



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
2025 Volume III: Graphic Narratives as Teaching Tools

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## Comics in the Classroom: Exploring Animal Adaptations

Guide for Curriculum Unit 25.03.02, published September 2025

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This unit combines science and literacy by using graphic novels to support all types of learners, including students with disabilities. Students will be reading *A Journey Into Adaptations with Max Axiom* by Agnieszka Biskup, an engaging graphic novel that explains how animals adapt to their environments. Students will learn how to read and understand graphic novels, focusing on how pictures and words work together to tell a story while strengthening both their knowledge in science as well as visual literacy and writing skills.

Throughout the unit, students will collaboratively build vocabulary, read, and participate in discussions to deepen their understanding. They will also complete a research project on a local animal, gather information, and create their own original comic that mirrors the graphic novel read as a class. This gives students a fun and creative way to demonstrate their comprehension while also developing their skills in research, writing and art.

The unit is designed for 3rd-5th grade inclusion classrooms, but can be adjusted for other grades and subjects. Instruction supports multiple learning styles through visuals, templates, partner work, and scaffolded instruction. The final comics will be shared with classmates and turned into a collective classroom book. This unit helps students build reading and science skills while also encouraging independence, creativity, and collaboration.

(Developed for English Language Arts, grade 4; recommended for English Language Arts and Science, grades 3-5)

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