GRAPHIC NOVELS IN NONFICTION   4th to 8th Grade

Common Core Reading Standard for Literature	CC.6.R.L.9 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics. CC.5.RL.3.7 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).
CCSS Speaking and Listening Standard	CC.6.SL.2 Comprehension and Collaboration: Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g. visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.
NGSSS Benchmark	LA.6.2.1.1 The student will identify the characteristics of various genres as forms with distinct characteristics and purposes.
AASL 21st Century	1.1.6 Read, view, and listen for information presented in any format (e.g., textual, visual, media, digital) in order to make inferences and gather meaning.
Objective	Students will • Explore a variety of graphic novels • Contrast /Compare a graphic novel and a nonfiction text on the same topic utilizing various mediums such as ebooks and digital book talks. • Discuss the components of a graphic novel: layout, style, etc. • Apply what they have learned about graphic novels to create one of their own utilizing the online tool Comic Creator.
Resources	• See attached listing of Graphic Novels. • www.digitalbooktalks.com • Computer Lab : The Comic Creator invites students to compose their own comic strips for a variety of contexts (prewriting, pre- and postreading activities, response to literature, and so on). http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/comic-creator-30021.html
Introduction	This lesson capitalizes on the popular appeal of graphic novels by using them to introduce the concept of genre. Students begin by working in small groups to analyze differences and similarities among a selection of graphic novels vs. nonfiction text on the same subject area. Based on their discussion, they determine what characteristics are represented and divide the texts accordingly. They then analyze the illustrator's use of conventions such as layout and page design. Finally, they create their own graphic novel using an online tool.
Vocabulary	Graphic Novel
Instruction	Begin by brainstorming with the students the names of different comics that they know and have them give descriptions. Pass out samples of many graphic novels and discuss the similarity to comic strips. Then pass out nonfiction texts on the

| | same topic. In small groups students should discuss (Think, Pair, Share) what is similar and different in the texts. (ie. Dialogue, character development, shape of frames, how action is shown, how to move from frame to frame).
Present the following information:
- Graphic novels manipulate space on a page to guide the reader and affect the interpretation of the story.
- Page layout and design can represent different organizational models, especially for storytelling. For example, a page with many frames can represent an ongoing scene with a lot of action. Larger frames with a great deal of detail may be an artist's attempt to set a forthcoming scene. Even page divisions add a certain element of story organization.
- Comic "storytellers" are careful not to include too many disjointed scenes on one page; as with a written narrative, such a mixture would make for a confusing and jumbled story.
- Layout is important when combining images and text, and with comics, students can transfer knowledge of visual organization to verbal and written organizational models.
- The concept of exploring one idea fully before moving onto the next could be likened to the page-break concept in graphic art.

Using a projector or SMART board, demonstrate the Comic Creator student interactive tool. Have the class create a comic together. Finally, using the tool on their own, students experiment with page design and layout to create a page in a graphic novel of their own. |
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| Assessment | As this lesson is the introduction to a longer unit on genre study, teacher observation and conferences and interviews should make up the bulk of the assessment to ensure that students are grasping and retaining the material as they move through the unit. Participation in guided discussion should also be considered.

If grades are to be given, teachers can assess the creation of the comic strip as well as the tips sheet if they chose to do the extension activity. |
| Followup | If you want to continue using comics in your classroom, visit the National Association of Comics Arts Educators http://www.teachingcomics.org/ for additional lesson plan, activities, and other resources. |