

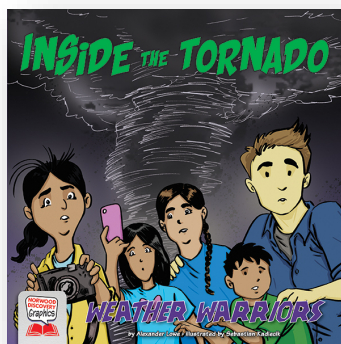
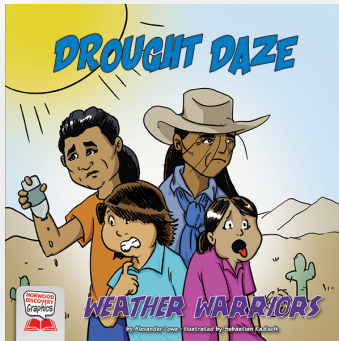
The Weather Warriors Series

Written by Alexander Lowe
Illustrated by Sebastian Kadlecik

Series Description

The Weather Warriors are never afraid to brave a storm, no matter how extreme it may be. Join the Weather Warrior families as they experience intense weather conditions, take important safety precautions, and learn how a storm works. In this series of exciting and informative graphic novels, students will learn about how different storms form, how they affect the people around them, and how to prepare in case of emergency.

Series Titles



How Graphic Novels Engage Students

Graphic novels are a highly visual form of storytelling that merge rich images with a limited amount of text to drive the narrative. They offer a fully immersive experience that invites students to enter the world of a text more effortlessly than many traditional books. Because of this, graphic novels are becoming increasingly more popular for elementary and middle-grade readers. Students can now find graphic novels ranging from fantasy to historical non-fiction to so much more, making them a great option for visual learners with varying interests.

Graphic Novels and Nonfiction for Struggling Readers

Graphic novels and nonfiction have been found especially effective for engaging “reluctant readers,” or students who may struggle to pick up texts on their own. Aside from how appealing these texts look, their highly visual format also offers additional cues to readers that support and strengthen vocabulary and reading comprehension skills. For example, if a student struggles with a particular word or event in the text, the illustrations offer far more visual cues than a traditional book to support the student’s search for meaning.

A Way into Reading

Perhaps most importantly, graphic novels may be a way into reading for students who don’t consider themselves “readers” outside of school. The minimal amount of text in a graphic novel offers a great starting point for students to build reading confidence and stamina. These factors may help reluctant students find the appreciation of storytelling and information we hope for them to find through reading.

In this document, you will find various ways to further engage and support students as they explore these exciting and informative graphic novels!

Teaching Tips for the Weather Warriors Series

How to Read a Graphic Novel

While many students love to read comics and graphic novels, some may not have encountered this format and may not know how to start. Help students understand how a comic strip works by giving them the vocabulary and tools they'll need to successfully read. The following activities will support students as they learn a new format.

Text Walk

Before giving students graphic novels as independent texts, take them on a walk through a graphic novel as a class. The table below marks features to preview, define, and discuss during your text walk.

Feature	Definition	Reading Tip
Panels	The individual frames that contain one segment of action.	Panels can be many shapes or sizes, but no matter what they look like, they are always read left to right, top to bottom.
Gutters	The space between panels	Action may occur in gutters that readers don't get to see. Readers get to imagine the action between panels.
Speech balloon	Indicates a character is speaking	Text can appear in more than one way on the page. Note what it looks like when the narrator is speaking and when the characters are speaking.
Images	Show the action of the story.	These features work together on each page. Slow down and remember to read both the words and look at the pictures. Think about how they are working together to create the story.
Text	Tell the action of the story.	

Study Individual Panels

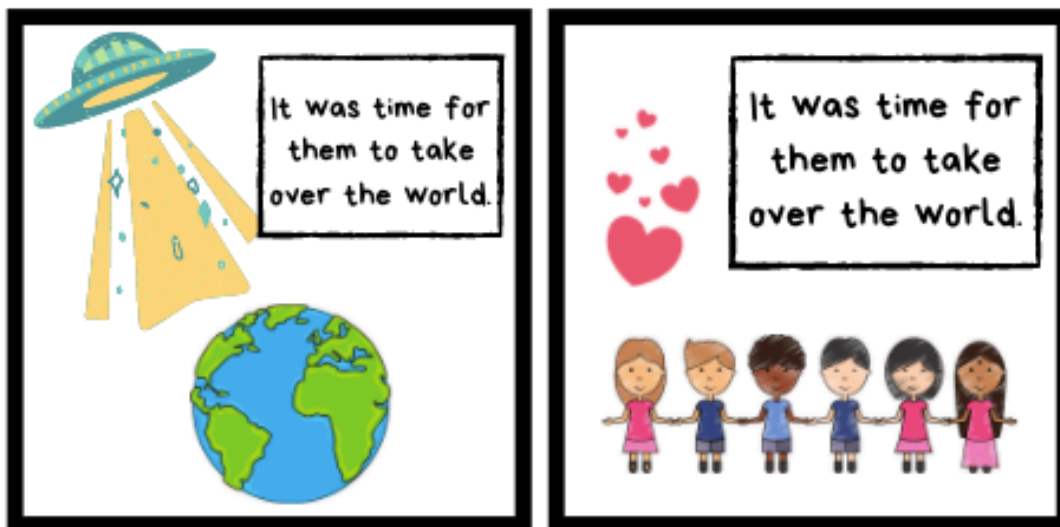
In early grades, students are often reminded how important it is to read each word on a page. When introducing students to graphic novels, it is important to share with them that the same attention must be paid to the visuals, because they also tell a large part of the story. To help students understand how each panel includes text and images that are intentionally paired together, practice looking at individual panels that have the same text but a different image. Ask students how the pairing changes their interpretation of the page. Samples are included on the next page.

Panel study samples:

Sample 1



Sample 2



Hook and Connect the Text

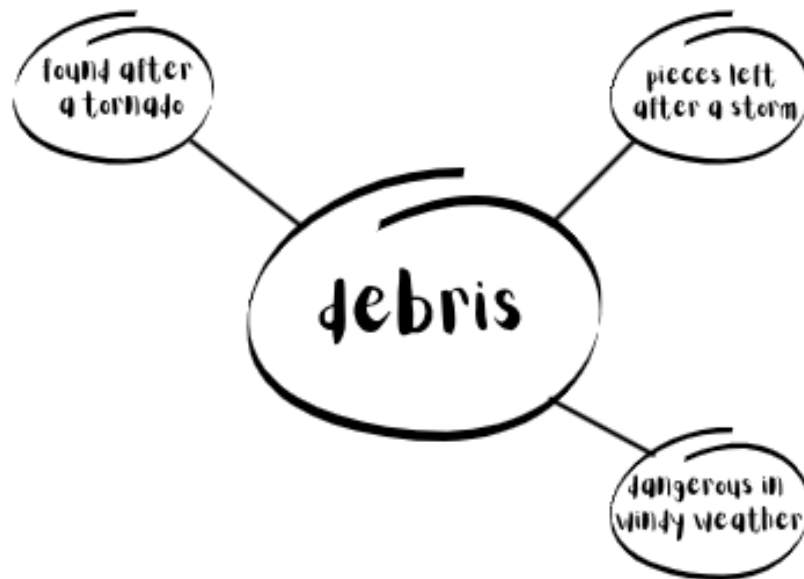
Engaging students in the topic at introduction is a great way to excite them about reading more. The following videos and activities will help hook students' interest, introduce them to the subject matter, and help them make real-life connections.

Text	Videos	Activity
Drought Daze	Introduction to Drought: https://youtu.be/5C8lZMQ6tPY Drought – The Dr. Binoc's Show: https://youtu.be/O5a6yHSI0L0	<p>My Water Footprint: For one full day, ask students to track their water usage. How many times do they turn on a faucet or flush a toilet? Have students take a tour around their home or school and write down how many appliances produce or use water: water fountains, washing machines, dish washers, etc. Ask students to discuss ways they could reduce their usage to conserve water.</p>
Eye of the Hurricane	What's a Hurricane?: https://youtu.be/xKubdY2mHXc Hurricane – The Dr. Binoc's Show: https://youtu.be/J2_Bk4dVS0	<p>Tracking the Eye: In this simple, low-prep activity, students can track a storm like Dr. Patterson by determining where the strongest and weakest points of a hurricane are.</p> <p><i>Materials: Water, 2-liter bowl, large spoon, string, paper clip</i></p> <p><i>Directions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare your tracker by tying a paper clip to the end of a piece of string. 2. Stir water in a large 2-liter bowl using a spoon. 3. When water is spinning, dip the paper clip into various places of the water. Students will observe where the paper clip is spinning the fastest. Have students take notes on their findings.
Hail Alley	What is Hail? – The Weather Network: https://youtu.be/6M-ycZLSF1w What is hail? Explained for kids: https://youtu.be/gTyz8ejb07c	<p>Grow a Hailstone: Help students conceptualize Steve and Kim's description of hail formation by showing them how a hailstone forms in a cloud.</p> <p><i>Materials: A bowl, a glass test tube (or small, thin glass), iodized salt, tap water, purified or distilled water, ice cubes, something to stir with</i></p> <p><i>Directions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fill the bowl 2/3 of the way with tap water. 2. Add a large amount of salt and stir. Add enough salt that you can see grains at the bottom of the bowl. You can never have enough salt. 3. Fill the rest of the bowl with ice and continue stirring.

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Fill the test tube halfway with purified water and place it into the ice water so that it is standing up. 5. Stir the ice water every minute for around 7 minutes. This will make the water in the test tube super-cooled. 6. After 7 minutes, remove the test tube from the ice water and put a small piece of ice in the tube. 7. Watch what happens to the cube and the surrounding water.
<p>Inside the Tornado</p>	<p>Tornados 101 – National Geographic: https://youtu.be/aacHWoB7cmY</p> <p>What is a Tornado? SciShow Kids: https://youtu.be/-s3UwOq1PIE</p>	<p>Tornado in a Jar: In this experiment, students will be able to see how the wind speed around a tornado can lift debris and create a dangerous situation. Then send students on a hunt through the book to find out how to avoid flying debris.</p> <p><i>Materials: A jar, water, dish soap, food coloring, chunky glitter</i></p> <p><i>Directions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fill the glass with 3/4 of water. 2. Drop chunky glitter into the bottom of the jar. 3. Put a few drops of dish soap into the water. 4. Cover the jar tightly and rotate it in circles very quickly until a column of spinning bubbles has formed. 5. Observe what happens to the bubbles and the glitter.
<p>White Out</p>	<p>Weather 101: What's a blizzard?: https://youtu.be/uQXtCyoN-tI</p> <p>The Biggest Snowstorms! Scishow Kids: https://youtu.be/BpBtRmTmbaQ</p>	<p>Build a Blizzard: Safely bring a blizzard indoors with this simple activity that shows how different elements react to create snow. Then send students on a hunt through the book to define the elements that form snow.</p> <p><i>Materials: A tall glass or jar, a measuring cup, white paint, baby oil, an Alka Seltzer tablet</i></p> <p><i>Directions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pour a 1/2 cup of water into a measuring cup. 2. Mix 1 tablespoon of white paint into the water. 3. Fill the tall glass 2/3 full with baby oil. 4. Pour the white water mixture into the tall glass. 5. Break up an Alka Seltzer tablet into small pieces and drop a few into the jar. 6. Observe how the reaction creates a blizzard. Add more tablets to re-create the blizzard.

Creative Vocabulary Tips

Mind Map: A mind map is a diagram that connects information and ideas to a shared central word. Ask students to create mind maps for vocabulary words found in the glossary of each book. Students will write the vocabulary word in a box in the center of a paper, then they will draw lines outward to connect to separate boxes. They will write information they know about each term in the connected boxes. *(Individual, partner, whole class)*



Heads Up: For this game, you will need a stack of index cards with vocabulary words printed on one side. You can find vocabulary terms in the glossary section of each book. One student chooses a vocabulary card making sure not to look at it. The student holds the card in front of their forehead so the other student(s) can see the term. The other student(s) work together to describe and define the word without saying the term. If the player holding the card guesses the correct term, the class gets a point. This game can be used for a warm-up or an incentive game. *(Partner, whole class)*

Vocabulary Link Up: All students receive a vocabulary card. Half of the students have a word and the other half have a definition. Set a timer and invite students to walk around the room and find their match. Students will work together to find correct matches and then report their word and definition to the class. *(Small group, whole class)*

Creative Reporting Options

Public Service Announcement Poster: Ask students to create a poster to inform and raise awareness about how others can stay safe during an extreme weather event. Students should use the text and their own research to convey how the storm works and the importance of taking safety precautions. PSA posters are a great way for students to practice persuasive writing and using images and text to create a message.

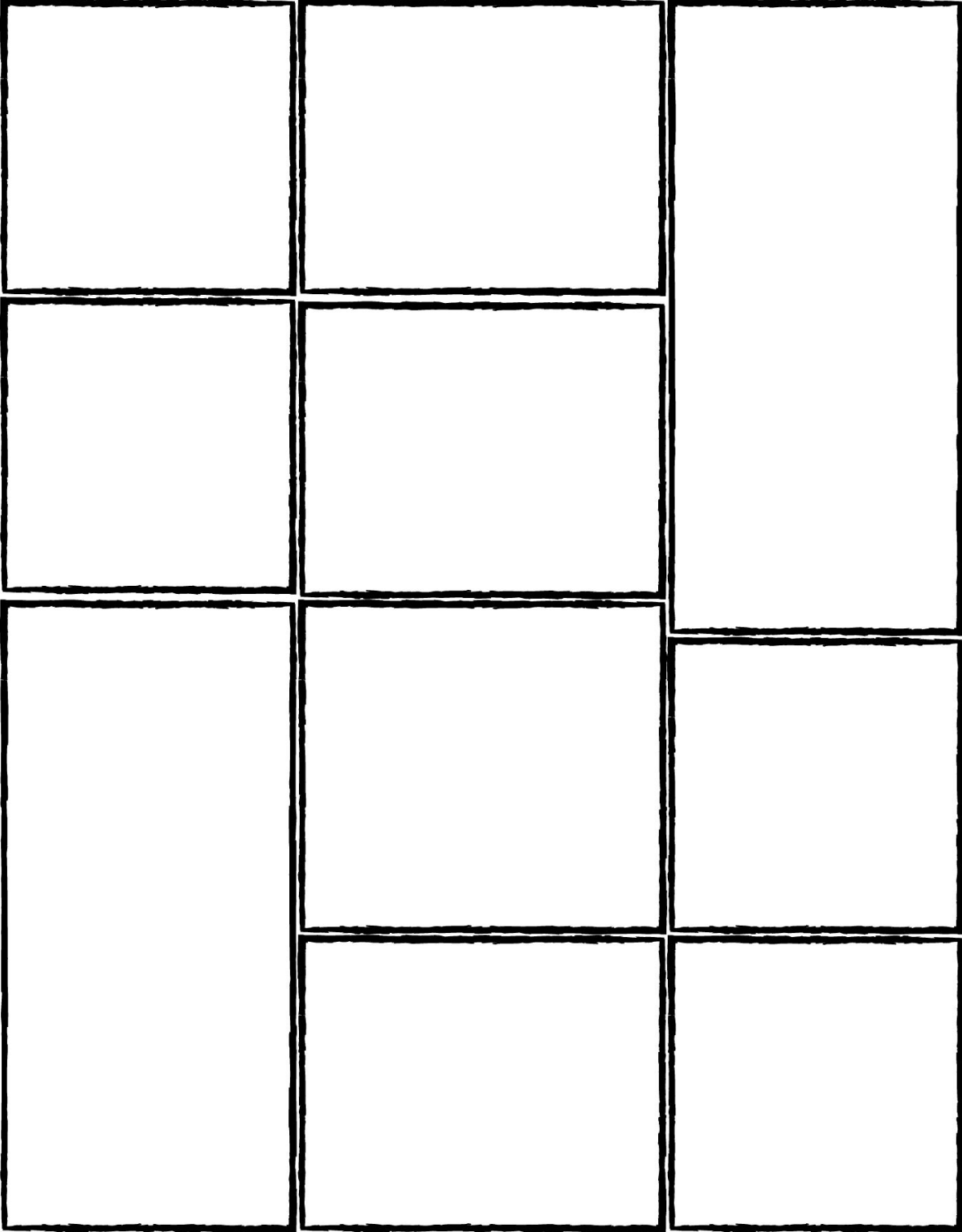
Trading Cards: Students use text and image to create a set of trading cards to describe the storm in the book they are reading. Cards should have categories of information, just as real trading cards. For example, students should include the *name*, the *weather patterns*, *safety precautions*, and a *visual*. The set can then live in the classroom for other students to study.

Comics: Students can create and present their own comic strip, similar to the Weather Warriors Series. Based on a given scenario, students should create a comic strip to explain how the storm forms and what the characters need to do to stay safe. *For example: A major blizzard is approaching in 24 hours. What do your characters do?* Students will create their own characters to journey through the storm. We have included a comic strip planning page, as well as a template to create their own comic strip on the next 2 pages.

Comic strip planner:

Panel	Setting	Characters Present	Action to Take Place	Text	Speech

Comic Strip Template:



Assessment

Informal assessment for reading comprehension should be ongoing and include different forms of assessment to accurately measure growth. Forms of assessment may include the reporting options above, observation, class discussion, conferences, and/or surveys.

The following are important areas to consider when assessing comprehension. These suggested areas are based on grade-level standards for grades 3-5.

- **Interpretation of visual text:** Ability to interpret visual information and explain how it contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
 - This assessment targets the student's ability to engage with and utilize visual features to increase understanding.
 - **How?:** Ask students:
 - How does this image help us understand the text it is paired with?
 - Why do you think the illustrator chose to include this image?
 - What do you see on the page that tells you...?
- **Integration of ideas:** Ability to either compare and contrast, or to integrate information from two or more texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
 - This assessment targets high-level thinking skills, requiring students to retain, recall, and intellectualize information from multiple texts and then organize and present it in a cohesive manner that shows understanding.
 - **How?:** After reading the graphic novel, invite students to read other books or articles on the same subject. Ask students to determine how they are the same or different.
- **Basic knowledge and recall:** Ability to recall important facts and details in a text.
 - These are lower-level thinking skills, but essential and foundational for students to progress to higher-level skills.
 - **How?:** Ask student to retell the story orally or by giving them the graphic organizer attached on the next page for them to fill out while reading.

Teachers notes created by Joanna Kamouh.

Joanna Kamouh is a dual-certified educator specializing in Early Childhood and Special Education in NYC. She received her Master's degree in Early Childhood and Special Education from NYU Steinhardt. Joanna's favorite part of teaching is helping students find the joy and excitement in reading independently. When she is not teaching, Joanna enjoys hiking, traveling, spending time with family, and curling up with her cat!

Graphic Organizer:

NON-FICTION GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

BOOK TITLE: _____

AUTHOR: _____

ILLUSTRATOR: _____

THREE THINGS I LEARNED:

NEW VOCABULARY WORDS:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

MY FAVORITE PANEL AND WHY:

DRAW IT!

