



## **Graphic Novels: Summer Reading 2021**

Dear Graphic Novels students,

Welcome to a different genre of literature! I am excited you have decided to join our class as we not only analyze the literature of a graphic novel, but also how the illustrations and framing of the story add more depth and value to the story. A key component of this class will involve creating our own graphic works. Therefore, the expectations are that you will be required to illustrate panels in some fashion. You are welcome to draw your own illustrations, print out images to use, and/or another method, but I want to be up front with the expectations that art (even poorly done art with passion) is a component within the class.

To jump-start our discussion of graphic literature, you will read one book over summer break and produce a written analysis of it. The graphic novel below demonstrates some of the various directions the genre has expanded from since its comic origins.

*Scott Pilgrim's Precious Little Life* (Bryan Lee O'Malley)

(You may choose to buy your book or borrow it; either way, you should have your book available, digitally or in a print copy, for the first week of the semester.)

Keep a journal as you read, making notes about the story and its construction. Pay particular attention to how the creator directs your attention through the interaction of text and image. You may use any notebook or application you like to keep this journal. Please be thorough in this work, commenting on each discrete unit of the novel. This may require you to stop periodically and collect your thoughts after particular sections.

When you have finished reading and journaling, write a 1-2 page analysis considering how the text and images combine to create meaning; point to several specific scenes or incidents to ground your analysis. When citing a scene in a graphic novel remember to use page numbers with your in-text citations and highlight a specific panel if necessary.

For example: "In the middle panel on page 63, Vernon completely removes the frame around the image in order to ..." OR "The graphic bubble 'Scott Pilgrim is dating a high schooler' (O'Malley 1) implies to the reader from the very start that this is somehow unacceptable. Indeed, on the next page Pilgrim is identified as 23 which alerts us to the conflict immediately ..."

**Your journal and essay are due in hard copy form on the first day of class.**

If you have questions, feel free to email me, better earlier than too late.

Hope you enjoy your break and your reading!

Brian Parsons

[brian@crossroadscollegeprep.org](mailto:brian@crossroadscollegeprep.org)

**Graphic Novels for our course:**

- *The Complete Maus* by Art Spiegelman (ISBN 9780141014081)
- *American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Yang (ISBN 9781596431522)
- *Watchmen, Vol. 1* by Alan Moore & Dave Gibbons (ISBN 9781779501127)
- *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* by Marjane Satrapi (ISBN 9780375714573)
- *March: Book One* by John Lewis and Andrew Aydin (ISBN 9781603093002)