



NCBLA Educational Resources

STAR WARS JEDI ACADEMY: A NEW CLASS

BY JARRETT J. KROSOCZKA

STAR WARS Jedi Academy: A New Class is the fourth book in the STAR WARS Jedi Academy graphic novel series. The books are recommended for readers in grades 3 through 7.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why is Victor changing schools?
- When Victor arrives at his new school, he meets other students and he meets teachers. He writes about them in his journal:
 - Who is Ms. Catera?
 - Who is Yoda?
 - To whom, from his own life, does Victor compare Yoda?
- Give examples of wise things that Yoda said to Victor to help him.
- Using examples, describe how Victor and his sister get along.
- When Victor writes in his journal, he labels his entries by the days of the week. What are the names of the days in Victor's language? (Monday, Triday, Quadday, Hexaday)
- Does Victor do well at his new school? What are some examples of when he is successful—and when he is not?
- What is the turning point in the story that allows Victor to realize the true characters of Zach and of Artemis?
- Why does Zach really want to be friends with Victor?
- What does the phrase “You can't tell a book by its cover” mean? How can it be applied to what happens with Victor's relationship with these two boys?
- The end-of-year awards, published in the school newspaper, *Padawan*, represent each of the characters in the story. Explain why each character received the award they did.

ACTIVITY: CREATE A STAR WARS CHARACTER AND A NEW STORY

In this activity, students will create their own Star Wars character and then write a story that includes their new character.

Create a new Star Wars character and create a character profile for their creation.

1. First discuss the different kinds of story characters, then have your students create an extensive and detailed profile of their character!
 - Will their character be a protagonist or an antagonist? Will their character be a main character or a supporting character?
 - Is their character human or some kind of alien?
 - What does their character look like?
 - What kind of family does the character come from?
 - What planet is the character from? Does the character live in a city? A small town? The countryside? The wilderness?
 - What does the character eat?
 - How does it breathe?
 - Does the character wear clothes? If yes, what kinds of clothes?
 - What is the character's favorite hobby or activity? What talents does the character have?
 - What negative personality traits might the character have?
2. Ask your students to create a few drawings of their character, alone and in action situations. They can also create drawings of their character's home, neighborhood, and planet.

Write a Star Wars story featuring their character.

Have students write their own Star Wars story featuring their character in a lead or supporting role. Your students can use the whole existing Star Wars universe to create their own story—but must somehow use their own character in a meaningful way in the story. The story should have a beginning, middle, and ending.

Your students might want to refer to Jack Gantos' book, *Writing Radar: Using Your Journal to Snoop Out and Craft Great Stories*, for some story writing tips!

ACTIVITY: STUDENTS' STAR WARS STORIES, WITH A TWIST!

Jarrett Krosoczka uses a variety of visual and written storytelling techniques to involve readers in his book *Star Wars Jedi Academy: A New Class*. Have your students read through the book and identify all Krosoczka's storytelling techniques. (He uses journal entries, school newspaper articles, comic strips, hand-written notes, texting, and much more!)

After students have created their own character and written, and rewritten, their initial story, have them choose one to three of the written and visual storytelling techniques employed in *Star Wars Jedi Academy: A New Class*, to put a new twist on their own stories.

ONLINE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The following online resources provide information related to graphic novels and comics:

Comics in Education by Gene Luen Yang

<http://www.humblecomics.com/comicsedu/>

Articles and Interviews by Brigid Alverson

Brigid Alverson writes about comics and graphic novels for *School Library Journal*. She is the editor of the *Good Comics for Kids* blog and has been reading comics since she was four. She has an MFA in printmaking and has worked as a book editor and a newspaper reporter; now she is assistant to the mayor of Melrose, Massachusetts. In addition to editing GC4K, she writes about comics and graphic novels at MangaBlog, SLJTeen, Publishers Weekly Comics World, Comic Book Resources, MTV Geek, and Good E-Reader.com.

- “Teaching With Graphic Novels”
<http://www.slj.com/2014/09/books-media/the-graphic-advantage-teaching-with-graphic-novels/>
- “Good Comics for Kids”
<http://talkingwithtim.com/wordpress/2008/07/16/brigid-alverson-on-good-comics-for-kids/>
- “Just Another Day in an LGBTQ Comic”
<http://www.slj.com/2017/05/diversity/just-another-day-in-an-lgbtq-comic/>
- “The People’s Comics: Using the Graphic Format to Teach About Current Events”
<http://www.slj.com/2017/08/books-media/the-peoples-comics-using-the-graphic-format-to-teach-about-current-events/>
- “Teaching with Science Comics”
<http://www.slj.com/2017/06/resources/teaching-with-science-comics/>
- “A nonfiction roundup of Graphic Novels”
<http://www.slj.com/2017/01/teens-ya/nonfiction-graphic-novels-give-these-to-fans-of-march/>
- “The immigrant experience in graphic novels”
<http://www.slj.com/2016/08/diversity/graphic-novels-portray-bicultural-america/>
- “Graphic novels that tie in with video games”
<http://www.slj.com/2016/10/books-media/game-changers-books-based-on-video-games/>
- Brigid Alverson Talk on “Graphic Novels for Kids”
<http://blogs.slj.com/goodcomicsforkids/2017/05/08/an-introduction-to-graphic-novels-for-children/>
- “Interview: Eric Kallenborn on Graphic Novels in the Classroom”
<http://blogs.slj.com/goodcomicsforkids/2017/08/16/interview-eric-kallenborn-on-graphic-novels-in-the-classroom/>

GRAPHIC NOVEL BOOKLISTS

The following online booklists from authoritative sources recommend graphic novels for different age levels:

- “Graphic Novels: Read the Pictures”
<http://www.readingrockets.org/booklists/graphic-novels-read-pictures>
- “Graphic Novels for Kids: Classroom Ideas, Booklists, and More”
<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/graphic-novels-kids-classroom-ideas-booklists-and-more>
- “19 Graphic Novels That Engage Students and Keep Them Reading”
<http://www.readingrockets.org/blogs/aiming-access/19-graphic-novels-engage-students-and-keep-them-reading>
- “Graphic Novels: Selected Titles for Children and Teens”
<https://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/detailListBooks.asp?idBookLists=192>
- “Graphic Novels”
<https://www.commonensemedia.org/lists/graphic-novels#>
- “The Best Comics for Your Classroom: A List for All Grade Levels”
<http://www.graphicclassroom.org/2008/01/best-comics-for-your-classroom-list-for.html>
- “Graphic Novels Reading Lists: 2016 Update”
<http://www.ala.org/alsc/publications-resources/book-lists/graphicnovels2016>
- “Great Graphic Novels for Middle School”
<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/lists/great-graphic-novels-middle-school/>
- “Powerful Graphic Novels for Middle School”
<https://www.edutopia.org/article/powerful-graphic-novels-middle-school>
- “Top 10 Graphic Novels 2015”
<http://www.slj.com/2015/11/reviews/best-of/top-10-graphic-novels-2015/>
- “Top 10 Graphic Novels 2016”
<http://www.slj.com/2016/11/reviews/best-of/top-10-graphic-novels-2016/>
- “Comic Relief: Thirty-Nine Graphic Novels that Kids Can’t Resist”
<http://www.slj.com/2011/07/collection-development/comic-relief-thirty-nine-graphic-novels-that-kids-cant-resist/>
- “Graphic Novels for (Really) Young Readers”
<http://www.slj.com/2006/03/collection-development/graphic-novels-for-really-young-readers/>

ARTICLES: USING GRAPHIC NOVELS IN THE CLASSROOM

The following online articles provide information about using comics and graphic novels in the classrooms:

- “Graphic Novels for Young Kids” by Reading Rockets
<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/graphic-novels-young-kids>
- “Graphic Novel Conversation with ESL Teacher Colleen Dykema”
<http://www.readingrockets.org/blogs/book-life/graphic-novel-conversion>
- “Using Comics and Graphic Novels in the Classroom” by NCTE
<http://www.ncte.org/magazine/archives/122031>
- “Eek! Comics in the Classroom” by Linda Starr
http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/profdev/profdev105.shtml
- “Comic Book Science in the Classroom” NPR Broadcast with Sarah Hughes
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4581832>
- “Hamlet' too hard? Try a comic book” by Teresa Mendez
<https://www.csmonitor.com/2004/1012/p11s01-legn.html>
- “Graphic Novels in the Classroom: A Teacher Roundtable”
<https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/teaching-graphic-novels/>
- “Graphic Novels: The Bridge Between Visual and Print Media” by Stan Steiner
<https://www.literacyworldwide.org/blog/literacy-daily/2017/05/08/graphic-novels-the-bridge-between-visual-and-print-media>

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR COMIC STRIPS

The following online websites and articles provide lesson plans for creating comic strips.

Websites

- Comics in the Classroom
<http://comicsintheclassroom.net/>
- Teaching Comics
<http://www.teachingcomics.org/>

Articles and Lesson Plans

- “Comic Strip Creations Lesson Plan”
<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plans/teaching-content/comic-strip-creations/>
- “Comic Creator”
<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/comic-creator-30021.html?tab=4>
- “Comics in the Classroom as an Introduction to Genre Study”
<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/comics-classroom-introduction-genre-188.html>
- “Comics in the Classroom as an Introduction to Narrative Structure”
<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/comics-classroom-introduction-narrative-223.html>
- “Book Report Alternative: Comic Strips and Cartoon Squares”
<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/book-report-alternative-comic-195.html>
- “Using Cartoons and Comic Strips”
<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/using-cartoons-comic-strips>
- “Creating Comic Strips”
http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-3-4/creating_comic_strips.aspx
- “The Secret in the Cellar: A Written in Bone Forensic Mystery from Colonial America”
<http://anthropology.si.edu/writteninbone/comic/index.html>
- “Creative Writing Using Comics Lesson Plan”
<https://eduref.org/lessons/language-arts/wcp0013>

ABOUT THE EDUCATION GUIDE CONTRIBUTORS

Author and illustrator Mary Brigid Barrett taught high school art in public schools in Ohio early in her career and later, after moving to Massachusetts, taught illustration and writing courses at The Rhode Island School of Design. She is the president and executive director of the NCBLA. Find out more about her books at MaryBrigidBarrett.com.

Marilyn Ludolph, Ed.D, after 35 years of service in public education as a teacher and administrator (elementary and middle school principal), became an assistant professor at Dominican University. Recently retired from her position as Assistant Dean in the School of Education at Dominican University, she now resides in Western Massachusetts and teaches courses in Children’s Literature. She serves on the Advisory Board of the NCBLA.

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