6-15-2018

Undiscovered Formats for Undiscovered Readers

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Undiscovered Formats for Undiscovered Readers

Cultivating Reading Motivation with Hi-Lo Fiction, Light Novels, and Graphic Novels

Summit on the Research and Teaching of YA Literature 2018
Amanda Melilli - Head, TDRL
Huston Green - TDRL Operations & Program Manager
“Every student needs to know the power of a reading life. Dickens simply won’t matter to most twenty-first-century teenagers unless they have developed a love of books first -- a trust that even the most difficult ones can be worthwhile.”

Penny Kittle

Book Love: Developing Depth, Stamina, and Passion in Adolescent Readers
## About This Session

**What will be addressed:**
- Reader identity
- Reader intimidation
- Format analysis
- Theory

**What won’t be addressed:**
- Learning disabilities or other reading limitations
- Curriculum
- Case studies
# The Importance of Terminology

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>Struggling/Reluctant Reader</th>
<th>Undiscovered Reader</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Educator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reader Identity</td>
<td>Negative, Less Than</td>
<td>To Be Created</td>
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<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Potential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Educational Setting</td>
<td>Everywhere</td>
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</table>
Why Alternative Texts?
"Frustration undermines the will to read."
(Kittle, 2013, p. 12)

Sometimes, it’s about quantity:

- Cultivate individual reading habits.
- Increase reading stamina.
- Provide students with materials at their reading levels that they can enjoy.
- Build confidence and trust in reading.

“Unless we do more than parcel out truly difficult texts to nonreaders as they limp along reluctantly behind us, we’ve given up on their lives as readers” (Kittle, 2013, p. 7).


Graphic Novels

Combination of words and images to tell a story.

Standalone titles or series.

Requires varying levels of visual literacy.

ANY genre of literature.
Hi-Lo Fiction
Hi-Lo Fiction

High Interest - Low Readability

Specific Format

Reading level is typically 3 or more grades lower than interest level.

Small and compact

High on drama

http://guides.library.unlv.edu/cyalit/hilo

Light Novels
Light Novels

A format of YA literature from Japan which often start with online fan bases.

Often associated with an anime/manga series.

Simply written: Uses simple/modern kanji.

Short paragraphs.

Illustrated.

Often serialized.

Light Novels in the US

US market is heavy on the **shonen** (targeted for young males).

Common characteristics:
- Teenage male protagonist.
- Waking up in a video game world
- Harem trope
- Fan service
- Potential for things to get weird...
Format Analysis
Method - Analysis

Variables
- Reading Levels
- Number of Pages
- Average Word Length
- Average Sentence Length
- Genre

Process
- 750 word minimum samples from each text.
- Minimum of four randomly selected pages.
- ATOS Analyzer for Books with Estimated Word Count.
- Genre - Worldcat, Titlewave, or best judgement.

Goals
- Determine characteristics and trends of each format.
- Compare the formats to traditional YA Literature
- Identify potential use of the formats with undiscovered readers.
## Method - Selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>35 Graphic Novels</strong></td>
<td>YALSA’s Great Graphic Novels for Teens 2018 List</td>
<td>Labeled as YA interest level in Titlewave. Fiction Titles Only First volume listed for series. Unable to access 4 titles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>47 Hi-Lo Fiction</strong></td>
<td>Recently published titles through Orca and Saddleback Labeled as YA interest levels in Titlewave Obtained through Interlibrary Loan or through the Teacher Development &amp; Resources Library</td>
<td>Unable to access 3 titles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>37 Light Novels</strong></td>
<td>Vol. 1 for each series Publication date of 2014-2018 OR new volumes still being published in 2018 Obtained through Interlibrary Loan or bookstores.</td>
<td>Unable to access 9 titles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>66 YA Literature</strong></td>
<td>YALSA’s Best Fiction for Young Adults 2018 Labeled as YA interest level in Titlewave.</td>
<td>Unable to access 6 titles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading Levels
Average Word/Sentence Length
Genres

- Contemporary Fiction
- Fantasy
- Science Fiction
- Romance
- Dystopia
- Historical Fiction
- Adaptation

Graphic Novels
- Contemporary Fiction: 23%
- Fantasy: 43%
- Science Fiction: 12%
- Romance: 11%
- Dystopia: 11%
- Historical Fiction: 11%
- Adaptation: 9%

Hi-Lo Fiction
- Contemporary Fiction: 94%
- Fantasy: 2%
- Science Fiction: 4%
- Romance: 3%
- Dystopia: 3%
- Historical Fiction: 3%
- Adaptation: 9%

Light Novels
- Contemporary Fiction: 73%
- Fantasy: 21%
- Science Fiction: 3%
- Romance: 3%
- Dystopia: 9%
- Historical Fiction: 7%
- Adaptation: 38%

Young Adult Literature
- Contemporary Fiction: 39%
- Fantasy: 39%
- Science Fiction: 7%
- Romance: 6%
- Dystopia: 9%
- Historical Fiction: 6%
- Adaptation: 9%
Verdict
When to Recommend

**Graphic Novels**
- Want a variety of genres.
- Looking for complex and in-depth stories/characters.
- Need to build reading confidence through quick reads.
- Difficulty with long sentences/paragraphs.
- Are intimidated by lots of text on a page.
- Have a hard time visualizing the “movie” in their heads.

**Hi-Lo Fiction**
- Need YA prose stories at lower reading levels.
- Need to build reading confidence through quick reads.
- Difficulty with long sentences.
- Interested in contemporary fiction.

**Light Novels**
- Anime/Manga fans who
  - want “more” from their favorite series.
  - Are not normally interested in prose.
- Gamers who enjoy RPGs (role playing games).
- Struggle with long paragraphs.

*For Now….
Special Thanks!

Davenia Boothe
Kristina Khanoyan
Carlos Gutierrez
David Montes
Daniella Telada
Questions?

Sources


