

EXPLORING GREAT STORIES

The goals of this assignment are:

- to **demonstrate your understanding** of the codes and conventions of graphic novels (particularly storytelling techniques and graphic novel elements) by applying it to an actual text (in this case, early/traditional superhero comics)
- to **apply your knowledge of literary criticism** (i.e. the study, evaluation, and interpretation of literature) to graphic novels (in this case, early/traditional superhero comics)

There are so many great stories being told through graphic novels that we would never have time to give each of them the time that they deserve. Therefore, we won't, but what we will do is take some time to choose at least one novel that each student will read, critique, and **present to the rest of the class** in some fashion (it does not have to be an oral presentation - it could be a bulletin board, poster, book trailer, or something along those lines).

You will be asked to discuss the **strengths** and **weaknesses** of the chosen novel(s), in terms of **graphic novel elements** (flow, moment, frame, word, and image), use of **storytelling techniques** (moment-to-moment, action-to-action, subject-to-subject, scene-to-scene, aspect-to-aspect, and non-sequitur), how it **contributes to literature in general**, and your **overall engagement** with the **character** and **the story**. The graphic novels are from my personal library and so are not available for loan outside of the classroom, therefore all reading must take place during class time. I would suggest using the following template:

Graphic Novel Introduction (one paragraph)

Begin your review by briefly summarizing the story and why you chose the graphic novel that you did.

Graphic Novel Author (one paragraph)

Who wrote this graphic novel? Provide at least **three pieces of background information** on the author and illustrator of the graphic novel, including other books that they were involved with and what they are famous for (if anything) in your review.

Graphic Novel Elements (one paragraph)

How well constructed was the graphic novel in terms of the *flow of the story*, the *moments that were chosen to illustrate*, the *framing of those moments*, the *words that were used to communicate the story*, and the *clarity of the images drawn*? (include examples - I will show you how in class). Include **three distinct examples** in your review.

Storytelling Techniques (one paragraph)

Was the story *easy to follow*? Was the story too simple, or was it complex yet well-explained? What *storytelling techniques* were used (e.g. moment-to-moment)? Was the

