

Podcast Pitch

Part 1 - The What

	<i>Brown Girl Dreaming</i> and the value of diverse books in the high school classroom	High school students and explicit content: a look at <i>Fun Home</i>	<i>Brown Girl Dreaming</i> and poetry in the high school classroom	<i>Fun Home</i> and comics as an educational tool	<i>Fun Home</i> and banned books
Summary	We will explore why it is especially important for high school students, who are at a relatively impressionable age, to be exposed to diverse stories and narratives, through the example of <i>Brown Girl Dreaming</i> .	We will discuss whether <i>Fun Home</i> is an appropriate text for high school students: is it too explicit for minors, or is it in fact especially relevant to them considering that it explores the growth of a teenager?	We will explore traditional notions of what kinds of poetry should be included in high school curricula (older and shorter poems) and how modern poetry such as <i>Brown Girl Dreaming</i> may be more relevant and educationally valuable to high school students	We will comment on how comics have traditionally not been viewed as an appropriate medium in an educational context, as much of existing comic media has tended to appeal to younger readers and perhaps not explore complex themes. Through the example of <i>Fun Home</i> , we will advance the idea that this is not true.	We will discuss the controversy surrounding <i>Fun Home</i> and the idea of banning books in general, arguing about whether or not it is justified and/or desirable to ban books based on concerns such as moral or religious objections.
Does the idea engage with the podcast prompt?	Yes: the topic discusses how diverse books like <i>Brown Girl Dreaming</i> are valuable in an educational context.	Yes: the idea discusses the appropriateness of <i>Fun Home</i> for students who are not yet adults.	Yes: the idea aims to challenge preconceived notions of what poetry at the high school level should consist of.	Yes: the topic explores the medium of comics in an educational context through <i>Fun Home</i> .	While not addressing the issue of education as directly as the other topics, this topic is still very relevant in the context of education, as many of the objections to the book have been raised to prevent students from reading it.

Are you offering your audience a new take on the text?	Our take would be quite expected, because the value of diverse books has been widely discussed in various contexts before, including education. Also, it would be hard to make a legitimate argument that such diversity is a bad thing, so our take is somewhat unsurprising.	The take in favor of censoring explicit content from high school students would be somewhat expected, as it would simply draw upon existing precedent. The other side of the argument could potentially be more interesting. This raises the issue of the episode potentially being too one-sided, and brings to light an important challenge if we choose this topic.	This take would be quite unique as it would be challenging an existing precedent in education.	Again, this take would challenge an existing norm in education, which would make it unique. The educational value of comics has not been as widely discussed as some of the other topics here.	Perhaps not. As this has been a controversial issue for a long time, it has been very extensively debated on both sides, so we may not have many new ideas to offer. Also, it may prove to be difficult to formulate logical and good-faith arguments in support of banning books.
Is your take inviting conversation or advancing a perspective that takes a stance on an issue?	Yes: we are taking a stance in support of diverse books in the high school classroom and against their suppression or censorship.	Yes: we would discuss the topic from both sides and challenge each other's ideas.	Yes: we are inviting conversation about what the purpose of poetry in high school curricula should really be and what kinds of poems can best satisfy that purpose.	Yes: we are actively hoping to promote the ideas that the comic is an effective medium in education, and hoping to generate discussion around its use as such.	Yes: we aim to bring to light the controversy and discuss varying perspectives about it, thereby inviting conversation about it.
How will you work with the memoir of your choice?	We can draw upon specific poems in the book that reveal Woodson's unique experiences as a black girl in that region and era.	We can discuss the various explicit scenes in the book, such as the one involving Bechdel and her partner in college.	Like with the first topic, we can focus on scenes that highlight Woodson's unique childhood.	We can discuss scenes that best encapsulate Bechdel's unique animation style and its effectiveness. Of course, we will also be discussing the book as a whole extensively.	Again, we can focus on explicit scenes, as these have been the source of much of the controversy surrounding the book.

Ranking:

- 1) *Fun Home* and comics as an educational tool (this is our chosen topic)
- 2) High school students and explicit content: a look at *Fun Home*
- 3) *Brown Girl Dreaming* and poetry in the high school classroom

- 4) *Fun Home* and banned books
- 5) *Brown Girl Dreaming* and the value of diverse books in the high school classroom

Part 2 - The How

Audience

The main intended audience for this podcast will be students, teachers, and parents; the students may want to introduce comics like *Fun Home* into their learning experience, and the parents and teachers may have doubts with this looking down on comics being used as educational tools. We'd like the audience to give comics a chance with regards to being used as an educational tool. Generally, our intended audience won't know much about specifically using comics as an educational tool, but will know a great deal about educational tools as a whole since, excluding the parents most times, they use them on a daily basis. Other podcasts are "The Cult of Pedagogy", "10 Minute Teacher Podcast with Cool Cat Teacher", and "Comic Geek Speak". Our podcast will take on more of an educational feel as the first two podcasts do by focusing on facts within education.

Communicator

The hosts are three students, which means we are one third of the intended audience and interact with the other two thirds on a daily basis. We are currently enrolled in an English class that has used comics to teach about multimodal forms of communication. Our perspective is unique in that we have first hand knowledge of how comics can be used as an educational tool and how effective they can be. The audience most likely won't be persuaded solely by our level of expertise, so the evidence that we present is what will create value within our conversation. Our audience will most likely go into our podcast with expectations of a somewhat childish podcast as comics are often seen by adults to be childish.

Message/Purpose/Context

The purpose of this episode is to persuade the audience that comics are effective tools to help students learn. This episode is part of a series in which we bring to light unconventional educational tools and discuss whether or not these tools are effective in the classroom. Our episode contributes to this main goal by showcasing another unconventional educational tool, comics. Within the sample podcast, each episode contributes to the overall goal by touching on one small part of the main idea.

Genre

The best genre for our podcast would be a roundtable podcast. This would allow us to emphasize the friendly and conversational tone that is integral for our podcast. This also allows us to bring out the contrast between each person's speech since it would bring out a greater number of cuts to different people.

Part 3 - Design

The audio elements we would like to integrate include intro and outro music; specifically, easily recognizable theme songs from famous superhero comic books to set the tone of this podcast as light and interesting. We will be speaking in a conversational tone, like friends having a discussion about a topic in which we agree. We will engage the audience by switching back and forth between the three group members, building upon what each person says. We will use inflection in our voices to show our passion for this subject. Humor will also be sprinkled into the conversation.

Emphasis	Contrast	Organization	Proximity
Provide examples of where comics have been successfully used as an educational tool. For example, we will discuss the non-profit company Superliterate that has case studies on how comics make you smarter. Another being the National Association of Comics Arts Educators (NACAE), presided by James Sturm, who preaches to higher learning institutions on the literary and artistic value of comics.	<p>By keeping each person's monologue short, the audience will be engaged by the contrast in voice type and tone. Hearing one person's voice for an extended period of time, regardless of the topic, can be boring to the listener.</p> <p>We decided that holding the same opinion with this topic may work the best since with a contrast of opinions it may be hard to convince the listener that comics are an effective educational tool.</p>	Our podcast will follow a logical and organized layout. We will introduce the goal of the podcast then introduce the hosts and briefly provide their background. Each host will give their opinion on using comics as an educational tool, providing a personal experience. Next, the hosts will discuss other examples of where comics have been used successfully. We will wrap up by offering other podcasts they can listen to.	<p>The hosts will be recording the podcast in the same room, shoulder to shoulder, which will make the conversational nature of the discussion apparent. We are all students who share the same opinion.</p> <p>We will make sure to not hold the microphones too close so our voices don't come across as too strong and bassy. We will record with the microphone in different positions to determine the optimal distance.</p>

Part 4 - The Pitch

What is the idea?

Fun Home and comics as an educational tool

Rhetorical Goal: To bring awareness to the use of comics as an educational tool, and to convince parents and teachers who might be against the idea that comics are an effective tool.

Why am I the person who should be talking about this and taking this on and who would be listening to me?

We are students who have used comics as an educational tool, so we have first hand experience with the positive impact this form of reading has in the classroom.

Students, teachers, and parents are the main audience; anyone who is against the idea of comics used as educational tools to persuade them to see how they can have a positive impact.

What can you expect from my take on the matter? In other words, how can you expect me to treat the idea (medium, genre)?

Podcast so audience isn't distracted by the actually comic

Genre = round table, conversation with back and forth between friends, light, humorous

What makes it relevant?

Kids read comic books for pleasure so it's an obvious next step. Comics are a motivational reading tool.

Comic books employ a complex interplay of text and images that gives them the potential to effectively convey concepts and motivate student engagement.

Comics speak to students in a way they understand and identify with. Even after students learn to be strong readers, comics give students the opportunity to read material which combines images with text to express satire, symbolism, point of view, drama, puns and humor in ways not possible with text alone.

Comics do not include the full scene many times, so the reader must use their imagination to fill in the blanks left by the author. This can be a fruitful exercise as it develops the creative minds of students of all ages.

What are the next steps?

Following the assignment deadlines: developing a script, rehearsing, recording podcast, editing where needed.

Formal Email

Dear Dr. Tsufim,

I am seeking to produce a podcast in which we take unconventional educational tools and decide if they are a positive tool, or a negative tool. For our first episode, we will talk about comics as an educational tool, specifically looking at the text *Fun Home* to convey our argument that comics are a positive addition to the classroom. Comics force the reader to use their

imagination to fill in each scene, and so we will be using passages from *Fun Home* in which this exercise is shown greatest. As we are all students who have used comics specifically in an educational way, our view is first-hand and our audience will take our opinions more seriously. Our target audience is made up of those who pay attention to education including parents, teachers, and students; as students we are a part of this audience and so we know how to appeal to them. For our first episode, the main goal is to raise awareness for the use of comics in the classroom by reaching this audience as they are the ones that can cause this change. Reflecting an ideal classroom, our podcast will be in the form of a roundtable and be very friendly, light, and relaxed.

Thank you for your consideration,

Insert Name Here

Aidan Riker, Parker Brosius, Hamza Qadri

Part 5 - Looking Ahead

In our steps going forward we need to first discuss the different subtopics that want to be discussed throughout our podcast. Once we settle on discussion points we will need to research these as much as possible to seem as if we are the experts during our podcast. We will also pull out examples from *Fun Home*, as well as other examples of comics used in the educational system. We may also listen to a podcast that has a similar style to what we are trying to do to give us a good understanding of how it should properly flow. Finally we just need to put all of these things together and on paper to make sure it gets submitted on time.