

## ***Hey, Kiddo* Rationale for the Classroom Post with Peer Comments**

### ***My Original Post***

Hey, Kiddo is an autobiographical graphic novel told from the perspective of Jarrett, who goes through a difficult upbringing. As a child, Jarrett's mother wasn't always the best caretaker and rarely spent time with him due to her drug addiction. In and out of treatment facilities, she also was in and out of his life. Jarrett's grandfather gained custody of Jarrett and took him in to raise him as his own. Through ups and downs and finding himself, while holding on to the pieces of those around him, Jarrett works through the struggles of being a child with a family filled with broken people and addiction, and having to be his own support at times, mainly through art. This book has been included in my curriculum because it provides students an insight on what it's like to come from a broken home, be raised by and have a family with drug and alcohol addiction, hardship, abuse, mental health problems, and diverse situations. This book allows privileged students to understand how tough some of their peers may have it; it also connects with those who are living through a similar situation in some capacity and lets them know they aren't alone. Because of these complex and difficult issues and topics, the target grade level would be 11th or 12th, although there are for sure some students who have been going through or have gone through situations, like Jarrett, since they were little. Honestly, the grade level and audience depend on the group and their maturity level and understanding of these deeper issues. This could be adjusted for students from 8th grade up through 12th.

When teaching this graphic novel, my main teaching objectives would be:

Students will be able to:

- Analyze different aspects of a single complex character and how they change over the course of the text.
- Interpret how different parts of graphic novels work to provide meaning and emotion.
- Relate to Krosoczka's experiences to their own experiences.
- Express how certain characters affect Jarrett's development throughout the book.

With these objectives in mind, I would use methods provided by Milnor, Milnor, and Mitchell on assaying nonfiction, particularly the methods on autobiography and memoir (317-320).

Furthermore, I would use character mapping (139), reader response/personal triggers (133-134), and focal judgments (140). I would also include the Graphic Novel guide created by Dr. Laurie Porter and Evelyn Barker with the help of Scott McCloud. Through these methods, I would teach specific lessons including, but not limited to, character mapping a main character and their traits, aspects, and events throughout the book, character arcs, creating an illustrated memoir vignette, and breaking down a page of a graphic novel. The reasons for teaching the book as literature through these specific methods are to provide students with empathetic views and understanding of others, allow students to read an autobiographical narrative through visuals beyond the word using the graphic novel, and give students the chance to consume a narrative using a different means than typical text.

Alternative texts to this one could be *Crank* by Ellen Hopkins and *Go Ask Alice* by Anonymous, although these change the perspective to a troubled family of addicts to a troubled teen with addiction. Another text could be *A Child Called It* by David Pelzer, as it deals with abuse and addiction and a troubled family as well. These could all be use supplementally too.

*Peer 1:*

Hi Will,

I think your summary of the book was spot on. I liked that you mentioned at the end that Jarrett sometimes had to be his own support system as this was not something I thought of when writing my own rationale. I also found it interesting that you chose grades 11-12 as the target audience. I really struggled with this part because of the sensitive issues that are in this graphic novel. I chose grades 9 or 10 just because of the way it was written. I think the themes are mature, but that it was written in a way that is still appropriate for a younger audience. I agree with you though, that it really does depend on the maturity level of the class as a whole and some classes may be ready for these conversations much earlier than others. One thing I don't think I considered was how the parents would feel about their child reading about addiction and abandonment, which is why I think your grade placement of 11th or 12th is probably more accurate. Many parents of 9th or 10th grade students may think some of the topics are too intense for their children who would be 16 and under still. I think juniors and seniors (and their parents) may be more open to/ready for these topics.

I appreciate how in depth you went about the assignments you have come up with for this graphic novel and that your goal is for students to gain an understanding for others. I think that it is important for them to learn about other people's experiences so they explain their knowledge beyond what they have personally experienced. While these things can be hard to talk about in our classrooms without upsetting anyone, they are important things for students to learn about that they won't always be able to avoid in real life.

I really enjoyed your rationale, Will. I hope you have a great week!

*My Reply to Peer 1:*

Thanks for your response [REDACTED]! I'm glad you like my rationale. I was a bit worried about it because I hadn't done something like it before. :)

Much appreciated,  
Will