PERCEPTION AND USAGE OF GRAPHIC NOVELS IN HIGH SCHOOLS

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Abstract

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This study sought to address the question of how teachers and librarians in a public high school perceived the instructional utility of graphic novels, and whether that perception was reflected proportionately in actual usage in classrooms. Online surveys using Likert and frequency scales were sent to teachers and librarians within a high school, seeking anonymous responses that would be analyzed quantitatively. A mistake in implementation of the survey by the researcher limited the conclusions that could be drawn from this study. No valid data about actual usage could be analyzed and a less focused sample of respondents to the survey on opinion resulted. Two strong correlations to whether a respondent categorized graphic novels as primary or supplementary material were found, however. Opinions about the degree to which graphic novels are effective tools for developing the literacy of proficient readers and perceptions of access to graphic novels were found to be strongly tied to how respondents categorized the role of graphic novels in curriculum. In order to tie these two factors, accessibility and efficacy with proficient readers, to how often graphic novels are used, more research would need to establish that categorization as primary or supplementary content is key to how often graphic novels are used. It is safe to conclude from this study, however, that perception of graphic novels as primary or supplementary texts was strongly tied to the practical concern of availability and the pedagogical opinion of whether students with well-developed reading skills benefit from inclusion of graphic novels into curriculum, within this group of respondents. Further research is needed to explore whether the perceptions

and correlations found in this study are representative of the educational professionals outside of this sample.

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Introduction

Visual literacy is becoming increasingly important to the current generation of students due to the wide dissemination of images in the media and society at large. The ability to critically analyze images is crucial, and graphic novels afford teachers an opportunity to improve visual literacy. Graphic novels can improve traditional literacy as well. Research supports the use of graphic novels in improving the reading comprehension of students. An inability to comprehend while reading a traditional text can often be traced to an inability to visualize the text. Graphic novels have been shown to benefit English Language Learners (ELL) and deaf students by supporting acquisition of conversational English, a needed precursor to acquiring fluency in academic English. Common Core State Standards create a less restrictive environment towards usage of graphic novels by placing more emphasis on visual literacy than previous standards and calling on formats of communication to be more diverse.

Despite the many potential benefits of incorporating graphic novels and a transition to federal standards that encourage graphic novel usage in school curriculum, recent studies have found that there may be a dissonance between the acknowledged educational value of graphic novels and their actual or intended use in school curriculum.

Curiosity as to what the opinion of graphic novels' efficacy as instructional tools was among teachers and librarians at my student teaching internship high school site, as well as whether that opinion translated to proportionate use in classrooms, motivated this study.

Literature Review

The first step in investigating what current opinion towards the efficacy of graphic novels as literacy-enhancing tools, and to what degree they are used in classrooms, is investigating the research that might influence opinions towards graphic novels among educational professionals. The foundation of the research on educational usage of graphic novels lies in examining the importance of visual literacy and how graphic novels can enhance visual literacy, as well as traditional literacy. The following five articles expound upon the importance of visual literacy to the current generation of students and its connection to traditional literacy. The fourth and fifth articles of the five illustrate the role sequential art, which is the medium of graphic novels, can play in bolstering visual literacy, and thus, traditional literacy.

Katie Monnin connects graphic novels, visual literacy, and media literacy in the article "Teaching Media Literacy with Graphic Novels" (2010) describing one practical application students will need to develop their visual literacy for: decoding increasingly prevalent visual media in the world around them. Monnin claims that today's students are "living during the greatest communication revolution of all time," second only to the invention of the printing press. In order to flourish in this new environment, students will need to be literate in texts that rely on multiple forms of communication, such as audio, visual, and writing. According to Monnin, graphic novels qualify as media literacy texts because they combine more than one mode of communication, visual and written. Critical thinking about graphic novels, such as decoding the message being sent by the author and examining the techniques used to send it, can scaffold critical thinking about the media that students encounter frequently in their worlds.

The next article focuses on the importance of multimodal literacy, a more general but very similar concept to media literacy, as written about by Monnin. In "'Where Lies Your Text?' (*Twelfth Night* Act I, Scene V): Engaging High School Students from Low Socioeconomic Backgrounds in Reading Multimodal Texts," authors John Callow and Katina Zammit, claim that multimodal literacy is becoming increasingly important in a world where visual images are tied into communication more and more each day, as Monnin claimed about media literacy. Callos and Zammit, go a step further in claiming that schools have a responsibility to develop multimodal literacy because students from low socioeconomic backgrounds may have no means other than school to access technology that will help them learn and practice reading texts that exercise multimodal literacy. This article reminds educators that not every student has regular access to smart phones, computers, and video game consoles that might enhance multimodal literacy outside the classroom. Schools must develop these skills in students from low socioeconomic backgrounds or the disadvantage these students face in the academic and working world will grow even deeper. Visual literacy instruction is a key to closing the digital divide caused by socioeconomic standing.

In the next article, authors Anne Nielsen Hibbing and Joan L. Rankin-Erickson detail teaching strategies they have used to help middle school reluctant readers develop their ability to visualize representative imagery while they read. In this 2003 article, "A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words: Using Visual Images to Improve Comprehension for Middle School Struggling Readers," these authors claim that visualizing imagery from text while reading aids students' comprehension, retention, and engagement with text. When students have trouble visualizing imagery while reading, they usually have trouble

comprehending the text as well. The authors asked their students to use a strategy in which they pretend there is a television in their mind broadcasting images from the text as they read. It was observed that using images or movies to introduce a subject can give students who struggle with visualization a "memory peg" (Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson, 2003) before engaging with text. A memory peg is an image a student can attach meanings to as they read the text. An example of a memory peg is an image to associate with a character. Having an image of a character can then enable visualization of events, situations, and themes from the text a more attainable task. Students who visualize more naturally can fluently create their own memory pegs as they read. Students who struggle with visualization can use images garnered from a movie or picture book as their memory pegs, easing their difficulty with visualization and improving their retention, comprehension, and engagement.

The next two articles stress the importance of visual literacy and make connections between sequential art and visual literacy. The first of these two articles is "Adolescents and 'Autographics': Reading and Writing Coming-of-Age Graphic Novels" (Hughes, King, Perkins, & Fuke, 2011), which reported two qualitative case studies in which students read graphic novels and then produced sequential art of their own. Sequential art refers to a sequence of images that portray a story, the medium that comprises graphic novels. The aim of this study was to use graphic novels and sequential art to engage students who perceived their reading and writing abilities to be sub-par. The authors claimed the ability to read graphic novels and produce their own graphic art sequences would aid the students' multimodal literacy- the interplay of multiple literacies, such as visual and textual. Each case study examined a classroom of six

students, one an all-male workplace preparation English class, and the other a co-ed academic program for students that had been expelled. The program for expelled students required the sequential art to be about how they ended up in the expulsion program or an important event in their lives. Although there were some students whose efforts were "only marginally successful" (Hughes et al., 2011), the authors reported that the class overall was more engaged in this material than in most other school curriculum. The students displayed increased multimodal literacy, and they demonstrated "an understanding of characterization, setting, and space, and develop(ed) artistic techniques" (Hughes et al., 2011). This study shows some weakness in how it declined to profile any of the students who did not engage well with the material, leaving the reader to wonder why some students were not successful. Also, the authors infer from improved attendance and frequent borrowing of graphic novels to read outside of class that engagement was high during this program, but no statistics are given to illustrate to what degree these phenomenon occurred or changed from previous behavior. Despite these small flaws, the accounts that are presented do offer a window into students' experiences and engagement in reading graphic novels and using the format themselves as a means of communication.

The fifth article to stress the importance of visual literacy and the second to make an explicit tie to sequential art is the 2009 article "You Gotta See It to Believe It: Teaching Visual Literacy in the English Classroom" by Robyn Seglem and Shelbie Witte. This article describes the authors' experiences using imagery to successfully scaffold the learning of literary techniques and concepts. Seglem and Witte claim that visual literacy is becoming increasingly important to young students because they are

increasingly bombarded with imagery via the Internet, TV, movies and other sources. The ability to think critically about these images and to communicate with images is imperative to today's learner. The authors also explained that improved visual literacy can develop more traditional, printed text literacies because visualizing while reading is a key to remembering, organizing, comprehending, and engaging with written text. The authors used many innovative tactics to activate and enhance their secondary students' visual literacy, while tying the activities directly into traditional text. Students designed a tattoo representing an event in their life and then designed a tattoo for a character from *Romeo and Juliet*. Students took notes using visual images as they researched and then wrote summaries from the images, learning how to paraphrase while avoiding unintentional plagiarism. Students also painted images to represent themes from novels, wrote parody advertisements for objects and events from novels, and produced poetry comics: sequential art representing the text of poems. This article presents case studies, giving us examples of students who responded well to these lessons, and so we, as readers, cannot generalize its finding or be sure that its positive results were not due to other factors. The article, however, is extremely useful in illustrating how imagery can engage students and scaffold their learning of complex themes. The examples in the article show some critical thinking about theme, metaphor, persuasive techniques, understanding of audience and voice, and other literary concepts.

These previous five articles demonstrate the importance of visual literacy and its connection to sequential art and graphic novels. The next four articles provide some insight into specific populations of students who may benefit the most from increased use

of graphic novels. Both deaf students and ELL students are helped by the visual cues of graphic novels, and by the stepping-stone they provide to academic language use.

The first of these four articles, "Using Graphic Novels in the High School Classroom: Engaging Deaf Students With a New Genre" (Smetana, Odelson, Burns, & Grisham, 2009) describes how graphic novels were used in a high school summer program for deaf students who failed an English class the previous year. Students were given access to many graphic novels and, though reticent to discuss them in class at first, students' enthusiasm and engagement with reading graphic novels could be seen in how many of them borrowed the books to read in their free time. Their engagement was also evident in how they discussed the books with peers outside the classroom. The students also excelled in creating scripts, characters, and plots for their own graphic novel proposals. The authors drew parallels with other English Language Learners, pointing out that the symbols and syntax of the English language are just as foreign to them because most deaf students have only communicated previously via American Sign Language, which has no written component. The authors claimed that graphic novels, through their dialogue and characters' body and facial expressions, help deaf students build their understanding of conversational English, a necessary precursor to academic English. Conversational English is particularly difficult for deaf students due to their physiological barriers. The article recommended that teachers consider the benefits of including graphic novels in curriculum for all students because they can make difficult subjects and literary techniques more accessible and they can help introduce less naturally engaging text. The participating high school added three graphic novels to their senior English curriculum due to the success of this project.

Although focused on deaf students, the Smetana et al. (2009) article mentioned how ELL students also benefit from learning conversational English from graphic novels. The next three articles focus on how incorporating graphic novels can benefit ELL students in other ways as well. The first of these is the 2012 article "The Value of Targeted Comic Book Readers" (Hammond & Danaher), a qualitative analysis of how adult ELL students learning English at elementary and upper-intermediate levels responded to the incorporation of sequential art with text emphasizing class vocabulary as supplemental reading. This multimodal text was produced by the authors themselves, with targeted class vocabulary repeated and italicized, accompanied by sequential art and audio readings of the text. Data was collected via questionnaires and interviews with focus groups and individuals. The researchers used a grounded theory approach to code the text, letting initial themes emerge from the data, and then each author conducted further coding independently for inter-rater reliability, comparing results after coding. Among other positive results, researchers found that students perceived their performance to be improved with this kind of text, making them more confident, relaxed, and motivated to learn. The authors noted that "(m)otivation seems to play an important part in the perceived availability of time, and from our study it appears that motivation is linked to interest and perceived usefulness." The authors of this article found that using sequential art increased their ELL students' interest and access to the material, resulting in more engagement with the material outside of the classroom.

Rachael M. Howard describes qualitative action research she conducted using three case studies to examine the self-image of English Language Learners as they read, and their reading preferences, in the 2012 article "ELL's Perceptions of Reading".

Howard used her observations as the students' teacher, interviews with the students and their parents, and the library records of what these three ELL students checked out as her data. From the books the subjects had checked out recently from the library, the students identified which ones they had enjoyed and which ones they had not. They also described their motivations for reading certain books. Howard coded and categorized the information from the interviews and library records to triangulate her findings. She came to the conclusion that the students' enjoyment of content is what motivated them to read at increased rates, and that graphic novels and mysteries were the genres most cited as enjoyable to students. Therefore, Howard concluded, graphic novels and mysteries should be integrated into curriculum more often in an effort to increase students' reading motivation, especially for ELL and struggling readers.

Christian W. Chun reports a case study that examined a teacher's use of a graphic novel in curriculum with an urban secondary ESL class in the article, "Critical Literacies and Graphic Novels for English-Language Learners: Teaching *Maus*" (2009). Chun found that the value of using graphic novels extended far beyond scaffolding of textual meanings. Chun argues that many graphic novels are not just a bridge to serious critical reading, but that students can exercise critical literacies with graphic novels. Chun's case study showed how graphic novels such as *Maus*, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1992 and tells of a Holocaust survivors' experiences using visual metaphors that portray Jews as mice and Nazis as cats, can engage ELL students in critical reading by offering a format that is more accessible but no less demanding of students' critical thinking. The author also points out that there are many graphic novels like *Maus* and *Persepolis* that feature characters who must navigate different and, at times, clashing cultures, surviving

by being able to function within more than one culture and language, a situation that ELL students might relate to well.

Bridging the gap between graphic novels' usefulness to specific populations of students and their usefulness to general student populations, the 2004 article "Using Graphic Novels, Anime, and the Internet in an Urban High School" (Frey & Fisher) describes usage of graphic novels with a class that was mostly composed of ELL students but also contained native English speakers. The authors of this article describe their experience using graphic novels as a component of curriculum for a ninth grade class of students who struggled with literacy in a low-income district of San Diego. Students read the first part of short sequential art excerpts and wrote endings to the stories. Students were then tasked with creating non-autobiographical sequential art of their own, reading graphic novels, and discussing the techniques used by their authors as a class. Students were given disposable cameras to create images for their art, or they could use found images or create images themselves. The authors found that the class seemed very engaged by this project, creating some of the longest, sustained writing most of these students had produced in this class, and using more sophisticated word choice and writing techniques than previously utilized. According to the authors, this project "provided a visual vocabulary of sorts for scaffolding writing techniques, particularly dialogue, tone, and mood" (Frey & Fisher, 2004). Of particular interest is the authors' observation that discussing how visual storytelling techniques, such as mood and tone, provided a bridge to understanding how these techniques could be utilized with traditional texts.

Continuing to examine how graphic novels' contributions are not only significant for specialized populations, the next article, "'Aren't These Boy Books?': High School

Students' Readings of Gender in Graphic Novels" (Moeller, 2011) investigates high school students' attitudes towards the inclusion of graphic novels in educational curriculum. Moeller's qualitative study interviewed fifteen students, in both group and individual interviews, about their receptivity towards graphic novels. The study found that male students were more receptive than female students, but that female students were receptive enough to graphic novels that their inclusion in curriculum would not alienate the female students. Moeller tended to overgeneralize the study's findings, but if examined within the appropriate scope of a qualitative study, the students' opinions are intriguing. Possible limitations of graphic novels' potential value as curricular material included perceptions of them not being valid literature and of graphic novels belonging to nerd subculture, both reasons gleaned from participants' feedback.

The article "Motivating Middle School Readers: The Graphic Novel Link," also examines receptivity to graphic novels, as well as efficacy, with a general student population. Author Buffy Edwards details a study investigating the link between reading motivation and graphic novels with a group of 148 7th graders. The study was an eight-week treatment of four groups of students, one of which had increased access to graphic novels and free voluntary reading time, two of which had either increased access to graphic novels or increased free voluntary reading time, and a control group. Pre- and post-assessments were given for vocabulary and comprehension, and a questionnaire regarding motivation was given. While Edwards admits that the results were not statistically significant, she reports that the statistical means for the group with increased graphic novel access and free voluntary reading time were consistently higher than for other groups. Edwards claims that through the data, student responses to questionnaires,

and informal teacher observations, it can be seen that graphic novels have the potential to increase intrinsic motivation, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. The author also notes that intrinsic motivation is essential because "Peer support for any activity, whether it is soccer or reading, is powerful."

Considering the many positive effects on reading shown in the previous twelve articles, one would expect graphic novels to be a popular and frequently used component of school curriculum. The next two articles, however, bring to the forefront a dissonance between the widely acknowledged benefits of graphic novels and their actual or intended use in schools.

J. Spencer Clark uncovers possible sources of dissonance between perception of graphic novels and intended classroom usage in the article "'Your Credibility Could Be Shot': Preservice Teachers' Thinking about Nonfiction Graphic Novels, Curriculum Decision Making, and Professional Acceptance" (2013). The study was a case study of 24 preservice teachers in a Social Studies methods class that the researcher was the instructing professor of. The Social Studies preservice teachers read two graphic novels that dealt with historical subject matter. Their attitudes towards graphic novels and how they envisioned using them in classrooms were then gauged through analysis of online discussion board posts, notes made on post-its while reading, written analysis by the subjects of the graphic novels, and individual interviews with self-selected participants. The preservice teachers reported very positive impressions of the graphic novels and their educational potential with future students. Admirable qualities of historical graphic novels that were pointed to by participants were the medium's ability to present multiple perspectives of historical events, engage readers, contextualize historical figures' actions,

and inspire curiosity about subject material. Despite the many benefits the preservice teachers recognized, many felt they would not be able to use them in curriculum because of concern over professional acceptance of the material by parents and their colleagues. The participants expressed concern that professional acceptance as teachers may be compromised by potential perceptions that graphic novels are linked to a non-academic comic book lineage, that graphic novels are not rigorous enough coursework, and that they may not be linked strongly enough to content standards. Although established teachers and librarians might not be as concerned as preservice teachers about professional acceptance, this study does suggest that, despite the educational potential of graphic novels, there may be some bias, or perception of bias, in the educational community regarding their use in curriculum.

"Graphic Novels: What Elementary Teachers Think About Their Instructional Value" (Lapp, Wolsey, Fisher, & Frey, 2011), surveyed sixty teachers about their perceptions of graphic novels and frequency of use in their classrooms. The surveys consisted of yes/no questions, Likert scales, and frequency scales. Each question that gauged attitudes towards graphic novels was paired with another question that gauged actual use of graphic novels. They found a dissonance between generally positive attitudes towards the potential educational value of graphic novels and low usage of them in classrooms by the same respondents. Respondents reported using graphic novels more often as supplemental reading or as a motivational tool than in their class curriculum. The authors posited a couple of possible reasons for this dissonance: accessibility and the demands of federal testing standards. Speaking about the latter, the authors wrote: "This discrepancy definitely invites future investigation to determine if, with the advent of the

new Common Core State Standards Initiative (2010), graphica will find its way into the context and culture of the classroom" (Lapp et al., 2011). In the midst of transition to a new federal educational system of assessment, the authors pondered whether the ability of teachers to include graphic novels in their curriculum might increase in the near future.

In the 2012 article "Sequentially smART- Using Graphic Novels Across the K-12 Curriculum," author Karen Gavigan offered a number of reasons to include graphic novels in school curriculum and highlighted how the Common Core State Standards encourages the use of graphic novels in curriculum. Among the reasons offered, Gavigan argued that graphic novels engage male students, help ELL students learn conversational English, teach multiple literacies, help decode text and vocabulary, motivate student reading, and help special needs students engage in literature. Gavigan outlined how the Common Core State Standards encourage visual literacy and the reading of, and communicating with, varied formats, explicitly mentioning graphic novels as an option. This article is informational in nature, with no new research to share, but it has value in summarizing other research-based support for graphic novels and creating awareness of how graphic novels relate to the new standards by which teachers will have to abide.

The studies of Clark (2013) and Lapp et al. (2011) began the investigation as to whether research findings regarding graphic novels, characterized by the first twelve studies detailed above, have translated into improved perceptions among educational professionals and actual or intended usage in classrooms. Research similar to these studies is needed to further investigate what high school educational professionals' current perception of graphic novels is and whether that perception is reflected in proportionate usage in their classrooms. Research is also needed to answer the question

posited by Lapp et al. (2011) as to whether the transition to Common Core State Standards, which encourage the development of visual literacy (Gavigan, 2012), has resulted in higher usage of graphic novels in classrooms.

The intention of my research study was to address these questions by examining attitudes towards the value of graphic novels in the development of literacy among Language Arts teachers and librarians at one high school, as well as whether actual usage of graphic novels in curriculum corresponded proportionately with these attitudes, and if that usage had changed recently.

Research Question

The research question that this study is designed to answer is:

1. Where does the perception of the educational value of the utilization of graphic novels in classrooms currently stand, and is this perception reflected in proportionate use in classrooms?

Methodology

Method and rationale

Quantitative analysis of Likert scale and frequency scale data was employed to examine perception of graphic novels and frequency of usage. Central tendencies were determined by numerical means, standard deviations calculated to measure variability from central tendency, and Pearson's *r* correlations were calculated to determine associations among the data.

This method was employed because it supplied a way in which to compare perception of graphic novels with actual usage on a common numerical scale. Numerical data from the Likert scale measuring opinion could be directly compared with numerical

data from frequency scales, allowing central tendencies and variability to be compared directly between perception and usage. This would allow statistical correlations between opinion and usage to be numerically determined as well.

Sample

Surveys were intended to be sent only to Language Arts teachers and librarians at a single high school but, for reasons detailed later in the *Analysis/Validity* section, the sample population grew to include librarians from across the school district. The final sample population was Language Arts teachers in the high school research site and K-12 librarians from across the school district.

The initially intended sample was small and mostly known to the researcher, so in an effort to preserve anonymity and to thereby encourage full disclosure of opinions and actual use, respondents were not asked to disclose demographic data about themselves. Had demographic data been requested within such a small group of participants (14 teachers and 2 librarians), those responding may have felt their identities could be easily determined. District statistics of teachers and students at this high school research site and at the school district as a whole do provide some context for the sample, however. District statistics are provided along with statistics for the individual high school site because the sample included librarians from across the district, from elementary to high school. Statistics for the specific high school site are provided because only teachers from this high school are represented in this survey data, skewing the data towards the perceptions of those teachers.

Teachers at the high school site, on average, have 9.6 years of experience teaching and 73.1% of the high school's 78 teachers have a Masters Degree ("Washington State

Report Card," n.d.). The high school is located in a residential neighborhood of a major metropolitan city. At last count in May 2012, the school had 1,607 students. At that time, 22.5% of students qualified for free or reduced-price meals, 11.1% were in Special Education programs, 3.9% had a Section 504, and 2.2% were considered Transitional Bilingual. 67.3% of students were counted as White, while Hispanic and Asian students comprised about 11% of the population each.

Statistics of the district in which the high school site is located provide further needed context because librarians within the district and outside of the high school are a part of the respondent sample. 43.2% of students in the district qualified for free or reduced lunch, 14.4% were in Special Education, and 10% were classified as Transitional Bilingual. As of May 2012, 43.3% of students in the district were White, 19% were Asian or Pacific Islander, 18.5% were Black, and 12.3% were Hispanic. There were 49,266 students in the district at the time of this measurement.

Instrumentation

A link to an online survey (Appendices A & B) was distributed via email to Language Arts teachers and the head librarian at the high school research site. The accompanying email stressed that the survey was anonymous. Respondents clicked on the link provided, were directed to a survey hosted by surveymonkey.com, and responded to four sections of prompts. The first section contained a Likert scale with options ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" in response to 14 statements regarding the usefulness and educational value of graphic novels, access to graphic novels, and how Common Core State Standards might influence incorporation of graphic novels into curriculum. In the second and third sections, respondents indicated how often

they actually used graphic novels in classrooms by selecting responses on a frequency scale that ranged from "Never" to "Multiple times a week". There were nine prompts in each of the second and third sections. The second section measured their use during the current, soon to be concluded 2012-13 school year (surveys were sent out in late May 2013). The third section measured teachers' use of graphic novels in the previous school year (2011-12). The fourth section consisted of an optional short answer prompt that asked respondents to share any factors that they believed influence the degree to which they use graphic novels in their classroom.

The prompts were developed with the body of research on graphic novels and education in mind. Each prompt was designed to gauge to what degree respondents agreed with aspects of graphic novels' potential use in classrooms. The first three prompts of the first section gauged respondents' views on the value of visual literacy and graphic novels' link to it and traditional literacy. The next two questions were meant to gauge how respondents categorized graphic novels, as either primary or supplementary texts, in anticipation that categorization might have a relationship to quantity of actual or intended usage. The next seven prompts were written to gauge respondents' opinions on how well graphic novels can be used in instructing certain populations and to provide an opportunity to compare how those opinions related to each other. The last two questions were designed to gauge respondents' perceptions of whether they have enough access to graphic novels, and whether Common Core State Standards encouraged the use of these texts.

The survey sent to librarians differed in that it did not attempt to measure actual use. While librarians might use graphic novels with students directly at times, this study

was focused on actual use in classrooms. Surveys sent to librarians consisted only of the first and fourth section of the survey sent to teachers, with four additional opinion questions added to the first section. The first twelve questions were parallel to those in the first section of the survey sent to teachers, providing another perspective into the usefulness of and accessibility of graphic novels. The four additional questions further explored the issue of accessibility and student interest in graphic novels.

The survey was designed so that questions posed to teachers in the first, second, and third sections were parallel to each other so that respondents' opinions about graphic novels and their actual usage in classrooms for the past two years could be compared. For example, teachers were first asked to what degree they agreed or disagreed with a statement that claimed graphic novels are an effective tool to develop the literacy of ELL students. In the following sections, teachers were asked how often they used graphic novels to instruct ELL students in the current and previous school years. This format allowed for comparison between teachers' attitudes of graphic novels and their actual use in classrooms. This design was also intended to enable an analysis of how actual use among respondents had changed from the previous year to the current year.

Analysis/Validity

Due to errors on the part of the researcher in the implementation and distribution of the survey, the scope of the data from this study that can be reliably analyzed was diminished. As described previously, two different versions of the survey were designed, one for teachers and one for librarians. The teacher version was sent out to the Language Arts teachers at the high school. I, the researcher, intended to send the weblink to the librarian version to the head librarian the next day. I mistakenly sent the weblink to the

teacher version, however. This error was compounded by a lack of clarity in communicating with the head librarian who had agreed to send the weblink to the survey out to other librarians. I intended for her to only send the survey to other library staff at the high school. She instead sent it to the mailing list for all librarians in the district. I quickly sent out the correct weblink the librarian mailing list, but some librarians continued to respond to the original link sent. This co-mingled responses from librarians from throughout the district with those of teachers at the high school. With anonymous responses and no demographic data taken, it was impossible to tell if most respondents were teachers or librarians. A few could be identified by the time stamp of when they took the survey (a teacher if they took it before it was accidentally sent to librarians) and by comments written in the fourth section. The fourth section was optional, however, and many did not leave comments or left comments that did not clearly identify them as a teacher or librarian.

Additionally, the librarian version that was sent to district librarians after the teacher version was sent out by mistake may have yielded some interesting data, but district librarians could have responded to both surveys. As a result, the surveys could not be reliably compared, making the data from the librarian survey invalid for the purposes of this study.

Consequently, because the actual usage survey sections were focused on classroom use as a part of curriculum, and because librarians' actual use of these texts would not accurately reflect this, the data from the second and third sections of the survey could not be analyzed reliably. Valid data on actual usage of graphic novels was not produced by this study as a result. Perceptions of the effectiveness of graphic novels as

tools for developing literacy could still analyzed from the data collected by the first section of the survey, but any conclusions drawn from that data could not be considered to represent the perceptions of Language Arts teachers and librarians at one particular high school, nor of Language Arts teachers and librarians at a particular district. The data regarding opinion collected by this study can only be considered as representative of one group of 21 educational professionals.

In this limited scope, the numerical values associated with responses to statements on a Likert scale were collected in a spreadsheet and calculated to find mean, standard deviations, and Pearson r correlations. The goal of this analysis was to establish to what degree and in what ways this group of educational professionals valued graphic novels as educational tools by analyzing the central tendencies and variability of their responses. The analysis also sought to uncover correlations between responses in order to discover if certain opinions were closely tied to other perceptions.

Data

Table 1 reports the central tendencies of respondents for every prompt in the opinion section of the survey, as well as variance from that central tendency. "GNs" stands for "Graphic Novels." The scale for each question ranged from 1 – 5, with 1 = "Strongly Disagree," 2 = "Disagree," 3 = "No Opinion," 4 = "Agree," and 5 = "Strongly Agree." From this data we can begin to understand where perception of the usefulness of graphic novels lies among our sample population.

Table 1

Central Tendencies and Variance Among Graphic Novel Perception

Prompt	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Visual literacy is an important skill to develop in students.	21	4.67	.483
GNs can improve visual literacy.	21	4.38	.590
GNs can improve traditional literacy.	21	4.00	.775
GNs can serve effectively as primary components of curriculum.	21	3.76	.995
GNs are best used as materials to supplement curriculum, but not as a primary focus.	19	2.89	1.243
GNs are a useful tool for ... ELL students.[a]	21	4.14	.854
GNs are a useful tool for ... deaf students.[a]	21	3.33	.658
GNs are a useful tool for ... students who struggle with	21	4.38	.590

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reading.[a]			
GNs are a useful tool for ... the general population of students.[a]	20	4.30	.657
GNs are a useful tool for ... proficient readers.[a]	20	4.10	.718
GNs are a useful tool for ... underclassmen (9th & 10th grades).[a]	21	3.81	.873
GNs are a useful tool for ... upperclassmen (11th & 12th grades).[a]	21	3.67	.913
I have enough access to GNs to use them as primary texts in curriculum.	21	3.24	1.261
Common Core State Standards allow more freedom to incorporate GNs into instruction.	21	3.38	.740

Note. Maximum score = 5.

[a]Omitted from text of original prompt: "...developing the literacy of..."

Table 2 reports Pearson's Correlations between responses to four statements of particular interest regarding the categorization of graphic novels into primary or supplementary texts, the perception of graphic novels as tools to help develop the literacy of proficient readers, and perception of access to graphic novels. "GNs" stands for "Graphic Novels."

Table 2

Correlations Among Graphic Novel Perception

	GNs can serve effectively as primary components of curriculum.	GNs are best used as materials to supplement curriculum, but not as a primary focus.	GNs are a useful tool for developing the literacy of proficient readers.	I have enough access to GNs to use them as primary texts in curriculum.
GNs can serve effectively as primary components of curriculum.	-			
GNs are best used as materials to supplement curriculum, but not as a primary focus.	-.538*	-		
GNs are a useful tool for developing the literacy of proficient readers.	.652**	-.503*	-	
I have enough access to GNs to use them as primary texts in curriculum.	.645**	-.428	.430	-

**$p < 0.01$ level
*$p < 0.05$ level

Analysis

Conclusions drawn from the data gathered by this study cannot be generalized beyond this group of 21 teachers and librarians. The data cannot be said to represent teachers at the high school site as a whole because we do not know how many of the responses came from those teachers. The data also cannot be said to represent the teachers and librarians of the district because the sample size is too small, nor should it be taken to represent teachers at high schools in general or librarians in general. If analyzed only as a snapshot of the perceptions of graphic novels among a group of 21 educational professionals, however, the data does yield some insight into where current opinion on graphic novels lies and which perceptions might be tied others.

The mean and standard deviation data from Table 1 allows us a glimpse into the perceptions this group of respondents have about the effectiveness of graphic novels in curriculum with specific populations of students, how graphic novels should be categorized in curriculum, and availability of graphic novel texts. A mean derived from response scores that totals 3.5 or higher indicates agreement to a statement, increasing in strength as the score increases, with 5 being the strongest possible agreement. A score in the 2.5 to 3.49 range indicate a neutral or "No Opinion" group response. Scores at 2.49 or below indicate disagreement, increasing in strength of disagreement as the score decreases, with 1 being the strongest disagreement. The set of values used to determine whether variance is high, moderate, or low is the researcher's own. Standard deviation lower than 0.500 was considered to indicate low variance ($SD < 0.500$ = low variance). Standard deviation between 0.510 and 0.775 indicated moderate variance ($0.510 < SD <$

.775 = moderate variance). Standard deviation above 0.775 indicated high variance (.775 < SD = high variance) from the central tendency.

Respondents agreed strongly with the statement that visual literacy is an important skill to develop ($M = 4.67$, $SD = .483$), with low variance. The sample group also agreed with the statements that graphic novels can improve visual literacy ($M = 4.38$, $SD = .590$) and that graphic novels' instructional value extended to traditional literacy as well ($M = 4.00$, $SD = .775$). The variance was higher regarding graphic novels' ability to help with traditional literacy, indicating there was not as much consensus on that point among the group.

The next two prompts in Table 1 showed high levels of variance and central tendencies closer to three on the scale, indicating that no clear group consensus opinion on whether graphic novels can serve effectively as primary components of curriculum ($M = 3.76$, $SD = .995$) and whether graphic novels are best used as supplementary materials ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 1.243$) can be claimed. Proximity to three on the scale, which corresponds with the response "No Opinion," might indicate either that the group was neutral on both questions or that they did not have strong opinions on the matter, but when the high variance is taken into account, we see that "No Opinion" cannot be said to represent the group's opinion as a whole. Perception as to whether graphic novels can be used as primary texts and whether they are best used as supplementary texts was widely varied within the group.

The next five rows of data from Table 1 reflect central tendencies and variance of agreement with statements about how effective graphic novels are in developing the literacy of specific student populations. The sample's central tendencies revealed fairly

strong to moderately positive opinions regarding use of graphic novels with four of the five specific groups, and did not show evidence of preference towards using graphic novels with readers in populations that might struggle with reading more so than with other students. Perception of graphic novels as being effective with struggling readers was the most strongly positive opinion ($M = 4.38$, $SD = .590$), with moderately low variance, of the four positive opinions regarding specific populations. Examining these opinions regarding specific groups in order of descending positivity and consensus, the next most positive opinion of effectiveness is not with another segment of the student population, but the general student population itself ($M = 4.30$, $SD = .657$). Efficacy with the general population had a fairly high agreement rate, with a moderate level of variance. Agreement that graphic novels are effective with proficient readers ($M = 4.10$, $SD = .718$) and ELL students ($M = 4.14$, $SD = .854$) was positive in both cases, but with moderately high and high levels of variance, respectively, indicating there was less consensus within the sample regarding effectiveness with these two groups of students. The sample was neutral or had no opinion about how well graphic novels can be used with deaf students ($M = 3.33$, $SD = .658$), with a moderate amount of variance.

The last four rows of data in Table 1 indicate central tendencies between "No Opinion" and "Agree," and moderate to high levels of variance. No perceptions of graphic novels' efficacy with underclassmen ($M = 3.81$, $SD = .873$) and upperclassmen ($M = 3.67$, $SD = .913$), whether respondents felt they had enough access to graphic novels ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 1.261$), and whether Common Core State Standards allowed more freedom to incorporate graphic novels ($M = 3.38$, $SD = .740$) can be claimed to represent the group as a whole because of their central tendencies' proximity to the "No Opinion"

response and/or their moderately high or high degrees of variance. Whether Common Core State Standards are more conducive to graphic novel usage had, at best, a marginal consensus indicated by a moderately high variance. Opinion as to whether respondents had enough access to graphic novels to use them as primary texts was the most defiant to generalization among the sample of all the perceptions measured, because it had the highest variance and was one of the closest central tendencies to the "No Opinion" response.

The fourth and fifth statements, respectively, of the survey, "Graphic novels can serve effectively as primary components of curriculum" and "Graphic novels are best used as materials to supplement curriculum, but not as a primary focus" would seem to conflict with each other at a cursory glance. The statements do not necessarily contradict, however, because of the way they are phrased. A respondent could agree with the statement that graphic novels *can* be effectively used as primary components of instruction while still also agreeing that graphic novels are better suited as supplementary materials than primary components of curriculum. The belief that graphic novels are better suited as supplementary materials does not preclude the belief that they can possibly be used effectively as primary components. The strong negative correlation between these statements, $r(19) = -.538$, $p < 0.05$ level, as seen in Table 2, is important in establishing that there was a statistically significant either/or relationship in how the sample responded to these statements, even though they were not forced to choose one or the other by phrasing of the prompts. Although not forced to categorize graphic novels as primary or supplementary texts, the strong negative correlation shows us that the opinion that graphic novels can serve as primary texts related strongly to disagreement with the

perception that graphic novels are best used as supplementary material, among this group. Conversely, this data also shows that agreement with the opinion that graphic novels are best suited as supplementary material was strongly related to disagreement with the perception that graphic novels can serve effectively as primary texts. Respondents tended to categorize graphic novels as either primary text material, or as supplementary text material.

Perception of whether graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of proficient readers had a strong relationship to whether respondents categorized graphic novels as primary or supplementary texts. As shown in Table 2, responses to effectiveness with proficient readers had a strong positive correlation with perception of whether graphic novels can serve as primary texts, $r(20) = .652$, $p < 0.01$, as well as a strong negative correlation with perception that graphic novels serve best as supplementary texts, $r(19) = -.503$, $p < 0.05$. Considering that the statements about effectiveness as primary or supplementary texts have a strong negative correlation to each other, it makes sense that a statement that has a positive correlation with one would have a negative correlation with the other. Many of the responses showed this relationship with these two statements to some degree, however, none as strongly or significantly as responses to whether graphic novels are useful with proficient readers. These correlations show that, among this sample group, there was a strong relationship between perception of efficacy with proficient readers and whether graphic novels were categorized as primary or supplementary.

One other response showed a similar relationship that was strong enough to note. Responses to the statement "I have enough access to graphic novels to use them as

primary texts in curriculum" had a strong, positive correlation with the opinion that graphic novels can serve as primary components of curriculum, $r\,(21) = .645$, $p < 0.01$, indicating a strong relationship between the two opinions. This statement about access also had a negative correlation to opinion that graphic novels best serve as supplementary texts, $r\,(19) = -.428$, similar to opinion about effectiveness with proficient readers, but this negative correlation was not quite strong enough to be statistically significant at the 0.05 level. It cannot be concluded that having enough access to graphic novels has a strong relationship to whether these respondents categorized graphic novels as primary or supplementary texts because the negative correlation with the statement about best serving as supplementary texts was not statistically significant enough. When coupled with the strong positive correlation between access and utilization as primary texts, however, the negative correlation is strong enough to note, in that it suggests the possibility of a similar relationship between perception of access to graphic novels and categorization as primary or supplementary texts, as seen between efficacy with proficient readers and categorization.

Implications

Despite this study's efforts, the research question it was designed to address was not answered fully. No answers regarding proportionate use of graphic novels in classrooms were found because the data regarding this part of the survey was unreliable due to implementation errors. Some insight into where the perception of the educational value of graphic novels in classrooms currently stands was gained, although the opinions observed cannot be said to represent any group outside of the sample population of 21 teachers and librarians. Limited to the sample population, the insights gained about

graphic novel perception do still provide us with some additional information about graphic novel perception among educational professionals, and suggest some avenues of further research that would explore whether the opinions uncovered in this study are consistent with larger and/or more focused samples of educators.

Central tendencies and variance in responses to prompts show us which opinions about graphic novels, within the sample, are agreed upon, disagreed with, or remain unsettled. Research shows a strong link between graphic novels and the improvement of visual literacy, of increasing educational concern as technology continues to propagate new modes of multimodal communication. The responses of these teachers and librarians indicate that they value visual literacy and also agree that graphic novels can, indeed, help in developing visual literacy. Teachers and librarians also agreed with the idea that graphic novels can help improve traditional literacy, however the moderately high variance tells us that a significant number see a distinction between how effectively graphic novels develop visual and traditional literacy. Opinion regarding how graphic novels develop traditional literacy was more positive than negative among this group, but it was not strongly positive, nor agreed upon within the group. This implies that graphic novels' benefit to visual literacy seems well established among this group, but that their benefit to traditional literacy is not as well established.

Much of the research into graphic novels' effectiveness is focused on use with select populations of students, and so this survey was designed to shed some light into whether opinions of graphic novels' utility differed in reference to specific populations and the general student population. This study indicates, among this sample, that educators see graphic novels as not simply fitting into a niche utility for struggling

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readers, but to be about on par in terms of usefulness with the general population and proficient readers, judging by responses to the prompts regarding ELL students, struggling readers, the general student population, and proficient readers.

One could interpret the central tendency of responses to the statement about effectiveness with deaf students as only moderately supporting use with deaf students, but it could also be that the population of students was so specific that many teachers and librarians had no experience to draw on when responding to this prompt. My interpretation is that most respondents selected the "No Opinion" option because they had not had a deaf student in class, and if they had, they may not have had the opportunity to instruct that student with graphic novels. The moderate variance was most likely due to responses from those who have had this opportunity and had strong opinions either way. I would recommend that future research into graphic novel usage with deaf populations focus on teachers who are known to have had experience with deaf students, or include a corresponding question asking whether respondents have had experience with deaf students.

The results regarding effectiveness with underclassmen and upperclassmen may have also been skewed a bit towards the "No Opinion" response. If there was a bias as to whether graphic novels were more useful with one of these age groups, one would expect the tendencies for the opinion regarding usefulness with the general student population to be around the middle of the central tendencies for efficacy with underclassmen and upperclassmen. The central tendencies for both opinions are considerably lower than for effectiveness with the general population. While most teachers probably have experience with many grade levels, they may not have experience recently with grade levels outside

the ones they are currently teaching while the popularity of graphic novels has increased. Most likely, many teachers answered "No Opinion" for one of these responses because they haven't had a chance to teach a graphic novel to one of these options. They also both have fairly high levels of variance and so this, coupled with possible bias towards the "No Opinion" response, means no reliable conclusions about this group's attitudes towards the effectiveness of graphic novels with underclassmen and upperclassmen can be drawn. As with the prompt about efficacy with deaf students, future studies investigating whether there is a difference in perception between efficacy with underclassmen and upperclassmen should collect data from respondents about how many opportunities they have had to work with students of all grades.

The fact that the perception of whether respondents had enough access to graphic novels to use them as primary texts had the highest variance of the survey results opens up many questions for future research: How does availability of graphic novels at different schools and different districts compare? Are there any tangible, measurable effects in student population in schools/districts that have a higher availability of graphic novels? Is it possible that graphic novels are more available to some than perceived?

The respondents' central tendency towards "No Opinion," in regards to the statement that Common Core State Standards allow more freedom to incorporate graphic novels, and the moderately high variance, indicate that a clear understanding of the Common Core State Standards' relationship to graphic novels has not been communicated to this group of respondents. This may be due to a general lack of clarity regarding Common Core State Standards, as schools are still transitioning to them, or it

could be specific to this genre of literature. Future studies are needed to see if this lack of clarity extends to larger and/or more focused populations.

Although respondents could have agreed with both the statement that graphic novels can function as primary texts and that they serve best as supplementary texts, the strong negative correlation between the statements shows us that respondents tended to categorize graphic novels as either able to be primary texts or supplementary texts. The high variance in responses for both of these prompts shows us that a consensus categorization of graphic novels is far from settled. This categorization may have a strong relationship to how often graphic novels are used in curriculum. Conceptualization as supplementary material would most likely correlate with only occasionally desired usage of graphic novels, or only with select groups. Perception of graphic novels as able to serve as primary texts would presumably correlate, if there were no other factors limiting usage, in higher usage than would perception as supplementary material. These conclusions cannot be drawn from this study, however. Research is needed to see if this categorization does, in fact, have a significant relationship with actual or desired utilization of graphic novels.

If research did find that this categorization had a strong relationship to actual or desired usage of graphic novels, then perceptions that have a strong relationship with categorization should be examined. This study did find that perceptions of effectiveness with proficient readers and of access to graphic novels both had strong relationships to categorization. Efficacy with proficient readers had the strongest tie to categorization. This may be because the benefits of graphic novels have been researched more thoroughly in how they relate to specific populations that might struggle with reading.

Teachers and librarians may not be as comfortable using them as primary texts if they believe graphic novels are limited to being scaffolding tools for struggling readers. Perception that graphic novels benefit proficient readers may signal that a teacher or librarian believes everyone in class, even those who do not need scaffolding help in reading, can benefit from utilizing graphic novels. It would follow that a teacher or librarian who believes graphic novels are good tools to help build all students' literacy would be more likely to use graphic novels as a primary text. If research were to establish that categorization has a strong relationship to actual or desired usage of graphic novels, this study signals that further research into how effective graphic novels are with proficient readers is warranted.

Perception of whether teachers and librarians had enough access to graphic novels had a similar relationship to categorization, and therefore, could have a relationship to the degree to which teachers and librarians use graphic novels. That relationship would be dependent on further research identifying a link between categorization as primary or supplementary material and actual usage of graphic novels. Also, more research is needed to further establish this relationship between perception of access and categorization because the sample was small and because the negative correlation between access and categorization as supplementary material was not quite statistically significant. This relationship, if further established by research, may show a practical concern of educational professionals in regards to using graphic novels in curriculum.

Need for more access to graphic novels was reflected anecdotally, although not statistically, by responses to the short answer section of the survey. Data collected by the fourth section of the survey was not analyzed because it was an optional section and was

meant to function as a sounding board for respondents to supply more context into graphic novel opinion and usage. Five respondents specifically mentioned in this section that not having enough access was an impediment to use of graphic novels. One respondent characterized this sentiment by commenting, "Access to a wide variety of graphic novels I am sure would increase my receptivity to them."

This study invites, most strongly, further research into two perceptions concerning graphic novels, one pedagogical and one practical. Efficacy with proficient readers is an area of research already lacking in regards to graphic novels. This study suggests that investigation of this area may be key in determining to what degree teachers and librarians would like to use graphic novels in classrooms. This study also suggests that the practical concern of having enough copies of graphic novels to use them as primary texts may also be an important factor in graphic novel usage rates. If teachers and librarians perceive that more usage of graphic novels would be beneficial to the literacy of students, and not having enough access is preventing this, research would be warranted into what factors are stalling the acquisition of graphic novels. Again, research is first needed to establish the connection between categorization as primary or supplementary materials and actual or desired usage.

In addition, judging from variance and proximity to the "No Opinion" option of some of the responses, more research may be needed into graphic novels' link to traditional literacy, how access to graphic novels differs among schools and districts and if there are measurable effects from those differences, and the lack of clarity in educational professionals' minds regarding the link between Common Core State Standards and graphic novels.

Additional research is needed to address one of the main components of my research question because the errors in this study prevented it from doing so: are graphic novels being used at a rate proportionate with educational professionals opinions about their efficacy in literacy instruction? The data I collected about actual usage cannot be reliably analyzed, but it did seem to suggest that rates of graphic novel usage among this group were considerably lower than what would be proportionate with the group's opinion of their utility. If further research were to confirm that this is a prevalent issue in the educational community, then some of the other questions this study raised, about access and effectiveness with proficient readers, may suggest some avenues for research into why there might be a dissonance between perception and use.

Conclusion

If the use of graphic novels in developing literacy is supported by research and by educational professionals, then graphic novels should be used to a degree proportionate with that support. Research does support the use of graphic novels to develop both visual and traditional literacy. From this study, and from the Lapp et al. (2011) and the Clark (2013) studies, we can see that the opinions of educational professionals are fairly positive regarding graphic novels within the sample groups studied. If further research confirms that educational professionals' perceptions of graphic novels are positive, more research will certainly be warranted examining whether positive attitudes are translating into proportionate usage. This study was not able to examine that area of interest due to implementation errors, so that question remains waiting to be answered by future research. This study did contribute, however, to the body of knowledge on perception of graphic novels in the educational world, and opened up avenues for future research into

the relationship between perceptions of availability of graphic novels, their efficacy with proficient readers, and how they are categorized as primary or supplementary material in school curriculum.

Graphic novels appear to offer valuable learning opportunities to students. Examining whether those opportunities are being taken advantage of is certainly worthy of further study.

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Appendix A

Survey distributed to Language Arts teachers at high school research site:

1. Graphic Novel Opinion

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Visual literacy is an important skill to develop in students.					
Graphic novels can improve visual literacy.					
Graphic novels can improve traditional literacy.					
Graphic novels can serve effectively as primary components of curriculum.					
Graphic novels are best used as materials to supplement curriculum, but not as a primary focus.					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of ELL students.					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of deaf students.					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of students who struggle with reading.					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of the general population of students.					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the					

literacy of proficient readers.					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of underclassmen (9th & 10th grades).					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of upperclassmen (11th & 12th grades).					
I have enough access to graphic novels to use them as primary texts in curriculum.					
Common Core State Standards allow more freedom to incorporate graphic novels into instruction.					

2. Use of Graphic Novels This Year (2012-13 school year)

	Multiple times a week	Once a week	Multiple times a month	Once a month	Multiple times a year	Once or twice a year	Never
I used graphic novels with ELL students.							
I used graphic novels with struggling readers.							
I used graphic novels with deaf students.							
I used graphic novels with my general student population.							
I used graphic novels with proficient readers.							
I used graphic novels as a primary text in my curriculum.							
I used graphic							

novels as a supplementary text to my curriculum.						
I used graphic novels with underclassmen (9th & 10th grades).						
I used graphic novels with upper classmen (11th & 12th grades).						

3. Use of Graphic Novels Last Year (2011-12 school year)

	Multiple times a week	Once a week	Multiple times a month	Once a month	Multiple times a year	Once or twice a year	Never
Last year, I used graphic novels with ELL students.							
Last year, I used graphic novels with struggling readers.							
Last year, I used graphic novels with deaf students.							
Last year, I used graphic novels with my general student population.							
Last year, I used graphic novels with proficient readers.							
Last year, I used graphic novels as a primary text in my curriculum.							
Last year, I used graphic novels as a supplementary text to my curriculum.							
Last year, I used graphic novels with							

underclassmen (9th & 10th grades).							
Last year, I used graphic novels with upper classmen (11th & 12th grades).							

4. Please share any factors that influence the degree to which you use graphic novels in your classroom.

Appendix B

Survey distributed to librarians at high school research site:

1. Graphic Novel Opinion & Use

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Visual literacy is an important skill to develop in students.					
Graphic novels can improve visual literacy.					
Graphic novels can improve traditional literacy.					
Graphic novels can serve effectively as primary components of curriculum.					
Graphic novels are best used as materials to supplement curriculum, but not as a primary focus.					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of ELL students.					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of deaf students.					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of students who struggle with reading.					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of the general population of students.					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of proficient					

readers.					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of underclassmen (9th & 10th grades).					
Graphic novels are a useful tool for developing the literacy of upperclassmen (11th & 12th grades).					
Teachers have enough access to graphic novels to use them as primary texts in curriculum.					
Common Core State Standards allow more freedom to incorporate graphic novels.					
The library has the freedom to acquire graphic novels.					
The library is encouraged to acquire graphic novels.					
Graphic novels are a popular check-out item at the library.					
Teachers encourage students to check out graphic novels.					

2. Please share any factors that influence the degree to which graphic novels are used in your library or in teachers' classrooms.