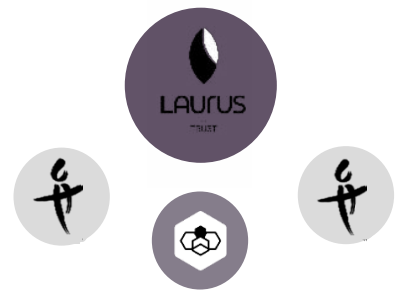


# LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 8

WORDS: MISS M  
DESIGN: MISS M



## THEME OF Comics & More THE WEEK

Dear Students,

Graphic novels have a long and illustrious history, particularly in countries such as Japan and France! In the past few decades, they've also become more popular in English-speaking countries, with higher sales, more recognition and greater acclaim.

Most people are familiar with superhero comics or magazines like *The Beano*, but graphic novels are so much more! Today we're celebrating the richness and diversity of the medium, plus recommending some brilliant reads.

### WHAT ARE COMICS?

A comic is a publication that uses art to tell a story, usually in the form of panels. The earliest example of comic books in the Western world date back to the 1920's and 30's, when the medium became popular in Britain and the US. Incredibly, some of those early publications are still running: *The Beano's* first issue was released in 1938 and is still being enjoyed by people today! Since the introduction of Superman in 1938, superheroes have been one of the most popular comic genres – but don't make the mistake of believing that's all comics are about!

### WHAT IS MANGA?

Manga is the umbrella term for comics or graphic novels originating in Japan. Unlike western comics, manga is read right-to-left instead of left-to-right. That's because Japanese writing is read this way! Most publishers choose not to 'flip' illustrations to preserve the integrity of the art. This can take some practice to get used to but becomes easier over time. In Japan, manga is often serialised in magazines. If a series is popular, its chapters are then collated and published in books known as *tankōbon*. These *tankōbon* are the volumes of manga we read in the UK!

### WHAT ARE GRAPHIC NOVELS?

The phrase 'graphic novel' has been contentious since its first use in the 1960's! The term in its most basic sense refers simply to a book written in the style of a comic, where the story or narrative is expressed through a combination of images and text. As comics became more adventurous in the 1970's, some illustrators and publishers employed the term to distinguish between their more experimental projects and the cartoons published in periodicals. As the comics medium was often looked down upon, some felt that the phrase 'graphic novel' added credibility and prestige. The term became popular when Will Eisner, an American cartoonist, released *A Contract With God*, an ambitious literary comic. Eisner wanted the book to be published by a mainstream company sold in bookshops rather than comic stores; his publisher therefore promoted the book as a "graphic novel". From then on, it became the accepted term for a book-length comic. Today, the phrase is generally used to refer to longer stories, published as bound volumes, with definite endings.

### RECOMMENDED COMICS



The **Tiny Titans** series features funny short stories and comic strips about DC superheroes as kids! They're not only hilarious, but serve as a brilliant introduction to

The DC universe. If you're already a comics fan, you'll also appreciate jokes from classic series. For something more educational, try **Corpse Talk**, which looks at famous figures from history.

### RECOMMENDED MANGA



What would you do with a notebook with the power to kill anyone whose name is written on the pages? **Death Note** is a twisty psychological thriller

about morality that follows the battle of wits between teenage genius Light Yagami and the enigmatic detective L. For something a little lighter, try the fantastical **Witch Hat Atelier**, which was shortlisted for the 2020 Excelsior Award.

### LIBRARIAN'S CORNER

This week, we're recommending our favourite comic reads!

**Mrs P** enjoys Raina Telgemeier's *Ghosts*. She thought the landscape illustrations were beautiful and enjoyed the relationship between the sisters!

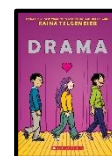
**Mrs B** loved Noelle Stevenson's *Nimona*, which tells the story of a shape-shifting girl who wants to be a villain's sidekick.

**Miss M** loved the fantasy manga *Fushigi Yugi* so much when she was a teenager, she even wrote an essay about it!

### RESOURCES

If you're interested in comics, there's plenty of resources out there! **Comichaus**, an indie comics app, is giving away a free month of access to its entire library of comics until the end of lockdown. **kidscomics.com** publishes daily updates on the latest comic releases aimed at young people. If you'd rather create your own comics, **BBC Bitesize** has a wonderful series of tutorials for creating graphic novels. Finally, for inspiring comic art, why not check out **comicartfans.com**? With over 450,000 pieces of original art in its gallery, it's a wonderful place to start!

### RECOMMENDED GRAPHIC NOVELS



Award-winning author Raina Telgemeier is known for her warm, funny stories about life as a teenager. In **Drama**, theatre-loving Callie becomes involved in her school's production crew, with drama ensuing both on-stage and off! If you prefer more romance, try Alice Oseman's **Heartstopper**, an LGBT+ love story about friendship, loyalty and mental illness.