

**WHY READ COMIC BOOKS?**

**BECAUSE YOU WANT  
AND LIKE TO READ**

**EXCEPT FOR THAT  
NIGGLING CONCERN AT THE BACK OF  
YOUR MIND.**

**ARE COMICS GOOD ENOUGH?**

**ARE THEY GOOD  
ENOUGH?**

**YES**

**CONSIDER THIS:**

**A 1992 study of more than 200,000 students from 32 countries revealed that Finland was the nation with the highest proportion**

- of comic book reading students (nearly 60%)**
- also had the highest literacy rate (99%),**
- as well as the highest library usage.**

# PEOPLE WHO READ, READ EVERYTHING

The extract below comes from the top 50 book sales list for France in 2002. We've listed the first 10 books

1	892 600 copies	La loi du préau - graphic
2	479 300	Men are from Mars... - lifestyle
3	395 200	La guide du zizi... - graphic novel
4	385 600	Lâchez les chiens... - graphic novel
5	383 000	Harry P. and the goblet... - juvenile
6	364 200	Bridget Jones, the age of... - novel
7	362 800	Shadow, Largo Winch - graphic novel
8	350 000	Harry p. and the chamber... - juvenile
9	329 600	Harry P. at the... - juvenile
10	328 000	Harry P. and the prisoner... - juvenile

# **COUNTRIES THAT READ LOTS OF GRAPHIC NOVELS, READ LOTS OF BOOKS IN GENERAL.**

**USA (population 300 million)**

**2005: 175 billion Rand spent on books  
of which 2.8 billion Rand spent on comics**

**Japan (population 120 million)**

**2003: 132 billion Rand spent on books & magazines  
of which 33 billion Rand spent on comics**

**France (population 61 million)**

**2006: 58 billion Rand spent on books  
of which 3.8 billion Rand spent on comics**

# A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE MERITS OF COMIC BOOKS



# COMIC BOOKS ARE VISUAL

**Pictures and text carry the story together.  
The graphics make the characters and their world  
recognisable  
and allow the reader  
to establish an intimate bond  
with the subject of the book.**



*“I like to read a book that has pictures so that I can have a clear understanding...” – S. Magayiyana*

## COMIC BOOKS ARE VISUAL: example

In order to graduate from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, cadets... must study Marjane Satrapi's graphical novel "Persepolis," a coming-of-age tale set during the Iranian revolution. It's a wise choice ... because the ... frames of Satrapi's family saga will give

the cadets a better understanding of Iran than any academic text, newspaper report or strategy paper ever could.

"Persepolis" shows Iranians not as ... fanatics, but as individuals, - funny, ... and often fearful of the strange, powerful forces unfolding around them.

"Comics are particularly well suited to telling (my) story to a global audience: Images are an international language."

- M. Satrapi



# COMIC BOOKS INCREASE LEARNING

In a study comparing graphic novels to text, Sones (1944) found that comics' visual quality increases learning.

Sones divided 400 sixth – through ninth-grade students into two groups, balanced in terms of school grade and intelligence. The first group received a story in graphic novel format, with pictures and text; the second, only the text.

Afterwards, each group was given a test on the content of the story.

One week later, the process was reversed: the first group given the text version and the second group the graphic novels. Both groups were tested again.

In the end, Sones concluded that “a strong trend in favour of the picture continuity was indicated by the two sets of results” (p.238).

In the **first test**, the **first group scored significantly higher** than the second group. In the **second test**, the **second group showed a significantly higher improvement** than the first.

Sones inferred from this that children in the first group had neared saturation after reading the graphic novels, so were unable to learn much more from text.

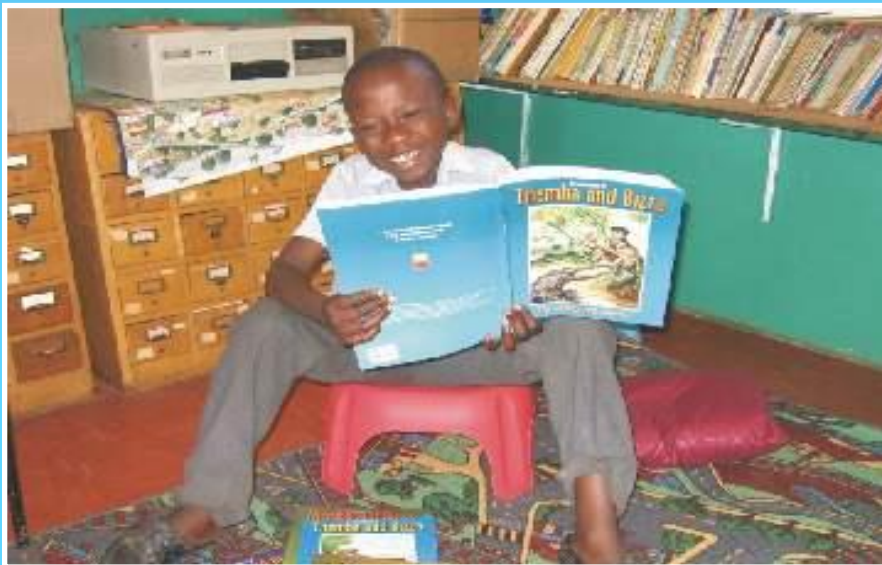
Those in the second group did not reach saturation until after they had reread the material in graphic novel format.

Sones noted that students of “low and middle intelligence levels” (p.239) were especially helped by the visual quality of graphic novels.



# GRAPHIC NOVELS ARE AN INNOVATIVE TOOL FOR LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

The average graphic novel introduces children to nearly twice as many new words as the average children's book and more than five times as many as the average child-adult conversation.



*(1993 study published in The Journal of Child Language)*

**They are an excellent intermediate step to new or difficult subjects.**

Épreuve de Français

30

NOM : Simon Delenne POINTS : 30

SECTION A : Compréhension

*Excellent!*

*Lis l'histoire et réponds aux questions :*

**LES AVENTURES DE BRAD**  
EVAN L'ÉTOILE

LE MUSÉE DU LOUVE. AINSTAMTRE  
LE PARC DE LA VILLETTE. IL Y A TANT  
D'INTERÊTS À VISITER!

ESGÈREZ-VOUS RANGER  
LE PARC DE LA VILLETTE  
SI VOUS PUEZ!

SI VOUS ALLEZ AU PARC DE  
LA VILLETTE, IL FAUT PRENDRE  
LE MÉTRO. LA STATION EST AU  
BOUT DE LA RUE À BRUXELLES.

ESGÈREZ-VOUS C'EST  
QUELLE LIGNE POUR  
LA VILLETTE?

LA LIGNE 11  
MÈS IL Y A  
UNE SÉCONDE  
SUR CETTE LIGNE.

MÉTRO

**This French test requires the learner to answer questions based on the text and graphics of a comic page.**

# **GRAPHIC NOVELS REFLECT POPULAR CULTURE**

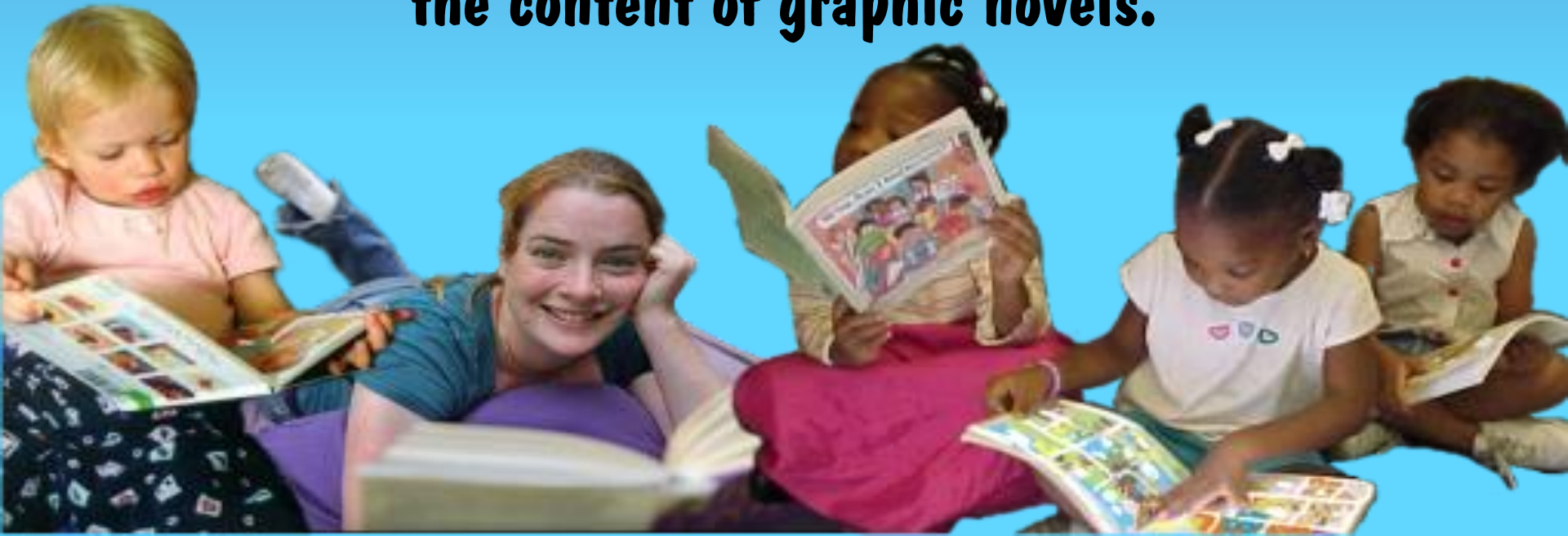
**INCORPORATING POPULAR CULTURE  
IN THE SCHOOL AND LIBRARY  
HELPS BRIDGE THE SEPARATION  
CHILDREN FEEL BETWEEN LIFE  
IN AND OUT OF THE SCHOOL OR LIBRARY.**

# **GRAPHIC NOVELS ARE PERMANENT**

**Many visual media such as film and animation,  
dictate the pace of the viewing.**

**Graphic novels have a permanent nature,  
allowing the reader to set the pace.**

**This allows readers of all aptitudes to absorb  
the content of graphic novels.**



# **GRAPHIC NOVELS MOTIVATE**

**For all these reasons, children have a natural attraction to graphic novels.**

**As a result, projects built around graphic novels often receive more attention,  
enthusiasm,  
participation,  
interest.**

**IF GRAPHIC NOVELS CAN INSPIRE A JOY OF READING,  
THEN THEY CAN STIR THE NEW READER  
TO DISCOVER BOOKS PAINTED WITH WORDS AS WELL,  
AND TO ENJOY THEM ALL.**

# in the words of a small graphic novel fan...

23 JUL 2007 13:07 VAN DIJK & DESMARAIS No. 8541

~~Dear~~ J I LOVE your books  
your Pictures are amazing  
every time I go to the library  
I pick your amazing books your  
books are my favorite books in the  
whole university and I saw the  
poster it is amazing you are  
COOL I CAN wait to see your  
new books from the one and  
only Thimba and bizza fan  
Wandisile and I have your  
book sted! today

Langa zone - 15 NO. 15 Harry Gwala  
Street Wandisile Myeki