

Graphic Novels

Cameron Macintosh



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By Cameron Macintosh



Contents

All About Graphic Novels	2
What Are Graphic Novels?	2
Types of Graphic Novels	6
What Is on a Graphic Novel Page?.....	10
A History of Graphic Novels	12
How Graphic Novels Are Made: An Interview with Graphic Novel Creator James Hart	20
Glossary	31
Index.....	32

All About Graphic Novels

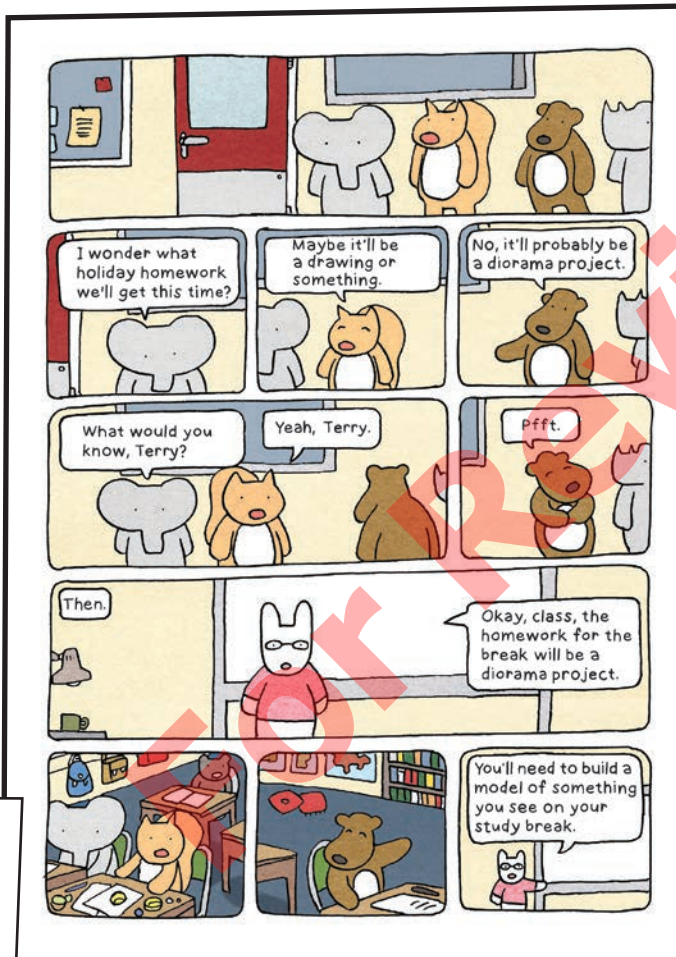
What Are Graphic Novels?

A graphic novel is a story told graphically. This means that the story is told through pictures. Some graphic novels tell a story with pictures alone, but most graphic novels use a combination of words and pictures, carefully written and designed to work well together.

In a graphic novel, words and pictures are usually arranged in individual “panels”. These are frames or boxes that show a short piece of action in the story. The panels are arranged in **sequence** across the page, or across a pair of pages.

Since the 1970s, graphic novels have been a very popular form of literature and entertainment for people of all ages.

This page of panels is from the graphic novel *The Adventures of Anders* by Gregory Mackay.



Many people think that graphic novels are the same thing as comic books, but they are different from each other. A graphic novel usually tells a complete story in one book, whereas comic books tend to be much shorter, and usually tell smaller parts of a longer, continuing story.



Captain Underpants is a graphic novel series for children by Dav Pilkey.

In many ways, a graphic novel is more like a movie than a regular novel. Each illustration is like a photo, taken from a particular angle. The illustrator can zoom in to show a specific detail of a scene; for example, they can show the emotion on a character's face. They can also zoom out to show where the scene takes place.



Zooming in and out can show where characters are and how they are feeling.

Some graphic novels are written and illustrated by the same person. More often, the story is written by one person and illustrated by another.

The author of a graphic novel needs to imagine how each individual panel in the story could look. They also need to decide if a panel needs dialogue or a caption. Dialogue is the speech between characters. A caption is a brief explanation of what is happening or about to happen in the panel.



Types of Graphic Novels

Graphic novels can tell any kind of story, but they tend to be grouped into one of five categories.

Superhero Stories

The most popular type of graphic novel is the superhero story. Like superhero movies, these novels tell the story of a superhero's quest. A quest is a journey to find something important, or to achieve something difficult. These types of graphic novels often feature characters who are popular in movies, such as Superman, Captain Marvel or Black Panther.



Superhero stories use lots of action sound effects.



Black Panther is a famous comic book series that has been made into a series of films.

Manga

Manga is a Japanese word meaning “whimsical pictures”. Manga is a type of comic book or graphic novel created in Japan that is extremely popular. There, manga books are read from the back to the front. Each page is read from its top-right corner to its bottom-left corner. When manga books are translated into other languages, their pages are sometimes changed so they can be read from left to right and top to bottom, like most non-Japanese books.



Many bookshops have a special manga section near the other graphic novels.