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## If Your Child Doesn't Like to Read, Try Comic Books

By Shawnta S. Barnes – May 5, 2018



The first Saturday of May is Free Comic Book Day. Today, my family made our way downtown to Monument Circle to visit Downtown Comics. Our entire family left the store with new reading material. Unfortunately, some people discourage children from reading comic books. Free Comic Book Day is an opportunity to expose people to the comic book genre and draw in new readers. Here are a few reasons I, as an educator and a mom, believe we should encourage children to read comic books:

### **1. Comic books engage reluctant and struggling readers.**

One of the hardest obstacles to overcome as an English teacher is helping reluctant readers find material to read. It seems like they hate every suggestion you give. Many times, I have found those reluctant readers will give graphic novels and comic books a try. Comic books are short and won't scare off struggling readers. No kid wants to be known as a struggling reader. The only way to get better at reading is to read, but the amount of effort and energy a struggling reader must use to read a longer text many times prevents the struggling reader

from beginning any text at all. Comic books are short enough to complete even if there are gaps in the child's reading ability.

## **2. The pictures add to the story and help with reading comprehension.**

The pictures add another layer to the story. Children not only have to read the words; they also have to read the pictures. If a child cannot read a word, the illustrations can help support the child in figuring out what the word is and then the child can comprehend the plot.

## **3. The story doesn't end at the end of the issue.**

As I mentioned earlier, it is a struggle to help children find the right book. Many times when you do, the story ends once the child finishes the last page unless the book is in a series. When it comes to comic books, the story continues in the next issue and characters cross over into other series. Once you hook a child, he or she will have plenty of material to read. The more children read, even if it is comic books, the better readers they will become.

If you have free time today, stop by a local comic book store. Reading comic books is not a subpar form of reading, it is an opportunity for your child to gain a love of reading.