boy as he embarks on a magical path that will lead him to his own manhood. 
  
  *Mature Readers/Grades 10-up*
*Mature Readers/Grades 11-up*

*Mature Readers/ Grades 10-up*

*Gaiman, Neil. the Sandman: A Game of You*. New York: DC Comics, 1993. Once Barbie’s dream world begins spilling over into her waking reality, Thessaly, a young witch, leads her and an eclectic group of young women on a quest to find and destroy the mysterious, evil Cuckoo. Arguably the best comic series of the late 1980’s and early 1990’s, this intelligent, literate series was duly honored as the first comic book to be awarded the World Fantasy Award for the story “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” which appears in volume four of this series, *the Sandman: Dream County*. 
*Mature Readers /Grades 10-up*

*---, Death: The High Cost of Living*. New York: DC Comics, 1994. In the incarnation of a young woman, Death spends one day every hundred years as a mortal on earth exploring what it means to be human. 
*Mature Readers /Grades 10-up*

*---, Black Orchid*. New York: DC Comics, 1996. The result of experimental biological testing, Black Orchid searches for the missing pieces to her past as she struggles to reconcile her human memories and botanical origins. 
*Mature Readers /Grades 10-up*

Gaiman, Neil and Dave McKean. *The Tragical Comedy or Comical Tragedy of Mr. Punch: A Romance*. New York: DC Comics, 1995. At his grandfather’s seaside arcade, a young boy encounters a mysterious Punch & Judy man with a dark past and a woman who makes her living performing as a mermaid. As their stories unfold, the boy must confront his own
family secrets. Gaiman and McKean craft a horrifying tale of strange puppets and a nightmarish world of violence and betrayal.
Mature Readers/Grade 10-up

Mature Readers/Grades 10-up

Mature Readers/Grades 11-up

Mature Readers/Grades 10-up

Koike, Kazuo and Goseki Kojima. Lone Wolf and Cub. Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Comics, 2000. An excellent example of the early graphic novel, Lone Wolf is an epic story that is 7,000 pages in length and told over the course of 20 volumes. Koike and Kojima’s work has exerted a strong influence on a generation of comic book storytellers, both in Japan and the Western world.
Mature Readers/Grades 10-up

Moore, Alan. Watchmen. New York: DC Comics, 1987. Moore’s classic examination and deconstruction of superheroes was one of the first superhero stories to move beyond the cliches of supermen in tights, and create three-dimensional, complex characters. Like Batman: The Dark Knight Returns, Akira, and Maus,
Watchmen remain one of the most important graphic novels ever published and continue to exert an influence on the field.

**Mature Readers/Grades 10-up**


**Mature Readers/Grades 9-up**

---, *Promethea, Collected*. New York: DC Comics, 2000. When Sophie Banks begins her research paper on the mythical being, Promethea, she has no idea that she will actually meet her hero and embark on a journey into the realm of the Immateria.

**Mature Readers/Grades 10-up**


**Mature Readers/Grades 10-up**

Otomo, Katshurio. *Akira, Book One*. Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Comics, 2000. Regarded by many as the finest comic series ever produced, *AKIRA* is a superb science fiction novel. Set during 2019 in a post-apocalypse Neo-Tokyo, the story focuses on the lives of two teenage friends, Tetsuo and Kaneda. As the story develops, so does Tetsuo’s paranormal abilities which make him the target of a government organization. This is the first of six volumes which have been translated into English. This novel is the basis for the film of the same name which is also written and directed by Otomo.

**Mature Readers/Grades 10-up**
Reiber, John Ney. *Books of Magic: Bindings*. New York: DC Comics, 1995. Long before Harry Potter, there was Timothy Hunter, a teenage magician who wears glasses and has an owl companion. His troubles with Dad, school, and a visit from Death keep Tim busy. Subsequent volumes include *Girl in the Box* and *Summonings.*

*Mature Readers/Grades 9-up*


*Mature Readers/Grades 10-up*

Ware, Chris. *Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid on Earth.* New York: Pantheon Books, 2000. Ware’s award-winning, innovative presentation depicts several generations of Corrigan males and reveals how they share similar histories of rejection and abandonment which have culminated in Jimmy’s hapless existence.

*Mature Readers/Grades 11-up*
Learning More: An Introductory Survey of Graphic Novels: 15 Books for Beginners

The 15 titles in this section will provide readers who are new to the field of graphic novels an overview of several types of graphic novels, including young adult fiction, superhero stories, fantasy, humor, science, and classics. An additional 3 titles are included to help readers understand the history and aesthetic theory of sequential art. Books in this section range in subject matter and age-level interests and are intended to serve as an introduction to the diverse field of graphic novels.


form. This book demonstrates how the genre can change to become a legitimate art form, while providing a sterling example of the medium’s untapped potential.

- **Miller, Frank.** *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*. New York: DC Comics, 1996. This 10th anniversary edition of Miller’s ground-breaking story presents a heretofore unseen dark, gritty and violent Batman! Along with Moore’s *The Watchmen*, *Batman: The Dark Night Returns* altered and matured the superhero tale, providing a lasting influence on superhero comics.

- **Otomo, Katsuhiro and Takumi Nagayasu.** *The Legend of Mother Sarah: Tunneltown*. Translated by Dana Lewis and Toren Smith. Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Comics, 1996. This quest story focuses on Mother Sarah and her search for her missing children who were separated from her after terrorists attacked their space colony. Set in the future on a poisoned and uninhabitable Earth, Otomo’s presents a tender and powerful tale about family bonds.


- **Shanower, Eric.** *The Age of Bronze: A Thousand Ships*. Orange, CA: Image Comics, 2001. This well-researched, richly presented literary work is the first part of a seven-volume graphic novel about the Trojan War.

- **Smith, Jeff.** *Bone, Volume 1: Out from Boneville*. Columbus, OH: Cartoon Books, 1995. Three Bonecousins (Fone, Phoney and Smiley) explore the world outside of Boneville in a humorous Tolkien-meets-Pogo fantasy.


Opening Day Collections

The following lists are designed to provide educators and librarians with examples of a core, opening day collection for school libraries. The titles in each collection offer a wide range of genres including humor, superhero, and fantasy titles.

Elementary School Library - Opening Day Collection

1. Creeley, Mark. *Akiko*.
2. Buskiek, Kurt. *The Wizard’s Tale*
23. Torres, J. *Alison Dare, Little Miss Adventures*.
Middle School Library - Opening Day Collection

7. Creeley, Mark. *Akiko*.
8. David, Peter. *Young Justice: A League of Their Own*.
10. Doran, Colleen. *A Distant Soil*.
20. Kubert, Joe. *Fax from Sarajevo*.
32. Smith, Jeff. *Bone: Out from Boneville*.
33. Smith, Kevin. *Daredevil Visionaries: Kevin Smith*. 
37. Torres, J. *Alison Dare, Little Miss Adventures*.
High School Library - Opening Day Collection

Note: Titles with an asterisk (*) indicates a book with mature themes and subject matter. These materials should be previewed before adding them to your collection.

8. Fujishima, Kosuke. Oh My Goddess!
14. Kubert, Joe. Fax from Sarajevo.
15. Loeb, Joseph. Superman For All Seasons.
32. Talbot, Brian. *Tale of One Bad Rat*.
33. Thompson, Craig. *Good-Bye Chunky Rice*.
35. Van Meter, Jan. *Hopeless Savages*.
CHAPTER 6: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Publishers

Abstract Studio, Inc.
P.O. Box 271487
Houston, TX 77277-1487
http://www.strangersinparadise.com
Publications include: Strangers in Paradise.

Active Synapse
4258 Norht High St.
Columbus, OH 43214
http://www.activesynapse.com
Publications include: Clan Apis.

AiT/Planet Lar
2034 47th Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94116
http://www.ait-planetlar.com
Publications include: Colonia, Electric Girl.

Archie Comics
P.O. Box 559
Stamford, CT 06913
http://www.archiecomics.com
Publications include: Betty and Veronica, Sabrina, Sonic, the Hedgehog.
Cartoon Books
P.O. Box 16973
Columbus, OH 43216
http://www.boneville.com
Publications include: Bone and Rose.

Chronicle Books LLC
85 Second Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
http://www.chroniclebooks.com
Publications include: Daniels' The Complete History of Wonder Woman, and Robbins' From Girls to Grzzl.

ComicsOne Corporation
47257 Fremont Blvd.
Fremont, CA 94538
http://www.ComicsOne.com

CrossGen Entertainment, Inc.
4023 Tampa Road
Suite 2400
Oldsmar, FL 34677
http://www.crossgen.com
Publications include: Ruse, Meridian, and Way of the Rat.

Dark Horse Comics
10956 SE Main Street
Milwaukie, OR 97222
http://www.darkhorse.com
http://www.crossgen.com
Publications include: Martha Washington Saves the World, Astro Boy, The Ring of Nibelung.

DC Comics (includes America's Best, Homage, Vertigo, and Wildstorm)
1700 Broadway
New York, NY 10019
http://www.dccomics.com
http://www.crossgen.com
Publications include: *Batman, Wonder Woman, the Sandman, Promethea, and The Books of Magic.*

**Drawn & Quarterly**  
P.O. Box 48056  
Montreal, Quebec  
Canada, H2V4S8  
http://www.drawnandquarterly.com  
http://www.crossgen.com  
Publications include: *The Golem’s Mighty Swing.*

**Fantagraphics**  
7563 Lake City Way NE  
Seattle, WA 98115  
http://www.fantagraphics.com  
Publications include: *Ghost World, Love and Rockets, and Safe Area Gorazde.*

**HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.**  
10 East 53rd Street  
New York, NY 10022  
http://harpercollins.com  
Publications include: *Simpsons Comics A-Go-Go and Little Lit.*

**Image Comics**  
1071 N. Batavia Street, Ste. A  
Orange, CA 92867  
http://www.imagecomics.com  
Publications include: *Go Go Girl and The Age of Bronze.*

**Little, Brown and Company**  
Three Center Plaza!  
Boston, MA 02108-2084  
http://www.littlebrown.com/  
Publications include: *Tin Tin.*
Marvel Enterprises, Inc.
10 East 40th St.
New York, NY 10016
http://www.marvel.com

NBM Publishing
555 8th Ave., Ste. 1202
New York, NY 10018
http://www.nbmpub.com
Publications include: The Fairy Tales of Oscar Wilde and The Wind in the Willows.

Olio Press
P.O. Box 1953
Portland, OR 97207
Email: oliopress@aol.com
Publications include: Castle Waiting.

Oni Press
6336 SE Milwaukie Ave, PMB 30
Portland, OR 97202
http://www.onipress.com
Publications include: Courtney Crumrin and the Night Things and Alison Dare, Little Miss Adventures.

Pantheon Books
Random House, Inc.
1745 Broadway
New York, NY 10019
http://www.randomhouse.com/pantheon
Publications include: Maus and Jimmy Corrigan.
Pug House Press
250E. Wynnewood Rd. #E-13
Wynnewood, PA 19096
http://www.amyunbounded.com
Publications include: Amy Unbounded.

SLG Publishing
577 South Market St.
San Jose, CA 95113
http://www.slavelabor.com
Publications include: Lenore and Little Gloomy.

TokyoPop
5900 Wilshire blvd., Ste. 2000
Los Angeles, CA 90036-5020
http://www.tokyopop.com
Publications include: Mars, Harlem Beat, and Peach Girl.

THECOMIC.COM
P.O. Box 390612
Cambridge, MA 02139
http://www.thecomic.com
Publications include: Beowulf.

Top Shelf Productions
P.O. Box 1282
Marietta, GA 30061-1282
http://www.topshelfcomix.com
Publications include: Goodbye Chunky Rice.

Viz Communications, Inc.
P.O. BOX 77010
San Francisco, CA 94107
http://www.viz.com
Publications include: Dragon Ball and Ranma 1/2
**Vendors**

**Baker and Taylor**
Baker & Taylor, Inc.
2709 Water Ridge Parkway
Charlotte, NC 28217
Phone: 800.775.1800
Online Ordering: http://www.btol.com

**Brodart - Book Services**
500 Arch Street
Williamsport, PA 17705
Online Ordering: http://www.brodart.com/books/bookhm.htm
Customer Service: 1-800-233-8467, Ext. 6545 (public lib.); Ext. 6532 (school lib.)

**Bud Plant Comic Art***
P.O. Box 1689
Grass Valley, CA 95945 USA
Online Ordering: http://www.budplant.com/
Customer Service: 800-242-6642

**Diamond Comic Distributors, Inc.**
1966 Greenspring Drive, Suite 300
Timonium, MD 21093
Phone: (410) 560-7100
Online Ordering: Not available
Website: http://diamondcomics.com

**Follett Library Resources**
1340 Ridgeview Drive!
Mchenry, Illinois 60050
Phone: 888.511.5114 or 815.759.1700!
Online Ordering: www.titlewave.com
Customer Service: 1-888-511-5114
Ingram Library Services
One Ingram Blvd.
P.O. Box 3006
La Vergne, TN 37086-1986
Online Ordering: http://www.ingramlibrary.com/
Customer Service: 1- 800 937-5300

Last Gasp***
777 Florida Street
San Francisco CA 94110
Customer Service: 415-824-6636
Online Ordering: http://www.lastgasp.com

Mackin Library Media
14300 West Burnsville Pkwy
Burnsville, MN 55306
Online Ordering: http://www.mackin.com/
Customer Service: 1-800-245-9540

Perma-Bound
Online Ordering: http://www.perma-bound.com/default.htm
Customer Service: 1-800-637-6581

*** These vendors specialize in art books including graphic novels. Their inventory includes a wide array of products including explicit adult materials.
Suggestions for Further Reading

A great introduction to one of the finest comic book series ever created. This volume provides an overview of each storyline and features a variety of interviews with Neil Gaiman along with artwork from the series.

This is a good, concise article that will provide librarians with a starting place for developing a graphic novels collection.

This was one of the first books to examine comic books as an art form. The term "sequential art" was coined by Eisner to describe the narrative method of comic book story-telling using pictures and words in a self-contained story.

A companion to *Comics & Sequential Art*, this book focuses on the art of graphic storytelling and is designed for young professionals. Also examines the influence of film and other media on the genre of comic books.

An outstanding article on the field of graphic novels. Includes recommendations on building a Teen collection.

A solid, comprehensive history of the rise of newspaper comic strips and comic books in the United States. *Currently out of print.*
An excellent article on building a new graphic novels collection for public libraries.

This article is also very useful for librarians who are just beginning to build a graphic novel collection for their library.

Another article by Kan that explores further ways of adding materials to your graphic novels collection.

Discusses the value of including comic books and graphic novels as a type of light reading! for students. Krashen encourages librarians and teachers to include comic books as part of a high-interest/low vocabulary reading program. Provides a readability index chart for a dozen regularly published comic books.

A statistical analysis of Colorado schools and the effects of library media programs on academic achievement.

This book provides handouts and guidelines for presenting research data on the positive impact that school media programs have on student achievement. Summarizes the major studies that were conducted in Alaska, Colorado, and Pennsylvania.

Continues the pioneering work of Will Eisner and examines the unique narrative process that is used to tell stories in comic book form. This book demonstrates how the genre can change to become a legitimate art form, while providing a sterling example of the medium’s untapped potential.

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This follow-up to *Understanding Comics* chronicles the failure of the comic book industry to become a legitimate art form and explores how the movement can be restarted, particularly by utilizing the resources of another spectacularly successful revolution, the Internet.


The first comprehensive history of women cartoonists and their contributions to the field of comic books and comics art.

---,


Robbins examines the portrayal of women superheroes, their success in the marketplace, and their treatment by comic book historians and fans.

---,


Examines the world of non-superhero comics that feature female characters such as Betty and Veronica and Mille the Model. Robbins' study explores the world of female comic protagonist from the 1930's to present.


One of the first lengthy books about graphic novels.

An excellent, general introduction to the history of comics.


A concise, well-written overview of the history of comic books and the rise of graphic novels as an artistic, literary form.


Currently out of print, this was the first book to provide librarians with a selection tool for building a graphic novels collection.


This is a newly revised version of Weiner's 1996 reference guide.
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About the Author

Philip Crawford is a life-long reader of comic books and graphic novels. He has taught English at School of the Arts High School in San Francisco and served as Librarian for the Helen Boutin Professional, a resource library for San Francisco Unified School District teachers. He holds a bachelor's degree in Women Studies and English Literature from University of California at Santa Cruz, a master's degree in English from San Francisco State University and an MLIS degree from San Jose State University.

He has conducted professional development workshops on graphic novels for the San Francisco Unified School District, San Mateo County of Education, the Vermont Library Association, and the California School Library Association. His column on graphic novels, "Thought Bubbles" appears regularly in Knowledge Quest, a publication of the American Association of School Librarians Association, a division of ALA.

A native of Pacific Grove, California, Philip now resides in Vermont with his partner, Joshua. He is currently the Library Director for Essex High School in Vermont.