



Bring Joy to Reading. Give Purpose to Writing.



# Guide to Voice & Choice

For the (Insanely) Busy Classroom Teacher

Empowering Student Voice Through Format Choice

## Quick Start Guide for Teachers

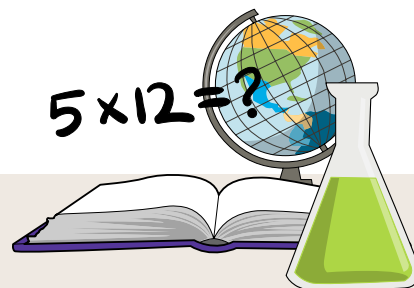
### 5-Minute Setup Checklist

- ☐ Create your Pixton teacher account
- ☐ Review student-friendly tutorial videos
- ☐ Choose your first assignment type from our *Lesson Ideas*
- ☐ Set up your digital classroom space
- ☐ Print student reflection sheets

### Student Onboarding Checklist

- ☐ Introduce Pixton as a “new way to show what you know”
- ☐ Show how to join your class and make student avatars
- ☐ Demonstrate basic comic creation tools (5 minutes)
- ☐ Assign practice comic e.g., “Introduce yourself in 3 panels”
- ☐ Explain how to submit/share work and how the *Pixton Interactive Rubric* will be used





## Lesson Ideas Using Pixton

### English Language Arts – Template: Character Analysis

#### Using the Pixton Comic Maker:

- Create a 6-panel comic showing character growth
- Design a before/after character comparison comic
- Illustrate internal vs. external character conflicts
- Show character interactions that reveal personality

#### Pixton Lesson Ideas:

- [Calling All Characters](#)
- [Complex Characters](#)
- [Comparing Characters](#)
- [Create Emotion Characters](#)

### Social Studies – Template: Historical Event Analysis

#### Using the Pixton Comic Maker:

- Create a comic timeline of the event
- Design a “newspaper comic strip” from that time period
- Illustrate cause-and-effect relationships
- Show multiple perspectives through character dialogue

#### Pixton Lesson Ideas:

- [Role of Women During WWII](#)
- [The Incan Defeat](#)
- [Migration During the Industrial Revolution](#)
- [The Great Depression](#)
- [Taxation Without Representation](#)

### Science – Template: Process Explanation

#### Using the Pixton Comic Maker:

- Create a step-by-step comic explaining and visualizing a scientific process
- Design characters that represent different elements/forces
- Illustrate before/during/after scientific changes
- Show real-world applications through a story

#### Pixton Lesson Ideas:

- [What's in a Molecule?](#)
- [Scientific Process](#)
- [Life Cycles](#)
- [Water Cycle](#)
- [Photosynthesis](#)

### Math – Template: Problem-Solving Process

#### Using the Pixton Comic Maker:

- Create a comic character who solves the problem
- Illustrate the problem scenario and solution steps
- Design a “math superhero” who explains the concept
- Show common mistakes and corrections

#### Pixton Lesson Ideas:

- [Solving Problems Using Math Terminology](#)
- [The Pythagorean Theorem](#)
- [Proportional Relationships](#)
- [Distance Problems](#)



## Choice Board Template

Visual	Storyteller	Analyst
Visualize/explain vocabulary	Write and illustrate a narrative	Design a comparison chart
Use symbols and diagrams	Include dialogue and plot	Focus on data and evidence
Emphasize color and layout (e.g., full-panel captions or different "zoom" levels)	Develop characters and setting	Highlight patterns and relationships

Collaborator	Researcher	Creator
Work with a partner on a shared comic	Include researched facts and sources	Use characters and props to compose scenes, rather than the preset backgrounds
Interview others for perspectives	Cite evidence in captions	Use different comic elements to go beyond simple narration and consider whisper, thought, sound effects, etc.
Create dialogue between viewpoints	Focus on accuracy and detail	Upload photos or original art for backgrounds



## Assessment Rubric

### Content-Focused Comic Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning (1)
Content Understanding	Clearly reflects its main purpose or theme and presents it in an effective and sequential manner. It tells the story in an engaging way, and/or it accurately communicates information about the topic.	Shows solid understanding with mostly accurate information	Shows basic understanding with some accurate information	Shows limited understanding with minimal accurate information
Use of Evidence	Uses multiple, relevant sources and evidence to support ideas	Uses some relevant evidence to support most ideas	Uses limited evidence, may not always support ideas	Little or no evidence provided
Communication Clarity	Ideas are expressed clearly and effectively through text and visuals	Most ideas are clear and well-communicated	Some ideas are clear, others may be confusing	Ideas are unclear or difficult to follow
Student Voice	Strong evidence of personal perspective and thoughtful choices in format	Some evidence of personal perspective and format choices	Limited evidence of personal voice in content or format	Little or no evidence of student voice or choice

*Note: Artistic ability is NOT assessed. Focus is entirely on content mastery and communication.*

## Pixton Interactive Rubric

The *Pixton Interactive Rubric* provides a clear framework for consistent and objective assessment, outlining expectations and delivering targeted feedback. It evaluates student comics across six key categories—**Background & Focus, Characters & Expression, Captions & Dialogue, Spelling & Grammar, Theme, and Sharing**—each designed to strengthen essential skills such as storytelling, language mechanics, creativity, and audience engagement. At the same time, it encourages students to demonstrate understanding through both visual and written expression.

TOTAL: 4/4

☒ BACKGROUND & FOCUS

Background(s) and scenes are thoughtfully chosen, and focus is used effectively to highlight certain moments that add interest to the panels.

☐ CHARACTERS & EXPRESSION

☐ CAPTIONS & DIALOG

☐ SPELLING & GRAMMAR

☐ THEME

☐ SHARING

TOTAL: 4/4

	1	2	3	4
<b>Background &amp; Focus</b>	A single background is used throughout the comic. The focus (point of view) has not been adjusted in any panel.	At least one panel has a change of background, setting, or focus.	Multiple backgrounds and/or focuses are used and generally help convey the writer's ideas.	Background(s) and scenes are thoughtfully chosen, and focus is used effectively to highlight certain moments that add interest to the panels.
<b>Characters &amp; Expression</b>	The facial expressions of all or most characters do not change even when speaking. There is little or no variation in poses or gestures. There is no evidence of careful consideration of outfits or props.	Some characters do not accurately reflect the emotion and actions of the scene. The facial expressions of some speaking characters accurately portray the character with an open mouth to show that they are speaking.	The facial expressions of most characters reflect the emotion the character is feeling. Most poses and gestures accurately reflect the action in the scene.	Characters are visually relevant to the story or topic and facial expressions, poses, and gestures reflect the emotion and action the writer is trying to convey. Outfits are thoughtfully selected to add detail and interest. Props, if used, are suitable for the scene.
<b>Captions &amp; Dialog</b>	There are no captions and/or text bubbles or one or more incorrect bubble types were used.	There is no variation in the types of text bubbles used, making it difficult for some readers to follow the story or topic.	Captions and/or different types of text bubbles are used (speech, thought, whisper, shout) but may not clearly present the story or topic.	Captions are used effectively as a narration tool and one relevant to the story or topic. Speech, thought, shout, and whisper bubbles are used to

The rubric is available for comics assigned to activities. Click on the comic to view it then click on the Rubric button at the top right.

TOTAL: 0/0

☐ BACKGROUND & FOCUS

☐ CHARACTERS & EXPRESSION

☐ CAPTIONS & DIALOG

☐ SPELLING & GRAMMAR

☐ THEME

☐ SHARING

Now you should see the rubric. Click on the categories to see the rating options.

TOTAL: 2/4

☒ BACKGROUND & FOCUS

Background(s) and scenes are thoughtfully chosen, and focus is used effectively to highlight certain moments that add interest to the panels.

☐ CHARACTERS & EXPRESSION

☐ CAPTIONS & DIALOG

☐ SPELLING & GRAMMAR

Click on one of the options: Oops, Fair, Fine or Mint for each category.

TOTAL: 19/24

☒ BACKGROUND & FOCUS

☒ CHARACTERS & EXPRESSION

Once you select an option for each category the rubric score will be automatically added. The total is displayed at the top.

☐ CAPTIONS & DIALOG

TOTAL: 0/0

☐ BACKGROUND & FOCUS

☐ CHARACTERS & EXPRESSION

☐ CAPTIONS & DIALOG

☐ SPELLING & GRAMMAR

☐ THEME

☐ SHARING

Your teacher has rated this comic 19/24

The student will be able to see the total score once they click on the rubric for the same comic.

TOTAL: 4/4

☒ BACKGROUND & FOCUS

Background(s) and scenes are thoughtfully chosen, and focus is used effectively to highlight certain moments that add interest to the panels.

☐ CHARACTERS & EXPRESSION

☐ CAPTIONS & DIALOG

☐ SPELLING & GRAMMAR

You can change it to a classic table style rubric and print it by clicking on the Printer icon at the top right.

These categories support universal design for learning (UDL) by allowing students to demonstrate understanding through visual, textual, and expressive means—ideal for differentiated instruction.



# Student Reflection Sheets

## Format Choice Reflection

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

1. Why did you choose to create a comic for this assignment?

2. How does creating a comic help you show your understanding differently than writing would?

3. What was the most challenging part of expressing your ideas through comics?

4. What would you tell another student about using comics to show learning?

5. How confident do you feel about your understanding of this topic? (Circle one)

Very Confident

Confident

Somewhat Confident

Need More Help

### Student Self-Assessment

Before you submit:

- ☐ Does my comic clearly show what I learned about this topic?
- ☐ Did I include specific examples or evidence?
- ☐ Will my teacher understand my main points?
- ☐ Does my comic reflect my understanding and perspective?
- ☐ Am I proud of how I chose to express my learning?



# Student Reflection Sheets

## Peer Feedback Form

Reviewer

Creator

### Content Feedback:

1. One thing I learned from your comic:

2. One thing that was clear:

3. One question I have about your topic:

### Format Feedback:

1. What I liked about how you used the comic format:

2. One suggestion for making your message even clearer:



## Supporting Curriculum Standards

### How Comics Support State and National Standards

Pixton helps teachers meet state and district requirements by mapping its *Lesson Ideas* and comic-based tasks to widely used standards—including CCSS, NGSS, the C3 Framework for Social Studies, the ISTE Standards for Students, CASEL SEL competencies, WIDA ELD, and ACTFL—and aligning content accordingly. Students engage with multiple text types (literature, informational texts, etc.) and practice diverse writing modes (narrative, argumentative, explanatory, and more), addressing core skills—evidence-based writing, reasoning, creative communication, language conventions, and research, inquiry, and media literacy—as well as broader state ELA, math, science, and social studies standards, all captured in their comics.

Pixton's AI Activity Maker also drafts lessons that reference a teacher's state standards: you choose grade/subject and focus, and it proposes objectives, prompts, and checks for understanding aligned to your state's curriculum including academic and domain specific vocabulary lists, student instructions, and differentiation strategies. Teachers keep full control—editing language and instructions, and as an additional option, include Pixton's interactive rubric that mirror's the target standards—so each activity remains classroom-ready and compliant while still engaging and differentiated.





# Parent & Administrator Communication

## Letter to Parents

Dear Families,

Your child will be using Pixton, a digital comic creation tool, to demonstrate learning in our classroom. This isn't just "fun and games"—research\* shows that visual storytelling helps students:

- Express complex ideas in new ways
- Engage more deeply with academic content
- Develop 21st-century digital skills
- Build confidence in sharing their understanding

Comics enable students to demonstrate knowledge through words and images, catering to diverse learning styles and giving every student an opportunity to succeed.

Your child will still be held to the same academic standards—they're just getting to choose how they demonstrate their mastery. If you have questions about this approach, please don't hesitate to reach out.

What you might see at home:

- Excitement about assignments
- Requests to share their comics with you
- Improved engagement with academic topics
- Development of storytelling skills

Thank you for supporting your child's learning journey!

\*Independently conducted research has shown that Pixton improves grammar and vocabulary, writing, critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration skills, and autonomous learning habits.



## Administrator One-Pager

### Pixton in the Classroom: Educational Benefits

Pixton has been shown to be effective across multiple independent studies. Documented benefits include:

- **Student Engagement:** Students show greater enthusiasm and engagement when learning with Pixton
- **21st Century Skills:** Develops digital literacy, multimodal communication, critical thinking and problem solving skills
- **Assessment Innovation:** Provides authentic performance assessment opportunities

### Standards Alignment:

- **Pixton AI Activity Maker** – Teachers pick their location, grade & subject; the generator automatically tags every new comic lesson to the matching curriculum standards.
- **Layered national frameworks** – Alongside state lists, educators can toggle national options—Common Core ELA/Math, NGSS Science, CASEL SEL, and the C3 Framework for Social Studies—letting one lesson satisfy multiple requirements at once.
- **Standards database.** Standards lists are cloud-hosted and updated centrally, so districts get new or revised codes without manual re-mapping.

### Measurable Outcomes:

Based on [LDX Research ESSA Level 2 Evidence](#).

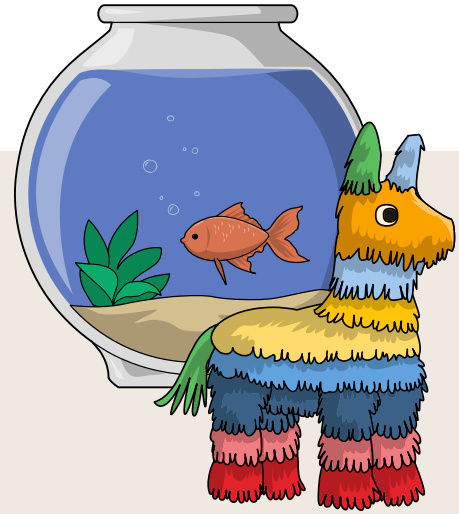
- **Improved Engagement and Comfort:** Pixton was found to create a comfortable and engaging environment for students to practice writing. The platform's visual and creative nature reduced the pressure associated with writing in a foreign language.
- **Collaborative Learning:** Pixton was used as a tool that facilitated collaborative learning among students. It encouraged them to work together and creatively express their ideas.
- **Enhanced Motivation:** Pixton motivated students to participate actively in learning. Students appeared to be more motivated to write and express themselves through the tool.
- **Effective Integration of Technology:** The study highlights the importance of integrating technology like Pixton into language education to enhance learning outcomes. It indicates that technology can be an effective tool for addressing challenges in language learning.
- **Improved Writing Skills:** Students showed significant improvement in their online writing abilities, with increased average scores on writing exams compared to a comparison group.

### Certified Safe

Data privacy is our priority. Pixton is vetted annually by iKeepSafe.org for compliance with COPPA and FERPA.



## Implementation Timeline



### Class Period 1

- Introduce Pixton and its features
- Show example comics related to lesson topic
- Guide students to create accounts and log in
- Demonstrate basic comic creation tools
- Assign comic topic tied to curriculum



### Class Period 2

- Review assignment goals and expectations
- Allow students to complete their comics
- Provide time for peer review or sharing
- Discuss how comics demonstrated learning objectives
- Collect or publish final comics



## Troubleshooting Common Concerns

### “I’m not artistic enough to teach this.”

**Solution:** Focus on content, not art. Pixton has all the visual assets needed, from characters, animals, settings, expressions, objects, and much more.

### “How do I grade this fairly?”

**Solution:** Use the content-focused rubric. Grade understanding, not artistic ability.

### “What about students who prefer traditional formats?”

**Solution:** Always offer choice. Some students may choose essays—that’s fine too.

### “Parents think this isn’t ‘real’ learning.”

**Solution:** Use the parent letter and share strong student work examples.

### “Parents worry it’s not rigorous enough.”

**Solution:** Emphasize that standards remain the same, share examples of high-quality work in various formats.



## Example

### Before & After Sample: Character Analysis

#### Traditional Response:

- "Romeo is impulsive. He makes quick decisions without thinking. This causes problems in the play..."

#### Comic Response:



*Teacher Note: The comic version showcases the same analytical thinking but incorporates visual metaphors, demonstrates an understanding of cause-and-effect, and reveals student interpretation through artistic choices.*

Ready to give students voice and choice in your classroom?  
Start with one assignment and watch engagement soar!

#### Support Resources:

Pixton Help Center: [help.pixton.com](http://help.pixton.com)  
Monthly Best Practices Webinars: [webinars.pixton.com](http://webinars.pixton.com)  
Email Support: [support@pixton.com](mailto:support@pixton.com)

