

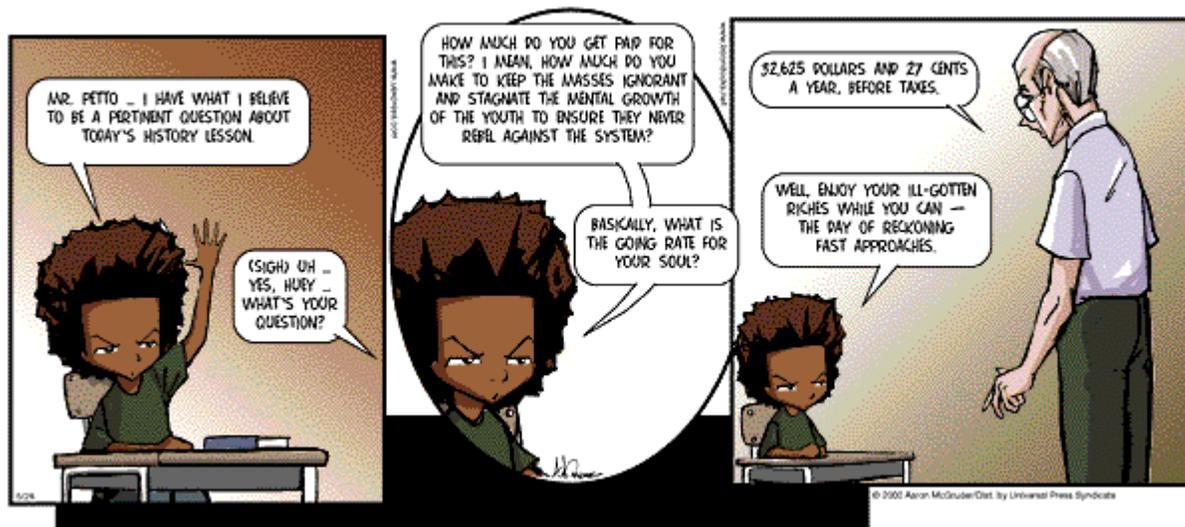


COMICS FOR K-12 EDUCATORS

ONLINE

THE BOONDOCKS

BY AARON McGRUDER



1

COURSE OVERVIEW

Comics for K-12 Educators (TE 579) is a course designed to (re)introduce students –who are also future/current elementary, middle, or high school teachers – to the socio-political importance and the literacy-enhancing value of comic strips, comic books, and graphic novels. Beginning with discussions related to the alleged “criminality,” “vulgarity,” “inappropriateness,” and “indoctrinating” influence of comics, originating in the early 1900s and continuing to present-day book bans, we will explore how efforts to keep (certain) comics out of the hands of children and out of schools have limited young readers’ opportunities to learn about their own and other – sometimes imagined or speculative – worlds, to think critically about their own and other (human) beings’ identities and experiences, and to challenge injustices. Through discussions of the literacy-related skills developed and honed by comic and graphic novel reading (decoding, comprehension, visual analysis, textual analysis, story pacing, etc.), as well as the need to engage young people with various texts from which they might construct relevance – especially in relationship to their own existences and their own growing conscientiousness – this course will

¹ Image from “Huey Freeman Only Speaks the Truth,” from Aaron McGruder’s *The Boondocks*. Posted online at <https://hueyfreemanonlyspeaksthetruth.tumblr.com/post/41823424360/the-boondocks-comic-strip-405>.



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emphasize the ways in which comic books and graphic novels can contribute to young people's literacy success, as well as to their criticality *and* empowerment. As we situate comics and graphic novels within discussions of censorship and justice, students in this course will also develop ideas for educational practices that challenge notions of difference that advantage some groups over others. Assignments for this course include 10 discussion posts, 3 major assignments, and a final paper. Students may complete extensions on the major assignments for this course, and the final paper, in order to receive graduate level credit.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Blabey, A. (2016). *The bad guys #1*. Scholastic Press.
- Butler, O.E. (A graphic adaptation by Damian Duffy & John Jennings, 2020). *Parable of the sower*. Abrams Comicarts.
- Craft, J. (2019). *New kid*. Quill Tree Books.
- Osman, A. (2020). *Heartstopper #1*. Graphix.
- Pilkey, D. (2023). *The adventures of Captain Underpants: 25 ½ Anniversary edition*. Scholastic, Inc.
- Smyth, T. (2023). *Teaching with comics and graphic novels: Fun and engaging strategies to improve close reading and critical thinking in every classroom*. Routledge. **This text is available for free, with online access through the SDSU Library.**
- Wertham, F. (1953). *Seduction of the innocent*. **This text is available for free, with online access through the SDSU Library.**
- Yang, G.L. (2021). *American born Chinese*. First Second.

IMPORTANT:

- **Students are frequently required to select, read, and respond to comic texts (comic strips, comic books, and/or graphic novels) of their choice – in keeping with the theme and criteria outlined in the Course Outline in this syllabus. Since the assigned comic texts for this course are written primarily for a middle school- through young adult-aged audience, teachers of early readers (grades K-2) will rely primarily upon these choices texts to develop the “Comics in the ELA Classroom” Unit Plan assignment, which is due in Week 13, if they choose to write units for their own grade levels.**
- Additional required texts, videos, and websites will be posted on Canvas and/or selected independently by students.



COURSE OBJECTIVES

Objectives of this course include students’ enhanced abilities to:

1. Apply a critical lens to the selection, analysis, and public/scholarly discourse surrounding comic texts, especially in relationship to the inclusion of comic texts in K-12 classroom spaces
2. Articulate the values inherent in and projected by comic texts, as well as those who critique and evaluate comic texts – particularly in relationship to their appropriateness for child readers
3. Critically examine the contributions of authors and illustrators of comic texts using a variety of evaluation tools
4. Develop and demonstrate a variety of strategies for choosing and using comics in K-12 classrooms
5. Create written and visual responses to comic texts, incorporating a synthesis of peer-reviewed scholarly sources, research-based evidence, and applicable theory

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

ASSIGNMENTS²

- Discussions on Canvas – 10 total (30%): Discussion posts and responses to peers on Canvas, as prompted, due throughout the semester in response to questions stemming from the required texts for the module, students’ independently-selected comic texts, and/or ideas for working with students in K-12 classroom contexts.
ALL DISCUSSIONS ARE DUE THURSDAYS AT MIDNIGHT, AS INDICATED ON THE SYLLABUS, WITH FOLLOW-UP POSTS TO PEERS (WHEN REQUIRED) DUE EACH FOLLOWING SUNDAY.

DISCUSSION RUBRIC (for each post), 10 points

Criterion	Score (0-5)
Answers all parts of the prompt, including follow-up posts when required	
Is professional in tone, even when raising critiques, and grounded in evidence; includes citations	

² Rubric extensions for graduate level credit will be uploaded to Canvas and reviewed in class prior to assignment deadlines.



as needed; writing is mechanically sound (fewer than 3 errors for full credit)	
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- Significant Assignments (50%)
 - **(Super)hero Generation (10%)**
 - Utilizing the ideas from Smyth (2023) and the other scholarly texts read by this week (e.g., Sciorba, 2014/2015), develop a (super)hero-generating activity for K-12 students (one grade, any grade) that will enable them to create a comic strip/book character they consider relevant to their lives. Assignment must include detailed steps for students, with references to the scholarly texts, in addition to a model of the final product created by you.
 - For graduate credit, you must submit a 2-page reflection on this assignment and its relevance to literacy education.
- DEADLINE: WEEK 4**

(SUPER)HERO GENERATION Rubric, 20 points

CRITERION	SCORE (0-5)
Activity includes (super)hero generation steps, with enough detail to be implemented by teacher at any single grade level, K-12 (includes a list of materials and resources and explains, step-by-step, how the lesson should be taught)	
Activity includes an element of “relevance” as connected to students’ lives, as noted in the scholarly texts read for this course	
Assignment includes a model of the assignment which suggests time and thought were put into its creation	
Citations to Smyth (2023) and other scholars are included and pertinent to the	



activity created; writing is mechanically sound (fewer than 3 errors for full credit)	
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- **Comics in the ELA Classroom – Unit Plan (20%)**
 - Create a unit plan for a single grade of K-12 students that includes at least TWO of the comic texts you have read up to this point in the course – either on your own or as assigned. Your plan should include clear literacy- and/or subject-specific goals, two informal assessments, one formal/summative assessment, and a set of criteria for grading your students’ summative assessment. Additionally, this assignment should include a 1-2 paragraph rationale, with citations, explaining why you believe this assignment will enhance your students’ learning. (Resources for formatting a unit plan will be provided on Canvas; consider building upon Assignment #1 and/or Discussion #4 as you create this unit plan.)
 - For graduate credit, you must submit an expanded 2-page rationale and a rubric (instead of just a set of grading criteria) for the student work
DEADLINE: WEEK 9

COMICS IN THE ELA CLASSROOM UNIT PLAN RUBRIC, 20 points

CRITERION	SCORE (0-5)
Unit plan has been written for a single grade level and includes a minimum of TWO comic texts read for this course, 2-3 literacy- and/or subject-specific goals, two informal assessments, one formal/summative assessment, and a set of criteria for grading the summative assessment.	
Unit plan is written clearly enough to be implemented by a classroom teacher at a single grade level (K-12).	
Unit plan demonstrates a clear understanding of each of the comic texts as read in	



their entirety (a.k.a, NOT skimmed).	
Unit plan links to the ideas discussed, presented, and/or read about thus far in the course, and citations are included in APA format; writing is mechanically sound (fewer than 3 errors for full credit).	

- **Villain-but-not-really-a-villain Comic Strip (20%)**
 - Create a ONE-PAGE comic, in which a popular villain (that K-12 students would recognize, not necessarily from a comic text) is actually *not* the “bad guy,” given the cause for which they are fighting. You can create this comic by hand, or you can use a comic generator (Resources will be provided on Canvas). This comic must include at least two characters, dialogue, narration, a clear “problem,” and an indication of the “villain-but-not-really-a-villain”’s motivation
 - For graduate credit, you must submit a 2-page reflection on the literacy value of this project

DEADLINE: WEEK 13

VILLAIN-BUT-NOT-REALY-A-VILLAIN COMIC STRIP RUBRIC, 20 points

CRITERION	SCORE (0-5)
Comic is no longer than one page in length and was created by hand or with a comic generation app (e.g., Pixton).	
Comic includes a popular villain that K-12 students would recognize and demonstrates why this villain is <i>not</i> actually the villain by providing an alternative perspective to their story.	
Comic includes a minimum of two characters, dialogue,	



narration, a clear “problem,” and an indication of the “villain’s” motivation.	
Comic reflects the ideas discussed up to this point in the course; writing is mechanically sound (fewer than 3 errors for full credit).	

- **Final Paper (20%):** Given the comic texts and areas of focus for this course, including each of the smaller assignments you have completed, write a paper that makes a case for how comic strips, comic books, and/or graphic novels might be utilized in K-12 classrooms. Engage with the arguments against comics (e.g., Wertham, 1953), as well as book-banning arguments, in addition to the arguments advocating for the value of comics and expanded notions of literacy education, to analyze the comic texts you have read this semester in relationship to their educational significance. What recommendations will you make for educators, regarding the critical (re)examination, selection, and teaching of comic texts? How does the approach you advocate now compare to the approach you might have taken in the past?

Be sure to use concrete examples from the course texts, as well as the texts for young readers that you have read this semester (including a minimum of three of the comic texts) to support your case. Paper should be approximately 8-10 pages, double-spaced, and written in APA format.

For graduate credit, your paper must include two independently-selected references, beyond those included in the course outline.

FINAL PAPER DEADLINE: WEEK 16

FINAL PAPER RUBRIC, 20 points

CRITERION	SCORE (0-5)
<i>Thesis/Argument</i>	
Paper includes a central thesis/argument related to the main prompt in relationship to "criticality" and comic book reading in the K-12 classroom. (Note	



<p>that the prompt for this final paper is a guide and not ALL aspects of this prompt need to be addressed explicitly. However, your paper must have a central thesis/argument.)</p>	
<p><i>Evidence</i></p> <p>Paper includes evidence (quotes and summaries or paraphrased discussions) from the various course texts (the books, articles, and/or comic texts) to support the points/arguments made throughout. (NOTE: Not ALL of the comic texts you read for this course need to be discussed in detail, but please include at least three)</p> <p>Quotations (aim for about 5) from the articles are REQUIRED, and paraphrasing/quotations, and descriptions of the artwork in the comic texts are needed throughout your paper as evidence to support your points in relationship to the scholarly work. Please just keep in mind the 8-10 page limit to determine which text(s) you want to describe in detail for the specific points you are making.</p>	
<p><i>Connection to Education</i></p> <p>Paper makes a clear connection to the field of K-</p>	



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12 education by making suggestions for practice, reflecting on your assignments for this course and/or your own classroom practice, addressing problems/issues that need to be addressed in relationship to the central argument you make, etc.	
<i>Format/Mechanics</i> Paper is written in APA format, includes references for all sources cited, including all comic texts, is approximately 8-10 pages in length, double spaced, and written in paragraph form. Paper has been revised and edited for mechanical errors. A level 5 in this area has fewer than 3 typos or grammatical errors.	

GRADING

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	59 or less



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TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR CANVAS

Student support for Canvas is provided by the Library Computing Hub, located on the 2nd floor of Love Library. They can be reached at 619-594-3189 or hub@mail.sdsu.edu

CLASS POLICIES

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION: Participation in this course is extremely important. You will not be penalized for missing class sessions due to work responsibilities. However, your participation score relies heavily upon your ability to complete 100% of the weekly assignments, including the independent reading. If you have a medical or personal reason that prevents you from submitting your assignments on time, please notify your instructor as soon as possible. You must keep for your records the instructor response that permits any late submissions.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION: All students in this course, regardless of race, ethnicity, language, ability, nationality, sexual orientation, gender expression, etc., should feel welcome in this class. Accordingly, all class participants should be respectful of classmates' differences, including differences of opinion. Discrimination and/or harassment directed toward fellow students will not be tolerated under any circumstances. If, for any reason, you feel uncomfortable in this class, please make sure that you speak to your instructor (Dr. Scirba) as soon as possible. You can reach me during office hours or call me directly. San Diego State University strives to maintain our campus as a place of work and study for faculty, staff, and students that is free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and harassment. If you have concerns about such behavior, you can also contact SDSU's [Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact [Student Disability Services](#) at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

FORMAT AND SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS: All assignments for this course should adhere to academic conventions (typed, double spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, as free as possible from grammatical and spelling errors, etc.) and be submitted **by their deadlines (see below for Late Assignment Policy) via Canvas. All formal, typed assignments (drafts, revisions, discussion posts, presentations, etc) should be uploaded to the appropriate area on Canvas. Emailed assignments will not be accepted, nor will hard copies of the assignments.**

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: It is imperative that you stay current on all readings, discussions, and assignments – including all “To Do” assignments and Reports. All deadlines appear on the course outline. Communication is extremely important, so if you are having issues with your assignments and their timeliness, please let



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me know. If you do not contact me 24-48 hours before the due date to discuss why your work is being turned in late, you will get points deducted.³

The penalty for late assignments is as follows:

1. Late assignment turned in within 24 hours past the deadline: 20% off the earned grade.
2. Late assignment turned in 24-48 hours past the deadline: 50% off the earned grade
3. Late assignment turned in within 48-72 hours past the deadline: 75% off the earned grade.
4. Assignment turned in 72 hours past the deadline: NO CREDIT

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY: The University adheres to a strict [policy regarding cheating and plagiarism](#). These activities will not be tolerated in this class. Become familiar with the policy and what constitutes plagiarism (<http://studentaffairs.sdsu.edu/srr/cheating-plagiarism.html>). Any cheating or plagiarism will result in failing this class and a disciplinary review by the University. These actions may lead to probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Examples of Plagiarism include but are not limited to:

- Using sources verbatim or paraphrasing without giving proper attribution (this can include phrases, sentences, paragraphs and/or pages of work)
- Copying and pasting work from an online or offline source directly and calling it your own
- Using information you find from an online or offline source without giving the author credit
- Replacing words or phrases from another source and inserting your own words or phrases
- Submitting a piece of work you did for one class to another class

CHECKING EMAIL MESSAGES: Please check your SDSU e-mail DAILY. Messages will be sent to your SDSU e-mail address as needed, throughout the semester. This will be the main form of communication that I will use when you are not in class or on campus.

COPYRIGHT POLICY

SDSU respects the intellectual property of others and expects faculty and students to do the same. It is best to assume that any material (e.g., graphic, html coding, text, video, or sound) on the Web is copyrighted unless specific permission is given to copy it under a [Creative Commons License](#). More information about the use of copy written material in education as part of the [TEACH Act](#) and [Copyright Fair Use Guidelines](#). Whenever possible, you should attribute the original author of any work used under these provisions.

STUDENT SERVICES

A complete list of all academic support services is available on the [Academic Success](#) section of the [SDSU Student Affairs](#) website.

³ Make-up assignments will be allowed for excused absences, on a case-by-case basis.



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For help with improving your writing ability, the staff at the SDSU [Writing Center](#) is available in person and online.

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#) offers confidential counseling services by licensed psychologists, counselors, and social workers. More info can be found at their website or by contacting (619) 594-5220. You can also Live Chat with a counselor http://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/cps/therapist-consultation.aspx between 4:00pm and 10:00pm, or call San Diego Access and Crisis 24-hour Hotline at (888) 724-7240.



TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

Please find additional course details under the “Course Essentials” module on Canvas. Comics for K-12 Educators will adhere to the following outline:

Week	Theme/Focus	Readings and Assignments *Please complete readings in order as numbered.
Week 1	Comics, Appropriateness, and “Juvenile Delinquency”	<p>TO READ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Select and read two comic texts (comic strips, comic books, and/or graphic novels) – one you think is “appropriate” and one you think is “inappropriate” for a student at any grade, K-12. 2) Wertham, F. (1953). – “What Parents Don’t Know About Comic Books”. 3) Wertham, F. (1953). Seduction of the Innocent, Chapters 1-8. 4) Skim the website for the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund (CBLDF) <p>TO DO: Discussion #1 ~ Which two comic texts did you select on your own and read this week, and why do you deem them “appropriate” or “inappropriate” for young readers? What do you think Wertham would say about these texts? What do you think the CBLDF would say? What do you think your own background with comics has to do with your assessment of the two texts you selected for this week?</p>
Week 2	Comics, (Literacy) Education, and Getting Started in the Classroom	<p>TO READ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Pilkey, D. (2023). <i>The Adventures of Captain Underpants</i>. 2) Smyth, T. (2023). <i>Teaching with Comics and Graphic Novels</i>, Chapters 1-8 3) Dallacqua, A.K. (2020). “Reading Comics Collaboratively and Challenging Literacy Norms” <p>TO DO: Discussion #2 ~ In what ways might <i>The Adventures of Captain Underpants</i> be utilized</p>



		in a K-12 classroom setting, borrowing from the ideas of Smyth (2023) and Dallacqua (2020)? (Give two examples – one idea from each text.)
Week 3	Comics and Representation	<p>TO READ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) SKIM: Facciani, M., Warren, P. & Vendemia, J. (2015). “A Content Analysis of Race, Gender, and Class in American Comic Books”2) Bishop, R.S. (1990). “Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors.”3) Dando, M. (2023). “Black Heroes Matter.”4) Whitted, Q. (2019). “In the Preachies” (Book Intro)5) Feldstein, A. & Orlando, J. (1953). Judgement Day. <p>TO DO:</p> <p>Discussion #3 ~ Look back on the comic texts you selected in Week 1 and Pilkey’s <i>The Adventures of Captain Underpants</i>. Which groups of students do you think each of these texts might “mirror” (Bishop, 1990)? How might the comic texts you select for students, going forward, (continue to) reflect the social justice efforts of publishers like EC Comics, as noted by Whitted and reflected in <i>Judgement Day</i>? How might you apply a Critical Race Theory framework to your teaching of comics?</p>
Week 4	Superheroes, Identity, and Relevance – Part I	<p>TO READ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Review Jonathon Scott’s Studio Bender webpage on “Superheroes”2) Watch Stan Lee’s discussion of Superheroes (TEDX Gateway)3) Select and read two comic texts (for any single age group, K-12) featuring “superheroes” – one you believe to be from a group <i>adequately</i> represented and one from a group you believe to be



		<p><i>inadequately</i> represented in the comics world.</p> <p>4) Sciorba, K. (2014/2015). “Texts as Mirrors, Texts as Windows.”</p> <p>TO DO: ASSIGNMENT #1 ~ Utilizing the ideas from Smyth (2023) and the other scholarly texts read, thus far (e.g., Sciorba, 2014/2015), develop a (super)hero-generating activity for K-12 students (one grade, any grade) that will enable them to create a comic strip/book character they consider relevant to their lives. Assignment must include detailed steps for students, with references to the scholarly texts, in addition to a model of the final product created by you.</p>
Week 5	Superheroes, Identity, and Relevance – Part II	<p>TO READ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Select and read two ADDITIONAL comic texts (for the same age group, K-12, that you selected last week) featuring “(super)heroes”; this time, ONE must be a female/femme of color and the other must be a person belonging to an Indigenous group (Resources provided in Canvas)2) Gipson, G. (2023). “Now it’s my time!: Black girls finding space and place in comic books.”3) Smyth, T. (2023). <i>Teaching with Comics and Graphic Novels</i>, Chapters 10-16 <p>TO DO: Discussion #4 ~ Create a bulleted list of 8-10 activities in relationship to the batch of four (super)hero comics you read over the last two weeks that one could do with K-12 students. Consider the ideas presented by Smyth (2023), as well as the topics raised by the other scholarly sources we have read, thus far.</p>
Week 6	Comics and “America” – Part I	<p>TO READ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Yang, G. (2023). <i>American Born Chinese</i>.



		<p>2) <i>Open Culture</i> Article on Theodore Geisel's (Dr. Seuss's) Political Cartoons</p> <p>3) Scott, C. (2007). "Written in Red, White, and Blue"</p> <p>TO DO: Discussion #6 ~ Name TWO ways in which Yang's <i>American Born Chinese</i> challenges the history of propaganda in comic texts, as evidenced in the work of Dr. Seuss and as discussed in Scott's (2007) article. What activities might you do with K-12 students to address/redress racist and/or nationalistic propaganda, using a text like Yang's?</p>
Week 7	Comics and "America" – Part II	<p>TO READ/WATCH:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Smyth, T. (2023). <i>Teaching with Comics and Graphic Novels</i>, Chapters 9 & 172) Video on The Amazing Spiderman #363) Sciorba, K. & Jenkins, J.R. (2019). "Smoky Night and the Un-telling of the L.A. Riots."4) Select and read a comic text that addresses a current or historical event that occurred in (or that included) what is now known as the United States (Resources provided on Canvas.) <p>TO DO: No discussions or written assignments due this week</p>
Week 8	Comics and Belongingness – Part I	<p>TO READ/LISTEN:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Craft, J. (2021). <i>New Kid</i>.2) McGruder, A.'s The Boondocks (additional comics to be shared on Canvas)3) Listen to Jerry Craft's NPR Interview about Banned Books <p>TO DO:</p>



		<p>Discussion #7 ~ At this point, do you think some comic texts belong in K-12 schools more than others? Do you think it is justifiable to ban books like Jerry Craft’s <i>New Kid</i>? Please explain, using any of the texts you have read, watched, or listened to so far this semester.</p>
Week 9	Comics and Belongingness – Part II	<p>TO READ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Osman, A. (2021). <i>Heartstopper</i>, #1.2) Select and read ONE comic text, set in the United States or elsewhere, that features a Latinx character (Resources provided on Canvas)3) SKIM: Perry, J.C. & Lavins-Merillat, B.D. (2019). “Self-esteem and School Belongingness” <p>TO DO:</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT #2 ~ Create a unit plan for a single grade of K-12 students that includes at least TWO of the comic texts you have read for this course, so far – either on your own or as assigned. Your plan should include clear literacy- and/or subject-specific goals, two informal assessments, one formal/summative assessment, and a set of criteria for grading your students’ summative assessment. Additionally, this assignment should include a 1-2 paragraph rationale, with citations, explaining why you believe this assignment will enhance your students’ learning. (Resources for formatting a unit plan will be provided on Canvas; consider building upon Assignment #1 and/or Discussion #4 as you create this unit plan.)</p>
Week 10	Comics and Belongingness – Part III	<p>TO READ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Select and read ONE of the X-men comics and/or an X-men comic for early readers (Check the SDSU Library for availability)



		<p>2) Select and read ONE comic text that features a character that is differently-abled</p> <p>3) Smyth, T. (2023). <i>Teaching with Comics and Graphic Novels</i>, Chapters 18-20.</p> <p>TO DO: Discussion #8 ~ What do comic texts, generally, seem to suggest about “belongingness”? How is belongingness tied to (in)justice in the texts you have read for this course? In what ways do the visual aspects of comic texts give readers/viewers a sense of a character’s desires and/or (in)abilities to belong? How might this theme of belongingness be relevant to students at various K-12 levels?</p>
Week 11	Villains	<p>TO READ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Fennell, J. (2012). “The aesthetics of supervillainry.”2) Blabey, A. (2016). <i>The Bad Guys</i>.3) Reread one of the comic texts you selected and read for a previous week, paying closer attention to the villain this time. <p>TO DO: No discussions or written assignments due this week</p>
Week 12	Villains	<p>TO READ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Select and read ONE comic text that features a villain you appreciate, for whatever reason.2) Keen, R., McCoy, M., & Powell, E. (2018). “Rooting for the Bad Guy” <p>TO DO: Discussion #9 ~ Are the “bad guys” in comic texts always/entirely “bad”? What makes the “bad guys” “bad,” exactly? What do the “bad guys” seem to represent? What is the socio-political significance of the “bad guys”? Use</p>



		examples from these last two weeks' readings to support your points.
Week 13	Villains? Heroes?	<p>TO READ/WATCH:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Bucciferro, J. (2020). "Comic Book Heroes and Villains" 2) Watch Warner Bros.'s (2019) <i>Joker</i>, starring Joaquin Phoenix or Disney's (2021) <i>Cruella</i> or the reading of Jon Scieszka's <i>The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs</i> <p>TO DO: ASSIGNMENT #3 ~ Create a ONE-PAGE comic, in which a popular villain (that K-12 students would recognize, not necessarily from a comic text) is actually <i>not</i> the "bad guy," given the cause for which they are fighting. You can create this comic by hand, or you can use a comic generator (Resources will be provided on Canvas). This comic must include at least two characters, dialogue, narration, a clear "problem," and an indication of the "villain-but-not-really-a-villain"'s motivation.</p>
Week 14	(In)justices	<p>TO READ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Butler, O.E. (2022). <i>Parable of the Sower</i> (a graphic novel adaptation by Damian Duffy & John Jennings) <p>TO DO: Begin to DRAFT final paper</p>
Week 15	(In)justices	<p>TO READ:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Gruenberg, S.M. (1944). "The Comics as a Social Force" 2) Bender, L. (1944). "The Psychology of Children's Reading and the Comics" 3) Thomas, E.E. & Stornaiuolo, A. (2016). "Restorying the Self: Bending Toward Textual Justice" 4) McFarlane, J.M. (2019). "How Visual Narratives (Comics) Can Increase



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		<p><u>Literacy, Decrease Bias, and Highlight Stories of Social Justice</u></p> <p>TO DO: Discussion #10 ~ As a culmination of all the ideas dissected in this course, what ways might comics be used to promote (social) justice in K-12 classroom contexts? In what ways might speculative fiction (e.g., Butler’s work) and/or student-produced comics be especially empowering to students? Be sure to include 2-3 references/citations.</p>
Week 16	<p>FINAL PAPER DUE ~</p> <p>Given the comic texts and areas of focus for this course, including each of the smaller assignments you have completed, write a paper that makes a case for how comic strips, comic books, and/or graphic novels might be utilized in K-12 classrooms. Engage with the arguments against comics (e.g., Wertham, 1953), as well as book-banning arguments, in addition to the arguments advocating for the value of comics and expanded notions of literacy education, to analyze the comic texts you have read this semester in relationship to their educational significance. What recommendations will you make for educators, regarding the critical (re)examination, selection, and teaching of comic texts? How does the approach you advocate now compare to the approach you might have taken in the past?</p> <p>Be sure to use concrete examples from the course texts, as well as the texts for young readers that you have read this semester (including a minimum of three of the comic texts) to support your case. Paper should be approximately 8-10 pages, double-spaced, and written in APA format.</p>	