

Can Graphic Novels Help Struggling Readers?

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Introduction

In 1978, Will Eisner (2006) wrote “A Contract with God”, popularizing the term “graphic novel”. From that point, the popularity of the graphic novel genre escalated. Graphic novels were taken from their book format and turned into summer blockbuster movies generating billions of dollars. New authors emerged with their own graphic novel characters and storylines. Sales of graphic novels skyrocketed from \$75 million in 2001 to \$120 million in 2003 (Raiteri, 2003). But what is it exactly that makes these books so appealing to readers?

Graphic novels appeal to a younger demographic by offering a variety of context coupled with visuals and can be used across the curriculum (Schwarz, 2002). This wave of popularity has not gone unnoticed. In 1992, Art Spiegelman won a Pulitzer Prize for his work “Maus” bringing the graphic novel to the forefront of the industry. With an obvious demand and acceptance for the genre, why don’t educators value graphic novels as teaching tools in the classroom, especially for struggling readers?

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to better understand why educators often don’t consider graphic novels as “really” reading. Why do educators not consider graphic novels quality reading material for struggling readers? By identifying the benefits of graphic novels for reluctant readers, educators will be able to better understand their place in literacy development.

Review of Related Literature

Schwarz (2002) identified graphic novels as fiction and non-fiction books that were picture heavy in a traditional comic format. Graphic novels offer an alternative to traditional textbooks and were used across the curriculum to communicate difficult concepts with not only words but also pictures to help students construct meaning from the text. Research suggested

that reading graphic novels actually required more complex cognitive skills than a traditional text. Graphic novels were found to be exceptionally helpful in teaching literacy skills like dialogue and inspiring students to write. Difficult concepts in areas like science and history were brought into a visual representation with graphic novels. Readers were able to connect to what they read in a more meaningful way whether it was for learning or enjoyment (Schwarz, 2002).

Spear, Benjamin, and Copeland (2005) explained graphic novels are a different type of book format, not a separate genre. This confused readers who wonder if a book was a comic or a graphic novel. Graphic novels were explained as a book-length narrative that comes in a variety of different genres but used a format of minimal words and sequential art to describe the characters and tell the story (Spear et al., 2005).

According to Connors (2010), graphic novels, predecessor, the comic, became popular in the 1940's with the youth culture. In response to their popularity, graphic novels were demonized by educators because they were deemed detrimental to reading and seen as poorly written, poorly printed and contained badly drawn illustrations. Literary critics encouraged educators and parents to shun graphic novels and embrace the classics (Connors, 2010).

Students saw peers reading graphic novels and shunned them often calling them nerds or misfits. This stigmatized graphic novels further by detracting from the popularity of the book format (Connors, 2010). However, some students realized the value of graphic novels and were willing to stand by their reading selection regardless of the unfavorable stereotype associated with the format (Connors, 2010).

Hutton (2015) emphasized that graphic novel creators wanted to set themselves apart from superhero comic creators and the stereotypes their fans embodied. Rebranded briefly as art comics, the graphic novel sought a home base out of a traditional book store rather than a comic

specialty shop allowing for wider market access (Hutton, 2015). Art Spiegelman, creator of *Maus* (1987), searched for a publisher that would accept his graphic novel that transcended the comic book but was not quite a traditional book format. Pantheon, a subsidiary of Random House, took a risk on publishing *Maus* and it paid off as a publishing success culminating in a Pulitzer Prize Special Citation in 1992. This catapulted graphic novels into the mainstream for readers (Hutton, 2015). As a crossover book, *Maus* did something that no other graphic novel or comic book had done at the time by creating a demand across the market and being welcomed into chain book stores (Hutton, 2015).

Post *Maus* (Hutton, 2015) graphic novels experienced burgeoning success not only in sales but also in interest as a usable tool in the classroom for reluctant readers to build fluency and grade appropriate reading skills. Teachers Smetana and Grisham (2012) explored graphic novels as a resource in “Tier 2 Response to Intervention” programs as cited in No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004). Students in the research group demonstrated below average reading skills and limited vocabulary which impacted their understanding of texts (Smetana & Grisham, 2012).

Smetana and Grisham (2012) realized two chief factors emerged with the study group’s ability to acquire reading skills. First, students could not apply what they had learned into authentic texts because they had only experienced reading in a published intervention program model rather than in a traditional book. Next, students did not seem themselves as “real readers” and were not reading outside of in-class assignments therefore they lacked exposure to a variety of reading texts because they were not interested in leisure reading (Smetana & Grisham, 2012).

Smetana and Grisham (2012) turned to graphic novels in hopes of increasing the struggling readers desire to read. When presented texts without graphics, struggling readers spent

a majority of their time decoding words rather than making meaning of the text. Graphic novels are often perceived as less threatening than traditional texts by readers because graphic novels have reduced amount of text coupled with images reducing stress on the reader to make meaning of what they are reading. In order to garner student buy in, the teachers allowed students to read the graphic novels freely and not see the books as directly connected to a school lesson.

Following their graphic novel reading session, students were presented with a literacy lesson but the tieback to the graphic novel was not made until the next meeting day. As the program progressed, the teachers reported positive changes in student reading behaviors and increases in their fluency rates. As students saw themselves as confident readers, reading comprehension soared and students sought out new materials independently for leisure reading (Smetana & Grisham, 2012).

Crowley (2015) found that recent studies have shown that when students read regularly for pleasure, their reading levels increased too. The author explained that struggling readers prefer graphic novels because they provide students with a reading outlet that illustrates the text with sequential pictures and moves at a quick pace. Graphic novels helped students to overcome their fear of reading. Often viewed as a gateway format, graphic novels lead students to other types of fiction. Many graphic novels fall into popular categories like manga, superheroes, and funny comics or are often linked to films. Graphic novels linked to films give readers an edge to comprehension as readers often have a frame of reference for the characters and the plot of the story (Crowley, 2015).

When students are exposed to opportunities at school to join clubs or take part in library lessons relating to graphic novels outside of regular schoolwork, Crowley (2015) explained that they thrive as readers. Extracurricular clubs that teach students how to write and illustrate a

graphic novel giving students a better understanding of what they are reading and empower the student to write their own graphic novel. Librarians played an important role in increasing students reading for pleasure by making a wide variety of graphic novels available. Often as students become invested in a graphic novel series, once they have completed the series they move on to more advanced reading material (Crowley, 2015).

Worthy, Moorman, and Turner (1999) wanted to know what students like to read. They deemed surveys too limiting and gave open-ended surveys instead that encouraged students to list what types of books they would like to read. The open-ended surveys allowed teachers to draw more meaning from the surveys (Worthy, et al., 1999).

In a reading preference study conducted by Worthy, Moorman, and Turner (1999), reluctant readers said they preferred to read books not commonly found in the libraries like comics, books based on movies and television, magazines and more recently published series that were difficult to find. By opening up a dialogue, educators were able to see into the minds of their reluctant readers. In fact, 65% of the students preferred comics and graphic novels (Worthy, et al., 1999).

Educators wanted to understand why students are drawn to this “light reading” material Worthy, Moorman, and Turner (1999). Comics and graphic novels have benefits like promoting fluency and linguistic competency needed for higher-level reading materials. Graphic novels empowered readers to challenge themselves with more sophisticated materials and have better attitudes towards reading as they become better readers. Findings in the study conducted by Worthy, Moorman, and Turner (1999) showed that there was a gap between what students wanted to read and what was available to them. Students were seeking out graphic novels on their own to read (Worthy, et al., 1999).

Bucher and Manning (2004) found that today's student prefers their literature to look like other forms of entertainment they enjoy and graphic novels fill that disconnect. Many educators have only been exposed to racier graphic novels like supernatural thrillers or Japanese manga and have stereotyped the format based on their limited exposure to graphic novels. Educators were encouraged to evaluate graphic novels for their appropriateness for their readers academically and socially. Teachers should preview the text and the art to examine the quality of the writing and illustrations to make sure it fits their demographic and expectations (Bucher & Manning, 2004).

Bender (2018) explained that students need to be able to make meaning from the texts they read. Meaning making is an essential skill for students to be successful readers where students extract meaning from texts based on symbols and signs within the text. Students are expected to be multimodal with their meaning making and be able to extrapolate meaning from a variety of texts, images, video, and audio (Bender, 2018).

Bender (2018) explains that graphic novels play an important role in meaning making. Often undervalued as a reading resource, graphic novels have been shown to have benefits in the classroom like helping students to construct meaning of text and improving reading comprehension in English language learners and students with disabilities. Teachers have used the books because they bring together several multimodal elements like being shorter in length than traditional texts and can be set in any genre allowing greater student buy in (Bender, 2018).

Bender's (2018) study showed that students make sense of what they are reading within a graphic novel using visual signs and written sign systems. Visual sign systems within the novel allowed students to examine creative devices within the text like font choice, color application, images, and organization of the layout to extrapolate a deeper understanding of the text. Students

used written sign systems like reading strategies, metacognitive strategies, and literary devices to connect with texts and derive a better understanding of what they read. The study encouraged educators to consider the inclusion of graphic novels into their curriculum planning as a multimodal text for struggling readers (Bender, 2018).

Weiner (2012) expressed optimism about the future of graphic novels. The graphic novel industry has gained momentum and credibility as a form of literature via mainstream readers and their appreciation of the format. Once unidimensional, graphic novels have been turned into high profile movie adaptations which garnered millions of dollars at the box office translating into an increased demand of graphic novels by readers (Weiner, 2012).

In 2002, the American Library Association held a day long symposium on graphic novels prior to their annual meeting. Graphic novelists, cartoonists, and librarians gathered to speak and learn about the merits of graphic novels. The same scenario played out in subsequent years as mainstream readers demanded access to graphic novels for their leisure reading Weiner (2012). Major publishing houses did not turn a blind eye to the emerging trend and colorized previous black and white versions of already published graphic novels to drum up new interest. Publishers ordered additional runs of previously published materials for wider audience purchase after smaller houses had experienced success with the first run of a graphic novel (Weiner, 2012).

Research Questions

This study will examine how graphic novels can build literacy in reluctant readers:

1. What are teacher's perceptions of graphic novels as a tool for literacy development?
2. How do graphic novels engage reluctant readers?

Significance of the Study

This study will be used to facilitate an understanding of why teachers do not use graphic novels for reading instruction in the classroom. This study will offer insight on alternatives to traditional reading instruction to those that are decision makers in the public school system, such as curriculum specialists, teachers, and administrators. Equally, might offer insight on graphic novel usage in the classroom to those who are not directly involved in reading education, such as publishing companies and authors, and will foster an understanding of how students can use graphic novels across the curriculum. This study will provide information that might be significant for educators concerned about the use of graphic novels in the classroom.

Method

The study will use a qualitative method. The researcher will be looking for reasons why teachers choose to not use graphic novels in the classroom for reading instruction. An online survey will be the means of gathering information from participants. Only participants that have granted permission to the researcher's study and have completed the online survey will be used in the comprehensive research findings. All participants will remain anonymous.

Participants

A non-random sampling of reading teachers and language arts curriculum coordinators involved in the Texas public school system in Austin, Texas will be the survey group used for this qualitative descriptive study on graphic novel use in the classroom. Overall the sampled population will include 350 teacher participants; 50 language arts teacher curriculum coordinator participants; and 300 teacher participants who teach reading instruction in a classroom setting. Representation for the participant group will come from the three levels of public education

(elementary, middle, and high school) and from various developed environments (urban, suburban, and rural) within a 100-mile radius of Austin, Texas.

Campus administrators will be directly contacted via email to refer their campus candidates to the study. The email will explain the logic behind the study, expectations, and will be asked if their campus would like to participate in return for a copy of the study. If they agree to participate, the administrator will refer participants from their campus to the researcher. Participant candidates will receive a detailed cover letter explaining the research and the importance of their participation. Written permission will be obtained from the administrator and the teacher participants via an online form. Once permission is granted, teacher participants will receive a link to the online survey which will allow educators to participate in the study. Teacher participants will answer a questionnaire including several 5-point Likert response styled questions. Study results will be anonymous.

Instrumentation

The research questions for this survey will be developed by the researcher addressing specific study objectives including participant's perceptions of graphic novels and how to use graphic novels to engage reluctant readers. Demographic information will also be collected. All participant research will be conducted through an online digital survey platform, SurveyMonkey. According to their website (www.surveymonkey.com), SurveyMonkey provides free, online, customizable surveys that allow the data to be downloaded and sorted. The survey will contain 15 questions divided into 2 sections: demographics and educator perceptions of graphic novels related to using graphic novels in the classroom. The field of 15 questions will be comprised of 11 Likert style questions and four multiple choice questions. The Likert style questions will assess the teacher participant's viewpoints on using graphic novels in the classroom.

Prior to the start of the study, a pilot participant group comprised of reading and language arts teachers from various grades will be tested with survey questions gathered from previous graphic novel research. Questions covering the study's goals of discovering teacher's perceptions of graphic novels and ways to engage reluctant readers will be included. The online platform for the survey tool will allow participants to remain anonymous. Once the data has been collected, answers will be analyzed to look for any central themes emerging as to reasons why educators do not use graphic novels in the classroom for reading instruction.

Design/Procedure

School administrators in Central Texas schools were contacted and asked for potential candidates for this research proposal from their campus. Administrators shared contact information of potential candidates with the researcher. The researcher then sent out invitations to participate to each potential candidate. Candidates that wanted to participate replied to the researcher with their completed permission form and then were sent a link to the online survey. 350 participants were selected by the researcher to participate in this survey. Participants were teachers at Central Texas elementary, middle and high schools.

Surveys are commonly used in educational research. Research was carried out through a 15 question cross sectional survey. Cross sectional surveys allow researchers to gauge participant's opinions at a certain point in time about a topic (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The purpose of this research survey instrument was to measure current educator attitudes and their use of graphic novel as teaching tools in the classroom. This survey contained four demographic questions and 11 Likert-scale questions. Survey questions were evaluated prior to release to participants online. Each participant was given an online link to the survey after they completed their consent paperwork. Participants had two weeks to complete and submit the

survey. SurveyMonkey was chosen to host the survey and collect the data from the survey.

According to their website (www.surveymonkey.com), SurveyMonkey is an internet based survey hosting system that began in 1999. Survey responses were immediately collected and then extracted into an Excel spreadsheet at the end of the survey. Data was sorted and examined. The researcher looked for trends and similarities among participant responses. Findings were organized into a detailed written report.

Data Analysis

Table 1 displays information gathered from the 350 participant's demographic information from the multiple choice questions.

Table 1

Basic Demographics of Participants

1. What is your gender?	
Male	175
Female	175
2. How many years of teaching experience do you have?	
First year	10
1-5 years	60
6-10 years	130
11-15 years	100
16+ years	50
3. What is your school district type?	
Urban	125
Suburban	125
Rural	100
4. What school type best fits your current campus?	
Elementary (Grades K-5)	100
Middle School (Grades 6-8)	100
High School (Grades 9-12)	150

Table 2 displays the data gathered from the 350 participant's opinions on use of graphic novels in the classroom from the Likert scale questions.

Table 2*Educator Opinions on Graphic Novel Use in the Classroom*

Question Number	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
5. I feel supported by my administrator to use graphic novels in the classroom.	3%	5.25%	9.5%	51.25%	31%
6. My district encourages use of graphic novels in my curriculum to teach.		17.25%	15.75%	39.45%	27.55%
7. My students like graphic novels.				11.3	88.7%
8. I have graphic novels in my classroom library.					100%
9. My school library has a diverse, adequate selection of graphic novels for students.		5.7%		24.3%	70%
10. I feel well prepared to teach reading strategies with graphic novels in the classroom.	19.4%	49.2%	2%	19.6%	9.8%
11. My district curriculum team supports teacher education on using graphic novels as teaching tools.	10.1%	18.3%	30.9%	31%	9.7%
12. As part of my teaching curriculum, I use at least one graphic novel to teach with during the school year.	5%	20%		50%	25%
13. My students bring graphic novels from home or other libraries to read in class.				20%	80%
14. I would like to attend additional training on using graphic novels in the classroom.					100%
15. I have attended additional training on using graphic novels to teach with in the classroom.	50%	20%		20%	10%

Data from the Likert type question portion of the survey revealed that all of the teachers agreed that students like to read graphic novels and will often bring their own graphic novels to class to read. Most of the educators (94.3%) agree that their school library has an adequate selection of graphic novels for students to pick from. All teachers report that they have graphic novels in their classroom libraries for student access. Three-fourths of the teachers used at least one graphic novel to teach with in the classroom during the school year. The research showed that more than half (68.6%) of the teachers felt that they were not well-trained enough to teach reading strategies with graphic novels. All teachers reported that they would like to attend additional training on how to use graphic novels in the classroom.

Research Methods Report #1

Correlational Design

Correlational design, as described by Creswell and Guetterman (2019), allows researchers to see how the variables in this quantitative design model are related. This model describes and measures the degree of association between two or more variables and the strength (or lack of) between the variables allowing the researcher to predict an outcome. Data is generally plotted in graphs such as scatter plots and matrices showing the relationships allowing researchers to visualize the trends. Causations cannot be derived from correlational studies. An example of a correlation design study would be a six-week study where body fat percentage is measured weekly and plotted against the minutes spent on cardiovascular exercise in a week (Creswell and Guetterman, 2019).

Causal-Comparative Design

This second type of quantitative design described by Creswell and Guetterman (2019) is causal-comparative, which allows researchers to compare the outcome of two groups when

exposed to the same variable. The causal-comparative method uses two different groups that are exposed to the same dependent variables. This method is similar to experimental research but no experimental manipulation takes place. A downfall of the causal-comparative method is that researchers must carefully interpret the results because they have less control over the study. A relationship might exist but the research is inconclusive (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). An example of this type of design model would be giving a survey to the students in two different high schools in the same school district on the satisfaction of their teachers for particular classes. Since the schools do not have the same teachers, student populations, or learning environments, it is highly unlikely that both schools would yield the same results on the survey.

Experimental Design

Creswell and Guetterman (2019) explain that experimental design follows the scientific method for research to establish possible cause and effect. One variable is manipulated while all others are held constant so that the changes can be attributed to that single variable. Participants are randomly selected to remove bias allowing for equal distribution in groups. In this method, threats to validity exist and must be ruled out to make valid observations from the data.

Experimental research comes with ethical issues such as when to conclude the experiment or eliminate participants that might benefit from the experimental treatment (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). An example of an experimental research design would be a study designed to test the effects of headache medicine. Participants with headaches would be selected at random and then either given 20 minutes to experience headache pills, a placebo, or asked to do exercises from a yoga DVD with postures to relieve headaches.

Survey Design

When designing a survey, Creswell and Guetterman (2019), recommend researchers should look for an instrument that is already created. If one cannot be found to meet the needs of the researcher, a survey must be made. This process includes writing questions, establishing question construction and then pilot testing the questions. Surveys should be replicable. Two main types of surveys are used. Longitudinal surveys are done at specific points throughout time with participants that have identified desirable group characteristics. Cross-sectional surveys include data taken at a specific point in time (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

According to Creswell and Guetterman (2019), researchers must find participants for the survey. In order to locate participants, researchers can offer an incentive for participating. If the topic of the survey is of interest to the participant, this can also be a motivator to participate. Surveys should take less than 10 minutes to complete and begin with clear expectations for the purpose of the research (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Creswell and Guetterman (2019) suggest that prior to the survey being distributed, pre-contact with potential participants is made via phone or email. This lets potential participants know about the survey and to anticipate the information being sent out. This pre-contact helps participants to feel appreciated and valuable to the process. A survey invitation (mail, email, or in-person) is then sent and should be personalized to the company or person. Once a survey participant has agreed to participate and completed a study agreement, reminders might be necessary to encourage the participant to complete the survey. Reminders can be sent through the mail, email or phone call or text to encourage participants to complete the survey. Deadlines are imminent in survey design. Quick deadlines should be avoided and special attention should be

paid to the time of year (holidays, global events) the survey is sent out to maximize the number of respondents (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Creswell and Guetterman (2019) explain that survey design has inherent problems. Surveys require participant consent in order to use the data. Once the data has been assessed, the instrument must be disposed of properly to ensure the safety of personal information shared with researchers. The survey matter may include sensitive topics that participants might not want to answer. On some occasions, incentives (money, goods, and access to research data) can be disbursed and this must be managed by the researcher (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Mixed Methods Design

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) view mixed method design as the third research paradigm; a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. Both methods utilize empirical observations to answer research questions. They see it as techniques that are closer to what researchers actually use in practice. When the methods are combined it allows for a better understanding of the data (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Creswell and Guetterman (2019) explain that mixed-method design is more time consuming but yields stronger results. There are three main types of mixed-method research designs: Convergent, explanatory sequential, and exploratory sequential (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Convergent Design

Creswell and Guetterman (2019) explain convergent design as the collection of quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously in order to compare or converge the two sets of results and discrepancies. The benefit of this design is that it combines the assets of each type of data. The qualitative data provides context for the study whereas the quantitative data provides a

foundation. It can be difficult to merge the two data sets and explain how they are alike without additional research (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Explanatory Sequential Design

Creswell and Guetterman (2019) explain that the explanatory sequential method is a two-phase model and most popular in educational research. This design explains the quantitative results with the qualitative data where priority is given to the quantitative data collection and analysis. The quantitative data is collected first and the qualitative or supporting research is used to refine the results from the quantitative data (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Exploratory Sequential Design

Qualitative research, as described by Creswell and Guetterman (2019), in the exploratory sequential design model is in two phases; it includes interviews and observations to better understand the problem. Once the phenomenon is explored, the testing instrument is designed. Qualitative data is collected from a small population to gain on the problem and then the quantitative data is collected from a larger population (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Research Methods Report #2

Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research

Creswell and Guetterman (2019) explain that qualitative research explores non-numerical data and how to make meaning of the data. This research focuses on examining the participant's perceptions and the researcher learns from the participants. It is meant to explore the participant's views and researchers observe participants in their natural environment. Studies can be emergent design allowing the study to change if needed. Data collection in qualitative research can be vast and time-consuming to organize and analyze (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Quantitative research, according to Creswell and Guetterman (2019), allows the researcher to explore a research problem based on a trend or a need to explain more details about a topic. Variables are necessary for quantitative research to understand the relationships between the components of the study. Studies utilize a large number of participants that are generally surveyed (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

In both qualitative and quantitative research methods, researchers collect and analyze the data in order to relate, compare, and analyze trends that emerge. Creswell and Guetterman (2019), explain that each type of research has a set design the researcher is expected to follow. Qualitative research data takes the forms of words that are communicated via interviews, documents, observations, or audiovisual recordings. End reports are less structured and often contain direct quotes from participants. Quantitative research is characterized by the need for a hypothesis. Data comes from surveys and the numbers are reduced to statistics to analyze. A formal report concludes quantitative research that includes extensive statistics (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Narrative Research

Narrative research, as described by Casey (1995), as an overarching category of research that is strongly grounded in storytelling. It describes the lives of individuals through stories about their lives and experiences. Creswell and Guetterman (2019) add that data gathering can focus on one single person or a group where the researcher interviews participants, collects data and then sequences it into chronological order. Participants must be willing to share their stories. Ethical issues can arise in the retelling of the story because the researcher might not accurately report the story as told or participants might forget parts of the story. Reports include the setting and people involved and must be validated prior to completion (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Narrative

research would be advantageous to use when documenting people who all experienced the same event such as the Chernobyl explosion.

Ethnographic Research

Ethnographic research is described by Creswell and Guetterman (2019) as a type of qualitative research that studies cultural phenomena where the researcher studies society through the viewpoint of the participant to better understand what they encounter. McQueen and Zimmerman (2006) explain ethnographic research comes from the study of anthropology and can be viewed as an extended field trip to experience a culture. Researchers are immersed in their participant's environment for quite some time to gain an understanding of the challenges, motivations, and settings that occur. The time of day and environmental setting are important pieces of data to include in research observations (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

According to Creswell and Guetterman (2019), unstructured interviews with open-ended questions are common methods of information gathering in ethnographic research to understand the participant's behaviors in acts, activities, and events. The sample size may be as few as 10 participants however enough observations to create a saturation point are necessary. In this type of research, data is organized, analyzed for patterns, and then synthesized to understand what the key patterns and insights are from the research. Ethnographic research would be advantageous to use to define social norms for a population (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). For example, a study on the social norms of teenagers who smoke cigarettes compared to peers that do not smoke cigarettes.

Case Study Research

Creswell and Guetterman (2019) explain case study research as research that examines phenomena happening to one test subject in a bound system. The participant can be a person, a

school, or a city, but just one test subject. Case studies provide an in-depth study of the case and are generally bound by time or space restrictions. Multiple sources of data like interviews, documents, and artifacts are used in this process and compiled to create a bigger conclusion (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Case studies are difficult to replicate because of their unique nature and results cannot be generalized. Case study research is the opposite of experimental research (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Case study research would be advantageous to use in medicine where researchers are investigating patients use of a certain drug and the effects it has on their body compared to others using the same drug.

Action Research vs. Formal Research

Creswell and Guetterman (2019) explain that the primary difference between action and formal research is that action research is completed in an educational setting where the researcher engages with the participants while conducting the research. Action research is dynamic, practical, and addresses an actual problem thus having immediate benefits for education. Researchers will often collaborate with colleagues and co-participants in the research (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Formal research, often considered scientific and hypothesis-driven, can be done anywhere and includes rigorous statistical analysis. This approach generally follows a traditional format for reporting and contains five sections including introduction, review of literature, methods, results and discussion. (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Creswell and Guetterman (2019) suggest that a researcher might choose action research to collect data for a survey because the researcher might want to research problems in their own classroom or school so they can improve outcomes for students or staff members. Proximity to the research participants is a benefit for collecting permission and survey data from participants.

In addition, follow up information can be collected in personal interviews with open-ended questions (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Assessing Teacher Use of Graphic Novels in Reading Instruction

I. DEMOGRAPHICS

1. What gender do you identify with? ___ Male ___ Female
2. How many years of teaching experience do you have?
___ First Year ___ 1-5 years ___ 6-10 years ___ 11-15 years ___ 16+ years
3. What is your school district type?
___ Urban ___ Suburban ___ Rural
4. What school type best fits your current campus?
___ Elementary (Grades K-5)
___ Middle School (Grades 6-8)
___ High School (Grades 9-12)

Assessing Teacher Use of Graphic Novels in Reading Instruction Questionnaire, p. 2**II. Educator Opinions**

Using the following 1-5 scale, please indicate by selecting the most correct response, the degree to which you agree with the statements listed below. Select the box that best matches your response:

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree

1	2	3	4	5	Question
					5. I feel supported by my administrator to use graphic novels in the classroom.
					6. My district encourages use of graphic novels in my curriculum to teach.
					7. My students like graphic novels.
					8. I have graphic novels in my classroom library.
					9. My school library has a diverse, adequate selection of graphic novels for students.
					10. I feel well prepared to teach reading strategies with graphic novels in the classroom.
					11. My district curriculum team supports teacher education on using graphic novels as teaching tools.
					12. As part of my teaching curriculum, I use at least one graphic novel to teach with during the school year.
					13. My students bring graphic novels from home or other libraries to read in class.
					14. I would like to attend additional training on using graphic novels in the classroom.
					15. I have attended additional training on using graphic novels to teach with in the classroom.