

Graphic Novels

Make Your Own Adventure



Why Read Graphic Novels?

May 1, 2015

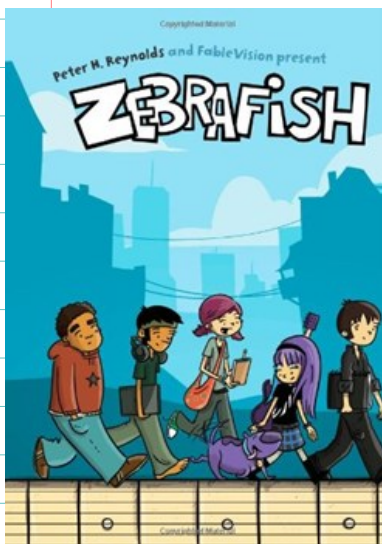
Looking for fun? Looking for something off the beaten path? Graphic novels might be just your thing. Characterized by a solid story, and backed up by striking visuals, graphic novels go beyond the basic picture book to prove a picture really can paint a thousand words.

Read on to find some graphic novel inspiration for your Must Read list!



Zebrafish, Sharon Emerson

Emerson, S., & Kurilla, R. (2010). *Zebrafish*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.



Starting a band is a great way to meet people, but none of the members of Zebrafish actually know how to play an instrument. That's only a minor problem, though. One member, Tanya, keeps missing meetings, and when confronted, she explains that she has leukemia and spends a lot of time at the hospital. Vita, the band's leader, gets the idea to do a fundraiser show to raise money for cancer research. This graphic novel ends with a positive, upbeat message encouraging young people to get out and make a difference, reminding them that no action is too small.

Age Level: 10 - 14 years

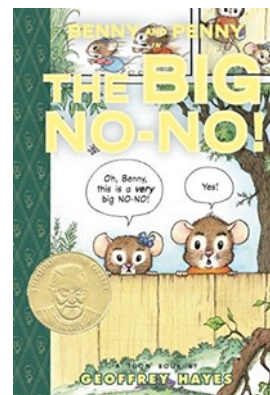
Cover art retrieved from Amazon.com on April 24, 2015.

Benny and Penny in the Big No-No!, Geoffrey Hayes

Hayes, G. (2009). *Benny and Penny in The big no-no!: A Toon book*. New York: Toon Books.

Benny and Penny mouse know taking stuff is a no-no, and they know sneaking into the neighbor's yard is a no-no, but they bend the rules when they think their new neighbor has stolen Benny's pail. Through a series of misunderstandings—and a mud fight—the first meeting with their hedgehog neighbor, Melina, doesn't go well, but apologies go a long way toward making up and making friends. This is a sweet beginning reader with a storyline and illustrations that will captivate the young ones while a simple vocabulary helps gain reading confidence.

Age Level: 4 - 8 years

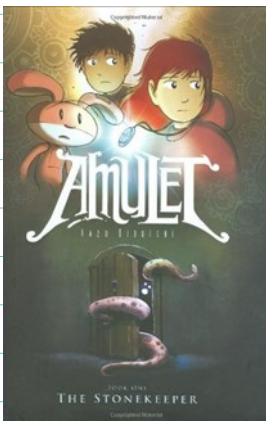


Cover art retrieved from Amazon.com on April 24, 2015.

The Stonekeeper: Amulet, Book 1, Kazu Kibuishi

Kibuishi, K. (2008). *The Stonekeeper #1*. New York: Graphix.

After her father's death, finances are tight, so Emily and her family move into their great-grandfather's empty, run-down home. While cleaning the house, Emily discovers a hidden amulet. The amulet warns her to keep her family safe, but a strange, tentacled creature kidnaps their mother, and the children find themselves following her captor through a portal into a strange world. Once there, the adventure truly begins as Emily and her brother Navin learn to use their innate abilities with the amulet to guide them. Kibuishi's creative artwork is phenomenal and could carry this story without any text at all.



Age Level: 9-12 years

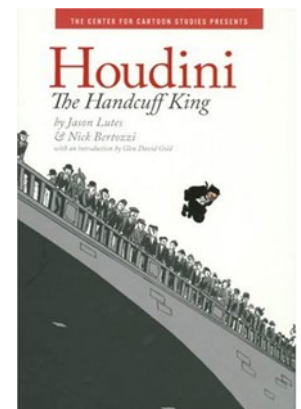
Cover art retrieved from Amazon.com on April 19, 2015.

Houdini: The Handcuff King, Jason Lutes

Lutes, J., & Bertozzi, N. (2007). *Houdini: The handcuff king*. New York: Hyperion.

This graphic novel tells the story of one day in Harry Houdini's life—May 1, 1908. The story follows Houdini's preparations for his jump off the Harvard Bridge into the near-freezing Charles River with 20 pounds of prison chain and handcuffs binding him. The novel offers an up close look at Houdini's dotting relationship with his wife, Bess, the anti-Semitism he faced, the loyalty he demanded from employees, and his constant battle to be known as the best in his field. Fascinating and suspenseful, readers will likely find themselves holding their breath as they wait for Houdini to resurface.

Age Level: 10 and up



Cover art retrieved from Amazon.com on April 25, 2015.

Otto's Orange Day, Jay Lynch

Cammuso, F., & Lynch, J. (2008). *Otto's orange day: A toon book*. New York: Little Lit Library.

Otto loves the color orange so much he uses his one wish from the Genie of the Lamp to turn everything in the world orange. This seems like a great idea until Otto realizes that turning all foods orange doesn't make them taste better, and cars are crashing because the traffic lights are all the same color. With the help of his Aunt and some quick thinking, Otto finds a way to return the world's colors. This hilarious graphic novel will have young readers coming back for more.



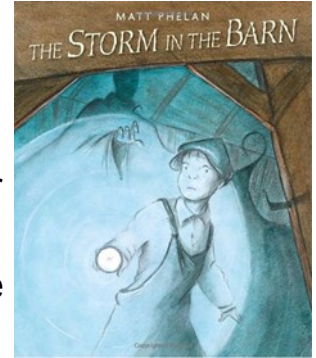
Age Level: 4 - 8 years

Cover art retrieved from Amazon.com on April 24, 2015.

The Storm in the Barn, Matt Phelan

Phelan, M. (2009). *The storm in the barn*. Somerville, Mass.: Candlewick Press.

Jack wants to be useful, but everything he touches goes wrong. In this story set in Kansas during the 1930s Dust Bowl, there is plenty wrong already. Jack's older sister has dust pneumonia, his younger sister has a knack for getting into trouble, and Jack sees strange things in the neighbor's barn. Jack, tired of being too small and useless, takes on the monster in the barn, and discovers it is none other than Rain, the Storm King. This sparsely-worded piece of historical fiction gives a thrilling twist to a time period readers are already familiar with.



Cover art retrieved from Amazon.com on April 25, 2015.

Age Level: 10 and up

The Adventures of Ook and Gluk, Kung-Fu Cavemen from the Future, Dav Pilkey

Beard, G., & Hutchins, H. (2010). *The adventures of Ook and Gluk: Kung-fu cavemen from the future*. New York: Blue Sky Press.

Ook and Gluk are mischievous caveman kids who know how to get under Chief Goppennopper's skin. The two caveboys have awesome adventures that lead to befriending a T-Rex named Mog-Mog, going through a time portal, learning martial arts, and ultimately saving their prehistoric



Cover art retrieved from Amazon.com on April 19, 2015.

world from Chief Goppennopper's evil descendant. The book is full of hilarious hijinks, as well as entertaining Flip-O-Ramas. Since the book is allegedly written by fourth-graders George Beard and Harold Hutchins, there is a lot of license given to spelling and grammar. This will potentially drive parents nuts, but the target audience will just keep laughing. **Age Level: 7-10 years**

Korgi: Book 1, Christian Slade

Slade, C., & Slade, A. (2007). *Korgi*. Atlanta, GA: Top Shelf Productions.

This beautifully drawn, wordless graphic novel shares the adventures of young Ivy, a Mollie, and her Korgi cub, Sprout. They are a fun, curious duo, and this curiosity lands them in the dangerous lair of Gallump the troll. In their attempts to escape the hungry troll, his minions, and the cooking pot, Ivy and Sprout learn they have some amazing and rather useful powers. Children and adults alike will love Slade's lush artwork, and even without text, the storyline is easy to follow. Parents, sit back, relax, and let your young ones "read" this story to you.



Cover art retrieved from Amazon.com on April 19, 2015.

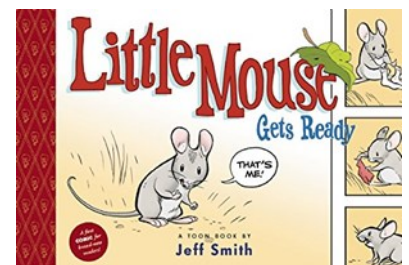
All Ages.

Little Mouse Gets Ready, Jeff Smith

Smith, J. (2009). *Little Mouse gets ready: A Toon book*. New York: Toon Books.

In this graphic novel for very young readers, Little Mouse is excited to go to the barn with his brothers and sisters, but he has to get ready first. Little Mouse carefully checks to make sure the tag is at the back of his underpants, and even gets his pants snapped on his own. Velcro and buttons aren't easy, but he makes it past these obstacles as well. You can imagine his surprise when mother reminds him mice don't wear clothes! Adorable and humorous, young readers will appreciate this book's sense of independence and instruction on completing daily tasks.

Age Level: 4 - 8 years



Cover art retrieved from Amazon.com on April 24, 2015.



Graphic Novels

Read On!

What are Graphic Novels?

"Graphic Novel" is a format, not a genre. Graphic novels can be fiction, non-fiction, history, fantasy, or anything in-between.

Graphic novels are similar to comic books because they use sequential art to tell a story. Unlike comic books, graphic novels are generally stand-alone stories with more complex plots. Collections of short stories that have been previously published as individual comic books are also considered graphic novels.

Citation:

GET GRAPHIC: The World In Words and Pictures. (n.d.). Retrieved May 2, 2015, from <http://www.getgraphic.org/whatisagraphicnovel.php>

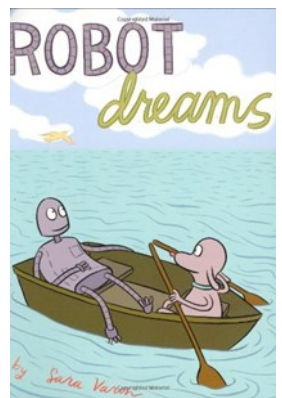


Robot Dreams, Sara Varon

Varon, S. (2007). *Robot dreams*. New York: First Second.

Dog builds a robot companion, and they do everything together, even going to the beach. After playing in the water, Robot rusts solid, and Dog must leave without him. Robot is left in the sand, only able to dream.

He is scavenged for parts, becomes part of a bird's nest, and later sold for scrap. Robot is finally repurposed as part of a radio, and in a poignant moment, he sees Dog walking with his new robot, and Robot plays music as his friend walks away. If a picture paints a thousand words, this graphic novels unwritten text fills volumes.



Cover art retrieved from Amazon.com on April 24, 2015.

Age Level: 8-12 years

