

# COMIC BOOKS: BETTER FOR YOUR BRAIN AND YOU

Reading comic books is both an entertaining and fulfilling way to pass the time, and a way to help improve your memory and overall brain function.



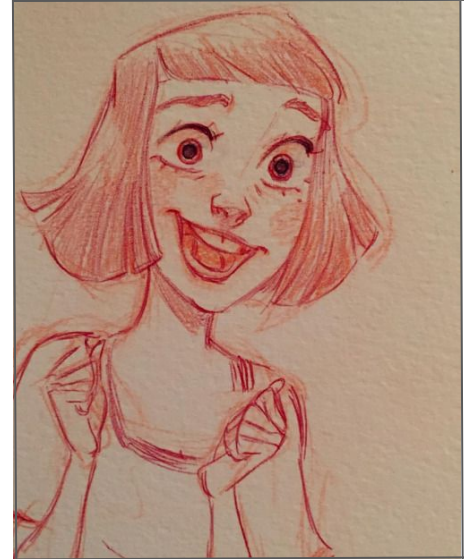
## ETHOS

- According to the comic theorist (an individual who studies comic books and their impact on humanity) Dale Jacobs, "comics and graphic novels tell sophisticated stories through multimodal cues that stimulate similar processes to the human brain mapping the world around it" (Widdicks).
- Teacher Christina Blanch, who works at Ball State University analyzed a study done at Oklahoma University. In this experiment over a hundred business major undergraduates participated. Half of the students were given graphic novels and the other half textbooks. After they were quizzed and those who had read the graphic novels were "more likely to recognize direct quotes" than those who read the textbooks. Blanch stated she was not surprised as the results have something to do with the brain and comic books impact on it. Blanch states, "when you have something with a word and picture combined, that counts as one schema (a cognitive structure), so you're only processing that one thing and you get so much more information out of it" ("Can Reading Comics Make Us Smarter?").
- One time when I was struggling to understand a literary text for class, I went out and bought the graphic novel version of it. The book was a Shakespearean text and I was struggling to understand the Old English. When I received the graphic novel version, it became a lot easier for me to understand. The visuals helped to explain what the text was about. It was less confusing and I was able to ace my assignment.

# PATHOS

- Comic books like books use words to help take you to new and distant places, but unlike most books, comic books use pictures as well. Using both words and pictures, comic books can fully immerse you in the story. How amazing would it be to be able to not only read about these worlds but see them as well!
- My friend growing up struggled with reading. She had a hard time staying focused and not getting lost or overwhelmed. This meant she got frustrated often with books and would just not read at all. She would not even read for school and was failing her English class. One day her mother brought home a comic book. Her mother was desperate and willing to try anything. When she got her hands on the comic book, my friend could not put it down. The pictures helped her understand what was going on in the story more clearly and helped her keep focus. Comics helped her spark a love for reading that no one would have ever guessed she had! Her grades started improving too and she began passing her class. Comic books helped to change her life.
- Did you know that the show the Walking Dead was originally a comic book? Before the award winning show was well a show, it was first a comic. Most people do not know that some of their favorite shows and movies were originally comics. In some cases shows have also been turned into comic books. If you are a huge fan of Stranger Things, they have comics that give fans a sneak peak into other parts of the show and introduce more lore. Comic books allow you to learn more about your favorite shows and movies, plus it can give you more content. The show the Legend of Korra only had four seasons and the rest of the story was finished in the graphic novels. Your favorite show or movie could be based on a comic or have a comic continuation and there could be all this content out there that you do not even know about! You would not want to miss out on all of this just because you would not give reading comics a try!

"True happiness is found along a middle road. There lies the balance and the harmony- with reason and emotion, not at war but hand in hand." - Aquaman



# BENEFITS OF READING GRAPHIC NOVELS

Graphic novels help students by...

## PROMOTING VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

Graphic novels often contain MORE difficult vocabulary than traditional print books, giving kids extra opportunities to learn new words. The visual support provided by the graphics allows students to quickly associate new words with their meaning.



## SHARPENING CRITICAL THINKING

When reading graphic novels, students must actively decode text and images together to synthesize information. Children must also infer in the gaps between panels. Nonfiction graphic novels make learning facts easier by activating the language and visual centers of the brain at the same time.



## ENGAGING KIDS IN READING

The concise text and rich images within graphic novels give children access to complex stories even if they struggle academically. The design, color, and images invite students of all levels to engage in sustained reading. Plus, graphic novels are often a bridge to longer, prose-based narratives.



## BUILDING VISUAL LITERACY

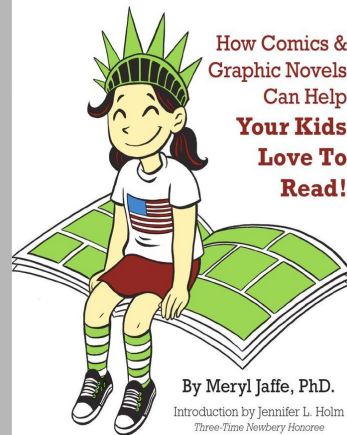
Did you know that the ratio of images to words in all kinds of documents is increasing? Understanding the interplay between pictures and text in both print and video media is an important component in comprehending increasingly complex information.



# LOGOS

- Research proves that comic books contain considerably bigger words than other books, meaning that they help improve one's vocabulary (Cohn). Comic book average about 53.5 advanced words per thousand. This is compared to the 30.9 advanced words per thousand in children's books and the 52.7 in adult books. Comic books even have more advanced words per thousand than college graduates who use 17.3 per thousand ("Comics and Dyslexia: A Curious Connection...").
- The font, capitals, thought bubbles, short bits of text, and overall format of comic books allow dyslexic readers to have an easier time reading. The visual aspects of comic books trick the reader's brain into continuing to exercise the part of their brain needed to read and process the information. In other words this formatting allows them to keep reading without struggle ("Comics and Dyslexia: A Curious Connection...").
- When reading a comic book, one's brain activity changes. If one is reading a story they find compelling and interesting, their neuron activity changes. If one feels as though they are addicted to a certain comic book, that is because their neuron activity has changed while reading the comic and they are longing for that familiar feeling (Brown).

# Raising a Reader!



A Comic Book Legal Defense Fund Publication

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