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

The Meta of Manga: The Thinking Behind Creating a Graphic Novel

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by Alima McKnight

The Meta of Manga: The Thinking Behind Creating a Graphic Novel curriculum unit is designed to impart much of what the YNI intensive seminar "Graphic Narratives as Teaching Tools" led by Marta Figlerowicz sought to do to even more teachers. This unit endeavors to expand the thinking around graphic narratives that many teachers have. The seminar used an engaging instructor, a multifaceted reading list, and collaborative conversations to help fellows in the seminar become quasi-experts. This curriculum unit will help teachers to articulate a rationale and create a procedure for implementing graphic narratives in their classrooms. The artifact created to accompany this unit is in fact a graphic narrative that tells the story of how to create graphic narratives. In a simple, yet catchy turn of phrase, this unit can be thought of as Comics in the Classroom! The unit will explore three avenues for GN use: as a supplement to a novel being read by students created by the teacher, as a way to complete a summary or retelling of a story by students, or as a vehicle for self expression in the writing parts of the literacy classroom. This unit is geared towards 3rd to 8th grade students.

(Developed for ELA, grades 4-5; recommended for ELA and Literacy in any language, grades 3-12)

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