BACKGROUND:

This instruction sheet provides guidelines for subject, form/genre heading assignment, and descriptive elements of comic books and graphic novels for juveniles through age 15 or 9th grade. Age level is determined by general consideration of the material, publisher-provided data, and often research from book-related Internet sources. Some works, including Japanese manga, provide age recommendations, but are evaluated individually to determine whether they might be classed with and cataloged as a work intended for older audiences.

1. Definitions of graphic novels and comics books.

For purposes of this instruction sheet, the terms comic book and graphic novel refer only to materials published in book or magazine format and have all of the following characteristics:

a. The characters and action are portrayed in a succession of panel drawings.

b. A series of panels advances a narrative line.

c. The dialogue is generally presented in "balloons," or their equivalent. In some cases the narrative is advanced with no dialogue or written material at all.

A comic book or graphic novel may be one of the following types:

a. A single continuous narrative from beginning to end, created specifically for the publication in hand. This category includes comic style adaptations from other media, such as motion pictures, dramas, or novels, even those that use the exact words of the original.

b. A collection of several separate narratives compiled for the publication in hand after having been previously published elsewhere.

2. Out of scope materials.

Class materials that have some characteristics of comic books and graphic novels but do not fully conform to the description in sec. 1, as follows:

a. Collections of single panel cartoons, single photographs with balloon captions, etc., that have no continuing narrative line. Class in NC.
C 1430  **Comics and Comic Characters**  

b. Fictional narratives that consist essentially of text written in book style with occasional illustrations employing comic characters (with or without balloon dialogue). Class as regular literary works, by author or title, in PZ.

c. Nonfiction works written in comic book style. Class in the appropriate topical numbers in classes A-Z.

d. “Photo novels,” i.e., novels that consist almost entirely of photographs (with or without balloon dialogue). Class in the numbers for Comic books, strips, etc., in PN.

3. **Subject cataloging for fictional comics, including graphic novels.**

a. **General rule.** Assign the Children’s subject heading *Graphic novels* as the first heading to correspond to the classification. Assign additional Children’s subject headings following the general principles for fiction (see C 1790).

Also assign terms from LCGFT (e.g., *Horror comics; Graphic novels*) according to the general guidelines for LCGFT assignment in instruction sheet J 110 of the LCGFT manual. Assign *Comics (Graphic works)* if a term denoting a specific form or genre cannot be assigned.

**Title:** *Amethyst, Princess of Gemworld.*  
*[original single-volume graphic novel]*

650 #1 $a Graphic novels.  
650 #1 $a Fantasy.  
650 #1 $a Princesses $v Fiction.  
650 #1 $a Magic $v Fiction.  
655 #7 $a Fantasy comics. $2 lcgft  
655 #7 $a Graphic novels. $2 lcgft

**Title:** *Whistle!*  
*[original work complete in 24 volumes]*

650 #1 $a Graphic novels.  
650 #1 $a Soccer $v Fiction.  
655 #7 $a Graphic novels. $2 lcgft
b. **Individual fictitious characters.** Do not assign subject headings for individual fictitious characters

*Title: Batman and Robin and Howard.*

*original single-volume graphic novel*

650 #1 $a Graphic novels.
[not 600 01 $a Batman $c (Fictitious character) $v Fiction.]
650 #1 $a Superheroes $v Fiction.
650 #1 $a Schools $v Fiction.
650 #1 $a Friendship $v Fiction
655 #7 $a Superhero comics. $lcgft
655 #7 $a Graphic novels. $lcgft

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4. **Subject cataloging for nonfiction written in comic book or graphic novel style.**

Add heading for **Graphic novels**. Assign the appropriate Children’s subject heading array. Subdivide each heading with the form subdivision –**Cartoons and comics**. Also assign genre/form terms from LCGFT (e.g., **Graphic novels**) according to the guidelines in the LCGFT manual.

*Title: The battle of the Alamo.*

*nonfiction work about the Alamo*

650 #1 $a Graphic novels.
650 #1 $a Alamo (San Antonio, Texas) $x Siege, 1836 $v Cartoons and comics.
655 #7 $a Historical comics. $2 lcgft
655 #7 $a Nonfiction comics. $2 lcgft
655 #7 $a Graphic novels. $2 lcgft

*Title: Wildheart: the daring adventures of John Muir.*

*nonfiction biography of John Muir*

650 #1 $a Graphic novels.
600 11 $a Muir, John, $d 1838-1914 $v Cartoons and comics.
650 #1 $a Naturalists $v Cartoons and comics.
650 #1 $a Conservationists $v Cartoons and comics.
650 #1 $a Environmentalists $v Cartoons and comics.
655 #7 $a Biographical comics. $2 lcgft
655 #7 $a Graphic novels. $2 lcgft
5. Descriptive elements.

a. Contributors. Because of the nature of the illustrative contents of graphic novels, extend consideration for additional access points for those contributors presented on the title page (e.g. Inker, Letterer, etc.), considering each of these tasks as separate functions.

Title: Cats!: girlfriends and catfriends
[writer, Frédéric Brrémaud ; artist, Paola Antista ; colors, Cecilia Giumento ; letters, Michael Heisler]

100 1# $a Brrémaud, Frédéric, $e writer.
700 1# $a Antista, Paola, $d 1976- $e artist.
700 1# $a Giumento, Cecilia, $e colourist.
700 7# $a Heisler, Michael, $e letterer.

b. Numbering. When a book presents its title with volume/book name and numbering, use that individual name as title and include corresponding series name and numbering in the MARC 490 field.

[Title on book reads: Archie & Reddie Book 4: It Doesn’t Scare Me!]

245 10 $a It doesn’t scare me!
490 0# $a Archie & Reddie ; $v book 4

[Title on book reads: Pacey Packer, Unicorn Tracker 3: Mermaids vs. Unicorns]

245 10 $a Mermaids vs. unicorns
490 0# $a Pacey Packer, unicorn tracker ; $v 3