

Comic Books & Literacy

Studies show comic books build reading skills for reluctant/struggling readers, ESL programs, Title I students, Special Education, on-level readers, & more

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Studies & findings on comic books from leading authors & publications

“Comic books are a frequent choice of people who grow up to become fluent readers.”

—*Voices of Readers: How We Come to Love Books*, Carlson & Sherrill. National Council of Teachers of English, 1998

“I would go so far as to say if you have a child who is struggling with reading, connect him or her with comics.” - *The Read-Aloud Handbook*, 6th ed. Trelease. Penguin, 2006

“...the children talked at length about the way they shared stories with friends, swapped comics on a regular basis, and debated the merits of different characters.”

—“The motivating power of comic books: Insights from Archie comic readers.” *The Reading Teacher*, International Reading Association, 2003

“...there are multiple studies to suggest that students who read comics go on to read more, and to read more varied literature.”

—James Bucky Carter, Asst. Professor of English education, University of TX, El Paso. Keynote speaker, 2009 “Graphica in Education” Conference. Quoted in *Education Week*, Vol. 28 No. 21. 2009

“...educators are using the medium [comic books] for a variety of purposes, including as a bridge to full literacy for English-language learners and struggling readers; a tool for discussing sensitive social issues; a subject for lessons on visual literacy; a vehicle for ethics discussion in classes with gifted students; and a means for nurturing creativity in after-school programs.”

—*Education Week*, “Eye on Research: Scholars See Comics as No Laughing Matter,” 2/2009

“For both groups, those who read more comic books did more pleasure reading, liked to read more, and tended to read more books. These results show that comic book reading certainly does not inhibit other kinds of reading, and is consistent with the hypothesis that comic book reading facilitates heavier reading.”

—*Comic Book Reading, Reading Enjoyment, and Pleasure Reading Among Middle Class and Chapter (Title) I Middle School Students*, Joanne Ujiie and Stephen D. Krashen, 1996

“Teachers need to find a place in their classrooms for comic books and graphic novels because it is sound practice to do so.”

—“Comics, the Canon, and the Classroom,” James Bucky Carter. Chapter 3, *Teaching Visual Literacy*, Nancy Frey and Douglas Fisher, Editors, 2008

(continued)

Comics & ESL/ELL Readers

“The students, primarily English-language learners, were able to make use of this medium [comics] in order to learn new reading practices. The teacher used the comics to teach multiple aspects of various reading processes...[this] demonstrates their use as instructional texts, because comics provide interesting and motivating material as well as visual support for literacy learning.”

—“Using Comics as Read-Alouds: Insights on Reading Instruction from an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Classroom.” *The Reading Teacher*, International Reading Association, October 2003

“One of the ways that ESL/EFL teachers can increase the amount of time their students read is by using comics and graphic novels, which can be especially useful in second language classrooms. Not only can they provide language learners with contextualized comprehensible input, they can also engage the learner and lead him or her to explore more graphic novels or books, magazines, newspapers, and other reading materials.”

—Justine Derrick, *The Internet TESL Journal* (Teachers of English as a Second Language), Vol. XIV, No. 7, July 2008

Comic Books & Special Education – Autism, AD/HD, dyslexia, & more

“Reading material that is high interest and rich in pictorial clues, such as comic books, can help the [AD/HD or autistic] child associate meaning with what is being read.”

—*Visual Perception Problems in Children with AD/HD, Autism, and Other Learning Disabilities*, Lisa A. Kurtz, 2006

“Proponents of comics in the classroom say that they can lure struggling readers who may be intimidated by pages crammed with text...with their visual cues and panel-by-panel sequencing [comics] are uniquely situated to reinforce key elements of literacy...”

-Adrienne Edwards, *Dyslexia Tutor*, www.dyslexia.wordpress.com

Comics & a ground-breaking President

“...in addition to collecting Spider-Man comics, [Barack] Obama would sometimes draw the hero in class.” —*New York Post*, January 2009

Comics & famous writers

“As a child, I had the largest comic collection in my neighborhood, as did Stephen Krashen, Cynthia Rylant, John Updike, and Ray Bradbury.”

—*The Read-Aloud Handbook*, Jim Trelease, 2006

Comics & a Nobel Peace Prize

“My father was the headmaster of a Methodist primary school...one of the things I am very grateful to him for is that, contrary to conventional educational principles, he allowed me to read comics. I think that is how I developed my love for English and reading.” —Bishop Desmond Tutu, noted author and recipient of a Nobel Peace Prize

Spotlight, a division of ABDO, was launched in 2006 and published the first “education editions” of comic books in partnership with the world’s leading comic book publishers. This innovative publishing strategy was profiled by *Publishers Weekly* in an article called “ABDO Brings Comics to Schools” and in a *School Library Journal* interview with Jim Abdo, “Spotlight on Media Tie-ins.” Spotlight’s education editions are high-quality, stripped of advertisements, and printed with reinforced bindings to withstand the circulation they receive among students. The books feature updated stories for today’s readers and the world’s most popular comics heroes, including Spider-Man, The Hulk, the X-men, Wolverine, the Fantastic Four, and more. Also available are popular movie comic adaptations, like adventures with Indiana Jones, Transformers, or the entire Star Wars saga. Spotlight has both age-appropriate and YA comic book editions to choose from. **To order call toll-free 1-800-800-1312.**