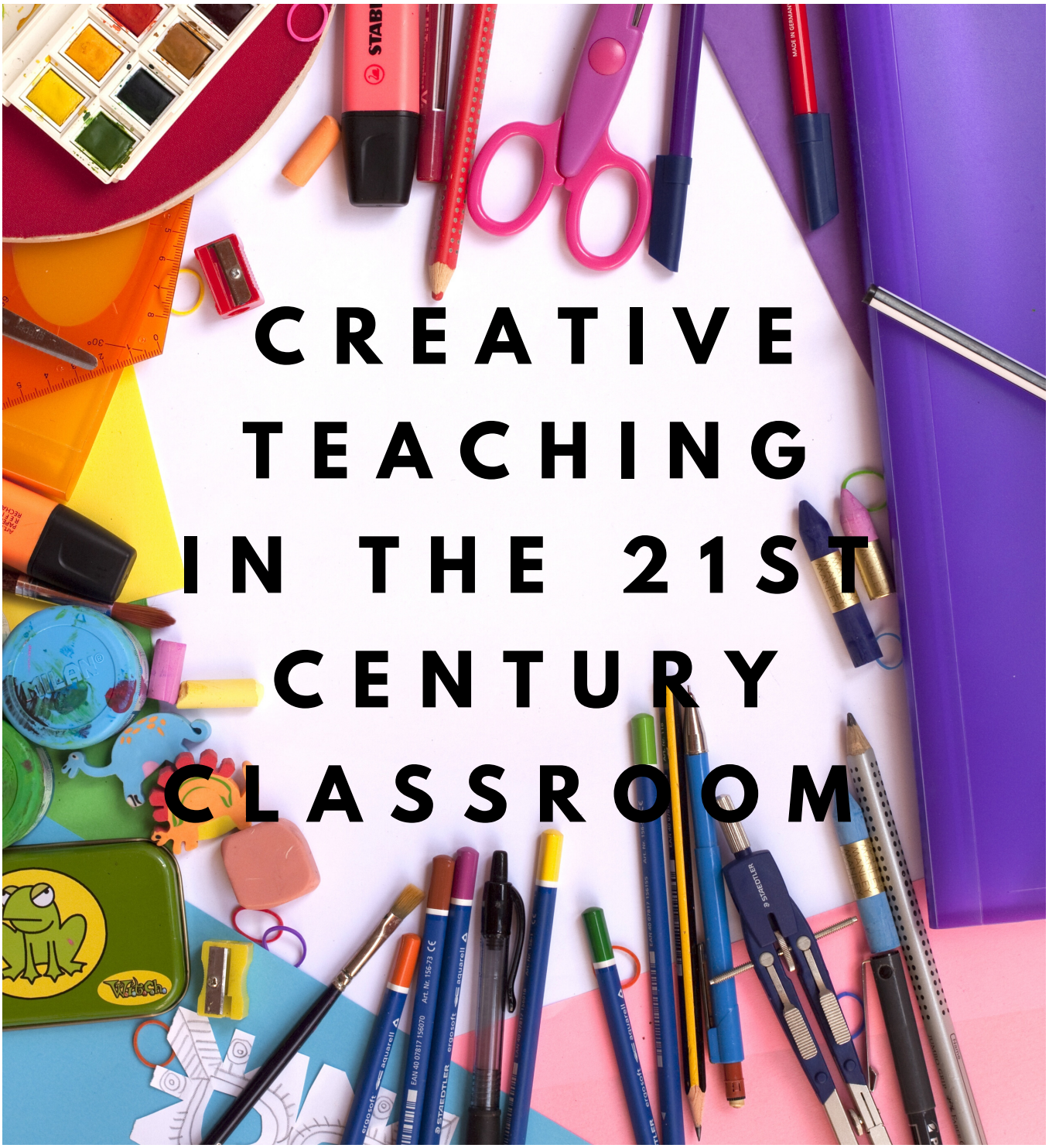
# BEYOND THE TEXTBOOK

**By Grace Eberts**

INCORPORATING COMICS + GRAPHIC NOVELS INTO THE SECONDARY EDUCATION CURRICULUM





# WHAT'S INSIDE


**04** **INTRODUCTION INTO THE FIELD OF COMICS**

An introduction into comics based on Scott McCloud's book, *Understanding Comics*

**06** **PART 1: AN OVERVIEW OF TEACHING + UNDERSTANDING COMICS**

Famous comics, Scott McCloud + Will Eisner on why comics are an important field of literature.

**08** **PART 2: DEFINING VISUAL LITERACY**

Defining the term Visual Literacy, A term that is crucial for viewing comics from an educational perspective.

**09** **PART 3: GOALS OF USING COMICS IN THE CLASSROOM**

Why they are a necessary addition to any curriculum




# WHAT'S INSIDE


**10** **DEFINING THEMES**

Figuring out how comics can fit into your curriculum
Tips for choosing Graphic Novels and Comics for your curriculum

**14** **HISTORY OF COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS IN THE CLASSROOM**

Early use of comics in the classroom and the definition of Multimodal Literacy .

**16** **LESSON PLANS + APPLICATION OF COMICS INTO THE CLASSROOM**

How to use comics in the classroom and activities that can aid in comprehension

**29** **TYING IT ALL TOGETHER**

Reinforcing how comics can enhance any secondary education curriculum.


SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT.
HI, I'M SCOTT McCLOUD.
JANUARY
WHEN I WAS A LITTLE KID I KNEW EXACTLY WHAT COMICS WERE.
OMICS WERE THOSE BRIGHT, COLORFUL MAGAZINES FILLED WITH BAD ART, STUPID STORIES AND GUYS IN TIGHTS.
I READ REAL BOOKS, NATURALLY. I WAS MUCH TOO OLD FOR COMICS!
BUT WHEN I WAS IN 8th GRADE, FRIEND OF MINE (WHO WAS A LOT SMARTER THAN I WAS) CONVINCE ME TO GIVE COMICS ANOTHER LOO AND LENT ME HIS COLLECTION.
SOON, I WAS HOOKED!
THE REALLY OLD MEN
BY STAN & JACK

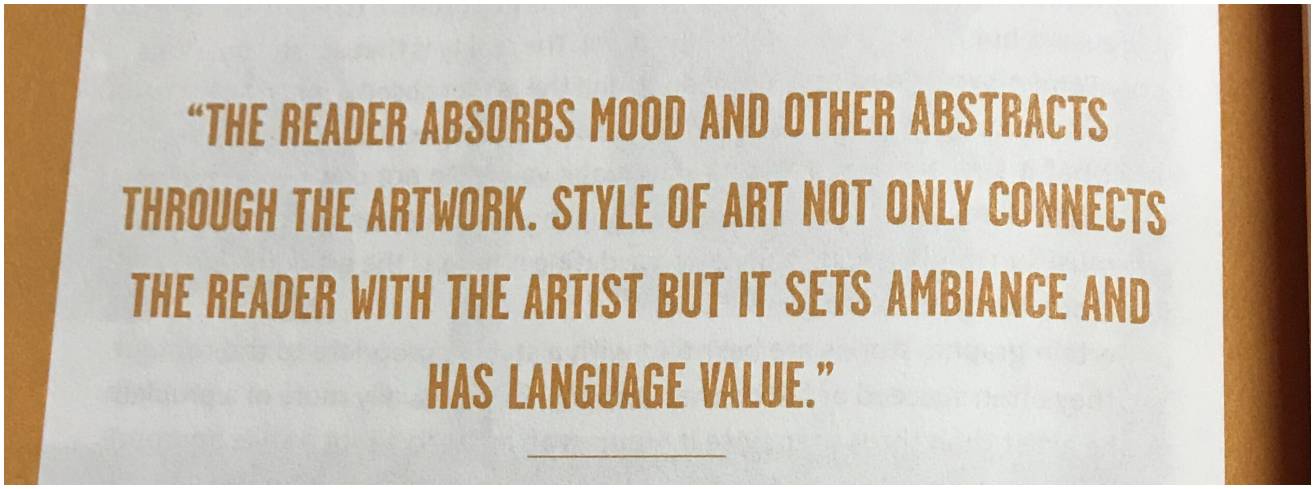

IN LESS THAN A YEAR, I BECAME TOTALLY OBSESSED WITH COMICS! I DECIDED TO BECOME A COMICS ARTIST IN 10th GRADE AND BEGAN TO PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!
I FELT THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING LURKING IN COMICS... SOMETHING THAT HAD NEVER BEEN DONE.
SOME KIND OF HIDDEN POWER!
BUT WHENEVER I TRIED TO EXPLAIN MY FEELING, I FAILED MISERABLY.
COMIC BOOKS?! HA! HA! HA!
BUT IT-- BUT IT'S-- BUH...
SURE, I REALIZED THAT COMIC BOOKS WERE USUALLY CRUDE, POORLY-DRAWN, SEMILITERATE, CHEAP, DISPOSABLE KIDDIE FARE--
--BUT--
THEY DON'T HAVE TO BE!
THE PROBLEM WAS THAT FOR MOST PEOPLE, THAT WAS WHAT "COMIC BOOK" MEANT!
DON'T GIMME THAT COMIC BOOK TALK, BARNEY!
IF PEOPLE FAILED TO UNDERSTAND COMICS, IT WAS BECAUSE THEY DEFINED WHAT COMICS COULD BE TOO NARROWLY!
A PROPER DEFINITION, IF WE COULD FIND ONE, MIGHT GIVE LIE TO THE STEREOTYPES--
--AND SHOW THAT THE POTENTIAL OF COMICS IS LIMITLESS AND EXCITING!
THIS IS WHERE OUR JOURNEY BEGINS.



# THE IMPORTANCE OF COMICS: AN OVERVIEW

Why comics are an important form of literature with an overview from Scott McCloud and Will Eisner

As Scott McCloud states at the beginning of his work, "If people fail to understand comics, it was because they defined what comics could be too narrowly. A proper definition if we could find one, might give lie to the stereotypes-- and show that the potential of comics is limitless and exciting! (McCloud 2). While McCloud aims to "set the record straight," as revealed through the title of his first chapter, he still admits that it is common for readers to view comics as "kiddie-fare," He aims to counteract this stereotype by portraying the medium of comics as "a vessel which can hold any number of **ideas** and **images"** (McCloud 6). Because comics can hold any number of ideas and images, they allow a writer to portray their message in a vastly different way than they could with a normal text. McCloud questions why comics are so important and why we should understand them. This is where the idea of **SEQUENTIAL ART** comes into play, which are images displayed in a specific order. The idea of Sequential Art leads us into the work of another renowned comic, Will Eisner, who's work pairs well with McCloud's.




# WILL EISNER ON IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF COMICS

"Master Comics artist Will Eisner uses the term Sequential Art when describing comics. Taken individually, the pictures below are merely pictures. However, when part of a sequence, even a sequence of only two, the art of the image is transformed into something more—the art of comics!" (Eisner, 5). Through the ways in which each image is displayed, such as through the order that they appear in, the overall message is enhanced. This is an aspect of comics that sets the genre apart from other literature. Two important ideas surrounding comics are attention and retention--attention meaning that the reader is interested in the work, and retention meaning that the story is portrayed in a logical order.

Attention is achieved through "provocative and attractive imagery" while retention is achieved through a "logical and intelligible arrangement of images" (Eisner, 51). These ideas can be transferred into the classroom because students remain more interested in the work due to the balance of both text and images. In addition, according to Eisner, the reader is able to sense the mood and value of the text through the images that accompany it. The quote that exemplifies this is shown above. Similar to the ideas of attention and retention in comics, if a student can see the value in a work based on the images within it, they will be more interested and want to keep reading.

## Why are comics an important integration into your curriculum according to McCloud and Eisner?

ATTENTION

A balance of texts and images

SEQUENTIAL ART

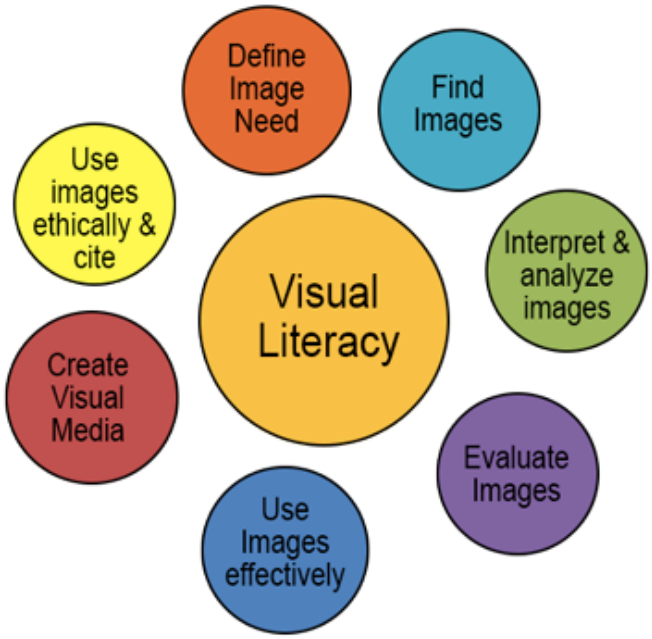
RETENTION

# DEFINING VISUAL LITERACY

an important term to consider when using comics in the classroom

## VISUAL LITERACY

**"THE ABILITY TO INTERPRET, NEGOTIATE, AND MAKE MEANING FROM INFORMATION PRESENTED IN THE FORM OF AN IMAGE, AS WELL AS TO PRODUCE VISUAL MESSAGES"**




As comics combine both images and words to portray their message, students will need to have a solid understanding of visual literacy. Some ways to foster an understanding of this in students can be achieved through several discussion questions including some of the following examples:

1. What can you see in the image?
2. How does this image make you feel?
3. What is being addressed in the image (subject matter)?
4. What colors are used in the image?
5. What is the image trying to tell us?

## GOALS OF USING COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS IN THE CLASSROOM

A.K.A- what we want students to achieve from it...to name a few...




"Students find the **aesthetic experience with visuals pleasurable** (as opposed to more typical anesthetic experiences associated with common types of school-based reading)"

“Students can learn to **handle ambiguity in a text**, **develop an open-minded approach** to its possibilities, **sustain attention**, and develop other traits of competent readers”

“Because **images are open for interpretation**, this **prompts rich discussion**, **stimulates problem solving**, and **builds social meaning**; therefore, students avoid one authoritative answer, **creating a more democratic classroom**"

"The comics medium and themes found in graphic novels are **more connected to students' experiences and more personally relevant to their lives**. They don't often get bored and give up"

(Bakis 2-3)



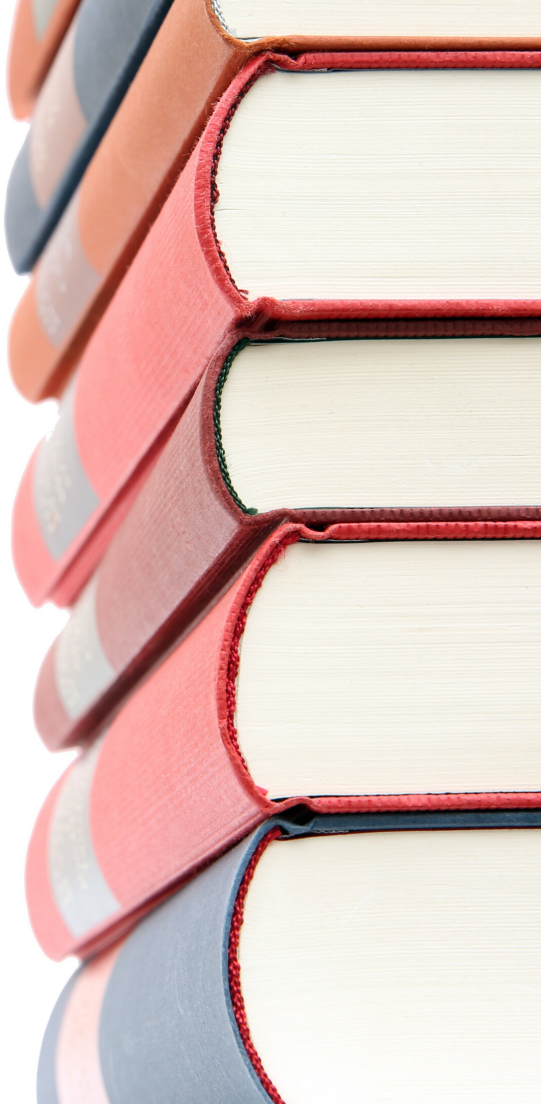
# DEFINING THEMES

Identifying answers to the following questions can help you define the themes for your units

**WHAT ARE THE DRIVING HUMAN FORCES THAT UNDERLIE THE INFORMATION AND CONCEPTS OF THESE STANDARDS OR THIS CONTENT?**

**WHAT PHENOMENA DESCRIBED OR IMPLIED IN THE STANDARDS OR TEXTBOOK HAVE AFFECTED ORDINARY PEOPLE (INCLUDING ME AND MY STUDENTS) OR MAY DO SO IN THE FUTURE?**

**WHAT UNIVERSAL PATTERNS OR BEHAVIORS RELATED TO THIS TOPIC SHOULD BE EXPLAINED?**



## TIPS FOR FIGURING OUT WHICH COMICS + GRAPHIC NOVELS TO INCLUDE

While wanting to integrate comics and graphic novels into your classroom may be something that you do not even have to think about, actually choosing the pieces can be an entirely different story. In *Teaching Graphic Novels Across the Curriculum*, several tips are given to help educators identify "high quality and academically appropriate" texts in the comic medium (Brozo, Moorman, Meyer 33). A checklist for this process is also included on the following page.

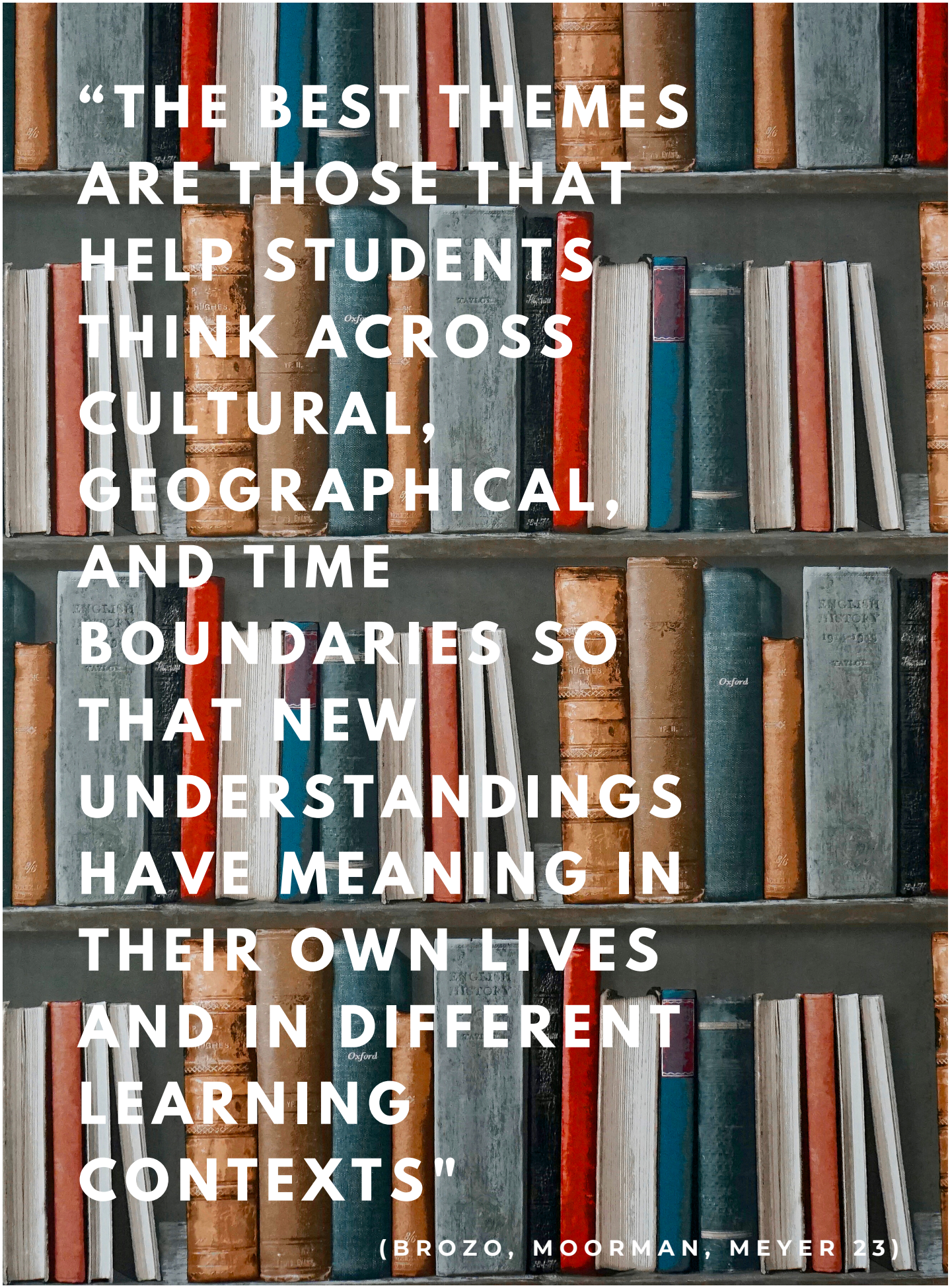
- **Review your curriculum to identify potential connections between the curriculum and graphic novels.**
- **Think about potential instructional uses (whole-group, cooperative groups, and independent study)**
- **Talk with professionals who are familiar with the genre**
- **Keep in mind that authors and illustrators create graphic novels for diverse audiences, always read the entire graphic novel to ensure that it is developmentally appropriate for your students.**

# Checklist for Ensuring a Text is Fitting for your Classroom



**Figure 2.3. Checklist for Adopting Graphic Novels**

| Consideration | Yes or No? | Additional Thoughts |
|---|---|---|
| ***Artwork*** | | |
| Does the cover art appeal to the target audience? | | |
| Does the cover art distinctly convey the theme/topic of the book? | | |
| Is the artwork appropriate for the target audience? | | |
| Does the artwork align with the story? | | |
| Does the use of color scaffold the readers understanding of the mood and tone of the story? | | |
| Is the artwork of adequate size? | | |
| ***Text*** | | |
| Do the word balloons contain an appropriate number of words? | | |
| Do the artwork and text work in tandem? | | |
| Do the tone of the artwork and the tone of the text match? | | |
| Is the reading level appropriate for the intended audience? | | |
| Does the text include traditional elements such as plot, theme, setting, etc.? | | |
| Are the main characters developed with their own voices? | | |
| Is the information presented in the text accurate and relevant? | | |
| ***Format and Structure*** | | |
| Does the panel arrangement scaffold readers' understanding? | | |
| Do the panels enhance the story? | | |
| Do the gutters aid comprehension? | | |
| Are the pages clear and easy to understand? | | |
| Within the panel, is the text readable? | | |


“THE BEST THEMES ARE THOSE THAT HELP STUDENTS THINK ACROSS CULTURAL, GEOGRAPHICAL, AND TIME BOUNDARIES SO THAT NEW UNDERSTANDINGS HAVE MEANING IN THEIR OWN LIVES AND IN DIFFERENT LEARNING CONTEXTS"
(BROZO, MOORMAN, MEYER 23)

# HISTORY OF COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS IN THE CLASSROOM

An overview of their early uses and the definition of **Multimodal Literacy**

In 1954, Dr. Fredrick Wertham, a well-known phsychologist published Seduction of the Innocent, a work in which he claimed that comic books contributed to "juvenille delinquancy, taught erroneous scientific concepts, encouraged homosexuality, and provided girls with poor role models" (Brozo, Moorman, Meyer 39). While today we now know this not to be true, the struggle to see the comic medium as a adequate form of literature still continues,

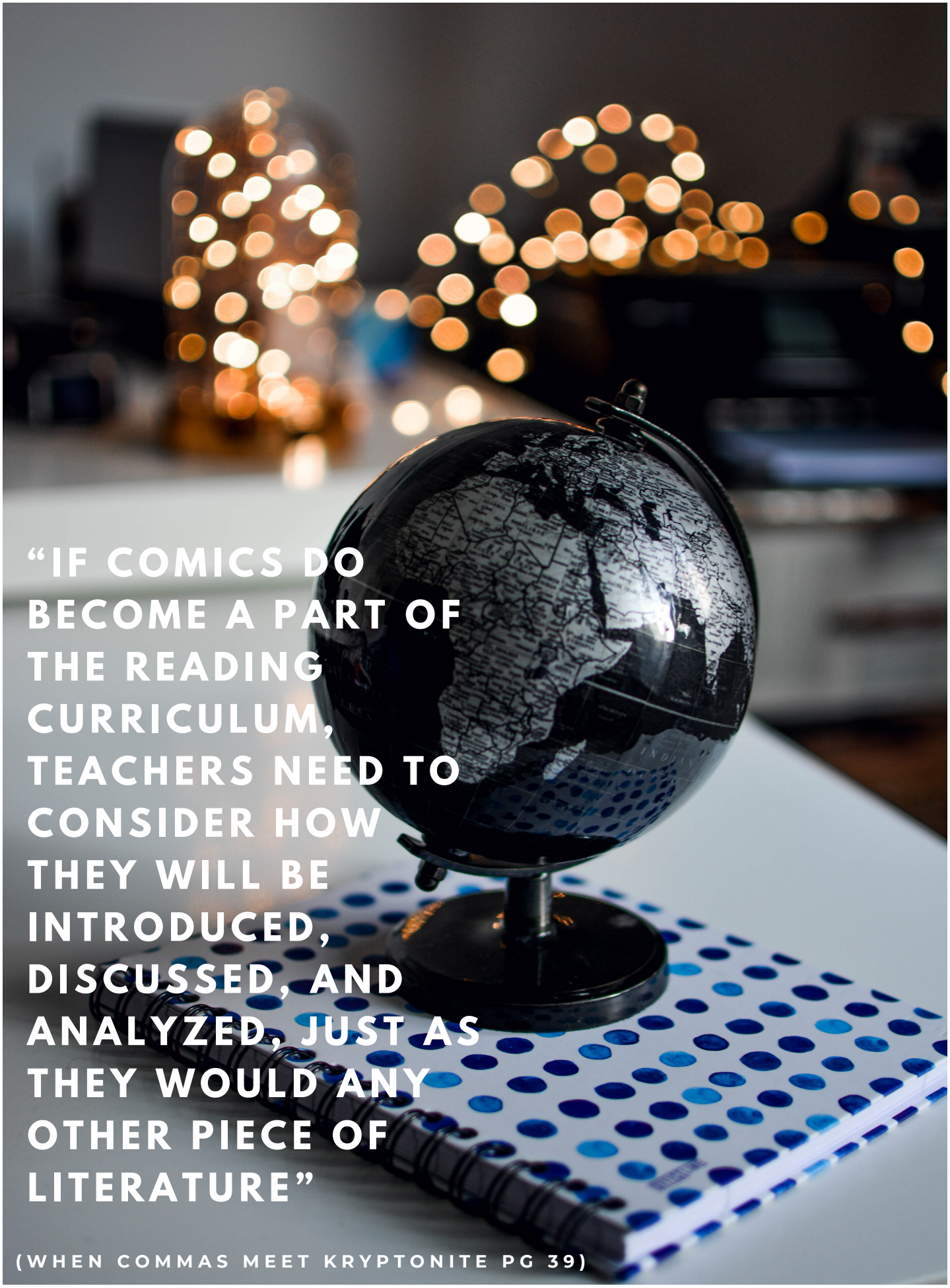
According to Teaching Graphic Novels Across the Curriculum, the comic medium first found its way into the classroom as a way to provide help for struggling readers. The images combined with text made decoding and comprehension easier for these students. While this still holds partially true, that comics can provide assistance for struggling readers and foster visual literacy, it is wrong to market them as remedial texts (Brozo, Moorman, Mayer 40)



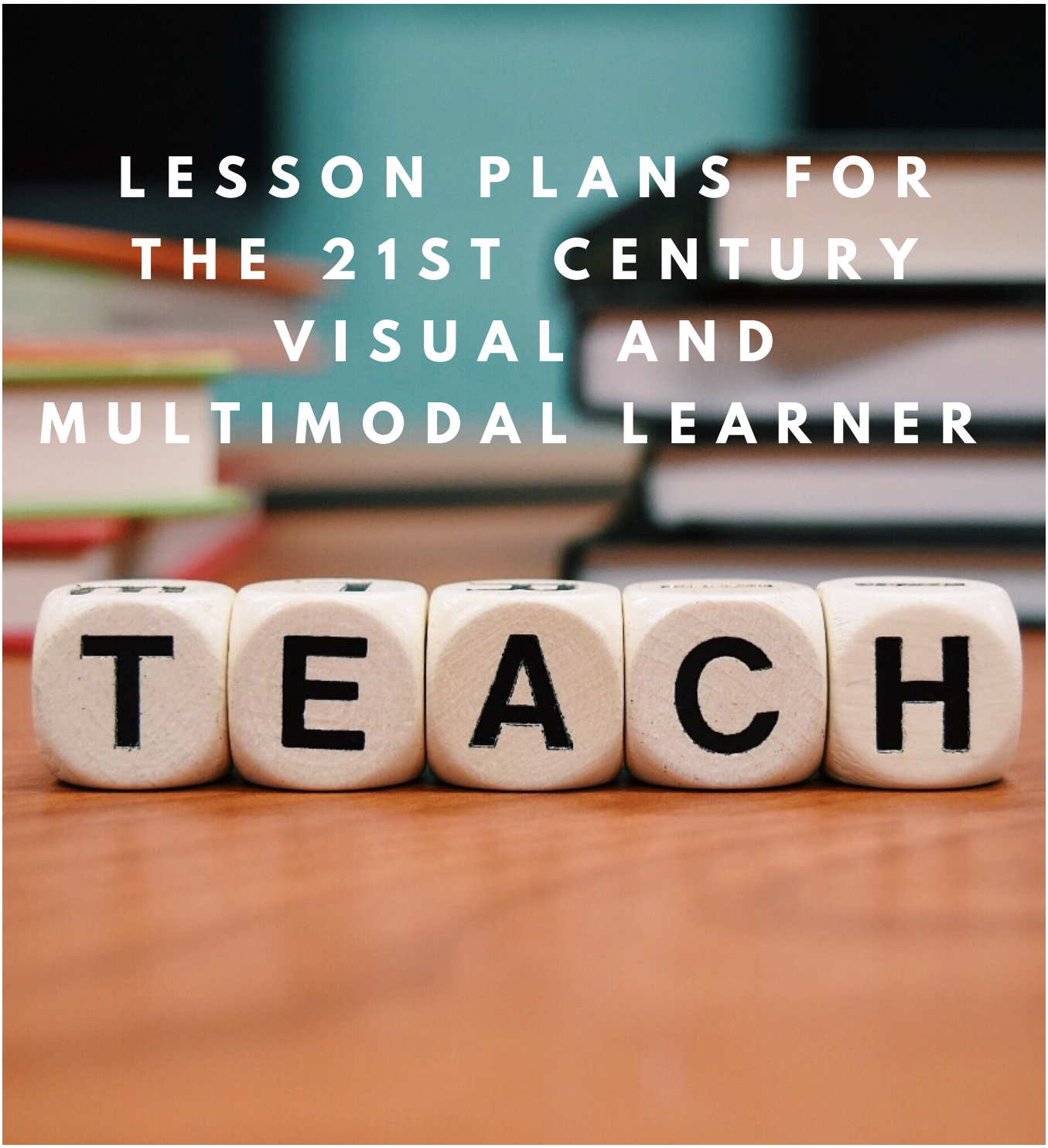

## MULTIMODAL LITERACY

Instead, this notion is outdated and "fails to recognize the high literary and aesthetic quality  of the body of graphic novel literature." In reality, comics and graphic novels "require the reader to slow down, to reread, to analyze both texts and pictures in order to construct an understanding of the narrative" (Brozo, Moorman, Mayer 40). This leads us to the idea of **Multimodal Literacy.**

- Requires combining information from multiple sources in order to comprehend or construct a text . In the case of comics and graphic novels, students would be combining both text and images to construct meaning within the piece.


“IF COMICS DO BECOME A PART OF THE READING CURRICULUM, TEACHERS NEED TO CONSIDER HOW THEY WILL BE INTRODUCED, DISCUSSED, AND ANALYZED, JUST AS THEY WOULD ANY OTHER PIECE OF LITERATURE”
(WHEN COMMAS MEET KRYPTONITE PG 39)

# LESSON PLANS AND CLASSROOM APPLICATION



# PLAN 1: TACKLING HEAVY TOPICS THROUGH GRAPHIC NOVELS

Using *I am Alfonso Jones* by Tony Medina

**Lesson Goal:** By reading *I am Alfonso Jones*, **students will gain an understanding of "the inequality that rears its head in the justice system, the prison industry, and in the dangerous elements found in policing in America**."—Tony Medina

**Text Being Used**: *I am Alfonso Jones* by Tony Medina




**"A DEEPLY FELT AND ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY STORY THAT HUMANIZES CHARACTERS TOO OFTEN RELEGATED TO STATISTICS AND HEADLINES; SURE TO SPARK STRONG RESPONSES AND DEBATE AMONG READERS"-LIBRARY JOURNAL**

**Procedure:**

- **Prior to Reading**--> I will have a discussion in which we would explore some of the issues that will be addressed in the book so that students will have an understanding which they can develop as they progress through the book. Possible Questions for this discussion include:
  - **How do you define justice?**
  - **Discuss some examples of the injustices in your community.**
  - **What do you think racial justice means?**
  - **What is the job of the police? Describe the relationship the police have with the people in your community.**
  - **What do you know about the Black Lives Matter movement? What are some other examples of political activism or social justice movements?**
  - **What is your perception of the American criminal justice system? What experiences have formed your view? What do you know about racial profiling? Police violence?**

# PLAN 1: CONTINUED-

Tackling Heavy Topics Through Graphic Novels

**Procedure: Continued-**

- **Setting the Purpose for Reading**
  - By doing this, you will give students some ideas to keep track of as their reading, which aids in overall comprehension
  - Some potential ideas for doing this include:
    - How African American history and culture are woven into the characters and plot of *I Am Alfonso Jones*
    - How *I Am Alfonso Jones* connects to real-world current events and community issues, nationally or locally
    - How the dynamics of race and racism intersect with policing to create problems in the criminal justice system
    - The importance of advocacy and activism in solving community problems
  - From here, students would be given a sheet in which thehy can keep track of these ideas through a bulleted list as they read.

**At the story's heart is Alfonso's mother's plea: if the officer's school had taught him more about the world, she mourns, he might have seen Alfonso "as a teenager... as an American, as a human."- Publishers Weekly**

**Encompassing Activity:**

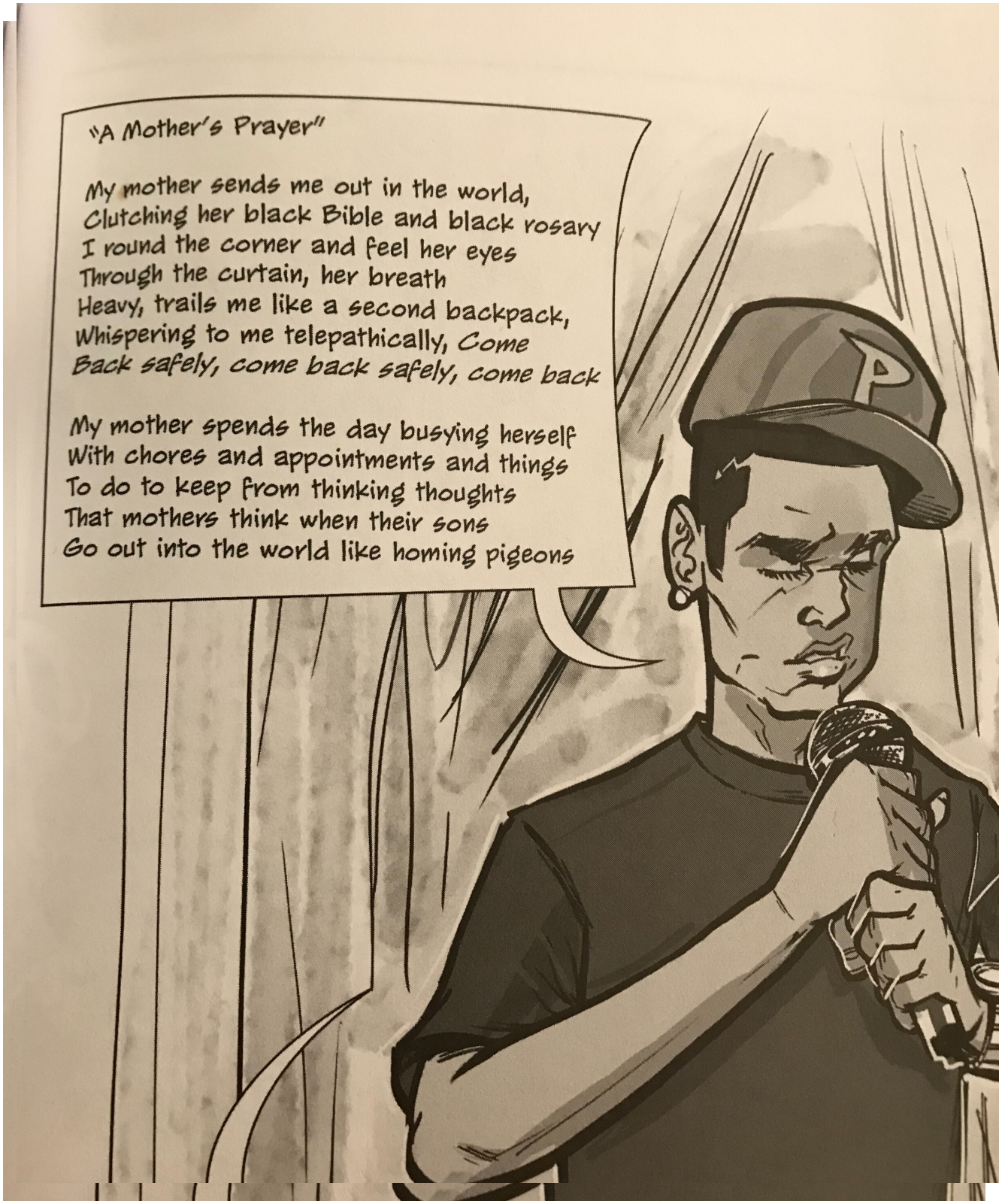
- **To be done at the end of the reading:** Just as Punk E wrote a poem about the Black Lives Matter movement after Alfonso's death, I would have students write their own poems based on prevalent social justice issues that are happening right now and are important to them.

**Intended Grade for this Lesson: 7th-10th grade**




**Ending panel of the text, leaving readers to do their part in the struggle for peace and justice**

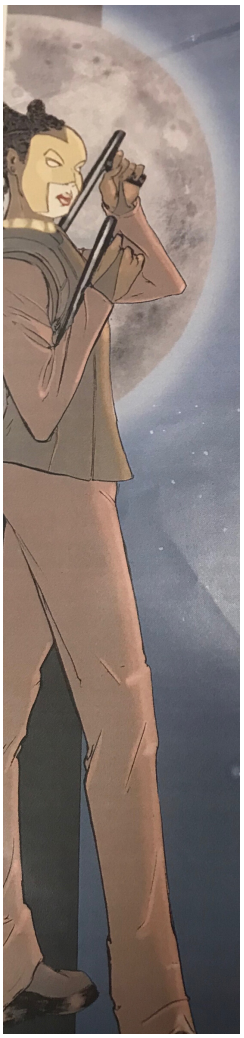
Punk E's poem a relating to the Black Lives Matter Movement in the aftermath of Alfonso's death



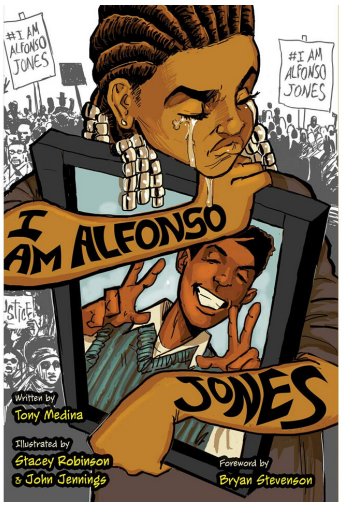

I would have students participate in a similar activity after reading the novel, exemplifying their understanding of the many elements, emotions, and ways to participate in a social justice movement.

# PLAN 2: MAKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN TEXTS

A continuation of *I am Alfonso Jones* while comparing it with a partner text, *Ajala: A Series of Adventures*.



**Lesson Goal:** A continuation of the above lesson where s**tudents will gain further knowledge on social justice movements,** but will also be able to **make connections between similar texts.**




**Text(s) Being Used:** *I am Alfonso Jones* by Tony Medina, and *Ajala: A Series of Adventures* by Robert Garrett

## "MRS. OLETHA WAS A CORNERSTONE OF THE MOVEMENT. SHE PROTECTED FREEDOM RIDERS"

**Procedure:**

- Students will **continue with their poetry projects**, but will also focus on reading Ajala: A Series of Adventures. In this series, a young 12 year old girl, Ajala, realizes that she is a junior agent for an organization called the C.S.C. As she begins her training, she learns about other members of the past who were highly influential, including "Mrs. Oletha was a cornerstone of the movement. She protected the Freedom Riders…" (Ajala: A Series of Adventures Volume 2, pg 14). From here, r**eaders begin to see that Ajala's organization is centered around social justice movements**, and she is going to play a key role in the fight, whatever it may be. **This story poses a similar situation to I am Alfonso Jones.** Because of this, I will have students fill out a **Double Entry Log** sheet in which they can write out their connections, as well as **continue delving into the topic of social justice movements, from the viewpoint of graphic novels.**

An example of one of the pages that draws a connection between social justice movements in the text.



# PLAN 2: CONTINUED-

**Encompassing Activity:**

- **To be done at the end of reading:**
  - Alfonso and his peers are 15 years old, and Ajala's character is 13 years old, yet still play a vital role in the furthering of social justice movements. Based on the poems that the students wrote, I will have them **research their movement of choice along with influential young people who have had a lot to do with these particular movements**. For example, one that comes to mind automatically based on the conversations about climate change going on worldwide, is Greta Thunberg. Despite her young age, she is making a huge difference and spreading vast awareness of the realities of climate change to people globally. From here, once students prepare their presentations and **see that they, too, can spark change despite their age**, I will have them **pick a social issue that is going on in their community or surrounding areas and help them get involved**. This is because, **although the students may be young, they can still be involved in a huge way and promote change**, as exemplified through the main and minor characters in these two texts.




**Intended Grade for this Lesson: 7th-10th grade**

# PLAN 3: MEMOIRS IN THE FORM OF COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS

Using David Small's *Stitches*

**Goal:** By analyzing *Stitches* by David Small, students will begin to **understand how memoirs are constructed** and how they begin from one, isolated memory which the author then embellishes to create an engaging story for their audience. In addition, **through Socratic Seminar activities where we would discuss main themes** in the book, students will begin to see that comics, although they are full of rich, colorful images, can still hold deep thoughts and messages within their pages. **They will see that a memoir does not have to be 300 pages and strictly 12 point font in order to send a deep message to the reader**. **Messages can be depicted through text and images working together**.

**Text Being Used**: *Stitches* by David Small




**Procedure:**

- As students go through the text, I will have them **consider how themes in one book can mean something entirely different in another**. We would do this through a **Socratic Seminar** activity. This is seen several times through Stitches when it comes to 3 main themes:

**3 Main Themes:**

- **FAMILY**
- **LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION**
- **HOME**

# PLAN 2: CONTINUED-

A focus on the Socratic Seminar Activity for this plan

**THEME 1:**

- **Family:** in most books, family is **the notion that holds people together,** those who you can rely on no matter what. However, **in David's case, family is the notion that tears him apart**. Through this discussion, I will have students **discuss the differences between the "Family" theme in other books, vs. what it means in this book** while making connections to other, specific pieces of literature that they have read.

**POSSIBLE SOCRATIC SEMINAR QUESTIONS FOR THIS THEME:**

- Would David's mom have been a more caring parent, if her own mother had not been so hostile?
- Do you think that David's mother has a reason for treating her own children so awfully, because of her own upbringing? OR Do you feel that she is responsible for how she treats her children, because it is her own choice to carry on the legacy of her mother or not?



**"SOME UNDERSTANDING IS GAINED AS FAMILY SECRETS ARE UNEARTHED, BUT FOR THE MOST PART DAVID FENDS FOR HIMSELF IN A FAMILY THAT IS UNCOMMUNICATIVE TO A TRULY GHASTLY DEGREE. SMALL TELLS HIS STORY WITH HAUNTING SUBTLETY AND POWER" -PUBLISHERS WEEKLY**

**THEME 2:**

- **Language and Communication:** In other works, **language is an entity that allows people to come together, share ideas, and inspire one another**. However, **in Stitches, language is an entity that sets people apart from one another,** bridging a divide rather than drawing them together.

**POSSIBLE SOCRATIC SEMINAR QUESTIONS FOR THIS THEME:**

- What are the different ways David's family expresses "language," although it is not always through speech?
- How does losing the ability to speak change David's life and pathway that he follows?

# PLAN 3: CONTINUED

Final theme for the Socratic Seminar and Wrapping Things Up

**THEME 3:**

- **Home:** In other works, **home is often something that is soothing or comforting to the main character**, a place where they can be themselves. **This is not the case in Stitches, why?**

**POSSIBLE SOCRATIC SEMINAR QUESTIONS FOR THIS THEME:**

- Is art the place where David finally feels "at home" with himself?
- Can David really be himself as he grows up in his home with his family?
- Does David consider the hospital to be his "home" since this is where his actions represent that he is most comfortable?




A close up of how David describes his family's use of language

**These themes focus on David's family, the way that they communicate, and his own sense of where he belongs throughout his childhood**

**Encompassing Activity:**

- At the end of the book, I will **have students pick their own isolated memory that could be used in a memoir. Just as David Small chose to begin his story with the small memory of what "languages" his parents spoke in**, I would encourage my students to do the same. Small was able to build a full narrative out of this small memory, so although it may be challenging, I would have students do this as well. I would then have them **draft their own 15-20 page comic "memoir" following the same idea, building a large piece out of a small, isolated memory by embellishing it and crafting an engaging story for a reader.**

**Intended Grade for this Lesson: 11th-12th grade**

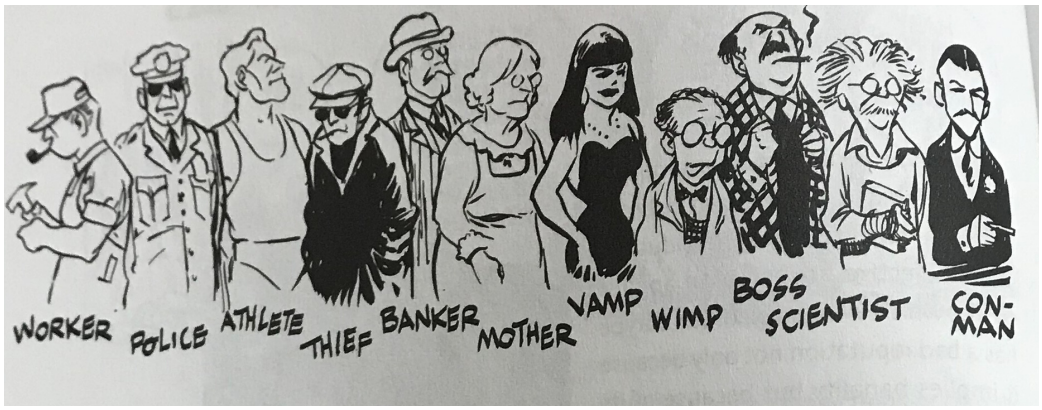
# PLAN 4: REPRESENTATIONS OF CULTURAL EXPERIENCE IN COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS

**Goal:** At the end of the lesson, **students will be able to see how depictions of African American women in comics have changed over time**, through the analysis of Jackie Ormes character, Torchy Brown, the film Ethnic Notions, and various comic strips and advertisements from the past, including Gasoline Alley. **Students will also have a developed understanding of stereotyping in comics.**

**Texts Being Used:** *Jackie Ormes: The First African American Woman Cartoonis*t, *Ethnic Notions* film, *Gasoline Alley*, Will Eisner's *Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative*

**Procedure:**

- **Prior to Reading**- I would begin the unit by showing the film, Ethnic Notions. **The documentary would introduce students to the different representations of African Americans in comics that existed in the past**. During the film, I would have students keep track of the different representations that they had seen and written down, and after the film, I would go more in depth into the different stereotypes, including the **"Sambo," and "Mammy" characters** to name a few. **I would also provide students with chapter 4 of Eisner's text, in which he goes in depth into the topic of stereotypes in comics.** An image of this chapter is found on the following page.




COMMON STEREOTYPES IN COMICS FROM GRAPHIC STORYTELLING AND VISUAL NARRATIVE

- **After the Film**- After the film, we would look at a **timeline** that I created prior to the lesson that includes many examples from the past of comics and advertisements that included stereotypical examples of how African Americans were portrayed in the media. I would stop at 1930 and **focus in on the comic strip, Gasoline Alley, specifically the representation of Rachel,** an African American woman and the problematic way in which she is depicted. I would have students pay attention to how she is portrayed and treated in the comic. From there I would continue to show the timeline, stopping once I reached **Jackie Ormes and her work on Torchy Brown**. We would focus on Torchy Brown and how her character is portrayed in a significantly different light than Rachel was in Gasoline Alley from the 1930s.

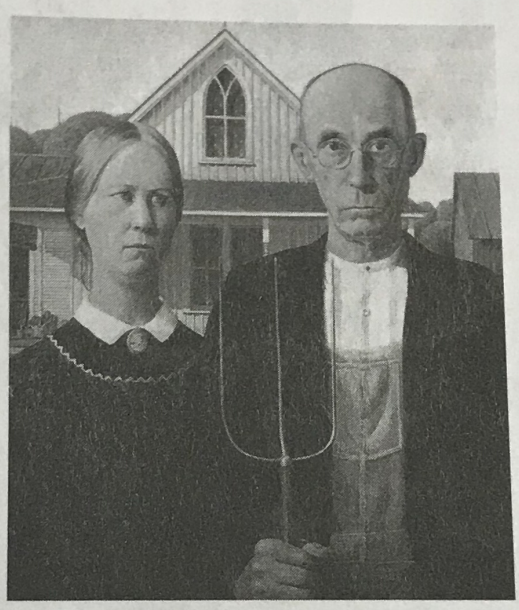
# Beginning of Chapter 4 from Graphic Novels and Visual Narrative

# CHAPTER 4

## IMAGES AS NARRATIVE TOOLS

### STEREOTYPICAL IMAGES

A *stereotype* is defined as an idea or character that is standardized in a conventional form, without individuality. As an adjective, *stereotypical* applies to that which is hackneyed. Stereotype has a bad reputation not only because it implies banality but because of its use as a weapon of propaganda or racism. Where it simplifies and categorizes an inaccurate generalization, it can be harmful, or at the least offensive. The actual word comes from the method used to mold duplicate plates in letterpress printing. These definitions notwithstanding, the stereotype is a fact of life in the comics medium. It is an accursed necessity—a tool of communication that is an inescapable ingredient in most cartoons. Given the narrative function of the medium, this should not be surprising.



Grant Wood, *American Gothic*, 1930, oil on beaver board, 30 11/16" x 25 11/16", unframed. Friends of American Art Collection, 1930-934, photograph by Bob Hashimoto, The Art Institute of Chicago

Comic book art deals with recognizable reproductions of human conduct. Its drawings are a mirror reflection, and depend on the reader's stored memory of experience to visualize an idea or process quickly. This makes necessary the simplification of images into repeatable symbols. Ergo, stereotypes.

Here, I would provide students with the Chapter, have them read and annotate it and discuss in groups how it relates to Jackie Ormes' work and Rachel's character in Gasoline Alley

# PLAN 4: CONTINUED-

Encompassing Activity and Looking at Comparisons

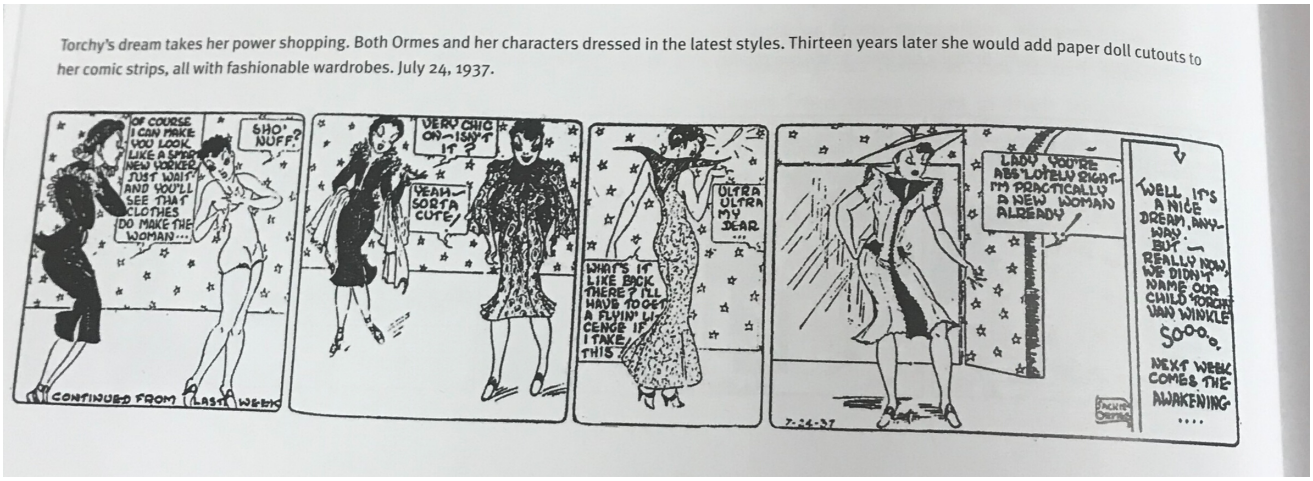


"While always stylish, Ormes' long-running heroine became increasingly independent and assertive over time" (National Public Radio, *Comics Crusader: Remembering Jackie Ormes*)

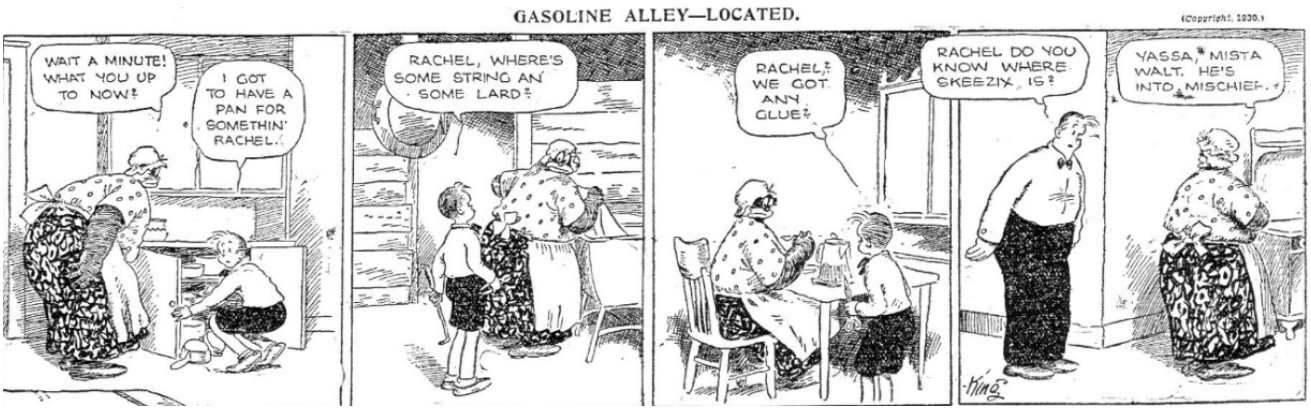
**Encompassing Activity:**

- Based on the two characters that we focused on, the film that was presented at the beginning of class, and the background knowledge that students gained from the timeline and Will Eisner's chapter, we would **discuss the cultural experience that was created/depicted in the media for African Americans** with the introduction of each of these characters into society.

**Intended Grade for this Lesson: 10th-12th grade**




Here, Ormes' character, Torchy is dressed in the latest fashion and shows off her sense of style. This differs vastly with the depiction of Rachel in Gasoline Alley pictured below.






## EDITORIAL NOTE- TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

Why does this matter in the classroom?

While some critics may define comics and graphic novels as “light childhood fare,” in reality, they can be utilized as a powerful teaching tool due to the complex message that many of them contain and the skills that they help students refine (Brozo, Moorman, Meyer 5). Graphic novels and comics combine both images and text, which contribute to student’s idea of visual and multimodal literacy. With visual literacy, students are able to find meaning within an image, a skill that can be utilized on a daily basis. As is the case for multimodal literacy as well, because multimodal literacy stretches far beyond the classroom. Multimodal literacy is a skill that students will have to use everyday, as this notion umbrellas over all types of media such as film, television, graphics and websites that they read on the Internet. In this case, comics help students hone in on their multimodal and  visual literacy skills, and their use will stretch beyond the classroom and into something that students utilize on a daily basis. Despite the stereotypical notion that comics are often associated with childhood ideas, when delving into the comic and graphic novel medium, it is realized that this notion is far from the truth. As seen through the tentative lesson plans that I came up with, it can be seen that comics and graphic novels allow students and educators to discuss difficult and important topics, through new and exciting ways thanks to the combination of both images and text. This does not take away from the important messages of these topics, but rather enhances them. As technology begins to expand to greater lengths each day, adjusting our classrooms to fit the visual and multimodal needs of students is something that can be fostered through the utilization of comics in the classroom.




# BIBLIOGRAPHY

## Texts Used


- Bakis , Maureen. The Graphic Novel Classroom Powerful Teaching and Learning with Images . Corwin, 2012.
- Bitz, Michael, et al. When Commas Meet Kryptonite, Classroom Lessons from The Comic Book Project. Teachers College Press, 2010.
- Brozo, Wiliam G, et al. Wham! Teaching Graphic Novels Across the Curriculum . Teachers College Press, 2014.
- Eisner, Will. Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative: Principles and Practices from the Legendary Cartoonist. W.W. Norton & Co, 2008.
- "Fiction Book Review: Stitches: A Memoir by David Small, Author . Norton $23.95 (329p) ISBN 978-0-393-06857-3." PublishersWeekly.com, https://www.publishersweekly.com/978-0-393-06857-3.
- Garrett, Robert, and N. Steven Harris. Ajala: A Series of Adventures. 1 and 2, XMoor Studios
- Goldstein, Nancy. Jackie Ormes: the First African American Woman Cartoonist. University of Michigan Press, 2019.
- "Lee and Low Books ." Lee and Low Books , Lee and Low Books , https://www.leeandlow.com/books/i-am-alfonso-jones/reviews/3139.
- McCloud, Scott, and Mark Martin. Understanding Comics: the Invisible Art. William Morrow, HarperCollinsPublishers, 2018.
- Medina , Tony. I Am Alfonso Jones . Tu Books , 2017.




# BIBLIOGRAPHY CONT.

## Images Used


- "AllPosters." AllPosters, https://www.allposters.com/-sp/Marvel-Comics-Retro-The-Incredible-Hulk-Comic-Book-Cover-No-181-with-Wolverine-aged-Posters_i13757659_.htm.
- Brozo, Wiliam G, et al. Wham! Teaching Graphic Novels Across the Curriculum . Teachers College Press, 2014.
- "While Always Stylish, Ormes' Long-Running Heroine Became Increasingly Independent and Assertive over Time." Comics Crusader: Remembering Jackie Ormes, National Public Radio , 29 July 2008, https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=93029000.
- Garrett, Robert, and N. Steven Harris. Ajala: A Series of Adventures. 1 and 2, XMoor Studios ."Good Reads." Good Reads, https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6407014-stitches.
- Goldstein, Nancy. Jackie Ormes: the First African American Woman Cartoonist. University of Michigan Press, 2019.
- McCloud, Scott, and Mark Martin. Understanding Comics: the Invisible Art. William Morrow, HarperCollinsPublishers, 2018.
- Medina , Tony. I Am Alfonso Jones . Tu Books , 2017.
- "Newsarama." Newsarama, 30 Mar. 2019, https://www.newsarama.com/44542-batman-first-inductee-into-comic-con-museum-s-character-hall-of-fame.html.



What will you do to enhance your curriculum?

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/ or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.