## Reading

Matching information

# Graphic novels

*People who think graphic novels are just comics with a different name should think again*

**A** Graphic novels, as the name suggests, are books written and illustrated in the style of a comic book. The term graphic novel was first used in 1978 by author and artist Will Eisner to distinguish a comic novel he had written and illustrated from newspaper comic strips. He described graphic novels as consisting of 'sequential art' – a series of illustrations which, when viewed in order, tell a story.

**B** Although today's graphic novels are a recent phenomenon, this basic way of telling stories has been used in various forms for centuries. Early cave drawings, hieroglyphics and medieval tapestries are examples of this. The term graphic novel is now generally used to describe any book in a comic format that resembles a novel in length and narrative development.

**C** Many adults feel that graphic novels are not the type of reading material that will help young people become good readers. They believe that graphic novels are somehow a bad influence that prevent 'real' reading. In other words, they think that they are not 'real' books.

**D** However, many quality graphic novels are now being seen as a method of storytelling on the same level as novels, films or audio books. From originally appealing to a small following of enthusiasts, they are now being accepted by librarians and teachers as proper literature for children and young adults. The main advantages are that they promote literacy, and attract and motivate young people to read.

**E** How do we know this? In the last few years, teachers and school libraries have reported outstanding success getting children to read with graphic novels. Many have mentioned the motivational factor of the graphic novel. This has been especially true with children who are usually reluctant to read, especially boys. The colourful pictures attract them, and then encourage them to find out what the story is about. Providing young people of all abilities with a wide range of reading materials, including graphic novels, can help them become lifelong readers.

**F** Furthermore, one of the main benefits of a graphic novel is that it can help students who are learning a foreign language, and who are having problems improving their reading skills. This is because the pictures provide clues to the meaning of the words. Language learners are therefore more motivated by graphic novels, and will acquire new vocabulary more quickly.

**G** Many teachers have reported great success when they have used graphic novels with their students, especially in the areas of English, social studies and art. They have discovered that, just like traditional forms of literature, they can be useful tools for helping students examine aspects of history, science, literature and art.

**H** The idea that graphic novels are too simple to be regarded as serious reading is no longer valid. The excellent graphic novels available today demand many of the same skills that are needed to understand traditional works of fiction. Often they actually contain more sophisticated vocabulary than traditional books. Reading them can help students develop the skills that are necessary to read more challenging works.

**❷ Now look at these questions, and <u>underline</u> the key words in each one. Then answer Questions 1–7.**

**Questions 1–7**

The Reading passage has eight paragraphs, **A–H**.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

*Write the correct letter, **A–H**.*

**NB** *You may use any letter more than once.*

1 people with negative attitudes towards graphic novels .....
2 a variety of school subjects where graphic novels can play an important role .....
3 why a graphic novel's visual element speeds up learning .....
4 a modern definition of graphic novels .....
5 graphic novels are as good as any other method of telling a story .....
6 graphic novels sometimes use advanced words .....
7 the historical use of pictures as a method of storytelling .....



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Table completion

**❸ Read the instructions for Questions 7–13 and the title of the table. Answer the questions below.**

**Questions 7–13**

*Complete the table below.*

*Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the passage for each answer.*

**The advantages of graphic novels**

| Advantages | Who benefits? | How it works |
|---|---|---|
| They provide motivation to read. | **7** ..... readers | They are attracted by **8** ..... . This encourages them to find out what happens in the **9** ..... . |
| They help improve a student's **10** ..... . | **11** ..... learners | The pictures act as visual **12** ..... . The student develops a larger **13** ..... . |

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