

Course Title:	Literature Through the Graphic Novel
Grade(s):	12

Course Description
This semester-long elective provides a study of the genre of the graphic novel to explore diverse, global perspectives. Students will analyze images and text with this unique format of storytelling in order to draw a critical understanding of the purpose of the text. Through reading, writing, and discussion, students will create their own understanding of thematic elements that are presented in a different style of narrative. Additionally, students will utilize interdisciplinary understanding of the texts that create social and historical commentary from authors and illustrators around the world. This course is designed to engage students with an alternative format of the novel while maintaining academic rigor that expands upon recognition of the blending of text and images in our ever expanding visual world. Senior English electives have the option to contract for Honors level. Contract Leveling allows students the opportunity to earn honors credit. Honors students will be required to explore a sustained independent project in addition to the work expectations of the class. More details will be presented at the beginning of each semester.
Approved Curricular Materials/Textbook(s)
Texts include, but are not limited to: • <i>The Arrival</i> by Shaun Tan • <i>Understanding Comics</i> by Scott McCloud • <i>Dragon Hoops</i> by Gene Luen Yang • <i>They Called Us Enemy</i> by George Takei • <i>The Complete Persepolis</i> by Marjane Satrapi • <i>American Born Chinese</i> by Gene Luen Yang • <i>Maus 1 and 2</i> by Art Spiegelman • <i>1984</i> by George Orwell • <i>New Orleans After the Deluge</i> by Josh Neufield • <i>March Trilogy</i> by John Lewis • <i>V for Vendetta</i> by Alan Moore • <i>Batman: Year 1</i> by Frank Miller • <i>Marvel's Civil War</i> by Mark Milla

- *Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet* by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- *Girl on Fire* by Alicia Keys

Unit Title	Unit Description (Include Unit Objectives)	Unit Pacing
Unit 1: Foundations of the Graphic Novel	In this unit, students explore the structure and conventions of comics and graphic novels by learning how sequential art combines images and text to tell a story. Students will study a range of comics and graphic narratives to understand how artists and writers develop characters and advance the narrative.	6 Weeks (September-October) (February-March)*
Unit 2: Why Disaster?	This unit focuses around one of the essential questions, “why disaster?” or “why do graphic novels tend to portray disaster and how do they do so without sensationalizing it?” The content includes graphic novels that center around difficult stories within lit circle groups. Groups read, analyze, and discuss major ideas and themes from the novel, as well as analyze the genres they are reading in. At the end of the unit, students evaluate the effectiveness of the graphic novel they selected and explain how well the author and illustrator used storytelling elements to portray a disaster.	4 Weeks (October-November) (March-April)*
Unit 3: What Makes a Hero?	This unit recognizes that many of the superheroes that we know today were created for or used to inspire a cultural movement or change. Using this idea, students research a current topic that they feel needs more attention. Students then present a "pitch deck" by creating a graphic novel cover, a 2-page sample, a hero sketch, and a 2-page analysis that relates to their selected topic. During this project, students read a superhero-focused graphic novel in book clubs and consider the essential question, “What makes a hero?”	4 Weeks (November-December) (April-May)*
Unit 4: Monsters	In this unit, students read the graphic novel adaptation of <i>Beowulf</i> and watch the film <i>Song of the Sea</i> to discuss Jeffrey Jerome Cohen’s <i>Monster Theory</i> , which relates to the idea that society creates its own monsters as a mirror for societal fears. Students will analyze how both texts mirror the expectations and concerns of their characters or readers. At the end of the unit, students create their own “Monster Manifesto” by writing a photo essay answering the essential question, “How do we confront, conquer, and embrace our monsters?”	4 Weeks (December-January) (May-June)*

* Second Semester