

The Reluctant Sidekick: A Skeptic's Guide to Graphic Novel Selection

TLA Annual Convention 2018 | Dallas, TX

April 5, 2018 | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Justification—Reading comics & graphic novels supports literacy efforts by...

- Engaging readers who learn visually.
- Wonderfully teaching visual literacy, which is an indispensable skill in our world.
- Reinforcing multiple literacies.
- Great for teaching tone, mood, dialogue.
- Exposing readers to new ways of storytelling, stimulates imagination.
- Providing another way for students to encounter art.
- Encouraging students to identify new and different genres.
- Increasing student vocabulary.
- Benefitting struggling readers, by limiting text and providing dyslexic students with multiple cues to help them comprehend.

Selection Criteria—What to consider:

- Collection policy
 - If not already included add guidelines in your collection policy for graphic novels
- Know your collection
 - Check your circ counts, what is popular at your library?
 - What are people constantly requesting?
 - If a school library, does the title support current curriculum?
 - Timeliness of title
- Factors
 - Clarity and appeal
 - Artistic and literary merit
 - Relevance
 - Age rating
 - Availability and durability of format
 - Good reviews
 - Accuracy
 - Author, illustrator, publisher reputations
- What should NOT affect your selection?
 - Race, religion, nationality, political views, gender or sexual identification of author, illustrator or characters
 - Foul or frank language
 - Subject matter you don't personally agree with

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Selection Aides—Where to Find Help:

- [Maverick Graphic Novel Reading List \[TLA\]](#) & [Little Maverick Graphic Novel Reading List \[TLA\]](#)
 - Using the Maverick lists to help advocate for and recommend graphic novels for kids
 - Which graphic novels or comic books do your students like? Ask basic readers' advisory questions to see what your students are interested in. The Maverick Reading List includes annotated descriptions of the material that can assist you from there if you are unsure of the genre or key words they may have in common.
 - Reader's advisory for graphic novels is the same as it would be for any chapter or nonfiction book. If you know the kids and what they like, the Mavericks lists can help you select something that they may end up loving as well. The books on these lists have been selected by committees of librarians who work directly with kids and teenagers.
 - Ex: Raina Telgemeier books like *Smile* are extremely popular among middle school readers right now. On this year's Maverick list, *Invisible Emmie* by Terri Libenson, *All's Faire in Middle School* by Victoria Jamieson, *Brave* by Svetlana Chmakova, and *Real Friends* by Shannon Hale are a few that are similar in tone and deal with issues about growing up and making friends at school.
 - Ex: If the student loves adventure stories that are also funny, the Dog Man series by Dave Pilkey is also very popular right now. Two titles from the series are on the Little Mavericks list this year. If readers have read all of the Dog Man books, some titles on the current list that are similar in tone are *The Great Art Caper* from the Pets on the Loose series by Victoria Jamieson and *Narwhal: The Unicorn of the Sea* from the Narwhal and Jelly books by Ben Clanton. Narwhal and Jelly is funny and features a hand drawn style that is similar to that of the Dog Man books, and the Pets on the Loose series is a shorter book that is funny and has a mystery to solve.
- Additional Award Lists
 - [Will Eisner Hall of Fame Comic Industry Awards](#) (Eisners)
 - [Children's and Young Adult Bloggers' Literary Awards](#) (CYBILS)
 - [Great Graphic Novels](#) [ALA]

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- Manga Guide
 - Selection Criteria—Strike a good balance:
 - Exciting vs. Too Violent
 - Safe vs. Too Babyish
 - Styles:
 - *Shojo*—cute and girly, often features adorable animal mascots
 - *Shonen*—boy-centric with lots of action
 - *Chibi*—child-size characters with tiny bodies and big heads
 - Order a mix of different style; bear in mind that fans do not always read along gender lines
 - Anime (Japanese animation):
 - Close association
 - Anime films and TV shows are often based on manga
 - Resources:
 - <http://www.teenlibrariantoolbox.com/2012/06/top-10-manga-you-should-have-in-your-library/>
 - <https://www.slj.com/2017/06/collection-development/12-marvelous-manga-for-middle-schoolers/>
 - <https://www.slj.com/2015/06/collection-development/manga-101-a-primer/>
 - <https://www.slj.com/2015/07/collection-development/15-new-manga-series-to-freshen-up-teen-collections/>
 - <https://www.slj.com/2014/10/teens-ya/manga-makes-a-comeback/>
 - <https://www.librarything.com/topic/6572>
 - <https://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2014/feb/03/manga-top-ten-teens>
 - <https://www.thoughtco.com/top-shojo-manga-must-reads-2283087>
 - <https://www.thoughtco.com/essential-manga-for-libraries-2283061>
 - https://www.barnesandnoble.com/b/books/manga/manga-for-all-ages/_/N-29Z8q8Zuci
- Diamond Bookshelf
 - Library Articles -- starting a graphic novel collection/acquiring donations
 - Digital Review Copies -- NetGalley/Edelweiss
 - GN Reviews -- industry professionals/LJ/SLJ/PW
 - Lesson Plans
 - Core Lists by Age Group
 - Diamond Bookshelf e-Newsletters -- News & Updates/Creator Interviews/Sneak Peaks/Reviews
 - 2nd Tuesday of each month
- Image Comics Newsletters
 - Delivers every 2 months
 - latest news and reviews
 - In-depth, new series spotlights (outlining larger themes, ideas for programming, suggested reading, and discussion questions)
 - Digital Review Copies

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- hoopla - a great place to find graphic novels and comics
 - Read first, determine suitability for your library and patrons
 - Available in over 1500 public libraries.
 - Curated digital content, including comic books
 - <https://vimeo.com/hoopladigital>
 - DC Rebirth available on hoopla
 - <https://www.hoopladigital.com>
 - hoopla app
- Readers!
 - Graphic novel selection is a wonderful opportunity to employ student voice
 - Find your comic fans, manga fans, traditional graphic novel fans (many times these are artistic students)
 - Help them form a club or clubs if they haven't already
 - Have them submit lists to you
 - They light up when they see "their books" on the shelf and can recommend them to others
 - Additionally, find folks at your local Barnes and Noble/bookstore/comic book store.
 - They will happily generate order lists for you. Just make sure it's what your kids are passionate about, not what that person is passionate about (i.e. if that person is into classic/retro comics, but your kids want the latest, etc.)

Resource Bank

<https://txlamaverick.wixsite.com/resources>