



# Pixton Practices Handout

## Long-Form Projects

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For Use With Pixton PowerUp Webinar

### Best Practice #1: Growth Over Time

#### Prep

Introduce students to the concept of tracking growth over time by showing examples such as character development journals, historical timelines, or science experiment documentation (from hypothesis to conclusion). Use Pixton's comic maker to demonstrate how to visualize progress or development in a fictional character or historical figure. Highlight how changes can be depicted through visual cues like expressions, settings, or chronological shifts in time.

#### Activity

Students will choose a subject they'd like to track over time (e.g., a character's development, the progress of a historical event, or a personal experience) and create a comic series that illustrates significant moments along the timeline. The series should visually capture key stages, reflecting growth, change, or development through character design, backgrounds, and other narrative elements. Encourage students to continue adding to their series over the course of the year, allowing them to review and reflect on their learning at the end of the year.

#### PowerUp Variations

**Chronological Depth:** Challenge students to expand their timeline, showing preceding events, the events that follow after the main events, or untold pivotal events or details that occurred throughout the story.

**Parallel Development:** Ask students to develop parallel timelines, comparing the progression of two different characters or events to highlight differences or similarities in perspective.

## Differentiation

**Template Support:** Provide students with sequence chart printables (first, next, then, last) or a character map to help break down their timeline into clear stages. This will guide them in structuring their work while maintaining focus on the stages of development.

**Creative Focus:** Encourage students to focus on specific elements of growth or development (e.g., emotional, intellectual, physical, circumstantial) depending on the subject of their comic.

## Best Practice #2: Long-Narrative Projects

### Prep

Introduce the concept of long-narrative projects like retelling stories, graphic novels, or biographies. Provide examples of graphic organizers that help students map out their stories over time. Show how these projects can be developed through consistent planning and iteration. If applicable, provide primary source materials (e.g., photos, speeches) to integrate into their comics for historical accuracy and depth.

### Activity


Students will select a fictional story, historical event, or biography to retell in comic form. Using Pixton's comic maker as a graphic organizer, students will break the narrative into key sections or chapters. They will create comic panels for each major event, ensuring that character, setting, and plot develop naturally throughout the project. The final product should be a cohesive long-form comic that tells a complete story or biography, with students weaving in primary materials where applicable.

### PowerUp Variations

**Historical Deep-Dive:** Encourage students to add historical artifacts or primary sources (e.g., a famous speech, document, or photograph) into their comics as background elements to provide authenticity and depth to the retelling.

### Differentiation

**Story Mapping:** Provide students with visual story mapping tools (character map, main idea web, etc.) from Pixton's Printables resources to help them break down the narrative into distinct phases.



**Flexible Media Use:** Allow students to choose their format (e.g., webcomics, longer graphic novels, or digital comics) to accommodate varying levels of engagement and narrative complexity. Keep in mind that while digital formats offer more flexibility, some features—such as uploaded image backgrounds or special characters—may limit the ability to print the final product. To address this, ensure students are aware of these limitations beforehand and help them select the format best suited to their project’s end goals.

## Best Practice #3: Reading Log Comics

### Prep

Introduce the idea of maintaining a visual reading log using Pixton. Instead of writing traditional entries, students will create one or two comic panels for a book or article they read, capturing the essence of what they’ve learned or felt.

### Activity

Students will maintain a visual reading log throughout the reading of the text, creating a comic panel or short series of panels using Pixton’s comic maker and focusing on key elements such as important themes, character motivations, or plot summaries. This activity encourages students to think critically about their reading and practice summarizing in a concise, visual format.

### PowerUp Variations

**Reflection Panel:** Add a reflective component where students create a separate panel to depict their personal response to the text or a creative extension where a character reflects on the events they experienced—whether it’s a connection they made, a question they have, or a critique of the material. This allows for deeper engagement with the reading material through visual media.

### Differentiation

**Comic Creation Support:** Provide templates using Pixton’s Story Starters with basic panel layouts for students needing assistance with structuring their visual summaries.

**Focus Variation:** Encourage students to choose between illustrating plot points, character development, or thematic elements, allowing flexibility based on interest and comprehension level.

Advanced Reflection: Ask more advanced students to create additional panels analyzing subtext or contrasting characters' actions with their motivations.

## Associated Research

Brown, C. (2023). *The benefits of using comics in the classroom* (Paper 1396) [Undergraduate honors thesis, Portland State University]. PDX Scholar. <https://doi.org/10.15760/honors.1427>

İlhan, G. O., & Şin, M. (2024). Reflections of “Use of Comics in Social Studies Education” course: The opinion and experiences of teachers. *SANE Journal: Sequential Art Narrative in Education*, 2(8), Article 2. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/sane/vol2/iss8/2>

Opigno. (2023, July 4). *Short-form vs. long-form learning content: How they differ and which to choose*. <https://www.opigno.org/blog/short-form-vs-long-form-learning-content-how-they-differ-and-which-choose>

Topkaya, Y., Batdi, V., Burak, D., Özkaya, A. (2023). The effectiveness of using comics in education: A meta-analytic and meta-thematic analysis study. *Ahmet Keleşoğlu Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 5(3), 922–940. <https://doi.org/10.38151/akef.2023.92>