

MASTER'S THESIS

Encouraging Communication and Participation: A Mixed-Methods Research Project Combining Graphic Novels and Reader Response Theory in a Norwegian 9th Grade ESL Classroom

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By
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1 Introduction

Teachers are always looking for ways to encourage student participation and idea-exchange in their ELS classrooms. It is believed that this encourages language acquisition and helps develop students' communicative competence, a central skill in language education in Norway today. However encouraging student participation and expression often proves easier said than done, and many are still struggling to find a way to achieve a student-centered classroom where communicative English is fostered. Some language professionals and researchers have suggested that moving away from authoritarian teaching styles dominated by teacher-talk and tasks that asks students to reproduce patterns and answers is the solution, offering up the use of literature as an alternative approach. However, motivating today's students to read to learn is not an easy task, as few young adults today are voluntary readers. The graphic novel has in the later years worked its way into theoretical discussions about literature as an alternative genre that might speak more directly to the way young adults are receiving information today, bridging the gap between high- and lowbrow forms of education. Such theory has also started making its way into practice, but is far from established in the Norwegian ELS classrooms. This thesis will be adding to this conversation by providing data that seeks to explore whether the use of a student-centered method, such as reader-response theory, in combination with graphic literature, here using *Optical Allusions* by Jay Hosler, could encourage student participation and ide-exchange in English.

1.1 Research Question

To explicitly restate the purpose of this thesis, I have formulated the following research question:

How can we encourage ESL students in Norway to participate in discussions and exchange ideas in English?

Naturally, as this research question is fairly large and open-ended, I have also formulated sub-questions that I will use to further explore the subject, seeking to better illustrate whether the use of literature, in the form of graphic novels, and a classroom approach based on reader-

response theory could be used as a means of encouraging students to participate in discussions and to exchange ideas in English. These are as follows:

a) Can reading literature, and more specifically a graphic novel, engage students and encourage them to read and participate in discussions of classroom texts to a greater degree than the texts provided to them in textbooks do?

and

b) Could a reader-response based approach in the classroom help students read critically and independently and engage them in processes of meaning-making and interpretation that lead them to confidently form and express their own ideas about the texts they read?

I will attempt to answer these questions by carrying out a research project in a Norwegian 9th grade English class where graphic novels and reader-response exercises are central aspects, and evaluating the students' response by using data from questionnaires and reader-response diaries.

1.2 Literature Review

In defense of the research question, this section presents a literary review of ideas and texts that have been central in forming the research question for this research project. This section is by no means meant to be exhaustive, but simply indicate where the ideas has come from and to demonstrate that there is a sound, theoretical base underlying my interest in this topic that has helped both in developing and answering the research question. This thesis attempts to join three main theoretical areas: reader response theory, literature in the classroom, and the Norwegian basic skills and English subject curriculum. Details from the works and theory discussed in this literary review will also be used in the analysis of the project-results, but research theory will also be implemented. Less important or comprehensive theories and texts will be cited properly and explained sufficiently (if at all necessary) when introduced, and will therefore not be dedicated any space here.

1.2.1 Reader-Response Theory

A reader-response based classroom approach is a central part of the research question, as it sets out in part to answer whether a reader-response based approach in the classroom can help students read critically and independently, and engage them in processes of meaning-making and interpretation that lead them to confidently form and express their own ideas about the texts they read. To productively conduct an understandable analysis of the project-results, this section will briefly summarize reader-response theory, focusing especially on a concept organized within the framework of this critical theory: reception aesthetics. To do this, this section will draw largely on Robert Dale Parker's *How to Interpret Literature: Critical Theory for Literary and Cultural Studies* (2008), but also on Shelby A. Wolf's *Interpreting Literature with Children* (2004).

Reader response is the idea of basing the “critical perspective on what reader-response critics usually call “the reader” (Parker 330). But when Parker further introduces reader response criticism in his book, he writes that “we might go as far as to say that there is no separate category of ‘reader-response criticism’ because all criticism is reader response criticism” (330) because the readers, no matter how they choose to focus their attention, cannot be removed from the reading. “They may,” Parker writes, “believe that their interpretation reveal the intrinsic meaning of a text, but they will still derive their sense of intrinsic meaning from their own response” (332). Thus, reader response can arguably not be escaped in any critical tradition. However, Parker still argues that reader-response criticism is a criticism in its own right because it *focuses* on the use of readers’ responses rather than using the readers’ responses to focus on something else. Parker goes on to consider different reader-response theories and theorists, but the hat reader-response most commonly takes on in the classroom is that of reception aesthetics or transactional reading. These are based on two main ideas that are both outlined briefly in Parker’s book. The first, being that of aesthetic judgment, which Barbra Herrnstein Smith and others have argued are contingent, meaning that “what is good or not good varies with the reader or group of readers and even, for any given reader, varies from reading to reading” (Parker 340). The second pertains to transactional reading, accredited to Louise Rosenblatt, Wolfgang Iser, and Stanly Fish. Transactional reading describes reading as an “ongoing transaction between the text and the reader working together, the text guiding the readers’ responses. In that way, reading enacts a continuous dialogue between the shifting directions of a text and the shifting responses of the reader” (Parker 334).

Shelby A. Wolf argues in *Interpreting Literature with Children* that critical theory is an important tool in successfully integrating literature in the classroom, and that “limiting children’s access to [literary] theory underestimates their intelligence” (21). She proceeds to outline five types of criticism that she believes to have special strengths that make them effective in a classroom of young people. One of these is what she calls “transactional criticism”, where she suggests that the tool used together with a text is “[a] mirror for reflecting on *reader response*” (table 1.1. my emphasis). Wolf also utilizes Louise Rosenblatt’s theory in her discussion, arguing that the transactional process is “an aesthetic experience in which individual readers’ life experiences help to shape textual understandings” (32). What Wolf describes can definitely be categorized as a form of reader response theory that might, indeed, be very useful in the classroom, and she especially values the opportunity it gives to both bring something to the text and take something away from it. “[Y]ou might attend to the rhythm of the language, but rather than lean in closer to analyze just how [the author] has achieved this rhythm (as a formal critic would), you would lean out to capture the rush of your own memories” (33). This “rush” of memories and, inevitably, self-reflection (cue the mirror-tool) can then be used as a driving force to have students form and express their own ideas and interpretations of the text, without worrying about making formal mistakes.

Wolf spends some time later in her book discussing ways in which literary discussions can be successfully facilitated in the classroom, but first outlines some limitations of transactional criticism and the mirror-tool used for reflecting on reader response. The mirror, she says, could be “misinterpreted as placing too much weight on the individual reader, stressing that his or her reflection is the only one that matters” (33). Though the reader response method should be used to facilitate personal interpretations of a text, with no single “correct” answer, Wolf stresses that any response is not as good as any other. Rather, the reader should be able to “return to the text to substantiate and justify their conclusions” (34). Another negative aspect of this type of criticism in the classroom, Wolf argues, is a kind of “over-the-top swing to personal response” which neglects what the reader can take away from the text, thus also neglecting the *transaction* between text and reader (34). Finally, Wolf reflects lastly on the tendency to only see oneself in one’s own reflection, that is: ignoring the social and political positioning of the reader (whether she is aware of it or not), and stresses the need to look “beyond the immediate reflection to the wider world” (35). Thus, due to the ease with which these issues could be avoided, the “limitations” of the reader response method that Wolf

discusses, could more appropriately be considered warnings of what to avoid when employing it.

As the aim of the reader response approach in the classroom is facilitating student-talk and discussions about the literary text, this section will also review some of Wolf's theory on how one should talk about literature in class. As has been shown, Wolf is not in favor of merely reading, but also engaging actively with the text. "When we take up literature in multiple ways," she writes, "through who we are and how we think and communicate with others, we are *engaging* in literature" (11, emphasis in original). She advocates literature discussions because they, in contrast to our self-talk, "dwell in the text for longer periods" and make readers "talk in more extended ways, expressing [their] comments and queries as well as listening to and responding to others' ideas" (112). She recognizes the educator's role in these discussions as they take place in the classroom, but also notes that "if teachers would step out of the way more often, they would find their children quite capable of conducting rich conversations" (115). Figure 1 below illustrates Wolf's five essentials for teachers in facilitating literary discussion.



Figure 1: Literature Discussion (Wolf 114)

In *lead as well as follow*, Wolf suggests that teachers strive for the ideal literary conversation where children get involved in deep discussions without teacher direction, but where teachers learn how to intervene when discussions are not “grand” or get out of hand (115). *Highlight criticism* takes us back to Wolf’s advocacy of introducing and integrating literary criticism as discussed above. *Encourage coding of comments and questions* is, as Wolf points out, a way of guiding students gradually into independent and fruitful discussions by encouraging students to comment on and ask questions to the text and their fellow students (119). The next essential, *emphasize multiple modes of response*, asks the educators to “stretch children beyond what they can say and write about a text” (121). Extending on this idea, she writes that “[t]he coding of a text does not have to be dependent on writing, but can grow from the visual and dramatic arts” (122), suggesting then that the students should not only discuss the text, but work with and from it as an extension of their reading. The last essential in facilitating literary discussion is to, *extend the conversation to the community*, she suggests that parents should be involved in the reading through reading together or having “book bags”, but this is arguably more important and natural when the students are very young.

1.2.2 Graphic Novels as Classroom Literature

Many discussions of the graphic novel as classroom literature revolve around the idea that graphic novels are preferred to pure-text novels by the students. Let it be clear that students’ attitudes towards reading graphic novels in comparison with their attitudes towards reading pure-text novels are not the focus of this thesis. The graphic novel has been selected because I, like many other scholars and language professionals, have evaluated the genre as a literary work with literary and linguistic merit that can be effectively integrated in the English classroom. As with all other classroom texts and materials, the graphic novel should be thoughtfully evaluated by the language professional. The main concern for this evaluation should always be the texts’ potential for learner outcome rather than student entertainment (of course recognizing that these can be interconnected).

The graphic novel for this project was selected for this project first and foremost on the basis that literature, whether it is traditional, in the narrow sense of pure-text novels or in its wider sense including also illustrated and graphic literature as well as films, is a useful and engaging tool that recognizes students as human beings and that can facilitate their language learning, use, and engagement. “[P]leasure is only a part of literature’s potential” Shelby A. Wolf argues in her book *Interpreting Literature with Children*, and it is an important point. “To

argue literature from the standpoint of pleasure,” she continues, “runs the risk of diminishing its power as a rich cognitive work” (19). Therefore, reducing the discussion of graphic novels to whether students find them more enjoyable than full-text novels is arguably not something we should be doing as language professionals. The graphic novel might also be argued to be a better selection for a classroom text, because it more holistically addresses the requirements of developing students’ skills in accordance with the subject curriculum and basic skills as outlined by the Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training (UDIR). The next section will explore in detail how the core and English subject curricula connect with this project, while this section will reviews literature and criticism that discuss classroom literature both generally and with attention to graphic novels.

It is not really necessary to argue that literature should be integrated in the Norwegian English classroom, quite simply because it is mandated in the curriculum that it should be (as will be shown in the following section). However, it is of course still relevant to discuss how literature can be integrated in the classroom efficiently not only as means of helping students’ learn to read but also to read to learn. The part of my research question that pertains to literature asks whether literature, or more specifically a graphic novel, can be used in the English classroom to engage students and encourage them to read to a greater degree than the texts provided to them in their English textbooks can. The critical literature chosen to help analyze the project-results primarily includes Gillian Lazar’s *Literature and Language Teaching: A Guide for Teachers and Trainers* (2013), which deals with the use of literature in the classroom as such, and several teacher accounts from *Teaching Visual Literacy: Using Comic Books, Graphic Novels, Anime, Cartoons, and More to Develop Comprehension and Thinking Skills* (2008) edited by Nancy Frey and Douglas Fisher which, as the title suggests, deals more specifically with graphic literary genres. There are, as any informed researcher will know, many well-composed, interesting, and relevant books on these topics, but the selection has been narrowed down due to the spatial restraints of this research report. These publications have been chosen because they are brilliant resources for language professionals who wish to successfully integrate (graphic) literature into their classroom, but further reading is absolutely appropriate for anyone interested in doing so. Lazar and Frey & Fisher’s books should also be read in their entirety, but for the purpose of this thesis only sections that are considered especially relevant to the research question have been selected. From Lazar’s book, these are section 1.4 “Literary competence and the language classroom”; 1.5 “Why use literature in the language classroom”; and 2.5 “Literature for personal enrichment: Involving

students”. In Frey and Fisher “Comics, the Canon, and the Classroom” by James Bucky Carter; and “‘Literary Literacy’ and the Role of the Comic Book: Or, ‘You Teach a Class on What?’” by Rocco Versaci.

Lazar’s section 1.4 “Literary competence and the language classroom” considers the concept of literary competence: the reader’s ability to take the words of a text and convert them into literary meanings. Here, Lazar mostly discusses whether or not it is important to explicitly teach literary competence depending on the purpose for which literature is being used. She distinguishes between the study of literature per se and the use of literature when drawing conclusions about this (13). This section has been chosen because, as Lazar also argues, the concept of literary competence is important in terms of how (or whether) the students understand the text. Lazar, sticking to a more traditional consideration of literature that is limited to “those novels, short stories, plays and poems which are fictional and convey their message by paying considerable attention to language which is rich and multi-layered” (5), does not include the graphic format in her discussion. As a result of this she does not mention the literacy competence required to read, understand, and interpret a graphic novel, but her overarching argument about literacy can nevertheless be applied to this type of literature.

In section 1.5, Lazar examines why literature should be used in the classroom. She argues in this section that the reasons why it should be are as follows: the material is motivating (15); it gives access to cultural background (16); literature encourages language acquisition (17); it expands students’ language awareness (18); it develops interpretative abilities (19); and it educates the whole person (19). This section has been useful in forming the hypothesis that literature can be used to encourage language acquisition and use, and will be used more explicitly as the project-results are analyzed. Finally, in section 2.5 “Literature for personal enrichment: Involving students”, Lazar picks up on ways in which students can be encouraged to draw more successfully on personal experience when interpreting a literary text. She uses this section to suggest ways in which texts can be made more relevant to the student’s experience by selecting materials that will encourage personal response (41), ways in which students can be encouraged to respond (42), and how to help students who may feel remote from the material (43). For this project, this section will be valuable as student engagement with and interest in traditional classroom texts are compared with their response to a graphic novel in a reader response based class format.

In “Comics, the Canon, and the Classroom” from *Teaching Visual Literacy* the author James Bucky Carter argues that leaving graphic novels out of the educational discourse is an elitist act of discrimination. He discusses reasons why teachers may be reluctant to use comics and graphic novels in their classrooms and vigorously argues that teachers should embrace the form to help evolve the literary canon so it becomes more inclusive. His account, though somewhat polemical, serves this project in the way it highlights teachers’ socio-political agency and the role that graphic novels and comics have to play in that respect today. Carter underscores the *need* for graphic novels in education, and entirely dismisses the tradition of questioning its value. Furthermore, Versaci’s essay in the Frey and Fisher collection (91-112) discusses literary literacy and the role of the comic book. Here he explores whether or not reading comics can constitute literary behavior. He provides insight on visual and literary features found in comic books, and gives several examples of how he himself has engaged students in working with these in his own class. His essay highlights a complexity in graphic novels that can match or even exceed traditional literature in depth and challenge and can therefore also be useful in the analysis of this project as well as for the justification for using graphic novels as classroom-literature.

1.2.3 Framework for Basic Skills, English Subject-Curriculum and CEFR

The Norwegian *Framework for Basic Skills* and the *English Subject-Curriculum* have naturally been especially relevant in the formation of my research question, as the target group for this research project is a Norwegian 9th grade English class. In addition, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Teaching, Learning, Assessment* (CEFR) will also be taken into consideration, especially with attention to the concept of developing communicative competence in students.

The Framework for Basic Skills is a government-issued document defining five basic skills basic to learning in school, work, and social life. These are oral skills, reading, writing, digital skills, and numeracy (UDIR 5). The oral skills relate to the ability to create meaning through listening and speaking and “include[...] being able to listen to others, to respond to others and to be conscious of the interlocutor while speaking” (6). Furthermore, it is stated that mastering oral genres requires active participation and, in secondary education, this means that students should be able to “substantiate their opinions, discuss subject related topics, appreciate different modes of expression and assess their own performance” (6). Reading as a basic skill implies creating meaning “from text in the *widest sense*” (8, emphasis mine). In the

framework for basic skills, it is emphasized that: “texts include everything that can be read in different media, including illustrations, graphs, symbols or other modes of expression” (8). Also, the interaction between comprehension and decoding is underlined in this section of the framework. Writing in the context of this framework “involves expressing oneself understandably and appropriately about different topics” and it is also “a tool for developing one’s own thoughts in the learning process” (10). The framework also underlines the ability to master binding text on paper and screen “together with other modes of expression, such as pictures, figures and symbols if relevant” (10). The digital skills “involve being able to use digital tools, media and resources efficiently and responsibly, to solve practical tasks, find and process information, design digital products and communicate content” (12). UDIR emphasizes the importance of this skill for future learning and active participation in the work field and society at large. Finally, although not as relevant for this project, numeracy is listed as a basic skill which means “applying mathematics in different situations” (14).

The *English Subject Curriculum* lists competence aims structured into different subject areas: language learning, oral communication, written communication, and culture, society and literature. The document states that students need to be able to use the English language in a variety of contexts to succeed in the world. Further, it claims that: “Language learning occurs while encountering a diversity of texts, where the concept of text is used in the *broadest sense of the word*” (2, my emphasis). This indicates that we are to use a combination of written and oral samples representing a wide variety from both written and digital media. Importantly, the subject curriculum also states that:

Literary texts in English can instill a lifelong joy of reading and a deeper understanding of others and oneself. Oral, written and digital texts, films, music, and other cultural forms of expression can further inspire personal expression and creativity. (2)

This clearly encourages the use and integration of literature in the classroom, and not only in the form of traditional, pure-text novels, promoting English as a way and tool of “gaining knowledge and personal insight” (2). The subject areas present different competence aims for different levels, and here it is most natural to consider those concerning the target group of this project: “Competence aims after year 10” (beginning on page 8). As is also emphasized in the project proposal (Appendix A), many of these goals can easily be connected to the project, but this section will only highlight a few. To see more clearly how these connect to the research question, I would like to first provide some key words from the research question, so

that these can be kept fresh in mind as the competence aims are highlighted: *discuss, engage, critical, independent, meaning-making, and form and express ideas*.

	Competence aims after year 10 - highlights
Language learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment on own work in learning English • Select different digital resources and other aids and use them in an independent manner in own language learning
Oral communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express and justify own opinions about different topics • Introduce, maintain and terminate conversations on different topics by asking questions and following up on input
Written communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read, understand and evaluate different types of texts of varying length about different topics • Write different types of texts with structure and coherence • Use digital tools and formal requirements for information processing, text production and communication
Culture, society and literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and elaborate on different types of English literature from English speaking countries • Create, communicate and converse about own texts inspired by English literature, films and cultural forms of expression

Figure 2: Highlighted Competence Aims

The emphasis on getting students to participate in discussions, and to form and express ideas in different modes in English is largely a product of the Norwegian focus on communicative-competence in language learning. This stems from the CEFR document, which states:

“Language use, embracing language learning, comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of competences, both general and in particular communicative language competences” (9). Defining communicative language competences as “those which empower a person to act using specifically linguistic means” (9)

and as comprised by linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic components (13). In other words, language professionals should strive to enable students to communicate efficiently rather than striving for native-like fluency. However, despite a tremendous effort in recent years to change language syllabi and methodology to accommodate the CEFR, professionals like Neus Figueras have argued that “it is still not possible to say that these language policies have been effectively transferred to classrooms or to teaching materials” (478). This research project is an attempt at such a transfer.

It is an assumption here that a student-centered classroom is ideal in developing communicatively competent language users, as this allows for students to practice using the language themselves. Literature is a natural choice for achieving this because it is, according to Lazar, more engaging and appeals to students as *people* (Section 2.5). The graphic novel has been selected as the literature of choice because it arguably accommodates to the Basic Skills and Core Curriculum to a greater degree than a pure-text novel. This is because a graphic novel combines images, symbols, and text to create meaning, and thus may offer a richer and more engaging reading experience. It is also more closely connected to and resembles newer forms of cultural expression, such as movies (both animated and otherwise).

2 Methods and Materials

This chapter will be dedicated to the description of the project and my research design, as well as including a brief overview of the materials used. The section has been divided into three sections: “Project Details”, “Research Design”, and “Materials”. The first section will discuss the details of the project, such as the formalities, project description, and participants. The project description in this section is not to be confused with the research design, as it seeks only to explain how the project was executed and not how it was designed or used for research. “Research Design” is the section in which this will be addressed. The “Research Design” section will address more technical aspects of the project, such as the method, ethical considerations, and also details about the structure of the questionnaires and response diary sessions, as these form the basis my analysis in this thesis. Finally “Materials” will provide information about the most central materials used in the execution of this research project.

2.1 Project Details

2.1.1 Formalities

To host this project, a class was selected at a school where I have connections due to a longer engagement as a periodical substitute teacher in English and Spanish. The class and its students were thus not new to me, nor I to them. I also have a professional and personal relationship with their class-teacher, which is beneficial to the project and me as I could always ask her for details or advice about the class. After having talked the project over with the class-teacher, a formal project proposal (see Appendix A) was sent to the principal, who promptly responded positively. Then, a parental permission slip was sent out to all legal guardians (Appendix B) asking for permission to use students' work and responses anonymously for this thesis. All legal guardians approved. I conducted the test at the Norwegian Data Protection Official for Research (NSD) to see whether I was obliged to notify the NSD about my project, and found that I was not. Project details, such as a discussion of the host class and the choice of method, will be further explained in the following sections.

2.1.2 Description of Project

The project, as described in both the project proposal (Appendix A), letter of consent (Appendix B) and lesson plan (Appendix C) is a three-week program using the graphic novel *Optical Allusions* by Jay Hosler (2000) in teaching English to students in the Norwegian Ungdomsskole (equivalent to the American upper middle- and lower high-school year 8-10). The graphic novel *Optical Allusions*, as shall be examined further in the following section, is a novel that can be used in an interdisciplinary manner benefiting subjects in the Norwegian Ungdomsskole such as English, natural sciences, and Norwegian. The information gathered in the course of the project is used to examine whether literature, here the graphic novel, can be used in combination with a reader-response based classroom approach to motivate students to form, express, share, and respectfully listen to ideas connected to the text and, furthermore, the world in which they live, in English.

As can be seen in the lesson plan provided in Appendix C, the project is to cover reading strategies, the graphic layout, literary elements, color, mood, and interpretation, and reader-response theory in the three weeks allotted. Each lesson starts with a response-session where students are given time and encouraged to share and discuss the project, the text, and themes

and topics they find interesting and relevant to each of them. The class then proceeds with mostly group-based tasks designed to make the students interact actively with one another in English. Every class period ends with a 5-10 minute writing-session where students are to give their response to the class-period and reflect on their work. This response can be given in either English or Norwegian, as it is aimed primarily at giving the students a channel in which they can respond to the teaching and share their thoughts freely.

2.1.3 Participants

The class selected to participate in this project is a Norwegian 9th grade English class consisting of 9 boys and 12 girls who are fourteen or fifteen years of age. The students' proficiency levels in English vary, yet they are relatively high. The teacher-account (Appendix D) provides more detail as to the cultural and socio-economical diversity within the group stating:

[T]his 9th grade consists of a diversity of 21 students born in 2001; they are twelve girls and 9 boys; One is a foster child, one's father is American; one is a second generation refugee from Somalia and wears hijab; one lives in a lesbian home; some have divorced parents and others live with both their parents. Despite their different backgrounds, the class functions well as a group.

The teacher also comments further on the English proficiency in her class writing that “[t]he students represent different levels of English acquisition, even though they have completed the same lessons during almost nine years at school”, illustrating that some of her students have learning disabilities, while some engage frequently with English in their daily lives, and another has lived in the U.S. for a year. I have previously worked with this class on several occasions as a substitute teacher, and we have at an earlier point worked with the graphic format. It was thus assumed that the students needed no preliminary instructions to be able to do the assigned reading at home.

2.2 Research Design

2.2.1 Method

This project is a mixed-methods project, relying most heavily on the analysis of quantitative research-results. It is an applied research project using primary data from questionnaires, supplemented by diary research and -analysis. The quantitative research method typically relies on a statistical analysis of numeric indices and/or survey responses with the purpose to

generalize, predict, and to posit casual relationships (McKay 7). This is also typical for this research project, as the majority of the data has been collected from questionnaires. Furthermore, the project has been conducted over a relatively short time-span (3 weeks), with quite a clear structure and a fair amount of control, which is also characteristic of the qualitative method. As the implementation of a reader response –based approach in the classroom was essential to this project, it was important to me that I was to plan and lead the lessons rather than simply observing the class. The approach, however, puts the students at the center of the lessons and relies on student-lead group work and discussions, and thus the possibility of controlling the classroom is naturally limited.

The research question asks quite openly: “How can we encourage students to participate in discussions and exchange ideas in English?”, but it should be apparent through the formulation of the sub-questions that the hypothesis of this research project tries to connect student participation with the use of literature and a reader response –based approach in the classroom. As the integration of literature in the form of the graphic novel is not a common practice in this class, which generally leans on the assigned textbook, and since the reader response approach is not implemented regularly in this class’ lessons, a statistical analysis of pre- and post-questionnaires was deemed an appropriate way to examine whether a casual relationship could be suggested between literature in combination with reader response methodology and students’ participation in debates and exchange of ideas. However, my stand on classroom research is most definitely connected with that which is more commonly assigned to qualitative research, suggesting that “[r]eality is multiple; it can only be studied holistically” (McKay 7). Therefore, the decision has been made to supply the statistical analysis with an interpretative analysis of the data and its categorization, utilizing response-diaries kept by the students throughout the project and other accounts from the students, their regular English teacher, and myself when necessary.

It would be naïve to think that the integration of literature and the application of a reader response –based approach would, in the course of just three weeks, be the only factors causing possible differences in the pre- and post-questionnaires. With attention to the varieties of factors that are classroom-specific and the class being a sample of convenience, this thesis will naturally not seek to claim universal external validity in its conclusions. However, it should be clear that the research project is designed to test a hypothesis concerning the use of literature and reader response theory in the classroom. Thus, it can be most closely connected

to quantitative research, though the analysis and conclusion are influenced by qualitative results as well as quantitative.

2.2.2 Research Ethics

This section will comment on the ethical considerations taken in designing this research project. Following institutionalized ethical guidelines on research on human subjects is, according to Sandra Lee McKay, a way of “demonstrating respect for the individuals involved” (26). The Norwegian National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (NESH) has created a set of ethical guidelines, which has been considered thoroughly for this project. Especially important was the considerations of respect for the individual, as the participation of the students was invaluable and much appreciated. Ways in which the concern for maintaining an ethically sound research practice for this thesis was, for instance, providing students and their legal guardians with information about the project, and requiring consent forms to be signed by those who wished to participate. This form of consent was free and informed and ensured that participants were “given genuine opportunities to reserve themselves from participating in the research without encountering inappropriate pressure or disadvantages” (NESH 11). Students who did not agree to participate would be able to follow the class as normal, but were ensured to not have their contributions included in the research report. Preserving student anonymity was also an ethical consideration, making students feel safe expressing themselves and sharing their work.

2.2.3 Questionnaires

At the beginning and end of the project, the students were given questionnaires where the first questionnaire (Appendix F) asks students to evaluate their attitudes and habits connected with learning English in school generally, while the final questionnaire (Appendix G) asks them to do so considering the three project weeks. This section will look closer at some theory concerning the use of questionnaires in research and also at the design of those used in this project.

Questionnaires were, as discussed briefly in the Section above, deemed an appropriate tool for gathering and analyzing the information needed to approach the research question for this thesis. As a young researcher with limited teaching experience, it seemed daunting to gather and process quantitative material in a class I did not engage with frequently and from students

whom I did not know personally. To ensure precise and reliable results, conducting surveys and systematic observation (by means of response diaries) became the preferred approach. In addition, the restriction of only having three weeks to complete the project and engage with the students directly encouraged the acquisition of “hard” material that could be reviewed and revisited at any point post-project execution. Also, as is underlined by McKay in her book, “surveys provide a very efficient means for researchers to gather a good deal of information in a short time with little cost” (37).

As a researcher working alone, there were no opportunities to have others examine the same data to ensure reliability, but the surveys were designed to provide reliable information by checking the internal consistency of responses in the survey by including several items that asked similar questions, as suggested in McKay (41). The questionnaire was furthermore designed primarily with close-ended questions, with one or two open-ended short answer questions at the end. These questions were divided into three main sections: reading, interpretation, and expression, with the shorter, final section asking more general questions. These sections were the same in both the pre- and post project questionnaires and were meant to serve the research question of this thesis. In the three main sections the students were asked to indicate on a seven point-scale how true the statements were for them, while the final section had options more suitable for the individual question, such as check-boxes for gender-identity and blank lines for short answers. The odd-numbered scale was selected purposefully so that students would have a “neutral” option. The suggestions for wording of survey questions outlined by Brown and cited by McKay in her book (39) have generally been followed, though some negative questions were included as part of ensuring answer validity, and to ensure that students would not tire of consistently choosing one side of the scale. In the sections below the questions have been listed.

2.2.3.1 Reading

The reading section centers on statements meant to illuminate the students’ relationship to reading and working with texts for or in class. There are seven statements in this section. In the pre-project questionnaire they are: *1. Before class I read the assigned texts; 2. I generally do not enjoy reading the assigned texts; 3. I spend a lot of time finishing the assigned reading; 4. Working with longer texts in school is fun; 5. I am often bored by the assigned texts; 6. I sometimes read more than what is assigned in the book; and 7. I prefer assigned reading to*

assigned tasks. In the post-project questionnaire they are quite similar: 1. *I finished the assigned reading before class;* 2. *I enjoyed reading Optical Allusions;* 3. *I spent a lot of time on the assigned reading;* 4. *Working with Optical Allusions has been fun;* 5. *Reading Optical Allusions bored me;* 6. *I read more in the book than I had to;* and 7. *I prefer this type of assigned reading to assigned tasks.*

2.2.3.2 Interpretation

The statements in the interpretation-section seek to evaluate the students' perceived value of these assigned texts, both in terms of learning-outcome and importance to their lives. This section also has seven questions. For the pre-project questionnaire: 8. *I often contemplate the things I read;* 9. *I rarely speak to others about what we read and discuss in class;* 10. *What we read about in the textbook is not very important to me;* 11. *I often feel like I do not know what the assigned reading is about;* 12. *The assigned reading makes me think about important things;* 13. *When I do not understand what I am reading, I often read it again several times;* and 14. *I rarely learn something new when I read the assigned reading.* In the post-project questionnaire the statements are as follows: 8. *I often contemplated the things I read about in Optical Allusions;* 9. *I rarely spoke to others about what we read and discussed in class;* 10. *What we read about in Optical Allusions is important to me;* 11. *I often felt like I did not know what Optical Allusions was about;* 12. *Optical Allusions made me think about important things;* 13. *When I did not understand what I was reading, I often read it again several times;* and 14. *I did not learn anything new reading Optical Allusions.*

2.2.3.3 Expression

The next section, expression, aims to outline the students' attitudes towards and experience with forming and sharing ideas with others in English. In the pre-project questionnaire there were 14 statements in this section: 15. *I like to talk about what I have read;* 16. *I often feel like my opinion about a text is not being heard;* 17. *Speaking in class is easy for me;* 18. *The teacher talks too much in class;* 19. *I worry about being wrong when I talk about the assigned reading;* 20. *I often have an opinion about the text I have read;* 21. *Generally, I am not challenged to express my opinions on what we are working on in class;* 22. *It is important to hear what others think about the assigned reading;* 23. *The teacher should tell me what the text is about;* 24. *One has to speak English to be good at English;* 25. *The material used in class is of no importance to how much I participate;* 26. *I like to be given time to practice*

speaking English in class; 27. When someone interprets a text differently than I have, I become insecure; and 28. Practicing speaking English makes me more confident in my ability to do so. In the post-project questionnaire, there are 13 statements: *15. I liked talking about Optical Allusions; 16. I often felt like my opinion about Optical Allusions was not being heard; 17. The teacher spoke too much in class; 18. Speaking in class is easy for me; 19. I was worried about being wrong when I talked about Optical Allusions; 20. I often had an opinion about what I had read in Optical Allusions; 21. It was important to hear what others thought about Optical Allusions; 22. The teacher should have told me what Optical Allusions was about; 23. I have spoken more in class than usual in the duration of this project; 24. The material we used in class was of no importance to how much I participated; 25. I liked that I was given time to practice speaking English in class; 26. When someone had interpreted Optical Allusions differently than I had, I became insecure; and 27. Practicing speaking English has made me more confident in my ability to do so.* Statement 24 in the pre-project questionnaire, “One has to speak English to be good at English”, seems unnecessary to repeat for the post-project questionnaire, and is thus excluded from it.

2.2.3.4 Finally

The final section has four questions in the pre-project questionnaire, asking for the students’ to provide information about their gender-identity (29.), their grades in English (30.), and two optional short answer questions where they could make suggestions that would lead them to be more active in class (31.) and comment on the questionnaire or any of the questions (32.). In the post-project questionnaire all but number 31 is repeated, with a slight change allowing students’ to comment on the project as well as the questionnaire and its content in the final question. All the statements and questions are provided in both Norwegian and English to ensure that all students can fully understand them, although instructions on how to answer the statements are provided under each section the scale remains unchanged. Both the class teacher and I (the researcher) were present and available to help and answer any questions from the students as they filled out the questionnaires.

2.2.4 Response Diaries

Since, the class was working with reader-response theory for this project, the response-diaries seemed like a natural addition to the program. In addition to the utility and educational benefits connected with having students reflect over and comment on their learning and

experiences with the project and text, it was useful to be able to read these comments and take them into account as the project moved along. In this way it did not take me three full weeks to discover practices that were perceived as useless, ineffective or dreadful by the students. It was my intention that students would be given the freedom to write about anything that they found relevant to the class-period, the text, or the project in these diaries, and they were allowed to write the responses in Norwegian if English proved too challenging. Keeping a diary can, according to McKay, “provide a great deal of awareness of the processes [the students] are involved in” (68). In addition, it might provide benefits such as teacher insight into student perspectives; it can illuminate factors worth studying, and provide a vehicle for data triangulation (69). Because pure diary-studies might be problematic because no other data allows for verification, this research project supplements questionnaire result analysis with data collected from the diaries to draw conclusions.

2.3 Materials

2.3.1 Optical Allusions

Optical Allusions is a graphic novel by Jay Hosler published by Active Synapse in 2000. The Ohio-based publishing agency publishes scientific graphic novels under the slogan “Probably good for your brain!”. Jay Hosler teaches biology at Juniata College in addition to making science comics. In addition to *Optical Allusions*, Hosler has also authored scientific graphic novels such as *The Sandwalk Adventures* (2013), *Clan Apis* (2013), and *Evolution* (2011). *Optical Allusions* is a comic-book adventure revolving around the character Wrinkles the Wonder Brain, who goes on a search in the human imagination for his bosses’ eye. Along the way, he learns about the evolution and biology of the human eye and engages with various characters from Greek mythology. Many of the chapters are followed by in-depth informational pages, which go into detail about the scientific concepts introduced in the previous chapter. The novel uses humor and adventure to teach the reader about various scientific topics, such as evolution, natural selection, and, of course, the wonders of vision.

2.3.2 Teaching Graphic Novels in the Classroom: Building Literacy and Comprehension

To supply Hosler’s novel in the classroom, this project has included some information, ideas, and photocopies from Ryan J. Novak’s book *Teaching Graphic Novels in the Classroom:*

Building Literacy and Comprehension (2014). This book “describes different methods teachers may use to begin teaching graphic literature to new readers” (cover). Since the project ended up with students creating their own graphic stories, Chapter 9 “Making Your Own Graphic Novel” has been especially useful. The “five elements of plot”-figure (135) was discussed explicitly in class, and was the focus of several group-sessions, while handout 9.1 and page 136 were photocopied and handed out to the students when they started plotting their stories.

2.3.3 OneNote and Tablet

OneNote is a digital note-taking program developed by Windows and frequently used by teachers in the target-school for this project. A project folder was made, and an invitation was extended to all students, as well as the class-teacher. Participants are given access to a content-area, where only the class-teacher and I can post and edit information, a cooperation-area, where all participants can access and edit, and a personal-area, which only the individual student, the class-teacher, and I can access and view. Every student in the target-class is already in possession of a windows-tablet and a OneNote-account. The students were already accustomed to using OneNote, and all the materials provided to the students were made available to them in the project folder. The students accessed information, did homework, took private notes, kept their response diaries, and worked together in the different areas of the folder. A censored version of the project file is available to view in Appendix J.

2.3.4 Other

Other materials used in this project were, the digital coloring platform OneMotion at www.onemotion.com , to complete the coloring exercises of lesson 3 (see the Lesson Plan in Appendix C). For the class pertaining to color-theory, the students also watched the trailer for the Pixar movie *Inside Out* on YouTube with English subtitles. In making their personal graphic stories, the students were given the option to do it digitally or by hand. Those who chose to complete the story digitally were introduced briefly to a handful of platforms they could use. All students who completed the task digitally used either Chogger Comic Strip Creator at www.chogger.com or Scratch at www.scratch.mit.edu . Chogger is a fairly simple program that allows students to select a pre-made comic layout, and fill it in with their own drawings, text, and images. Scratch was originally intended for making simple animations, and allows students to select pre-made characters and settings if they do not want to draw

their own, and to add text and movement to these images as they please. In scratch students had to compose the graphic layout themselves. In addition, one of the requirements for the presentation of their story (held after the project weeks) was that the story was presented digitally. Most students chose to use Prezi or PowerPoint to do this. Those who had not completed their story digitally were asked to import images of their finished product so that it could be presented in this manner.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Response-Diaries and Short-Answers

All students were given 5-10 minutes of each lesson to write in their response journals. For obvious reasons, the diary entries cannot be quoted in their entirety, but the thesis will attempt to include a sample representative of the students' feedback as a whole. The samples will be listed and organized by the class in which they were recorded, each class being given a separate section below. All of the diary entries can be found in their entirety in Appendix H, and will be cited according to the titles there. In the questionnaires, the students were under the section "Finally" prompted to answer what would make them participate more actively in class, and given the opportunity to comment freely on the project and the questionnaires. The results extracted from the questionnaires will be treated below in the section titled "Short Answers". As there were not many students who provided answers to these short answer questions, all of the students' answers will be treated directly or indirectly in section 4.1.7 below. Students writing in English have had their responses directly quoted, and entries in Norwegian have been translated with an effort put forth to preserve the students' voice. The responses recorded in the response-diaries and the short answers from the questionnaires have been grouped together here because the responses have a similar format, that is: free writing from the students themselves – resulting in qualitative evidence rather than quantitative. This qualitative evidence will be discussed briefly as it is recorded here, but will be most effectively put to use as supporting arguments or evidence in the discussions that follow the questionnaire-results.

3.1.1 Week 1, Class 1

In the first lesson, where the students were given the graphic novel, completed the pre-questionnaire and did exercises connected to the graphic novel format, the general impression from the response diaries were excitement about the novel, the project, and the group exercises. Representative excerpts of diary entries from the first class are, for instance: “I think it was a great start on the project today, it was fun that we sat in groups and got to discuss different tasks” (9F); “I think this is going to be exciting. We have had some other projects, but not this big of a project” (13M); and “It was exciting to get a different book, but there are quite a few difficult words in the book. But it’s better than reading in the regular book. More exciting and fun to read” (4F, my translation). A few students expressed confusion writing that they are “not sure what is going on” (6F).

3.1.2 Week 1, Class 2

In the second class, the students started guided reader response and shared their responses in a full group and later did work in smaller groups pertaining to literary elements. In the diary responses from this lesson students generally expressed enjoyment of the text, the tasks, and the group work. Excerpts summarizing the feedback are: “When we said out loud the questions we were given and the answers we chose, was tbh¹, very entertaining to listen to”(8M); “I think I am learning a lot when I am talking with my friends, instead of writing down what I can say” (5M); and “[I]n these classes we can speak more freely in groups and work in groups. It kind of makes it more safe so I think these classes are good” (11F, my translation) However, a number of students also commented that the first exercise in the big group was awkward or uncomfortable, writing things like: “It was awkward because people wasn’t comfortable talking English in such big groups” (18M) and “I am scared to say something wrong and then I thought it was very uncomfortable to speak” (17F, my translation).

3.1.3 Week 2, Class 1

This class started with a reader response session in smaller groups, and was continued with group exercises dealing with colors, mood, and interpretation. The last coloring exercise the students could choose to do individually. Again, the responses recorded in the diaries were predominantly positive, expressing gratitude for the ability to work in groups, and excitement

¹ tbh is a slang abbreviation meaning “to be honest”

over the coloring exercise. Here are some examples: “As always the class was fun. It is always fun to be working in groups instead of working alone on tasks” (20M); “I like to work in groups because it makes me talk more. I also like listening to what they have to say” (9F); and “I loved when we colorized the drawing and could talk to your friends and listen to music” (15F). A few students also noted that they did not see the point of the coloring exercise, making comments to the extent of “I was not sure what we were supposed to learn tho” (8M).

3.1.4 Week 2, Class 2

In the second class of week two students had a reader response session in smaller groups, then in the class as a whole. After, students were briefly introduced to reader response theory and the digital tools, and got started in small groups with their personal graphic stories for the presentation (see presentation requirements in Appendix I). Again the students were mostly positive, commenting on their experience with the groups and the novel, and expressing excitement about the presentation. Some representative excerpts are: “I think this is funny because we get more social and we learn not to be so scared around everybody” (12F); “I still like the group work and especially the way we work with the graphic novel ... [Discussing the text] doesn't only help the person who has a question, but it also helps the one who have to explain it in English” (3M); and “I'm having fun with this project because we do other things and work more in groups” (11F, my translation). However, for this class there were also a few expressing stress or confusion, such as “[w]hat I liked the least was when we had to work on the project. It can be good, but I don't understand” (4F, my translation) and “I don't like when we have to participate orally, because I am scared what others think if I say something wrong” (21F, my translation).

3.1.5 Week 3, Class 1

Lesson five started with a reader response session in smaller groups where students summarized and discussing their reading. Finally they were given time to work on their graphic stories by discussing their ideas in groups and working on them individually. The diary entries were positive overall: “It was a fun lesson today. I managed to think of a story I could have” (4F, my translation); “I have learned very much from this project, and I hope that we can talk more English in the normal lessons” (5F); “I like this project with the graphic novels because it is another way of working, and I would like to do it again” (3M). A few also

commented that they still did not see the point, writing things like “its a bit weird to make a comic strip” (16M) and “I’m not sure about what I should learn” (6F).

3.1.6 Week 3, Class 2

The last lesson was dedicated to working on the presentation and finishing the post-questionnaire. The students did not make entries in their response diaries.

3.1.7 Short-Answers

The answers recorded from the essay-section are presented below. Most students answered the questions in Norwegian and appear in translated versions below. I have made an effort to preserve the student’s voice in the translations, and no “cosmetic” editing has been done to correct sentence structure, punctuation, etc.. The student quotes are followed by the number of their questionnaire (1-21, each student having one), their representative gender (M for males, F for females) and a number that represents the grade they have reported to receive most frequently (1-6). The numbers of the questionnaires were distributed at random, and were not the same for the pre- and post-questionnaires. They are simply noted here so that the reader can differentiate when a quote originates from the same questionnaire. The grades and gender are also reported in case this information is relevant at a later point of the analysis. Each of the questions will be presented, using the prefix PRE for the statements stemming from the pre-project questionnaire and POST for those stemming from the post-project questionnaire, followed by the number of the statement in each questionnaire

3.1.7.1 PRE31: “What would make you talk/participate more in class?”

For the essay question PRE31, a number of responses were recorded. The responses could generally be divided into three sections or themes. These were: topic, class organization, and reluctance. There were also two students who indicated that they did not really need to participate more in class.

Many students indicated that the topic played a role in how much they participated in class. Many recorded that the topics should be interesting: “Have more interesting topics.” (2M5), “[m]ore interesting topics.” (6M5), “[i]f the subject is something funny or interesting, also when other people talk.” (8M5), and “[i]f it’s a special topic.” (10M4). Some students also indicated that the topics should be relevant to their own lives: “Make tasks where we can speak freely about a topic that is important to us. Not that we’re given 15 min to talk about the

Wild West.” (7M5 – the Wild West was a topic in this English class the previous week) and “[w]hen there’s something to talk about and when it’s something I have an opinion about.” (12M5).

Also, quite a few students made comments on class-organization that could encourage them to participate more orally. Some commented quite simply: “Encourage me more.” (1F4) and “[w]hen there are fewer people in the classroom.” (13F5), while others gave more concrete suggestions: “Maybe if we did it more in Norwegian, because then I understand more, and can be more active orally.” (3F3), “[m]ore oral work would make me and everyone else in class able to share their own opinions and answers. This works best in smaller groups. Things that could make me participate more in class could be more fun and exciting work like studying things I am interested in myself.” (20M6), and “[t]hat we have more physical tasks by doing practical things. That we have more oral classes. That everyone ought to try to participate. That we have tasks that everyone can master, sort of. For instance, if you have oral games/activities in class, I’d think more would participate and be interested.” (17F5).

The majority of the students who gave detailed answers to the PRE31 expressed reluctance to speak in class due to various insecurities. Some students addressed the need to feel safe with their classmates when answering the question, such as: “Ehm, to feel safe in my class” (19F5), “[i]f we’re dealing with something exciting, but there’s not really anything that can make me speak more. It depends on my mood and my confidence. But it also depends on who is in the class. Because if I say something wrong then someone might comment on it and that is why I don’t speak so much in class” (5F3), and “I don’t know, if I get insecure then I’m worried to get it wrong. And if I really know the answer I am scared to be wrong. I talk the most when I feel safe with the people I’m around and that I don’t have to worry about making a fool out of myself in front of them” (4F3).

Meanwhile, other students focused on the importance of being given time to prepare their responses to feel confident expressing them: “Be given the opportunity to talk to a classmate about what we are going through in full class after” (15F4), and “Not forcing anyone to answer. To ask questions that anyone can answer. That one feels safe that no one will laugh if you say something wrong. It is easier to participate orally if the teacher gives you positive feedback because it is very difficult to build up the courage to raise the hand. Many times one knows the answer but then it’s scary in case you answer incorrectly. I have to think about

what I'm going to say so it would have been easier to participate orally if we were given some time to think" (16F5).

3.1.7.2 PRE32 and POST30: Comments

Only one student responded to the PRE32 -question, stating that: "The question about the grades made me uncomfortable" (14FN/A). To the POST30, however, there were quite a few responses recorded. Since the students had the opportunity to address individual questions as well as the project as a whole, the comments will be followed with the correct abbreviations for the specific questions in addition to the number/gender/grade combination, if applicable.

Two students commented on the post-questionnaire that they had problems with the project because they had been having trouble understanding the graphic novel. To the POST5 – question, they commented saying: "I did not understand the book so it was not that fun but it was not too boring either" (18F3) and "[i]t was fun but I could not understand the plot and then it was a little boring" (17F3). One of them also commented on POST15 that "[i]t was difficult because I did not understand the book" (18F3). Moreover, these two students in addition to another commented on the project more generally in terms of enjoyment and understanding: "I did not like the book, and I did not understand it because it was a bit difficult to understand. I liked the classes but was a bit insecure speaking out loud" (18F3), "I liked the classes, but thought the book was a bit difficult to understand, and therefore it was a bit difficult to talk in the groups. But it has been fun" (17F3), and "[i]t has been exciting and different to work with, but it could have been even better if I understood the meaning with the comic" (2F3).

A handful of positive comments were also recorded, such as: "I liked this project a lot!" (20F5), "I think this project has gone by very quickly. I feel like it met my expectations. You've done a good job, Julianne! Good luck☺" (15F5), "[i]t was exciting and fun to do something different" (7M4), "[f]un to mix it up" (4M5), and "[t]he task was fun and I hope it's possible to do something like this again" (6M6).

3.2 Questionnaires

As one of the purposes of this research project was to decide whether the approach of using a graphic novel and reader-response based tasks would motivate and encourage students to actively participate in classroom discussions about the text to a greater degree than what the texts in their English textbook do, most statements in the pre-project questionnaire have equivalents in the post-project questionnaire. This is to make it easier to compare students' habits and attitudes towards reading, interpreting, and expressing themselves about classroom texts they interact with generally to those connected with reading, interpreting, and expressing themselves about the material interacted with in the duration of the project. Therefore, it has been decided that the results from the pre- and post- project questionnaires will be displayed side by side, matching up the statements that seek to investigate (more or less) the same attitudes and habits, but for different types of texts and tasks, the first of which represents what has generally been used and the second representing that brought in as part of this project. In the few instances where there is no equivalent, the statement or question and its results have been presented alone, specifying which questionnaire they belong to.

All 21 participants completed both the pre- and post-project questionnaire, but there were instances where students had refrained from answering (or simply forgotten). In these instances results have been listed as not applicable (n/a), to avoid skewing the results any one direction. The results will, for the sake of order, be divided and presented in the same section as they were in the questionnaire: reading, interpretation and expression. Each of the statement-pairs will be presented in the same manner as described in the section above, using the prefix PRE for the statements stemming from the pre-project questionnaire and POST for those stemming from the post-project questionnaire, followed by the number of the statement in each questionnaire. The results will be presented in detail in a table, showing the number of students who have indicated each number on the scale, and more generally in a figure that demonstrates the number of students who responded to the question negatively (1-3 on the scale), thereby disagreeing with the statement, neutrally (4 on the scale), and those who responded positively (5-7 on the scale), hence agreeing with the statement.

To avoid a tedious listing of quantitative results and their accompanying tables and figures, the results will be discussed as they are listed, drawing on and considering results from the response diaries when relevant or necessary. Each statement-couple will be discussed

separately, but there will also be a discussion of the results for each overarching section. This is because it seems necessary and useful to summarize and emphasize the purpose they serve in answering the research question of this thesis.

3.2.1 Reading

3.2.1.1 Completing the Reading Assignment

To chart how many students completed the reading assignment, the following statements were included in the questionnaires:

PRE 1: Before class I read the assigned texts

POST 1: I finished the assigned reading before class

These statements were positively loaded and had, as can be seen in Figure 1, slight variations in the PRE and POST questionnaires. In the PRE questionnaire, a total of 14 students agreed while 6 disagreed with the statement to varying degrees. 1 student remained neutral. In the POST questionnaire, there were 18 positive responses, 3 negative ones. No neutral answers were recorded.

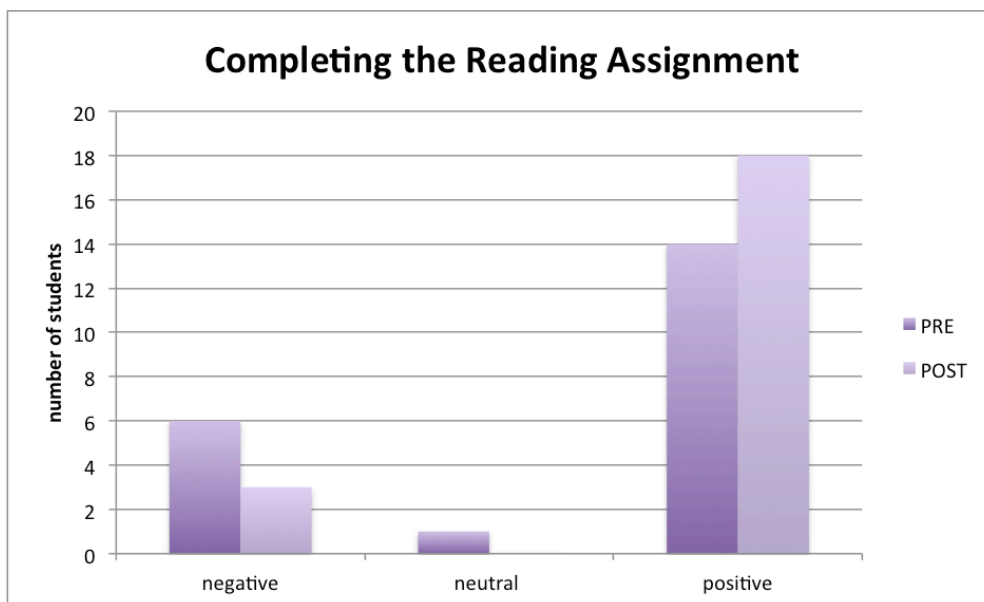


Figure 3: Completing the Reading Assignment

Looking at the degree to which students agreed or disagreed in Table 1, it is shown that in the PRE questionnaire the 6 negative responses were divided as follows: 2 students who selected

3, 3 students who selected 2, and 1 student who selected 1. The positive responses in the PRE questionnaire were divided as follows: 4 students who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 8 students who selected 7. In the POST questionnaire, the negative responses registered 2 students who selected 3, 0 students who selected 2, and 1 who selected 1. The positive responses in this questionnaire were 1 student who selected 5, 4 students who selected 6, and 13 students who selected 7.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	1	3	2	1	4	2	8	0
POST	1	0	2	0	1	4	13	0

Table 1: Completing the Reading Assignment

3.2.1.2 Discussion of Completing the Reading Assignment Results

A prerequisite for having students participate in discussions and forming and sharing ideas about a classroom text is, quite obviously, that the students have read the text. Reading is, as we have seen, a basic skill outlined by UDIR and it is a “prerequisite for lifelong learning and active participation in civic life” (Basic Skills 8). What is not mentioned under reading as a basic skill, in contrast to what is written under oral skills (6), is that the development of reading as a basic skill also requires active participation. Rocco Versaci commenting on the struggle to make lifelong readers out of his students writes “[I]oving to read is more than simply knowing how to read” (92), and underlines that the traditionally narrow definition of literature reduces “literacy” to a too narrow definition. Introducing the graphic novel as literature into the ESL classroom was, in part, an attempt to adhere to UDIR’s specification of using texts in “the widest sense” and to give students material motivates them by, for instance “exposing them to complex themes and fresh, unexpected uses of language” (Lazar 15). What the results indicate is that 3 responses have moved from the negative response (“I do not complete the assigned reading”), and one from the neutral (“I finish the assigned reading about half the time”), to the positive response (“I complete the assigned reading”) when presented with the graphic novel instead of assigned reading in *Searching 9*, their regular textbook. This is especially impressive when we take a closer look at the detailed responses, where it is shown that five more students chose point 7 on the scale (“completely agree” or “I always complete the reading”) and two more chose point 6 (“strongly agree” or “I almost always complete the reading”) when assigned the graphic novel in place of reading in *Searching 9*.

It is tempting to interpret these results as proving of both Lazar and Versaci's statements that literature is more engaging material, and this can be supported with evidence from the response diaries as well. Many students have registered that they like the book, such as: "It was fun to have a different book" (4F) and "I like [the book] a bit because I get to challenge myself, usually I have a hard time to challenge myself, because we just learn something that is pretty easy" (6F). Also it is notable that, as can be seen in the teacher's account (Appendix D) one of the students who is generally exempt from homework asked to be allowed to complete the assigned reading for this project. However it should be considered that the students might have been motivated by other factors, such as the fact that they knew they were participating in a research project, and/or that they had a (fairly) new teacher leading and observing them.

3.2.1.3 Enjoying the Reading

To chart to what extent the students enjoyed the reading assigned to them, the following statements were included in the questionnaires:

PRE 2: I generally do not enjoy reading the assigned texts.

POST 2: I enjoyed reading Optical Allusions.

Figure 2 demonstrates the answers registered in the PRE and POST questionnaires in response to these statements. It is important to note that the statement was negatively loaded in the PRE questionnaire and positively loaded in the POST questionnaire. The results from the PRE questionnaire registered to varying degrees 10 negative, 4 neutral, and 7 positive responses. The POST questionnaire registered 11 positive, 4 neutral, and 6 negative responses.

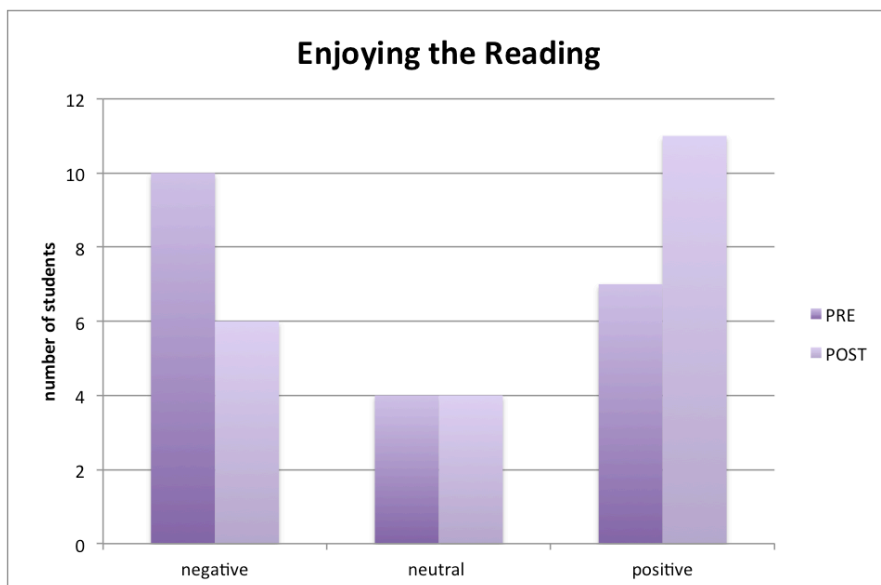


Figure 4: Enjoying the Reading

In Table 2 the degree to which students responded positively or negatively, hence agreeing or disagreeing with the statement, can be examined more closely. Responses agreeing with the negatively loaded statement in the PRE questionnaire were divided as follows: 3 students who selected 5, 4 students who selected 6, and 0 students who selected 7. The negative (disagreeing) responses to this statement were registered with 3 students who selected 3, 7 students who selected 2, and 0 students who selected 1. For the POST questionnaire, where the question was positively loaded, the positive responses were divided: 4 students who selected 5, 5 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7. The negative responses registered 1 student who selected 3, 5 students who selected, and 0 students who selected 1.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	0	7	3	4	3	4	0	0
POST	0	5	1	4	4	5	2	0

Table 2: Enjoying the Reading

3.2.1.4 Discussion of Enjoying the Reading Results

Versaci argues that one of the best kinds of engaging reading material is the comic book (94), and that through the using comic books in school helps students to become lifelong readers because they are interested in and enjoy the material (191). However the answers to the question on how the students enjoyed reading the graphic novel in comparison to how they like their assigned reading generally show little difference. Only one response has moved from not enjoying the reading in the pre-questionnaire to enjoying the reading in the post-

questionnaire, suggesting that student opinions on assigned reading remain more or less the same in the two instances. The nuances can be seen in Table 2, where the most notable difference is that for the graphic novel two students have indicated that they “completely agree” to having enjoyed reading *Optical Allusions*, whereas none indicated the corresponding extreme (“completely disagree”) to the pre-statement. What can be concluded here, then, is that students generally seem to enjoy reading assignments, with less than 1/3 of the class reacting negatively to them in both the case of reading in *Searching 9* and in *Optical Allusions* and none responding with the negative extreme in either case. The genre or type of text might very well have an effect on where the individual students place themselves on the scale in terms of enjoyment, and this is perhaps why so many language professionals stress the benefits of letting students choose their own reading.

3.2.1.5 Time Spent Reading

To chart the time students spent finishing their reading, the questionnaires included the following statements:

PRE 3: I spend a lot of time finishing the assigned reading.

POST 3: I spent a lot of time on the assigned reading.

The positive, negative, and neutral answers are recorded in Figure 3 below, showing that in the PRE questionnaire there were 8 positive, 1 neutral, and 12 negative responses to the statement. In the POST questionnaire the division of responses was 6 positive, 5 neutral, and 10 negative.

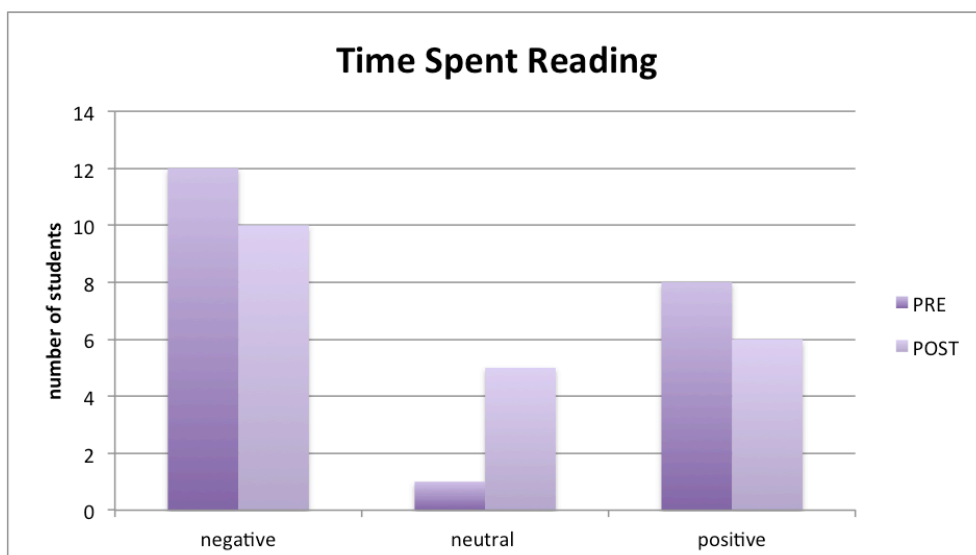


Figure 5: Time Spent Reading

The detailed registration of responses to these statements, shown in Table 3, demonstrates the division of negative responses to PRE questionnaire with 3 students who selected 3, 4 students who selected 2, and 5 students who selected 1. The positive responses to the PRE statement were divided between 3 students who selected 5, 3 students who selected 3, and 2 students who selected 7. The negative responses to the statement in the POST questionnaire were registered as 6 students who selected 3, 4 students who selected 2 and 0 students who selected 1. Here, the positive responses were divided as 1 student who selected 5, 4 who selected 6 and 1 who selected 7.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	5	4	3	1	3	3	2	0
POST	0	4	6	5	1	4	1	0

Table 3: Time Spent Reading

3.2.1.6 Discussion of Time Spent Reading Results

This question was in part a control-question to check internal consistency and thus ensure reliability, as suggested by McKay (41), as asking how much time the students spent on the reading is closely connected with whether or not they completed the reading. However, this question also provides information about the students' English proficiency as well as their literary proficiency. A graphic novel often has very little text compared to a pure-text novel, and also compared to the texts provided in *Searching 9*. This could indicate that students of lower English proficiency would have an easier time with *Optical Allusions* and thus finish

their reading faster. However, as James Bucky Carter underlines: “Any visualization, whether it is made up of pictographs we recognize as drawings, or drawings we’ve come to recognize as letters, must be interpreted, coded, and comprehended by the mind” (49). This means that though reading a graphic novel might be easier in terms of traditional literacy, reading and interpreting letters, it might be more demanding in terms of complex literacy, such as that indicated in the *Framework Basic Skills*. There, as we remember, the ability to construct meaning from text includes interpreting the information found in “different media, including illustrations, graphs, symbols or other modes of expression” (8, emphasis mine). Keeping this in mind, it might then not be surprising that the movement from the results in the pre to the post –questionnaire is towards the middle, the neutral response increasing from one to five.

3.2.1.7 Attitudes Towards Working With Longer Texts

To chart students’ attitudes towards working with longer texts, the following statements were included in the questionnaires:

PRE 4: Working with longer texts in school is fun.

POST 4: Working with *Optical Allusions* has been fun.

These were both positively loaded statements, and received in the PRE questionnaire 7 positive, 6 neutral, and 8 negative responses. In the POST questionnaire the responses were 12 positive, 4 neutral, and 5 negative. These results are graphed in Figure 4.

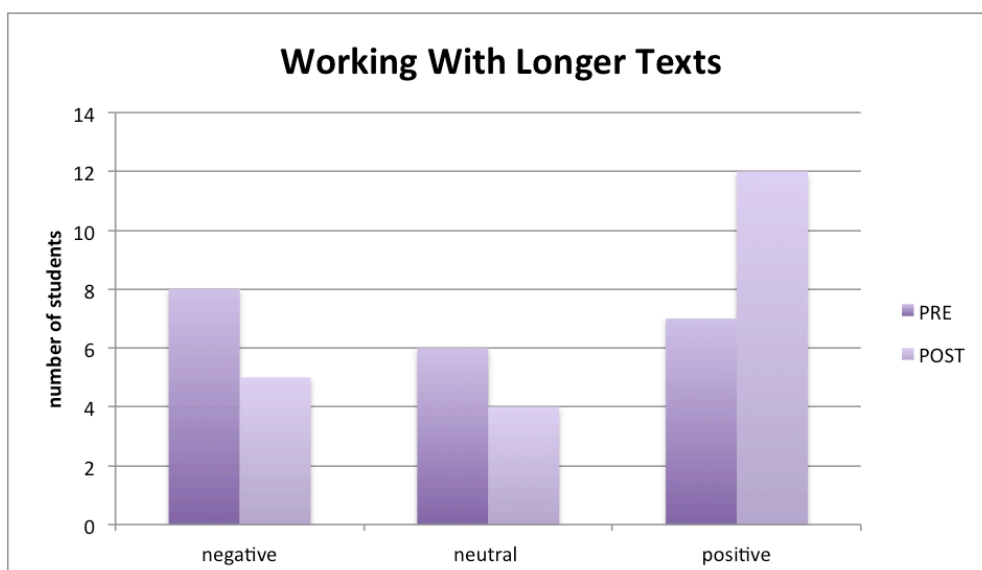


Figure 6: Working With Longer Texts

Table 4 shows the varying degree to which the responders agreed or disagreed with the statements. In the PRE questionnaire the negative responses registered was divided as follows: 5 students who selected 3, 1 student who selected 2, and 2 students who selected 1. The positive responses were 3 students who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7. In the POST questionnaire, the negative responses recorded were 1 student who selected 1, 0 who selected 2, and 4 who selected 3. Positive responses were divided as 5 students who selected 5, 6 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	2	1	5	6	3	2	2	0
POST	1	0	4	4	4	6	2	0

Table 4: Working With Longer Texts

3.2.1.8 Discussion of Working with Longer Texts Results

The question of how the students like working with longer texts is closely connected with the question of whether or not they enjoy reading longer texts. However, as can be seen from the results procured in the questionnaires the difference is definitely bigger between the PRE and POST questionnaires here than in question 2. What is important to consider is that the teacher has different roles for the two: selecting texts on one hand, and designing tasks on the other. Furthermore, the individual students' personality makes a difference, as reading the assigned reading is (presumably) a dominantly individual task, while most of the class-tasks designed for this project were group and discussion –based. As can be seen from Figure 5, the attitudes towards working with longer texts before and after the project move notably from predominantly negative/neutral to predominantly positive. Considering that the students did not have such a shift in their enjoyment of *reading* the assigned text, it can be assumed that the difference here is primarily due to the design of the tasks and not necessarily the texts themselves. “Comic books,” Versaci writes, “help students do two things: understand how images produce meaning, and become engaged in the search for this meaning” (96), and it is the teacher’s responsibility to create tasks that demonstrate to students that these texts can be as complicated and challenging as other texts.

3.2.1.9 Entertainment Value

To chart the extent to which students were entertained by the assigned reading, these statements were included in the questionnaires:

PRE 5: I am often bored by the assigned texts.

POST 5: Reading *Optical Allusions* bored me.

It can be seen from Figure 5 that in the PRE questionnaire 15 students agreed with the statement, 5 students disagreed, and 1 remained neutral. For the POST questionnaire, 3 students agreed, 15 disagreed, and 3 remained neutral.

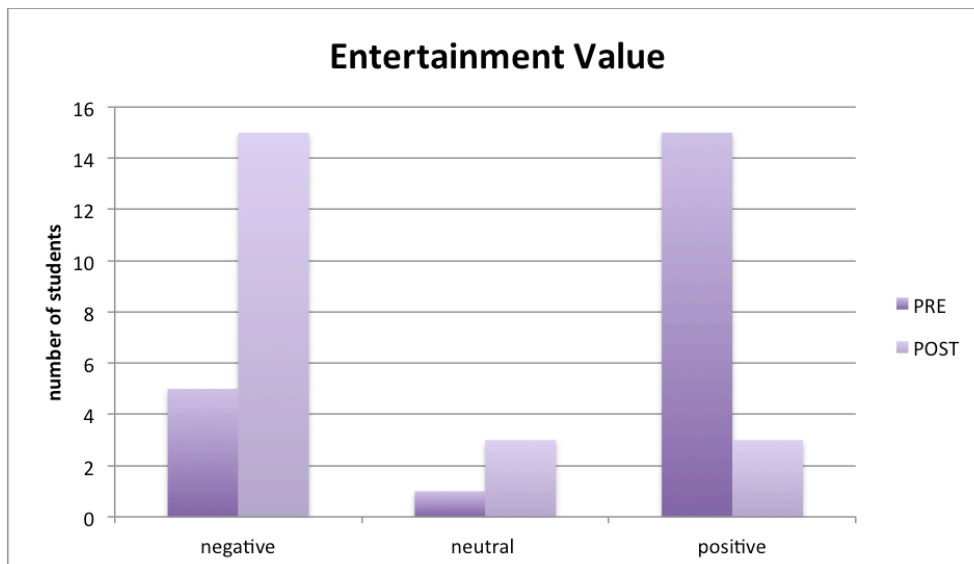


Figure 7: Entertainment Value

Table 5, demonstrating the nuances of these responses, shows that the negative responses to this statement in the PRE questionnaire were registered with 1 student who selected 3, 3 students who selected 2, and 1 student who selected 1. The positive responses were divided as 5 students who selected 5, 9 students who selected 6, and 1 student who selected 7. For the POST questionnaire, the negative responses were registered as follows: 4 students who selected 4, 8 students who selected 2, and 3 students who selected 1, while the positive responses were registered as 3 students who selected 5, 0 students who selected 6, and 0 students who selected 7.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	1	3	1	1	5	9	1	0
POST	3	8	4	3	3	0	0	0

Table 5: Entertainment Value

3.2.1.10 Discussion of Entertainment Value Results

Again, this question was one that was included as a way of checking internal consistency, and is paired with PRE2 and POST2 pertaining to whether or not the students enjoy their reading. The difference shown here, however, is much larger than that recorded between the other, similar questions above. Here, the contrast is notable, with twelve students moving down from the positive (“I am bored by the reading”) to either negative (“reading *Optical Allusions* did not bore me”) or neutral. That so many students report here being bored by the regularly assigned reading, but not by the graphic novel may supports Versaci’s theory that graphic novels make for more engaging classroom material that students enjoy reading. Considering that the results here are in conflict with the ones above, however, it is hard to draw any definite conclusions. It might be that the phrasing of the questions in PRE and POST 2 is the reason why the responses are inconsistent, as the PRE2 statement was formulated negatively (“I generally do not enjoy reading the assigned texts”) and the POST2 positively (“I enjoyed reading *Optical Allusions*”). Not only might the negatively formulated question have caused confusion in itself, as McKay has shown (39), but the fact that the statements were not formulated in the same way might render them ultimately unsuitable for comparison in the PRE and POST questionnaires. This could have been avoided in the creation of the questionnaire, and might have made the results more transparent and easily analyzed. It is, however, important to notice that students seemed generally intrigued by their reading of *Optical Allusions*, and though not mentioning their attitudes towards other assigned reading explicitly expressed that it was “exciting and fun to do something different” (7M4 POST30). Contributing this solely to the graphic novel, however, would not be sound as “something different” may refer to a number of aspects in the project, such as the new teacher, class-structure, tasks and so forth.

3.2.1.11 Personal Interest

To chart the level of personal interest in connection with the assigned reading, the questionnaires included the following statements:

PRE 6: I sometimes read more than what is assigned in the book.

POST 6: I read more in the book than I had to.

It is shown in Table 6 that the responses from the PRE questionnaires were recorded as: 5 positive, 14 negative, and 2 neutral responses. In response to the POST questionnaire there were 6 positive, 13 negative, and 2 neutral responses given.

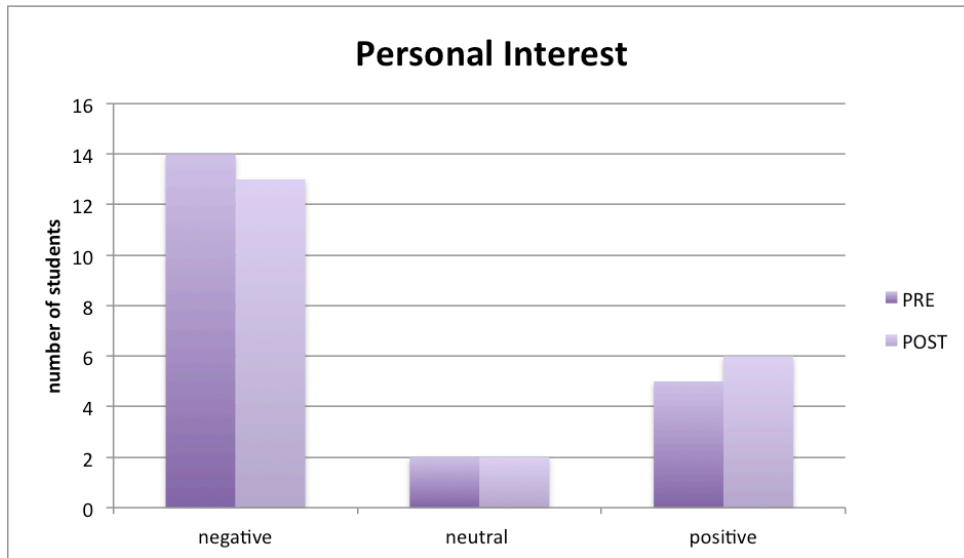


Figure 8: Personal Interest

The level of personal interest can be examined more closely in Table 6, where the varying degree of (dis)agreement is charted. In the PRE questionnaire it is shown that the positive responses were divided between 1 student who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7, while the negatives were recorded as 2 students who selected 3, 7 students who selected 2, and 5 students who selected 1. In the POST questionnaire, the positive responses were made up of 1 student who selected 5, 1 student who selected 6, and 4 students who selected 7. The negative responses in the POST questionnaire were registered as 1 student who selected 3, 3 students who selected 2, and 9 students who selected 1.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	5	7	2	2	1	2	2	0
POST	9	3	1	2	1	1	4	0

Table 6: Personal Interest

3.2.1.12 Discussion of Personal Interest Results

The statements on personal interest were included to again test whether this class would confirm to the many arguments made to the effect that introducing (graphic) literature into the classroom encourage students to become more active readers. The responses recorded here to for both the PRE and the POST statement provide little ground to argue that graphic novels make students read more on their own, contradicting arguments such as those made by, for instance, Versaci, Carter, and Lazar. What is positive and important to note, however, is something registered in the teacher's account (Appendix D). The class-teacher writes: "Especially positive was the effect for one student who normally is exempt from doing homework. She came up to me and asked if she could do homework during this project, and already for lesson number two she had finished reading the book". Though support may not be found here statistically, it might be considered that the ones who enjoy the reading when working with graphic novels may be other students than those who enjoy the reading generally. Including different types of texts in the classroom, or expanding the canon of literature, might show that we care about all of our students as individuals with varying backgrounds, personalities, and preferences, rather than ignoring those "who think, read, and decode differently from the narrowest notion of reading and literacy" (Carter 53). It might also be important to note here that there were more students who reported having finished the assigned reading when working with the graphic novel than otherwise, and that this could also be considered an indication that (graphic) literature engage more students in reading though not necessarily so much that they read more than what is asked of them.

3.2.1.13 Student Preferences

To chart student preferences when it comes to assigned reading versus assigned tasks, the following statements were included in the questionnaire:

PRE 7: I prefer assigned reading to assigned tasks.

POST 7: I prefer this type of assigned reading to assigned tasks.

The student preference is demonstrated in Figure 7, where it can be seen that the statement from the PRE questionnaire gathered 15 positive, 2 negative, and 4 neutral responses. In the POST questionnaire, the numbers were 15 positive, 3 negative, and 3 neutral responses.

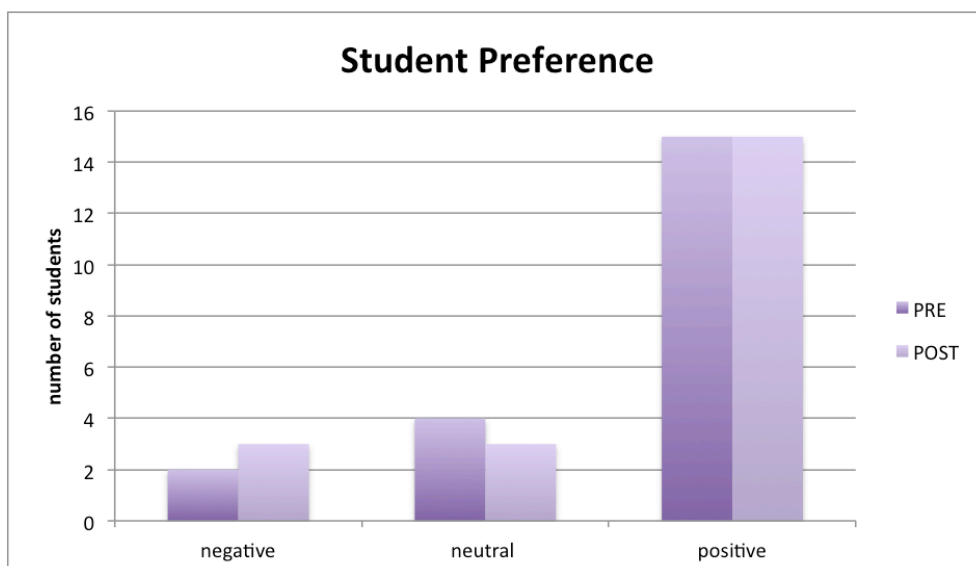


Figure 9: Student Preferences

Table 7 gives a more detailed overview of these numbers, showing that the positive responses from the PRE questionnaire were registered as 3 students who selected 5, 6 students who selected 6, and 6 students who selected 7. The negative responses were divided 0 students who selected 3, 1 student who selected 2, and 1 student who selected 1. In the POST questionnaire the positive responses were 4 students who selected 5, 4 students who selected 6, and 7 students who selected 7, while the negative numbers were made up from 1 student who selected 3, 1 student who selected 2, and 1 student who selected 1.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	1	1	0	4	3	6	6	0
POST	1	1	1	3	4	4	7	0

Table 7: Student Preference

3.2.1.14 Discussion of Student Preference Results

The attitudes students reported in connection with their preference for assigned reading to assigned tasks are, not surprisingly, fairly consistent with only one point moving from neutral to negative. This could be considered another control statement ensuring that the student responded consistently from the PRE questionnaire to the POST questionnaire, but it is also possible that some students had a change of heart with regard to assigned reading when working with it over a longer period of time. It is, as previously noted, not possible to decide which students has provided which answer, and it would thus be unreliable to assume that the similarities in the PRE and POST questionnaires are due to the same students providing the

same response in both instances. What can be shown very clearly with the results from these statements, however, is that students generally do indeed prefer reading assignments to assigned tasks, arguably supporting many of the arguments made by Lazar who writes that literary narratives “may be more absorbing for students than the pseudo narratives frequently found in course books” (15) and provide language exposure in more “meaningful and memorable contexts” (17), seeing that more than a third of the students report a preference for this kind of assignments.

3.2.2 Discussion of Results in the Reading Section

The reading section was included in the questionnaire to account primarily for the part of the research question which asks whether the integration of literature can encourage students to read and participate more actively, seeking to answer whether students complete and engage and/or enjoy the reading to a greater extent when the assigned work is reading literature rather than reading in the textbook or doing tasks. Asking students to reflect on these statements was important because the other part of the research question, pertaining to reader-response theory, relies heavily on whether or not the students actually complete the reading. A student cannot be expected to respond to a text that (s)he has not read, though (s)he can still respond to other students’ responses to the text. Student enjoyment also plays an important role in the continued exploration of reader response theory’s effect on student engagement in discussion, as students who enjoy the reading are more likely to engage actively in conversation about it (Lazar 15). This has also been shown in many of the student responses to PRE31 (section 4.1.7.1). As there was some inconsistency in the control statements, it is hard to make any definite conclusions as to the effect(s) of integrating graphic novels as classroom literature in comparison to using the textbook. However, it is apparent that the general tendency is positive response to reading assignments, and that the students seem to have enjoyed and completed the reading of *Optical Allusions*.

It has been shown that more students did for the most part finish their assigned reading before class, and that students were not bored by the graphic novel, rendering its entertainment value rather high. The results from this section also suggest that students prefer assigned reading to assigned tasks, but that the graphic novel did not motivate them to read further than the regular assigned reading did. This should not necessarily indicate that the integration of literature is not effective, however, as some of the texts in *Searching 9*, their regular textbook, are literary excerpts. What the results with regard to personal interest may suggest, though, is

that using longer works of literature, such as *Optical Allusions*, does not guarantee student engagement to the point of making them voluntary readers. There might be many reasons as to why this project does not reveal such a tendency, one perhaps being that a longer engagement and training in literary studies might be necessary to make a lasting change in attitudes. Lazar distinguishes between *studying* literature and *using* literature in her book (15), and as reader response is more closely connected to the study of literature, it might reasonably be assumed that the students were not exposed to such an approach for long enough to develop the literary competence and confidence needed to maximize their output from reading. The positive results registered in this section are promising in terms of justifying or even encouraging the integration of literature in the classroom, but might also be due to students being motivated to do the work because they knew they were being observed, that their achievements were being used for research, and due to the fact that it was simply something different.

3.2.3 Interpretation

3.2.3.1 Contemplation

To chart the extent of student-contemplation of assigned reading, the following statements were included in the questionnaires:

PRE 8: I often contemplate the things I read.

POST 8: I often contemplated the things I read about in *Optical Allusions*.

In the PRE questionnaire, 9 students responded positively to this statement, while 6 responded negatively, and 6 remained neutral. For the POST questionnaire the number of positive responses was 5, while 10 responded negatively, and 6 neutral. These results are shown in Figure 8.

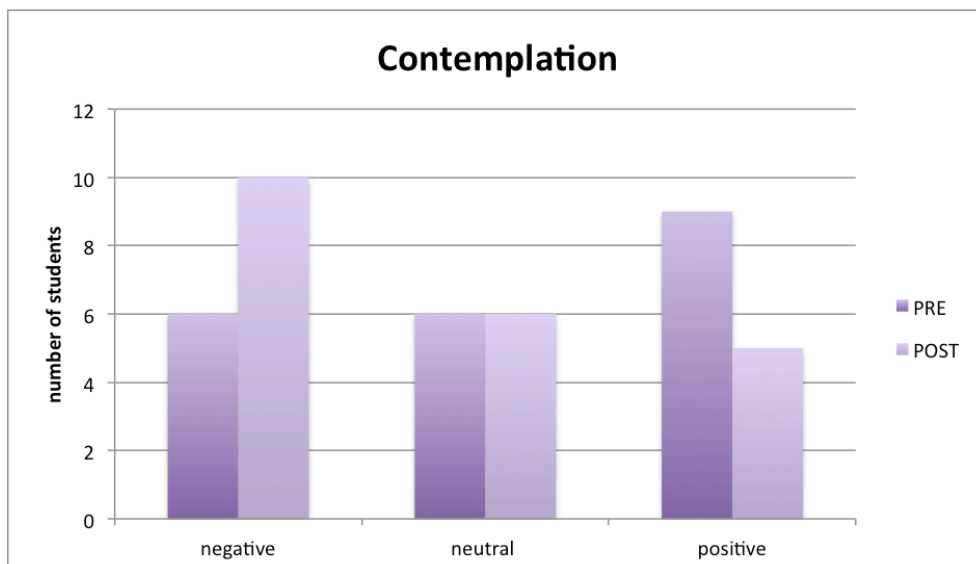


Figure 10: Contemplation

Table 8 gives a more detailed overview of these numbers, showing that the positive responses in the PRE questionnaire were divided as follows: 5 students who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7. The negative responses consisted of 3 students who selected 3, 3 students who selected 2, and 0 students who selected 1. In the POST questionnaire the positive numbers were registered as 3 students who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 0 students who selected 7. Here, the negative responses were divided as 4 students who selected 3, 3 students who selected 2, and 3 students who selected 1.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	0	3	3	6	5	2	2	0
POST	3	3	4	6	3	2	0	0

Table 8: Contemplation

3.2.3.2 Discussion of Contemplation Results

The results show that fewer students contemplated the things they read about in *Optical Allusions* than other reading, moving positive answers recorded from 10 in the PRE questionnaire to 5 in the POST questionnaire, neutral answers remaining the same. Looking to the answers recorded in the “Entertainment Value” Section, it can be established that the students generally did enjoy reading *Optical Allusions*, eliminating the possibility of students consciously putting the text out of their minds as a result of dislike. This question was asked in part to determine whether students found parts of the text interesting and/or profound enough to contemplate, seeking perhaps to support Rocco Versaci in his argument that

“graphic novels can be every bit as complicated, challenging, and enlightening as more traditional literary forms” (107). These results may thus initially be considered disappointing, but it is important to keep in mind the nature of *Optical Allusions* in comparison with other texts schoolchildren read. *Optical Allusions*, though treating the scientific topic of the eye does so more indirectly, attempting to entertain as well as educate the readers. Since strategies for reading and interpreting stories, expressing one’s own opinions, and describing the reading experience was the focus of this project, the technical information of the eye were not focused on even in class, it would thus be unreasonable to expect most students to contemplate such (relatively complicated) information in English by themselves. Furthermore, graphic novels were selected as a focus of this thesis, partly because the format arguably is more similar to other sources of entertainment and information in the students’ lives (TV, movies, media) and it may be considered that the students could have retained the information from the novel in the same, largely subconscious manner this form of stimuli generally promote. In other words, it is not necessarily entirely negative that students do not consciously contemplate the things that they read, as it has been suggested that graphic novels is a genre that could bridge the gap between the learning students experience in school and the learning they seek out in their own free time. However, to increase contemplation, it would perhaps be useful to bring students’ attention more explicitly to the theme of the book (which in *Optical Allusions* is the eye) and teach skills for interpreting literature as part of the course, as Lazar has also suggested. In hindsight, it is doubtless that some focused reading exercises would have been beneficiary for this class, as they were not accustomed to working and focusing so closely on literary texts. Many, as has been shown in the diary entries and also in the teacher account, struggled with seeing “the point” to the lessons.

3.2.3.3 Sharing

The following statements were included in the questionnaire to chart the extent to which students shared their experiences with class texts and discussions with others:

PRE 9: I rarely speak to others about what we read and discuss in class.

POST 9: I rarely spoke to others about what we read and discussed in class.

Figure 9 shows that the PRE statement received 6 positive, 8 negative, and 6 neutral responses, while the POST statement had 9 positive, 9 negative and 3 neutral responses.

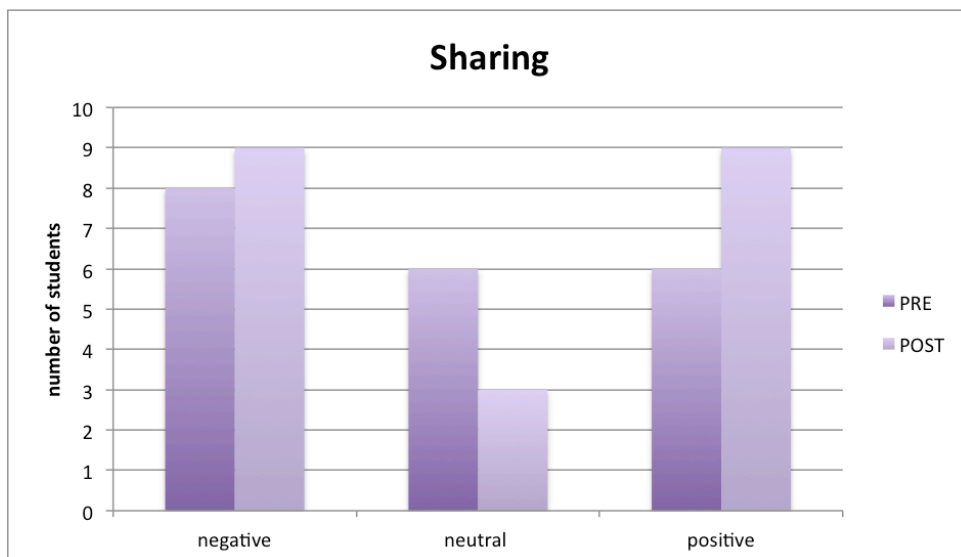


Figure 11: Sharing

These numbers can be examined in more detail in Table 9, where it is shown that the PRE questionnaire had in its negative responses 2 students who selected 3, 4 students who selected 2, and 2 students who selected 1. The positive responses were comprised of 2 students who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7. One student did not provide a response to the statement in the PRE questionnaire. As to the POST questionnaire, the negative responses were divided as 5 students who selected 3, 2 students who selected 2, and 2 students who selected 1, while the positive responses were recorded as 4 students who selected 5, 4 students who selected 6, and 1 student who selected 7.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	2	4	2	6	2	2	2	1
POST	2	2	5	3	4	4	1	0

Table 9: Sharing

3.2.3.4 Discussion of Sharing Results

Again, the results of this section seem to work against the hypothesis of this research project, as students are seen as sharing *Optical Allusions* with others more rarely than other texts (a number of students moving from neutral to negative). However, as has been indicated in the discussion above, such results can be interpreted in the light of lacking proper guidance as well as it can be interpreted as a lack of student involvement with the genre and story, and also (more hopefully) as a sign of the genre's integration into their daily lives and routines. It could also be considered that students who generally share thoughts and ideas with each other

outside of class were given the opportunity to do so in the classroom, and thus did not feel the need for further discussion when class was over. There are many elements that are difficult to control that plays into the reading of these results, which makes it difficult to draw any definite conclusions. However, if increased sharing also outside of class is desired, possible solutions could be providing better guidance in literary studies, as discussed above, but also assigning tasks that required sharing as homework, such as Wolf has suggested in her steps to facilitating literature discussion. Her fifth step includes extending the conversation to the community (114), using for instance “book bags” that include parents (alternatively peers) in literary discussion.

3.2.3.5 Perceived Importance

The following statements were included in the questionnaires to chart the perceived importance of the assigned reading to the students:

PRE 10: What we read about in the textbook is not very important to me.

POST 10: What we read about in *Optical Allusions* is important to me.

It is important to note that the PRE statement is negatively loaded, while the POST statement is positively loaded. The PRE questionnaire generated 10 positive (agreeing), 6 negative (disagreeing), and 5 neutral responses, while the POST questionnaire recorded 1 positive, 15 negative, and 4 neutral responses.

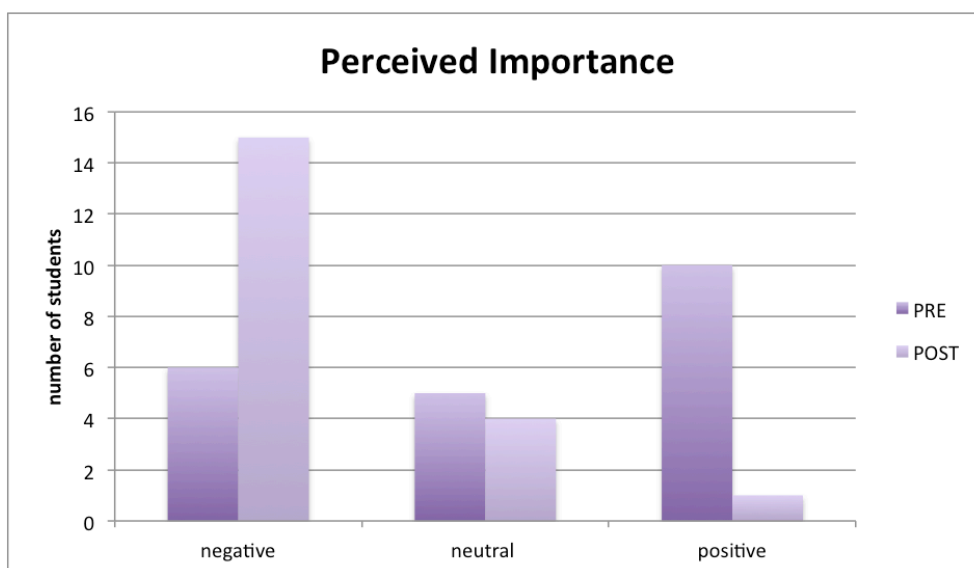


Figure 12: Perceived Importance

The degree to which students (dis)agreed with the statements is registered in Table 10. For the PRE questionnaire, negative responses were comprised by 3 students who selected 3, 2 students who selected 2, and 1 student who selected 1. The positive responses were 4 students who selected 5, 5 students who selected 6, and 1 student who selected 7. The POST questionnaire registered negative responses as follows: 4 students who selected 3, 8 students who selected 2, and 3 students who selected 1, while the positive responses were registered as 0 students who selected 5, 1 student who selected 6, and 0 students who selected 7. One student did not respond to the statement in the POST questionnaire.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	1	2	3	5	4	5	1	0
POST	3	8	4	4	0	1	0	1

Table 10: Perceived Importance

3.2.3.6 Discussion of Perceived Importance Results

Perceived importance received similarly negative results in the POST questionnaire as in the two sections above. Though quite a few students reported perceiving the texts as not particularly important also in the PRE questionnaire, there is an overwhelming majority that do so in the POST questionnaire. Again, it seems natural to question whether the class would have needed more guidance in how to productively use literary texts or graphic novels as part of their learning process. It might also have been problematic that the students were not accustomed to a reader response based classroom approach, which in combination with a lack of guidance might have made the discussions students did have seem arbitrary or unimportant. A way of increasing students' perceived importance could be having them self-select texts. This is something that was not possible for this project but that would be worth considering in future versions of it. Alternatively, for researchers conducting a similar project with their own class, the class teacher could make an informed decision based on her knowledge of the class and using guidelines such as those outlined by Gillian Lazar (48-56). Choosing this option would maintain the positive effect of having all students read and discuss the same book, being exposed to different views and interpretations, and still being able to do close readings of the text.

3.2.3.7 Understanding

To chart students' understanding of the assigned reading, the following statements were included in the questionnaires:

PRE 11: I often feel like I do not know what the assigned reading is about.

POST 11: I often felt like I did not know what *Optical Illusions* was about.

To the statement of understanding in the PRE questionnaire, 7 students responded positively, 14 negatively, and 0 remained neutral, while the statement from the POST questionnaire recorded 4 positive, 15 negative, and 2 neutral responses. These numbers are registered in Figure 11.

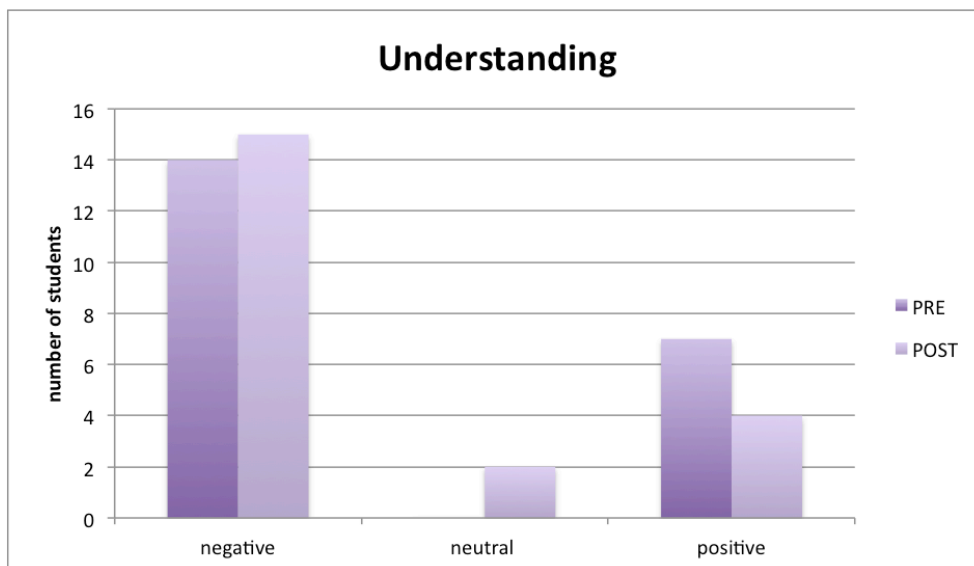


Figure 13: Understanding

Table 11 breaks these numbers down into more detail, showing that the negative responses from the PRE questionnaire consists of 1 student who selected 3, 3 students who selected 1, and 10 students who selected 1, while the positive responses are divided as follows: 3 students who selected 5, 3 students who selected 6 and 1 student who selected 7. As to the POST questionnaire, negative responses were recorded as 3 students who selected 3, 5 students who selected 2, and 7 students who selected 1. Here, positive responses were made up by 1 student who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 1 student who selected 7.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	10	3	1	0	3	3	1	0
POST	7	5	3	2	1	2	1	0

Table 11: Understanding

3.2.3.8 Discussion of Understanding Results

The difference in the understanding of the text from the PRE to the POST questionnaires is, as can be seen here, rather small. This might imply that the text selection, though perhaps unsatisfactory in terms of perceived importance (see Section above), can be considered appropriate in terms of level of difficulty. A few of the students expressed, as has been shown in the treatment of the response diaries, frustration because they did not understand the reading, but these are in the minority of the class. Furthermore, it can be seen as positive that these students were able to express their lack of understanding in the response diaries as these would otherwise have remained anonymous and not helped. This was also noted by the class teacher in the teacher account (Appendix D). It is worth noticing that a graphic novel generally have less text and would, perhaps, be expected to improve understanding. Such assumptions, however, are generally ignorant of the many elements that influence the reading of a graphic novel, as James Bucky Carter has emphasized (49). It also ignores the process of selecting level-appropriate texts also in alternative genres of literature. *Optical Allusions* furthermore has longer sections of informational content that are mostly (traditional) text, and these were offered to the students as extracurricular reading with which they could challenge themselves and further develop traditional reading skills.

3.2.3.9 Processing

To chart the extent to which students process the content of assigned reading, the following statements were included in the questionnaires:

PRE 12: The assigned reading makes me think about important things.

POST 12: *Optical Allusions* made me think about important things.

As can be seen in Figure 12, there were 2 positive, 7 neutral, and 12 negative responses to this statement in the PRE questionnaire. The POST questionnaire generated 3 positive, 2 neutral, and 16 negative responses.

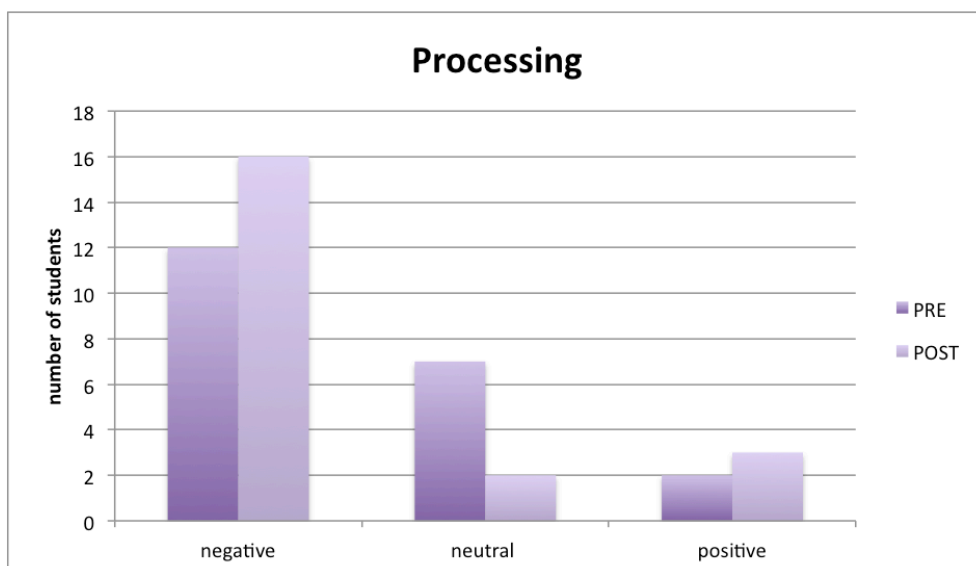


Figure 14: Processing

Table 12 shows that the negative responses from the PRE questionnaire were divided as follows: 5 students who selected 3, 6 students who selected 2, and 1 student who selected 1. The positive responses were made up by 1 student who selected 5, 1 student who selected 6, and 0 students who selected 7. In the POST questionnaire, the negative responses were: 5 students who selected 3, 8 students who selected 2, and 3 students who selected 1, while the positive ones were 2 students who selected 5, 1 student who selected 6, and 0 students who selected 7.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	1	6	5	7	1	1	0	0
POST	3	8	5	2	2	1	0	0

Table 12: Processing

3.2.3.10 Discussion of Processing Results

The results in the processing section are similar to those discussed thus far in this section. Though the results in the PRE and POST questionnaires are fairly similar, with the majority of students acknowledging that the assigned reading generally do not make them think about important things, the responses are slightly more towards the negative side in the POST questionnaire. Though one extra positive response is recorded, neutral responses decreased significantly and the negative responses, as can be seen in Table 12, has shifted further towards the bottom of the scale. Again, better organization and a clearer structure could be the answer to helping the students process the content of the text more easily. There must be a

way to incorporate reader response theory that does not interfere too much with student autonomy in the classroom, but that would still help the students feel like they were getting more out of the text. Wolf has suggested that “teachers tend to lead more directly when they’re helping children get used to the idea of discussion” (117), and this might be the proper balance that is lacking from this project. The students were not accustomed to the approach, which can have kept them from discovering what about the text and the study of it was important to them and their own lives.

3.2.3.11 Textual Understanding

To chart how students strove to understand the text they were reading, the questionnaires included the following statements:

PRE 13: When I do not understand what I am reading, I often read it again several times.

POST 13: When I did not understand what I was reading, I often read it again several times.

Figure 13 shows that the PRE questionnaire recorded 13 positive, 6 negative, and 2 neutral responses to this statement. The POST questionnaire recorded 14 positive, 4 negative, and 3 neutral responses.

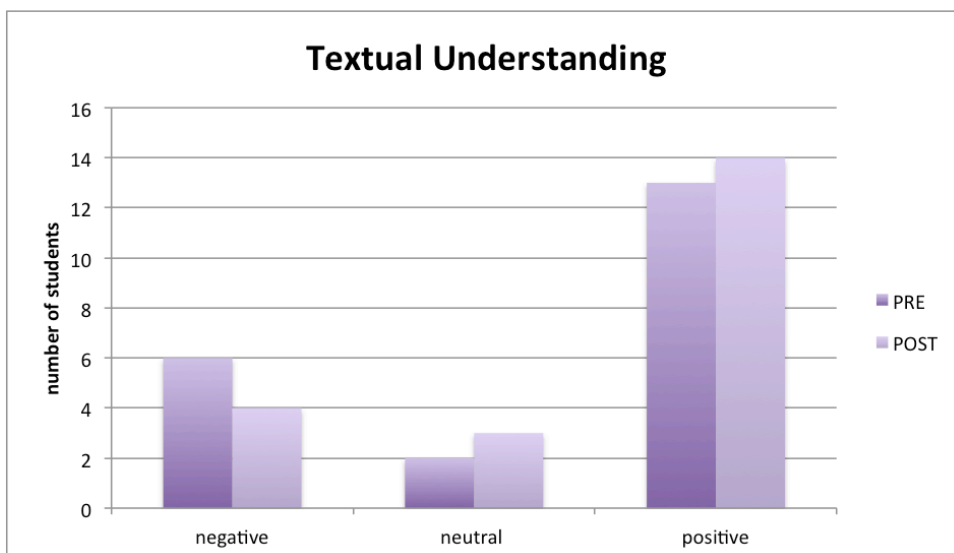


Figure 15: Textual Understanding

In Table 13, it is shown that the positive responses to the PRE questionnaire were 2 students who selected 5, 4 students who selected 6, and 7 students who selected 7, while the negative responses were made up by 3 students who selected 3, 0 students who selected 2, and 3 students who selected 1. The POST questionnaire had positive respondents divided as 7 students who selected 5, 4 students who selected 6, and 3 students who selected 7. 1 student who selected 3, 0 students who selected 2, and 3 students who selected 1 made up the negative responses.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	3	0	3	2	2	4	7	0
POST	3	0	1	3	7	4	3	0

Table 13: Textual Understanding

3.2.3.12 Discussion of Textual Understanding Results

The results to this question of textual understanding prove that most of these students strive to understand what they read most of the time. The difference between the PRE and the POST questionnaires are minimal, though there is a detailed shift that moves towards the center of the scale in the POST questionnaire, as can be seen in Table 13. This shows a dedication on the behalf of the students to understand the content of the assigned reading. The minority of students who report that they generally do not re-read when something is unclear, might be represented by students who do not find it necessary or desirable to understand the text fully (reading to complete assignment rather than to gather information), or students who assume the context will bring them answers. Though it could be presumed that re-reading sections of a graphic novel would take the students a shorter amount of time than other reading assignments, these results seem to indicate that re-reading difficult content is a question of habit rather than a question of interest or time.

3.2.3.13 Perceived Benefit

The following statements were included to chart the perceived benefit from reading the text, as seen by the student:

PRE 14: I rarely learn something new when I read the assigned reading.

POST 14: I did not learn anything new reading *Optical Illusions*.

To the PRE statement, there were 7 positive, 8 negative, and 6 neutral responses, while the POST statement generated 3 positive, 14 negative, and 4 neutral responses, as can be seen in Figure 14.

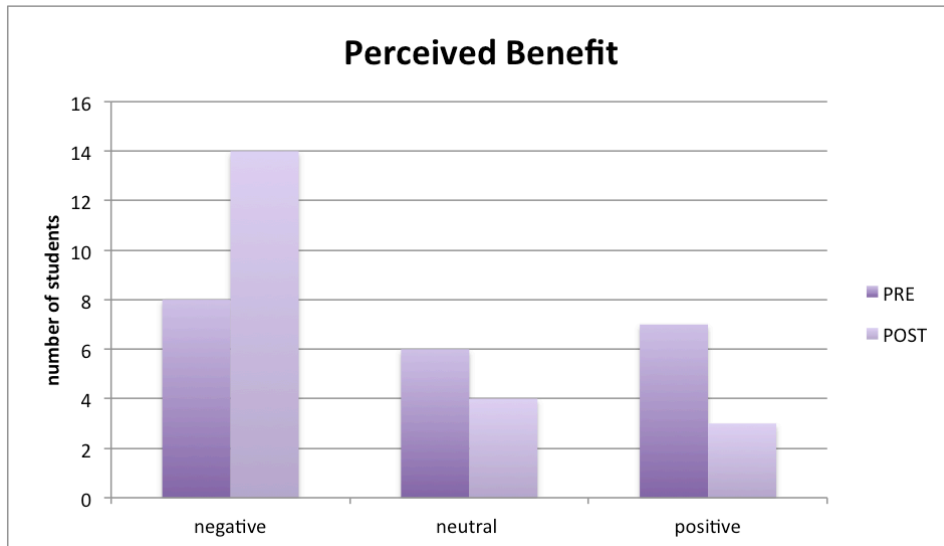


Figure 16: Perceived Benefit

The negative responses in the PRE questionnaire were comprised of 5 students who selected 3, 1 student who selected 2, and 2 students who selected 1, while the positive responses had 1 student who selected 5, 5 students who selected 6, and 1 student who selected 7. For the POST questionnaire, the negative responses were divided as follows: 4 students who selected 3, 9 students who selected 2, and 1 student who selected 1. Positive responses here were recorded by 2 student who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 0 students who selected 7. These numbers are presented in Table 14.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	2	1	5	6	1	5	1	0
POST	1	9	4	4	1	2	0	0

Table 14: Perceived Benefit

3.2.3.14 Discussion of Perceived Benefit Results

Surprisingly after having surveyed the other results in this “Interpretation” Section, the perceived benefit of reading *Optical Allusions* is registered among the students as rather high. An overwhelming 14 students responded negatively to the POST statement, suggesting that they did, in fact, learn something new from working with the graphic novel in this way – most

of them landing on the lower part of the scale. Though the students have not reported contemplating the themes extensively, nor perceived the topics as important to their lives, it seems that the benefit they report from having worked with the novel is still higher than that they perceive getting from working with other classroom texts. This might give strength to the idea that “the act of reading a comic cuts much more closely to how our students today receive information” (Versaci 97), thus making the information easier to process and internalize. Also, the perceived benefit might have increased from the PRE to the POST questionnaire because in the reader response method, students are given more time to “talk out” their issues with the text, and discuss areas of interest with one another. Not only does such a format give each student more time to discuss the content but the student and group-centered exercises also, to a larger extent, remove the authoritative figure of the teacher, perhaps leading students to ask questions and bring up topics they do not feel qualified or comfortable discussing with the language professional. One student notes in the response diary: “I liked how we ... together in groups went through what we thought was hard to understand with the book. This doesn’t just help the person who has a question, but it also helps the one that have to explain it in English” (3M). It is worth noting, however, that there is a slight difference in the formulation of the statements in the PRE and POST questionnaires, which might lead the PRE14 to sound more negative (and thus harder to agree with) than the POST14.

3.2.4 Discussion of Results in the Interpretation Section

The interpretation section of the questionnaires was designed to answer the part of the research question concerned with whether a reader response based approach to the graphic novel in the classroom could help the students read critically and independently and engage them in processes of meaning-making and interpretation. Retrieving information about the extent to which students were able to interpret the reading was essential because meaning-making and interpretation is key for the students to be able to participate actively in the reader response based exercises, expressing their ideas and opinions about the text. The most important thing to take away from this “Interpretation” Section is the suggestion that the research project did not provide enough support to the students to let them confidently consider and interpret the graphic novel on their own. Though the focus of the project was more on the reading experience, personal expression, and the literary format, it is shown in much of the results from the questionnaires that students did not extensively contemplate the reading, perceive its importance, or wish to talk about it with others.

This might be due to the students' inexperience with the format of the lessons and text and could have been greatly supported, as Lazar has suggested, by helping the students develop their literary competence (14). Furthermore, the students could perhaps have been supported in finding ways to make meaning and interpret the text if the goals of the project had been made more available to them. Some of the students seemed to expect a traditional teacher-centered classroom, where meaning would be presented to them, while the aim was to have students that are "not simply regurgitating [the teacher's] opinions back at [her]; instead, they are forming their own" (Versaci 106). Such a format might, understandably, be difficult to adapt to, especially outside of the classroom where teachers and peers are not easily available for discussion. It might have been better if the students were presented with the selected and highlighted competence aims at the beginning of the project, and their freedom to interpret and make meaning independently was stressed further. This was not done because it was thought possible that presenting students with the aims of the research project would skew the results, but in hindsight making it clear to students what is expected of them should probably be considered an advantage and not a disadvantaging bias.

3.2.5 *Expression*

3.2.5.1 *Attitudes Towards Sharing*

To chart students' attitudes towards sharing thoughts and ideas, the following statements were included in the questionnaires:

PRE 15: I like to talk about what I have read.

POST 15: I liked talking about *Optical Allusions*.

Figure 15 shows that the statement in the PRE questionnaire received 8 positive, 11 negative and 2 neutral responses, while for the POST questionnaire statement these numbers were 9, 5, and 7 respectively.

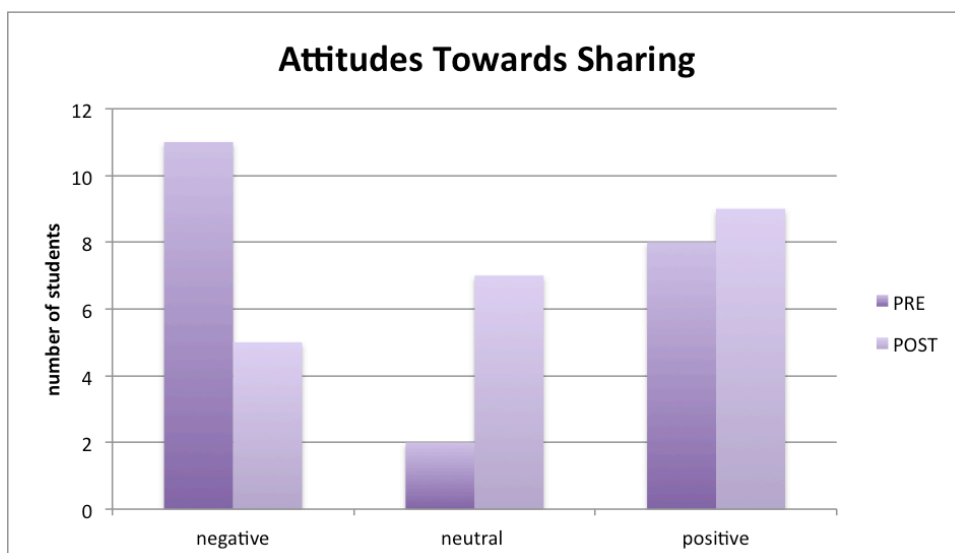


Figure 17: Attitudes Towards Sharing

The varying degrees of (dis)agreement with the statements are registered in Table 15, where it can be seen that the negative responses to the statement in the PRE questionnaire were divided as follows: 4 students who selected 3, 3 students who selected 2, and 4 students who selected 1. The positive statements were recorded as 3 students who selected 5, 3 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7. For the POST questionnaire, the negative results were comprised of 2 students who selected 3, 2 students who selected 2, and 1 student who selected 1, while the positive of 4 students who selected 5, 3 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	4	3	4	2	3	3	2	0
POST	1	2	2	7	4	3	2	0

Table 15: Attitudes Towards Sharing

3.2.5.2 Discussion of “Attitudes Towards Sharing” Results

These results indicate only one more positive response in the POST questionnaire, but there is a significant move from the negative to the neutral. Though neutral does not indicate that students share willingly, the move might be important because it suggests that three weeks of using a reader response based approach in the classroom can start changing student attitudes towards sharing, if not drastically. Not only may this be the case because the students enter a classroom where the format is better suited for discussion, allowing them to practice sharing with each other. Also, as indicated in the introduction, a reader response based approach can

be used as a driving force to have students express their own ideas to their peers (and later also the teacher) without worrying about making formal mistakes. Referring back to the “Entertainment Value” Section, the fact that students seemed to enjoy *Optical Allusions* more than general classroom texts might also have an impact on their attitudes towards sharing. This is not only because a text has to be entertaining to be useful in the classroom, but also because books that absorb students in the plot might, as Lazar has suggested, let students explore the multiple levels of meaning in the text (17), and thus also have more to share in class.

3.2.5.3 Perceived Value of Opinion

To chart the extent to which students feel their opinion is valued, the questionnaires included the following statements:

PRE 16: I often feel like my opinion about a text is not being heard.

POST 16: I often felt like my opinion about *Optical Allusions* was not being heard.

In the PRE questionnaire, 1 response was positive, 15 negative, and 5 were neutral. As for the POST questionnaire there were 3 positive, 16 negative, and 2 neutral responses registered. These results are demonstrated in Figure 16.

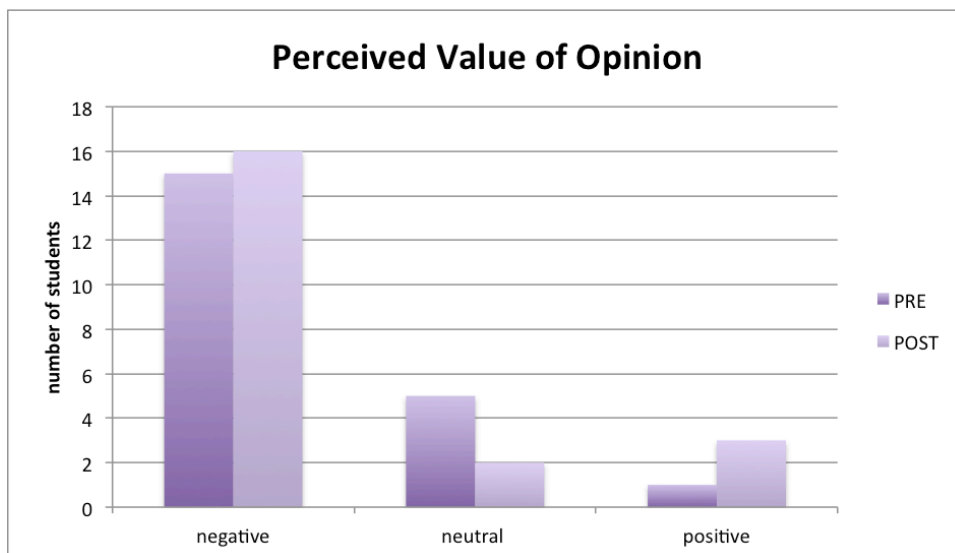


Figure 18: Perceived Value of Opinion

Examining these numbers closer in Table 16, it can be seen that the positive responses from the PRE questionnaire were registered as 0 students who selected 5, 0 students who selected 6,

and 1 student who selected 7, while the negative responses were 6 students who selected 3, 4 students who selected 2, and 5 students who selected 1. In the POST questionnaire, the positive responses were divided as follows: 1 students who selected 5, 1 student who selected 6, and 1 student who selected 7, while the negative responses were made up from 3 students who selected 3, 6 students who selected 2, and 7 students who selected 1.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	5	4	6	5	0	0	1	0
POST	7	6	3	2	1	1	1	0

Table 16: Perceived Value of Opinion

3.2.5.4 Discussion of “Perceived Value of Opinion” Results

The “Perceived Value of Opinion” results show that most students felt like they were being heard in discussion most of the time, both when working with *Optical Illusions* and other classroom texts. However, as can be seen from Table 16, there were two more students confirming that they did not feel heard working with *Optical Illusions* than with other classroom texts, while in the PRE questionnaire more students remained neutral. Group dynamics might play a role in this, as students were put in discussion groups made by the class teacher every class except from the first. This was done because the class teacher did not feel that letting students select their discussion groups independently, which was the original intension, was a good fit for the class (see teacher account Appendix D). Moreover, though it is impossible to know which students have provided which answer in the questionnaires, it is worth considering that working with the graphic novel may, as James B. Carter has suggested, be including (and excluding) the voices of a different group of students than other texts (53). Either way, it is uplifting to note that so many students (15 in the PRE questionnaire and 16 in the POST questionnaire) report that they do feel like their opinions are being valued in class.

3.2.5.5 Speaking in Class

The questionnaires included the following statements to chart the ease with which students speak in class:

PRE 17: Speaking in class is easy for me.

POST 18: Speaking in class is easy for me.

The PRE questionnaire recorded, as is shown in Figure 17, 9 positive, 8 negative, and 4 neutral responses, while the POST questionnaire recorded 11 positive, 8 negative, and 2 neutral responses respectively.

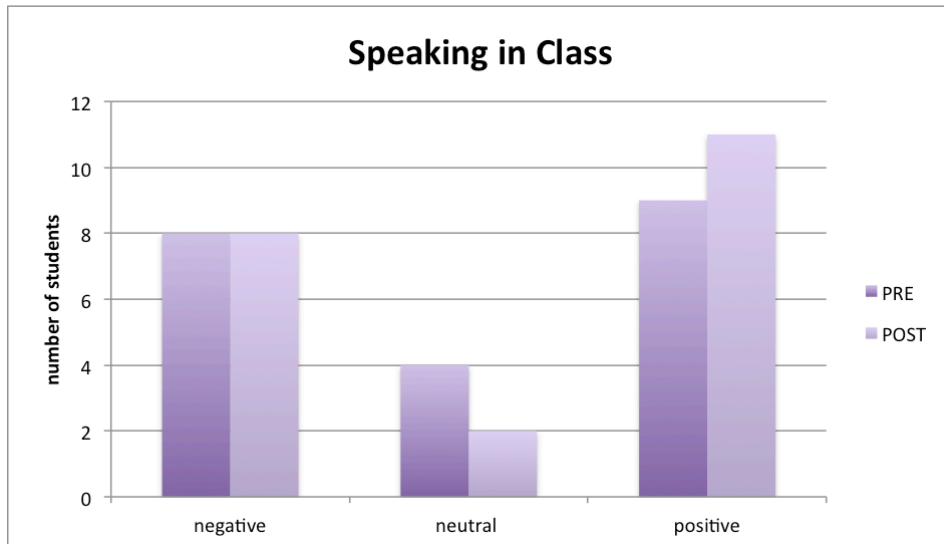


Figure 19: Speaking in Class

The positive responses from the PRE questionnaire were registered as follows: 2 students who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 5 students who selected 7. The negative responses were made up from 1 student who selected 3, 4 students who selected 2, and 3 students who selected 1. In the POST questionnaire the registered positive responses were 3 students who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 1 student who selected 7, while the negative responses here were comprised of 3 students who selected 3, 2 students who selected 2, and 3 students who selected 1. These numbers are registered in Table 17.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	3	4	1	4	2	2	5	0
POST	3	2	3	2	3	2	6	0

Table 17: Speaking in Class

3.2.5.6 Discussion of “Speaking in Class” Results

These results show that two responses moved from neutral in the PRE questionnaire to positive in the POST questionnaire, indicating that during the project with *Optical Illusions* a few students found it easier to speak in class. Furthermore, a slight upward shift can be noted more generally in Table 17, indicating that most students found it easier (if not always easy)

to speak in class during the project. This might be due to the classroom approach which allowed students, as discussed earlier, to talk about the text in smaller groups and with their peers, also delegating more class-time to student discussion than what they were accustomed to. However, there are many factors that can play a part in whether or not students feel comfortable speaking in class, and it is perhaps surprising to see this upward shift with a (relatively) new language professional in the classroom. The reader response approach might have proven vital, employing the essentials outlined by Wolf, such as *encouraging coding of comments and questions* in the groups (114). The design of the tasks may also have played a role in lowering anxiety about speaking in class, reader response based tasks asking students to respond from their own experience, memories, and connection with the text which may feel safer and more encouraging than asking for responses based on other types of criticism (such as a structuralist analysis). It is positive to note that about half of the students (11 out of 21) did find it easy to speak in class during the *Optical Allusions* project, but the negative responses remained the same between the PRE and POST questionnaires (8 responses).

3.2.5.7 Teacher-Talk

To chart students' opinion of teacher-talk, the following statements were included in the questionnaires:

PRE 18: The teacher talks too much in class.

POST 17: The teacher spoke too much in class.

In Figure 18, it is shown that the PRE questionnaire registered 2 positive, 15 negative, and 4 neutral responses, while that for the POST questionnaire these numbers were 0, 1, and 20 respectively.

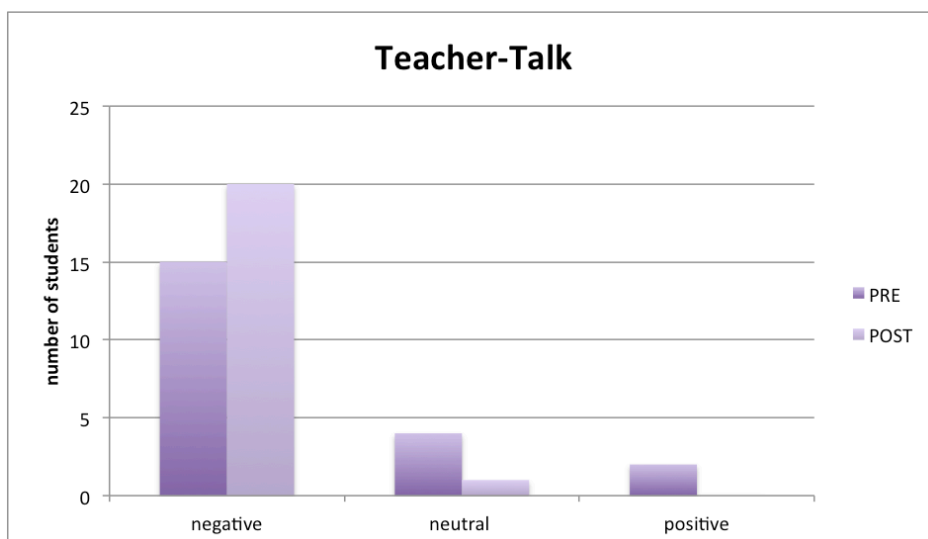


Figure 20: Teacher-Talk

A more detailed division of these numbers is provided in Table 18, where it is shown that the negative responses from the PRE questionnaire were registered as 3 students who selected 3, 8 students who selected 2, and 4 students who selected 1. The positive responses were made up from 1 student who selected 5, 0 students who selected 6, and 1 student who selected 7. The POST questionnaire registered no positive responses, and had the negative responses divided accordingly: 0 students who selected 3, 11 students who selected 2, and 9 students who selected 1.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	4	8	3	4	1	0	1	0
POST	9	11	0	1	0	0	0	0

Table 18: Teacher-Talk

3.2.5.8 Discussion of “Teacher-Talk” Results

Student perception of teacher-talk is relatively low both in the PRE and POST questionnaires, however noting that the responses are more condensed at the lower end of the scale in the POST questionnaire. This indicates that though the students have not necessarily worked with the reader-response approach before, their classroom appears to be a generally student-centered one. In the PRE questionnaire, only two responses indicate that the teacher talk too much in class, while four are neutral. In the POST questionnaire there are no positive and only one neutral response. The project, as is shown in the lesson plan (Appendix C) strove to have as little teacher-talk as possible, limiting teacher-talk to a maximum of 10 minutes per 60 minutes. This was primarily because the reader response focuses on individual interpretation, and it was desirable that students participated and practiced their English as

much as possible during the lessons so that the research question could be properly and impartially investigated. It is difficult to assess from this question whether students prefer lessons with less teacher-talk, but it is evident in the response diaries that the vast majority enjoyed this format, some writing: “I like these classes more than the normal English classes. Because in these classes we can speak more freely in groups and work in groups” (11F); and “[working in groups] can give me several ideas in the subject we’re working on, like more point of views” (8M).

3.2.5.9 Concerns for Participation

The following statements were included in the questionnaires to chart whether students had concerns about being wrong when discussing the assigned reading:

PRE 19: I worry about being wrong when I talk about the assigned reading.

POST 19: I was worried about being wrong when I talked about *Optical Allusions*.

In the PRE questionnaire, 13 students agreed with the statement, while 6 disagreed and 2 remained neutral. As for the POST questionnaire, 8 students agreed, 13 disagreed, and 0 responded neutrally. These responses are illustrated in Figure 19.

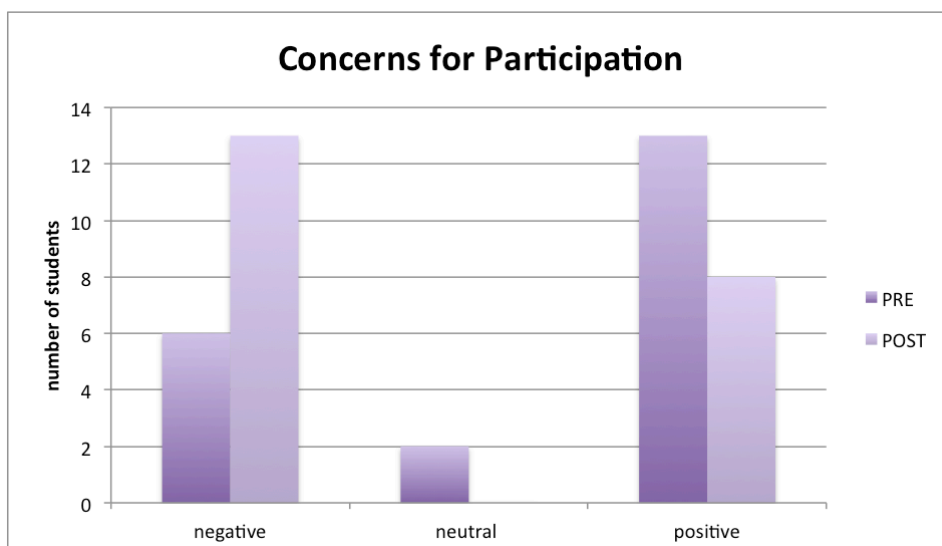


Figure 21: Concerns for Participation

Table 19 breaks down these numbers into more detail, showing that in the PRE questionnaire negative responses were divided accordingly: 1 student who selected 3, 2 students who

selected 2, and 3 students who selected 1, while the positive responses were registered as 2 students who selected 5, 4 students who selected 6, and 7 students who selected 7. The POST questionnaire registered for its negative responses 5 students who selected 3, 3 students who selected 2, and 5 students who selected 1. Here, the positive responses were made up from 2 students who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 4 students who selected 7.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	3	2	1	2	2	4	7	0
POST	5	3	5	0	2	2	4	0

Table 19: Concerns for Participation

3.2.5.10 Discussion of “Concerns for Participation” Results

The concerns for participation arguably provide positive evidence that the reader-response theory does, in this particular class, seems to reduce the concerns for participation students may have to a great extent. In the POST questionnaire, the number of students reporting that they do not (to different degrees) worry about being wrong when they talked about *Optical Illusions* has more than doubled, going from 6 to 13. The design of the reader response based tasks, as discussed above in the “Attitudes Towards Sharing” Section, might help reduce the anxieties and concerns connected with participation. Of course, it is not wise to attribute this difference only to the theoretical approach. In fact, there are entries places in the response diaries that indicate that the format of working in smaller groups, rather than the design of the tasks, makes the students feel safer and more inclined to participate. Writing for instance that “the groups are great to be in, it’s not so hard at all to speak and ask for help in this small groups” (12F). However, there are also indications that group work facilitates the reader response format, exemplified, for instance, by 8M writing: “I think these tasks are very good, especially since we are in groups”. It could therefore be suggested that the combination of student-centered reader response based tasks that are conducted in smaller groups reduce concerns for participation, such as the fear of being wrong.

3.2.5.11 Forming Opinions

To chart the extent to which students form opinions about the text they read, the following statements were included in the questionnaires:

PRE 20: I often have an opinion about the text I have read.

POST 20: I often had an opinion about what I had read in *Optical Allusions*.

Figure 20 shows that in the PRE questionnaire, 9 students responded positively, 8 negatively, and 3 neutrally to the statement. The POST questionnaire registered 11 positive, 8 negative, and 2 neutral responses.

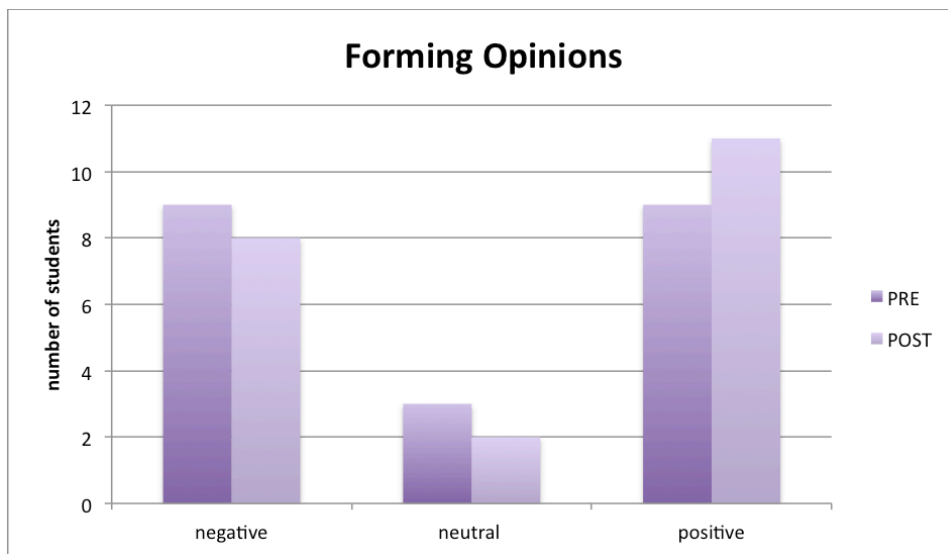


Figure 22: Forming Opinions

A more detailed breakdown of the numbers is provided in Table 20, where it is shown that the positive responses to the PRE questionnaire were registered as 0 students who selected 5, 4 students who selected 6, and 5 students who selected 7, while negative responses were divided as follows: 6 students who selected 3, 2 students who selected 2, and 1 student who selected 1. The POST questionnaire results registered positive responses as 6 students who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 3 students who selected 7 and negative responses as 2 students who selected 3, 4 students who selected 2, and 2 students who selected 1.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	1	2	6	3	0	4	5	0
POST	2	4	2	2	6	2	3	0

Table 20: Forming Opinions

3.2.5.12 Discussion of “Forming Opinions” Results

The research question asks in part whether a combination of graphic novels and reader-response theory can help students form opinions about the text, but here it can be seen that the

difference is rather small between the PRE and the POST questionnaires. Only one response differ the negative registrations in the POST questionnaire, while the positive has increased with 3, also taking from the neutral. Though more than half of the students reported having formed an opinion about the text, it is odd to see that 8 (9 in the PRE) students indicate that they generally do not have an opinion about the text. Possibly, this could be connected with the “Interpretation” Section on a whole, where students recorded not contemplating the text much, also suggesting that it did not make them think about important things. Perhaps the students taking the questionnaires, unfamiliar with the reader response theory, thought that the opinions needed to be more profound and traditionally literary or academic for it to count in the recording of answers to this question. Of course, it could be possible that some or all of these students had no opinion on the reading, but it seems unlikely to conclude that 8 out of 21 students had not even formed an opinion as to whether or not they liked, or resonated with, the text.

3.2.5.13 Expressing Opinions

The questionnaires included the following statements to chart the frequency to which students express their opinions in class:

PRE 21: Generally, I am not challenged to express my opinions on what we are working on in class.

POST 23: I have spoken more in class than usual in the duration of this project.

The statement in the PRE questionnaire generated 4 positive, 11 negative, and 5 neutral responses, while the POST questionnaire statement generated 6 positive, 11 negative, and 4 neutral responses. These numbers are illustrated in Figure 21. It is important to note that the PRE statement was negatively loaded while the POST statement was positively loaded.

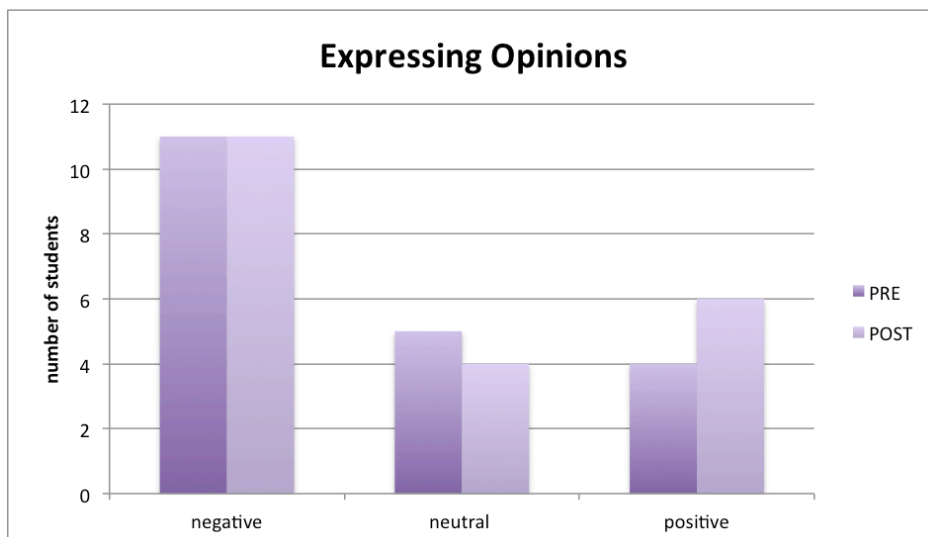


Figure 23: Expressing Opinions

In the PRE questionnaire, as can be seen in table 21, shows that the disagreeing responses were registered as 6 students who selected 3, 4 students who selected 2, and 1 student who selected 1, while the agreeing responses were recorded as 2 students who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 0 students who selected 7. The table also shows the division of the POST questionnaire responses, dividing the negative responses as 2 students who selected 3, 4 students who selected 2, and 5 students who selected 1. The positive responses were recorded as 1 student who selected 5, 3 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	1	4	6	5	2	2	0	1
POST	5	4	2	4	1	3	2	0

Table 21: Expressing Opinions

3.2.5.14 Discussion of “Expressing Opinions” Results

The first thing that is important to point out in the dealing with the results of these statements in the questionnaire is the difference in wording, which regrettably makes it difficult to make a good comparison between the two. This is because the first statement asks students to assess to what extent they are challenged to express their opinions, while the second asks them to record whether or not they had spoken more than normal in the duration of the *Optical Allusions* project. The reason why this is problematic is that the first reflects on the classroom format while the other reflects on student behavior. Asking if they have participated *more*

than normal leaves it difficult to decide whether those who registered negative responses to the POST statement generally do not participate or if they merely continued to participate at the same level as before (which could be any level). In hindsight this is something that should have been done differently, but having to interpret the results as they are, 6 students recorded having participated more than normal. This is arguably a positive result for those six students, but due to the lack of contrast it is difficult to decide whether it was the graphic novel, the reader response approach, or the change of pace causing the increase. Another thing that can be taken away from this is that the class is generally (outside of the project) not challenged to express their opinions about a text in class.

3.2.5.15 Listening to Others

To chart students' attitudes towards listening to others, the following statements were included in the questionnaires:

PRE 22: It is important to hear what others think about the assigned reading.

POST 21: It was important to hear what others thought about *Optical Allusions*.

To these statements, the PRE questionnaire recorded 12 positive, 2 negative, and 6 neutral responses, while the POST questionnaire recorded 10 positive, 7 negative, and 4 neutral responses. These are shown in Figure 22.

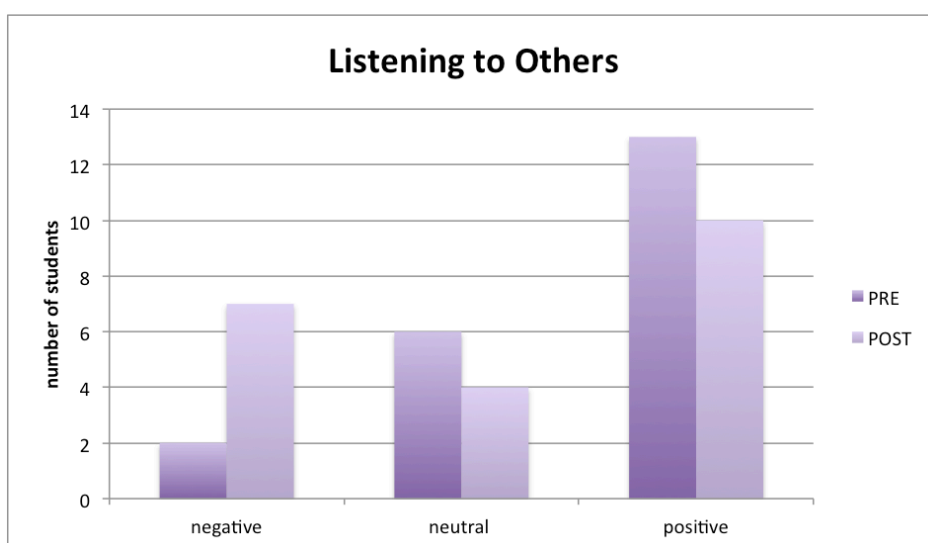


Figure 24: Listening to Others

Table 22 provides a detailed overview of the responses, demonstrating that 1 student who selected 3, 0 students who selected 2, and 1 student who selected 1 made up the negative responses to the PRE questionnaire statement. The positive were divided as 2 students who selected 5, 5 students who selected 6, and 6 students who selected 7. For the POST questionnaire, negative responses were recorded as 2 students who selected 3, 3 students who selected 2, and 2 students who selected 1, while the positive were made up from 4 students who selected 5, 6 students who selected 6, and 0 students who selected 7.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	1	0	1	6	2	5	6	0
POST	2	3	2	4	4	6	0	0

Table 22: Listening to Others

3.2.5.16 Discussion of “Listening to Others” Results

The attitudes students recorded towards listening to others did arguably not improve in the course of the project. In fact, the PRE questionnaire recorded 3 more students agreeing to the statement that it was important to listen to others’ opinions about the text than in the POST questionnaire, and there were also 2 more that remained neutral. This might be a prime example of how Wolf has suggested that that the mirror tool used for reader response can become overpowering, leading students to believe that his or her reflection (interpretation) is the only one that matters (33). Knowing that this was a limitation of the transactional analysis before starting, measures could, perhaps, have been taken to avoid such a result in the POST questionnaire (though it is important to note that only 7 students responded negatively).

Including the graphic novel in the classroom was intended, in line with James B. Carter, to broaden rather than narrow the students’ ability to think and respond inclusively. The project was also working to cater to the point in the competence aims which states that students should be able to “[i]ntroduce, maintain and terminate conversations on different topics by asking questions and following up on input” (9), suggesting that students should take (or at least show) interest in what others are contributing to the conversation. With no students in the POST questionnaire, compared to the 7 in the PRE questionnaire, having ranked fully agreed to the importance of listening to others, this has arguably failed on some levels.

Perhaps the decline can also be attributed to the lack of “Perceived Importance” of the text, and the general lack of understanding for (and proper introduction to) the reader response theory and project expectations.

3.2.5.17 Interpretative Authority

The following statements were included in the questionnaire to chart students' attitudes and expectations towards the teacher as an interpretative authority:

PRE 23: The teacher should tell me what the text is about.

POST 22: The teacher should have told me what *Optical Allusions* was about.

The PRE questionnaire gathered 9 positive, 9 negative, and 3 neutral responses to this statement, while the POST questionnaire recorded 8, 10, and 3 respectively, as is shown in Figure 23.

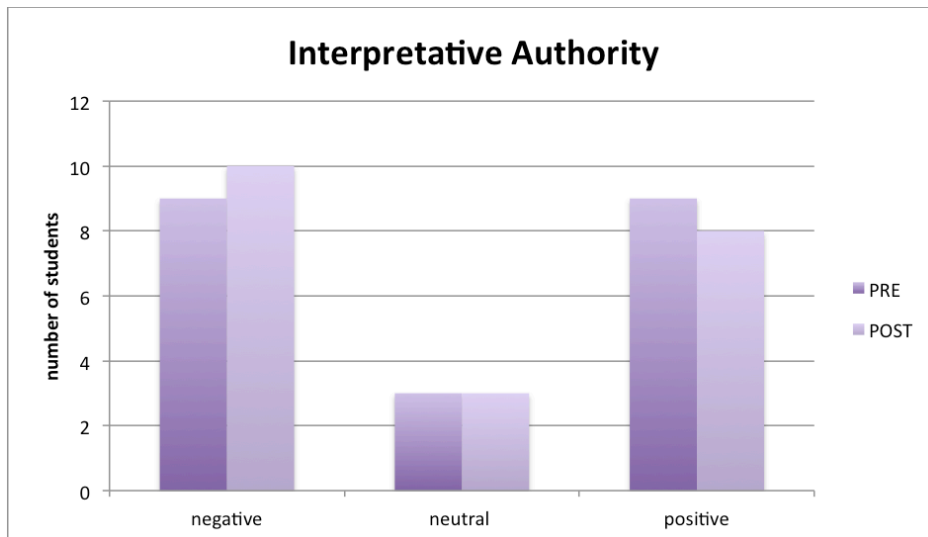


Figure 25: Interpretative Authority

In Table 23, these results can be further examined, as it is shown that the PRE questionnaire divided the positive responses as follows: 1 student who selected 5, 6 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7, while negative responses were made up from 2 students who selected 3, 3 students who selected 2, and 4 students who selected 1. As for the statement in the POST questionnaire, the positive responses recorded were 3 students who selected 5, 3 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7. The negative responses recorded 4 students who selected 3, 2 students who selected 2, and 4 students who selected 1.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	4	3	2	3	1	6	2	0
POST	4	2	4	3	3	3	2	0

Table 23: Interpretative Authority

3.2.5.18 Discussion of “Interpretative Authority” Results

The results in this section were not characterized by a significant difference in the PRE and the POST questionnaires, only showing one more negative response in the POST questionnaire than in the PRE questionnaire. It could, perhaps, be expected that the difference had been bigger, considering that the reader response theory values the individual interpretative authority, but it might be that the duration of the project and approach in the classroom was not sufficient to foster a significant change in attitudes. It is also, again, a possibility that the lack of communication regarding the nature of the reader-response theory and the expectations of the students causes still 8 students to believe that the teacher should have told them what *Optical Illusions* was about. In hindsight, it can be noted (yet again) that the students could have benefitted from clearer instructions. In addition, it might be considered that summarizing the plot of the assigned reading in plenum could have been a good idea to include also those students who reported feeling frustrated at not understanding the book, as the level of the book and its main ideas (evolution, natural selection etc.) are rather complex for a 9th grade ELS class. This would not have had to be done in a way that would diminish individual interpretation in the reader response. On the other hand, taking time for making such a summary would have taken away much valuable time spent with student-centered group discussions, and might have worked to increase the traditional and daunting authoritarian approach to literature that keeps students from participating and confidently expressing their own opinions about the text.

3.2.5.19 Getting Good

To chart students’ opinion of the importance of practicing speaking English, the following statement was posed to them in the first questionnaire:

PRE 24: One has to speak English to be good at English.

As can be seen from Figure 24, 18 students agreed with the statement, 0 students disagreed, and 3 responded neutrally. Table 24 provides a detailed breakdown of these numbers,

showing that the positive responses comprised 2 students who selected 5, 4 students who selected 6, and 12 students who selected 7.

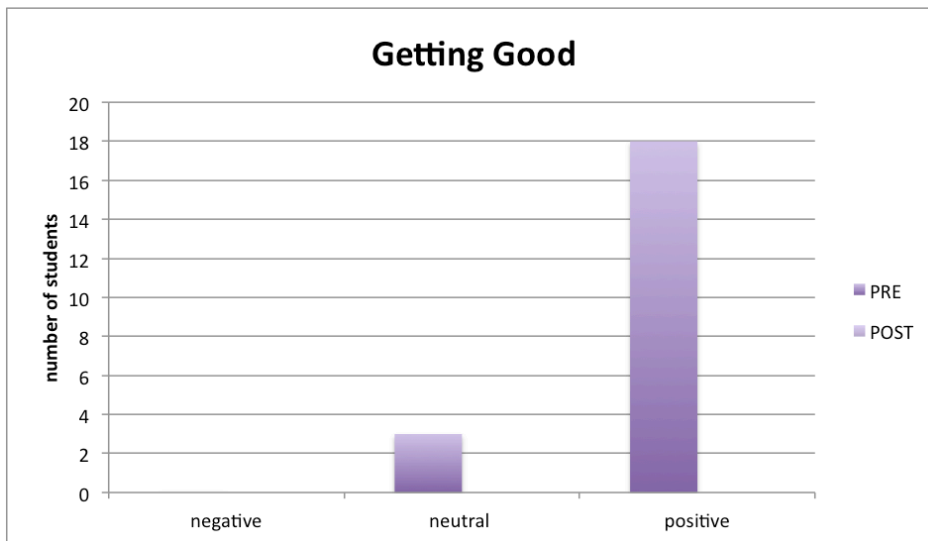


Figure 26: Getting Good

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	0	0	0	3	2	4	12	0

Table 24: Getting Good

3.2.5.20 Discussion of “Getting Good” Results

These results are fairly self-explanatory and the statement was included in the questionnaire mostly to have the students reflect on the importance of participating orally and sharing ideas in English. They were included in the PRE questionnaire to foreshadow the intention to let them practice speaking English so that they could improve their communicative abilities. The agreeing majority of 18 out of 21 students (the remaining 3 responding neutrally) is overwhelming and suggests that students generally agree to the importance of challenging oneself to participate in order to get better. Providing them with the graphic novel and reader response based tasks was a way of encouraging participation and giving students space and time to do so. The intent of this question (and also the research project more generally) should probably have been made explicit to the students at the beginning of the project, rather than subdued to avoid biased results so that students could more confidently act on the consensus expressed here.

3.2.5.21 Material Importance

The following statements were included in the questionnaires to chart whether the students' perceived the material as an important factor in their participation:

PRE 25: The material used in class is of no importance to how much I participate.

POST 24: The material we used in class was of no importance to how much I participated.

Illustrated in Figure 25, 8 students responded positively, 12 responded negatively, while 1 remained neutral to the statement in the PRE questionnaire. The numbers recorded in the POST questionnaire were 7 positive, 11 negative, and 2 neutral responses.

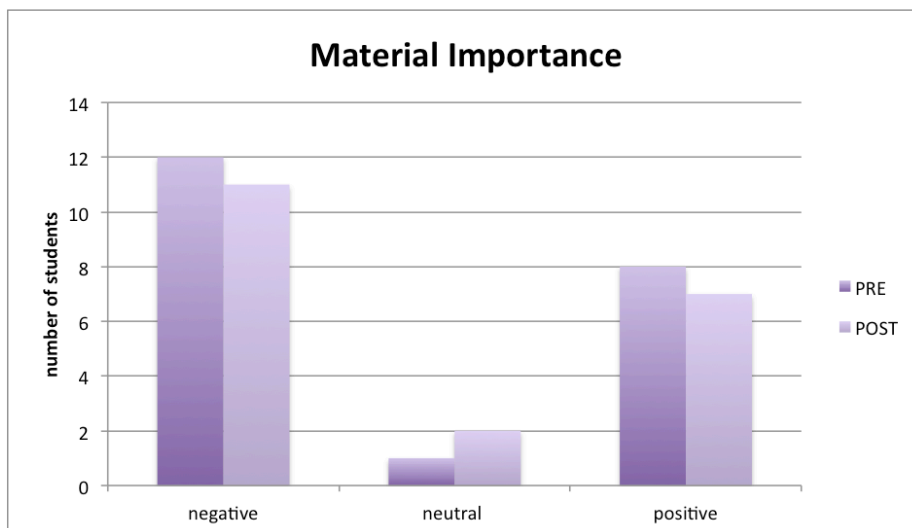


Figure 27: Material Importance

The negative responses to the statement in the PRE questionnaire is divided as follows: 10 students who selected 3, 2 students who selected 2, and 0 students who selected 1, while the positive responses have 2 students who selected 5, 3 students who selected 6, and 3 students who selected 7. In the POST questionnaire, the negative response is made up from 6 students who selected 3, 4 students who selected 2, and 1 student who selected 1, contrasting the positive response which recorded 2 students who selected 5, 5 students who selected 6, and 0 students who selected 7. 1 student did not respond to the statement in the POST questionnaire.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	0	2	10	1	2	3	3	0
POST	1	4	6	2	2	5	0	1

Table 25: Material Importance

3.2.5.22 Discussion of “Material Importance” Results

It seems that the importance of the material did in fact seem to make a difference to how much the students participated, and this statement-set might work as a supplement to the poorly constructed set discussed under “Expressing Opinions”. Though not asking exactly the same question, it serves to illuminate whether the graphic novel in combination with the reader-response tasks did have an importance on whether or not the students participated in class. Though the results do not provide answers as to whether students participated more or less because of the material, it seems that the material factor generally (both in the PRE and the POST questionnaire) do affect participation to a certain degree. The total responses were dispersed fairly similarly in both questionnaires between positive, negative and neutral responses (neutral gaining one and positive losing one in the POST questionnaire), indicating that student opinion on the matter did not change much in the duration of the project.

3.2.5.23 Practicing English

To chart students’ attitudes towards practicing English themselves, the following statements were included in the questionnaires:

PRE 26: I like to be given time to practice speaking English in class.

POST 25: I liked that I was given time to practice speaking English in class.

In the PRE questionnaire, 7 students responded positively, 8 negatively, and 5 neutrally to the statement, while in the POST questionnaire 15 students responded positively, 3 negatively, and 2 neutrally. These results are illustrated in Figure 26.

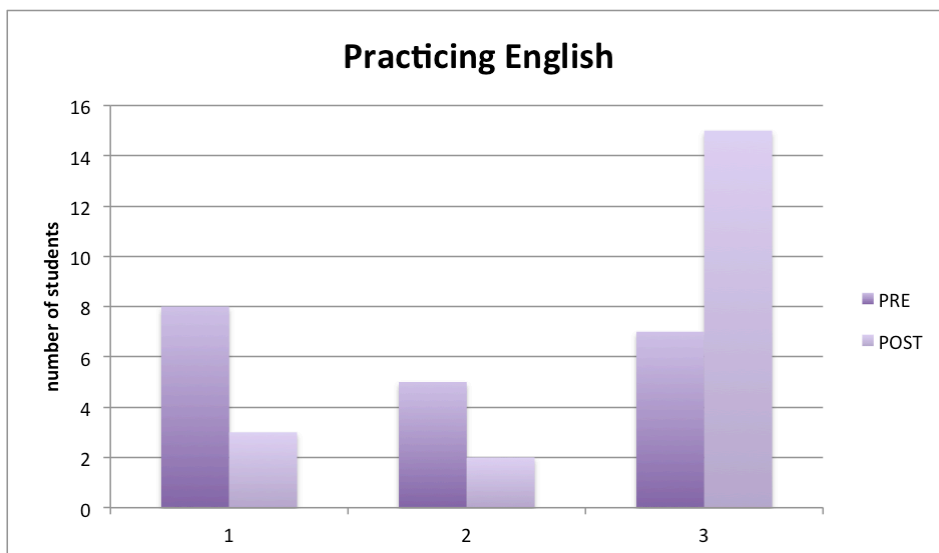


Figure 28: Practicing English

More specifically, as can be seen in Table 26, the positive responses from the PRE questionnaire were registered as 2 students who selected 5, 3 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7. The negative responses here were as follows: 5 students who selected 3, 1 student who selected 2, and 2 students who selected 1. 1 student did not respond to the statement. The statement in the POST questionnaire registered 3 students who selected 5, 7 students who selected 6, and 5 students who selected 7, making up the positive response, and 0 students who selected 3, 3 students who selected 2, and 0 students who selected 1, making up the negative. 1 student did not respond to the statement.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	2	1	5	5	2	3	2	1
POST	0	3	0	2	3	7	5	1

Table 26: Practicing English

3.2.5.24 Discussion of “Practicing English” Results

The results obtained from the “Practicing English” statement couple are strong indicators that the students did appreciate the change in format. There were more than a doubling recorded in the agreement to the statement from the PRE questionnaire to the POST questionnaire, suggesting that students do like to be given the opportunity to practice speaking English in class, though not under any conditions. The reader-response theory and tasks are, as discussed several times earlier, designed to empower students in forming and expressing their own ideas and opinions and it might be worth considering that this approach is (at least partly)

responsible for the positive increase recorded here. However, in the response diaries the excitement was mostly centered on the opportunity to be working in groups, and it is not to be said for sure whether the tasks given for the group to work on is the decisive factor. Still, when it comes to practicing English, it is a safe assumption to make that more students in the group would feel comfortable with and grateful for the opportunity to do so when enabled to make statements based on their own experiences with the text and responding to others', rather than responding to questions that seem to have (only) one right answer. One student arguably exemplifies this writing in her response diary towards the end of the project: "I think this is funny because we get more social and we learn to not be so scared around everybody" (12F), indicating that she enjoys and feels more confident practicing English with the other students.

3.2.5.25 Interpretative Confidence

The following statements were included in the questionnaire to chart the students' interpretative confidence:

PRE 27: When someone interprets a text differently than I have, I become insecure.

POST 26: When someone had interpreted Optical Allusions differently than I had, I became insecure.

In the PRE questionnaire, 14 students agreed with the statement, 6 disagreed, and 1 remained neutral. The POST questionnaire had 8 students agree, 7 students disagree, and 5 students responding neutrally. The results are illustrated in Figure 27.

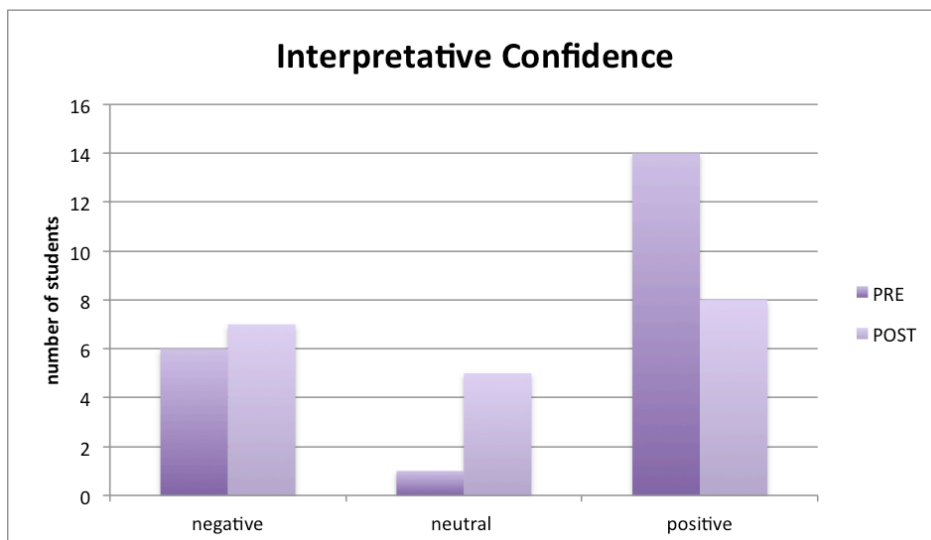


Figure 29: Interpretative Confidence

As can be seen in table 27, the positive responses to the statement in the PRE questionnaire were registered as 5 students who selected 5, 3 students who selected 6, and 6 students who selected 7, while the negative comprised 1 student who selected 3, 3 students who selected 2, and 2 students who selected 1. As for the POST questionnaire, 3 students who selected 5, 0 who selected 6, and 5 who selected 7 made up the positive response, while 1 student who selected 3, 3 who selected 2, and 3 who selected 1 made up the negative response.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	2	3	1	1	5	3	6	0
POST	3	3	1	5	3	0	5	1

Table 27: Interpretative Confidence

3.2.5.26 Discussion of “Interpretative Confidence” Results

The results indicate that the use of the graphic novel and the reader response theory did, indeed, increase the interpretative confidence of students to some extent, if not greatly. The number of students reporting that they felt insecure in their interpretations falling from 14 in the PRE questionnaire to 8 in the POST questionnaire, increasing the neutral more than the negative. This is arguably an important move because it indicates that students might be beginning to recognize the value and importance of their own interpretations, though they might (as shown in “listening to others”) not yet have learned to value that of others equally. It seems a move in the right direction, and may make hopeful James B. Carter’s statement that using graphic novels critically in the classroom can quench statements that indicate “that we

do not care much for others who think, read, and decode differently from the narrowest notion of reading and literacy” (53). Though the students may not yet see the importance of acknowledging the opinions of others, it may be indicated from this statistic that setting a good example as a teacher by using a format that encourages individual interpretation and expression has a positive effect. It could also be assumed that though some of the students did not necessarily recognize the importance of listening to others, students who have formed or expressed alternative interpretations now feel more confident doing so in an encouraging environment and with tasks that not so clearly demand “right” answers.

3.2.5.27 Communicative Confidence

To chart the students’ communicative confidence, the following statements were included in the questionnaire:

PRE 28: Practicing speaking English makes me more confident in my ability to do so.

POST 27: Practicing speaking English has made me more confident in my ability to do so.

The PRE questionnaire registered 15 positive, 3 negative, and 3 neutral responses, while the POST questionnaire registered 9 positive, 8 negative, and 3 neutral responses, as can be seen in Figure 28.

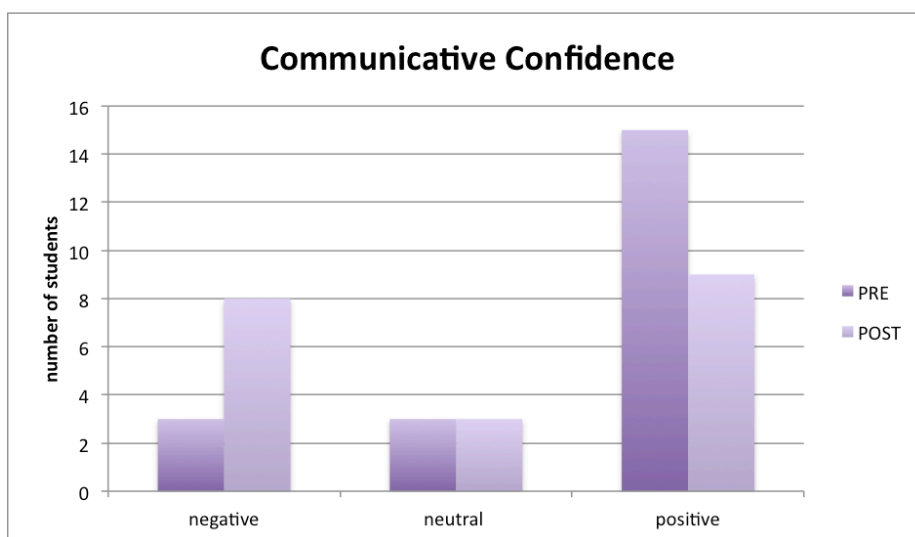


Figure 30: Communicative Confidence

In Table 28 the detailed responses are listed, showing that the negative responses from the PRE questionnaire were made up from 3 students who selected 3, 0 students who selected 2, and 0 students who selected 1, while the positive responses were distributed as follows: 3 students who selected 5, 3 students who selected 6, and 9 students who selected 7. The negative responses from the POST questionnaire were 4 students who selected 3, 4 students who selected 2, and 0 students who selected 1, contrasting the positive responses recorded as 5 students who selected 5, 2 students who selected 6, and 2 students who selected 7. 1 student did not respond to the statement in the POST questionnaire.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
PRE	0	0	3	3	3	3	9	0
POST	0	4	4	3	5	2	2	1

Table 28: Speaking English

3.2.5.28 Discussion of “Communicative Confidence” Results

In contrast to the “Interpretative Confidence”, the “Communicative Confidence” Section does not offer such uplifting results. It seems that the interpretative confidence has fallen, going from 15 positive in the PRE questionnaire to only 9 in the POST questionnaire. It is a difficult statistic to analyze, and more information on this point would be needed to make any decisive comments on the cause of this fall. One option might be the phrasing of the statements, which in the PRE statement suggests that the students reflect on how they are improving, while the POST statement might perhaps be seen as asking students to assess their current communicative confidence. It might be noted here that earlier sections, such as “Perceived Value of Opinion”, “Speaking in Class”, and “Concerns for Participation” reduce the likelihood of class environment being the cause of such a hesitation to claim communicative confidence. Furthermore, the students generally seemed confident expressing their opinions in the groups, though sometimes hesitating with the new format. It would have been interesting to revisit the group with follow-up or short answer questions to further examine these results.

3.2.6 Discussion of Results in the Expression Section

The “Expression” Section was designed to serve the part of the research question that asks whether the reader-response based approach in combination with the graphic novel could lead students to confidently form and express their own ideas about the text. It was assumed that this approach would be successful in encouraging students to participate in discussion and

exchange ideas in English, and though the “Interpretation” section fell a little short, it seems that this section still provides hopeful results. Arguably, the most important finding being how positively students react to reader response based task design and class organization. Though it is difficult to attribute the response to any one factor (such as theoretical approach), it is notable that students more enthusiastically formed and expressed opinions about *Optical Allusions*, and rejoiced in and capitalized on the opportunity to have student-centered lessons with much group work. This is seen (and treated) in the positive responses recorded (though not always strikingly different from the initial responses) in sections such as “Attitudes Towards Sharing”; “Perceived Value of Opinion”; “Speaking in Class”; “Concerns for Participation”; and “Practicing English”.

Though this section generally provides results that are positive with regard to the research question, none (except perhaps “Practicing English”) were overwhelming. Proper guidance, as also discussed for the “Interpretation” Section might have provided more conclusive or impressive results in this section, assuming that students would have expressed themselves more confidently had they been given sufficient aid in interpreting the text and tasks. However, it seems that the reader response based classroom approach was rather successful regardless. Though singling out one decisive factor in the classroom is difficult, it seems that using the “mirror tool”, as suggested by Wolf (33), led students to form and express their own ideas and interpretations, and worry less about making formal mistakes. Still, there could be more work done in terms of underlining the importance of listening to others, even when the interpretations are individual, to avoid the over-the-top swing to personal response Wolf warns about (34). This could probably also be solved by providing students with a better understanding of the reader response theory.

4 Conclusion and Final Remarks

In conclusion, the research question has been answered through this project in the following way: Reading literature, and more specifically the graphic novel, seems to engage these students and encourage them to read and participate in discussions of classroom texts to a greater degree than textbook material does. Furthermore, it is not certain that the reader response based approach in the classroom alone helped these students read critically and independently and engage them in processes of meaning-making. However, it seems that the

reader response based approach led these students to more confidently form and express their own ideas about the text they read.

Beginning with the use of literature, though the graphic novel did not encourage students to become volunteer readers, as can be seen in the section of “Personal Interest”, students reported being more entertained by *Optical Allusions* (“Entertainment Value”), and enjoyed the reading and working with longer texts more (“Enjoying the Reading” and “Working with Longer Texts”). Furthermore, more students reported completing the reading when working with *Optical Allusions* (“Completing the Reading Assignment”), which would naturally lead them to be more prepared to participate in class discussions. This seems to support Gillian Lazar in her assumption that literature is a good resource for language professionals and ELS classrooms, because it provides more motivating material that encourages language acquisition by providing language in meaningful and memorable contexts and absorbing students in the plot. It is definitely suggested by the results obtained that students could benefit from working more with longer texts, being given the opportunity to further develop their literary skills to maximize the ELS output from such an approach. The responses recorded, both in the questionnaires and the response diaries, do not provide sufficient information on whether or not it was the graphic format specifically that spiked student responses in the “Reading” section, however, many of the POST statements were asking students to respond based on their experience with *Optical Allusions*, and are thus somewhat representative. Furthermore, as has been argued also in the beginning of this thesis, selecting the graphic novel is also a choice that is supported by the basic skills framework, the ELS competence aims, and, as suggested by Rocco Versaci, the general academic merit of the format. It is also worth considering James Bucky Carter’s argument that choosing the graphic format may include students who are, often, excluded or disadvantaged in traditional literary projects in school, either by their background (e.g. being a minority), literacy level (e.g. being a slow reader), or academic approach (e.g. being more creative).

Turning then to the use of the reader response theory, the “Interpretation” Section suggests that it is not enough to simply employ the reader response strategy in the classroom. Expecting students to implicitly learn and take home the knowledge of how to read critically and independently and engage in processes of meaning-making to form their own opinions was arguably a fault in this project, and it should have been approached differently. Though it was emphasized to the students that their personal responses to the text were important and

central, the project arguably provided them with too little theoretical information as to why, nor with regard to how they could employ reader response theory to encourage their language acquisition. This is exemplified in the results that indicate, for instance, little contemplation of the text and a low perceived importance. The only reader response theory provided to them is found in the OneNote file, and was intended as preparation to their graphic story (see Appendix H and J). Not making the intention more explicit was not, as Wolf has suggested, a case of underestimating the intellect of the students, but a result of fearing biased results, as discussed also at the end of the “Interpretation” Section. What is suggested as potentially more efficient in engaging readers in processes of meaning-making and critical and independent reading, is that the reader response theory is not only applied in the classroom in practice but also theoretically. This could work to help students to understand how and why the reader response is significant and how to employ it without the guidance of predesigned tasks, preparing them to form their own opinions more confidently. That such explanation and practice would take away from valuable class time in which students could be practicing their English in discussion and analysis could also be solved by committing to longer periods of literary study and debate in class. If effective, the texts and tasks could be varied to suit the curriculum and could therefore, as students become accustomed to using literature, substitute or supply the textbook without taking away from their academic progression.

The “Expression” Section has, in fact, suggested that a reader response based classroom approach is effective in engaging students in discussion and helping them express themselves more confidently, even with the lacking support offered in understanding the approach. Though some students seemed slightly uninterested in listening to others, it is evident in the results that many aspects of students’ participation in discussion and expression of opinions improved, though the duration of the project was fairly short. This is exemplified especially in “Concerns for Participation”, “Practicing English”, and “Interpretative Confidence”. It makes a good case for continuing experimentation with implementing a reader-response based approach and tasks in the ELS classroom. However, it is important to note that there are many factors at play deciding student performance, and it is not certain that the reader response approach is to take all the credit for the positive results recorded and discussed in the “Expression” Section. It was especially apparent in the response diaries that students felt safer and had more fun working in smaller groups, discussing with their peers rather than answering, talking with, or listening to the teacher. There are many types of tasks that can be organized and completed in groups, but as reader response in combination with the graphic

novel has been the focus of this thesis, it can only be said here that it seems like one good way to produce such change and encourage participation.

The limitations of this research project must be commented on. Being conducted only on a local and small group of 21 students, the research and results are not to be considered representative of all ELS students in Norway (even less so worldwide), and the results procured and discussed here cannot be considered universal or conclusive. Being only one researcher, with limited access to the class and also under restrictions of time and space in the publication of this thesis, it has been difficult to produce evidence of internal reliability. However, dependability of the results is suggested by the transparent presentation and discussion of the results, both as presented in this thesis and its appendices. It is hoped that other researchers or teacher finds the concept of this research project interesting, and will conduct similar studies that provide a larger collected sample of students, and which may in turn lead to more reliable conclusions. Further research is always useful and necessary. As a final remark, I regret that the scope and format of this thesis has not been sufficient in conveying the eagerness with which the students attacked their tasks and told their stories, and hope that the project can work as a model (both demonstrating what seems to work and what can be done better) for teachers seeking to encourage participation and exchange of ideas in their ESL classrooms.

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Appendices

A: Project Proposal

Prosjektforslag til *Optical Allusions* av Jay Hosler

Julianne Dreyer

Introduksjon:

Dette forslaget viser et tre-ukers program til bruk av tegneserieromaner (Graphic Novels, GN) i Engelsk undervisning på ungdomsskolenivå. Dette forskningsprosjektet er del av en 30 poengs masteroppgave i Engelsk som fremmedspråk i skolen (TEFL/TESL). Masterstudiet er et samarbeidsprosjekt mellom Linnéuniversitetet, Göteborgs Universitet, og Høgskolen i Østfold. Målet med oppgaven er at observasjoner, intervjuer og resultater som blir registrert under prosjektets tre uker kan brukes for å undersøke hvorvidt GN kan brukes effektivt i undervisningen med spesiell vekt på leser-respons teori (reader-response theory). Teksten *Optical Allusions* vil for elevene være en tverrfaglig tekst som kombinerer elementer fra Engelsk (bokens språk), Naturfag (informasjon om øyet) og Norsk (sjangertrekk, litterære elementer). Hypotesen baserer seg i hovedsak på at GN er en moderne og engasjerende litterær form som kan brukes tverrfaglig for å motivere elever til å forme, uttrykke, dele, og lytte til tanker rundt teksten, og videre også den verden de lever i.

Prosjektskisse:

Prosjektskissen følger her på Engelsk:

The project is intended to run for 3 weeks, an extra session or two can be added at the end of the project-period if the teacher wishes to include an oral presentation as part of the project and final assessment.

Week 1	
Intro	CLASS 1
Reading Strategies	Students are introduced to the project Students fill out introduction form
Literary Elements	Students work with elements of the GN layout through exercises with panels and discussion bubbles Students write in response diaries
Obligatory reading: Chapter 1 and 2 (28pp.)	CLASS 2 Students are given time to share first responses to the text and discuss topics they find relevant to it. Students are briefly introduced to literary elements like storyline, characters, themes etc. Students work in groups with discussion based tasks connecting to literary elements.

	Students write in response diaries
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Color</p> <p>Reader -Response and storytelling</p> <p>Obligatory reading: Chapter 3 and 4 (27pp)</p>	<p>CLASS 1:</p> <p>Students are given time to share thoughts about and responses to the reading and discuss topics they find relevant to it</p> <p>Students are encouraged to think of elements in a GN that impacts their reading that are not present in pure-text novels</p> <p>Students are introduced to the use of color in graphic novels and complete a (digital) coloring exercise</p> <p>Students write in response diaries</p> <p>CLASS 2:</p> <p>Students are given time to share their thoughts on the reading, format and project in general, and are encouraged to discuss any theme that may arise</p> <p>Students are briefly introduced to reader-response theory. Students are then asked to think of a personal experience that relates to the GN, note it down and share it with their group</p> <p>Students work on presenting their story in GN form</p> <p>Students write in response diaries</p>
<p>Week 3</p> <p>Reader-Response and storytelling</p> <p>Obligatory reading: Chapter of choice (5, 6, 7, 8, or 9)</p>	<p>CLASS 1</p> <p>Students are given time to share their responses to the text and discuss topics they find relevant to it.</p> <p>Students discuss their chapter of choice in groups based on their selection and are asked to briefly summarize the action.</p> <p>Students are given time to work on their GN stories.</p> <p>Students write in response journals.</p> <p>CLASS 2</p> <p>Students are encouraged to share thoughts about the project and responses to the text and tasks.</p> <p>Students continue work on their personal GN stories</p> <p>Students fill out the completion forms.</p>

Koblinger til Pensum

Her følger noen punkter fra UDIRs kompetansemål i Engelsk med kommentarer på hvordan disse kan knyttes til prosjektet.

Språklæring

bruke ulike situasjoner, arbeidsmåter og læringsstrategier for å utvikle egne ferdigheter i engelsk

Dette prosjektet baserer seg på et elev-sentrert klasserom hvor eleven selv oppmuntres til å ta ordet og lede diskusjoner. Denne arbeidsformen gir

kommentere eget arbeid med å lære engelsk

En stor del av prosjektet er respons-dagbøker som elevene fører på slutten av hver time. Her skal elevene kommentere på sin opplevelse av faget, undervisningen, og egen innsats i/arbeid med faget.

Muntlig

forstå hovedinnhold og detaljer i ulike typer muntlige tekster om forskjellige emner

Prosjektet legger opp til korte presentasjoner av forskjellige emner (for eksempel litterære elementer og leser-respons teori).

uttrykke seg med flyt og sammenheng tilpasset formål og situasjon

uttrykke og begrunne egen mening om forskjellige emner

innlede, holde i gang og avslutte samtaler om forskjellige emner ved å stille spørsmål og følge opp innspill

bruke sentrale mønstre for uttale, intonasjon, ordbøying og ulike setningstyper i kommunikasjon

Elevene får ved flere anledninger jobbet med disse ferdighetene ettersom prosjektet i stor grad bygger på klasseromsdebatt og elev-prat (i motsetning til lærer-prat).

Skriftlig

forstå hovedinnhold og detaljer i selvvalgte tekster

Elever får selv velge hvilket kapittel de ønsker å lese for prosjektets siste uke.

lese, forstå og vurdere ulike typer tekster av varierende omfang om forskjellige emner

Teksten *Optical Illusions* vil for elevene være en tverrfaglig tekst som kombinerer elementer fra Engelsk (bokens språk), Naturfag (informasjon om øyet) og Norsk (sjangertrekk, mytologi).

bruke egne notater og forskjellige kilder som grunnlag for skriving

Elevene vil i løpet av prosjektet bli bedt om å skrive en egen historie basert på leser-respons notater gjort i sammenheng med teksten.

skrive ulike typer tekster med struktur og sammenheng

bruke sentrale mønstre for rettskriving, ordbøying, setnings- og tekstbygging i produksjon av tekst

Elevene vil i løpet av prosjektet bli bedt om å skrive mange type tekster, eksempelvis egen illustrert historie, sammendrag og tekst i responsdagbok.

bruke digitale verktøy og formkrav for informasjonsbehandling, tekstproduksjon og kommunikasjon

Digitale verktøy inkluderes i prosjektoppgaven blant annet som del av for- or etterundersøkelsene, research og responsdagboken.

Kultur, Samfunn og Litteratur

drøfte ulike typer engelskspråklige litterære tekster fra engelskspråklige land

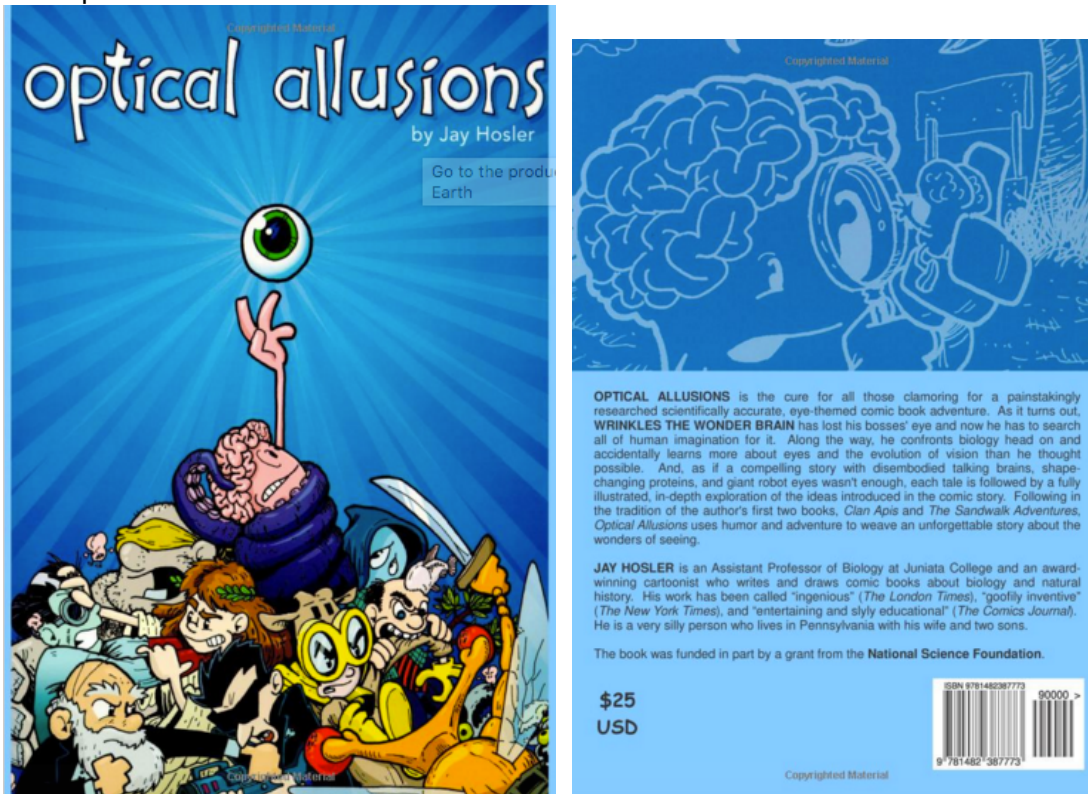
samtale om og formidle aktuelle og faglige emner

Disse vil være sentrale i de elevstyrte diskusjonene om teksten.

lage, formidle og samtale om egne tekster inspirert av engelskspråklig litteratur, film og kulturelle uttrykksformer

Studentene vil bli bedt om å lage sin egen historie i GN-format inspirert av *Optical Allusions*.

**Appendix
Om Optical Allusions:**



Review by Chris Wilson for the Graphic Classroom

<http://www.graphicclassroom.org/2009/11/optical-allusions.html>

Who but Jay Hosler, Ph.D, would have dreamed up a scientific comic book about the eye? If you've read his other works, especially **CLAN APIS**, he's the first person that would come to mind. Is it boring? No. Actually, **OPTICAL ALLUSIONS** is a well-researched, highly effective graphic novel about the evolution of species, DNA, the scientific process of categorization, gene pools, and sexual dimorphisms all told within the context of the complexities of the different types of eyes.

Like I said, no one but Hosler would even attempt it. No surprise here, **OPTICAL ALLUSIONS** is a fantastic, albeit it dense, scientific comic-prose hybrid. Wrinkles the Wonder Brain works for three women with one eye to share between them. He loses the eye and must embark on a quest to find the eye and return it to his employers.

Like any great quest, Wrinkles must learn a thing or two before he can complete his goal. Learn he does. Unlike your science textbook, Hosler intertwines Greek mythology (as if you had not already pick up on that) science fiction and all manner of beast and body making the learning of science less like a biology lesson and more like an adventure in education.

The fiction is clearly fiction and the science is clearly science. There is no twisting the two together. What Hosler does is intertwine a piece of the tale into comic format, then he follows it up with a text-based narrative dense with scientific explanation, examples, charts, figures and all the sciency amenities.

We are left with a real science investigation that is clever, engaging and more importantly, understandable. It is a piece of comic-prose informational sharing that should make the National Science Foundation (who partially funded the effort) very proud.

B: Permission slip

MASTERPROSJEKT I 9D UKE 2-4

Hei, jeg heter Julianne Dreyer, og er masterstudent i Engelsk ved Høgskolen i Østfold. Jeg har fått lov av rektor og kontaktlærer til å utføre et forskningsprosjekt i 9D, hvor jeg tidligere har vært vikar flere ganger.

OM PROSJEKTET

Prosjektet er del av en 30 poengs masteroppgave i Engelsk som fremmedspråk i skolen (TEFL/TESL). Masterstudiet er et samarbeidsprosjekt mellom Linnéuniversitetet, Göteborgs Universitet, og Høgskolen i Østfold. Målet med oppgaven er at observasjoner, intervjuer og resultater som blir registrert under prosjektets tre uker kan brukes for å undersøke hvorvidt grafiske noveller (GN) kan brukes effektivt i undervisningen med spesiell vekt på leser-respons teori (reader-response theory). Teksten *Optical Allusions* vil for elevene være en tverrfaglig tekst som kombinerer elementer fra Engelsk (bokens språk), Naturfag (informasjon om øyet) og Norsk (sjangertrekk, litterære elementer). Hypotesen baserer seg i hovedsak på at GN er en moderne og engasjerende litterær form som kan brukes tverrfaglig for å motivere elever til å forme, uttrykke, dele, og lytte til tanker rundt teksten, og videre også den verden de lever i.

SAMTYKKE

Dette skjemaet ber om foresattes samtykke til at elevens arbeid, svar, og kommentarer under prosjektet som omhandler tegneserieromanen *Optical Allusions* av Jay Hosler kan brukes anonymt som del av en masteravhandling i Fremmedspråk i Skolen ved HiØ. Om samtykke ikke blir gitt, vil eleven ta del i prosjektet på skolen uten at materialet kan bli brukt i avhandlingen.

Leveres tilbake innen Fredag 08.01.2016

Samtykke gis (merk én)

Til opp av Form

Ja

Nei

(Elevens navn i blokkbokstaver)

(Foresattes signatur)

C: Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan Optical Allusions

Lesson 1

Introduction	Students are introduced to the project Students fill out introduction form (30 min)
Reading strategies	Students work in groups with elements of the GN layout through exercises with panels and discussion bubbles (20 min)
GN layout	

Lesson 2

Literary elements	Students are given time to share first responses to the text and discuss topics they find relevant to it. (15 min)
Reader response	Students are briefly introduced to literary elements like storyline, characters, themes etc. (5 min TT, 10 min R)
	Students work in groups with discussion based tasks connecting to literary elements. (20 min)
	Students write in response diaries (10 min)

Lesson 3

Reader Response	Students are given time to share thoughts about and responses to the reading and discuss topics they find relevant to it
Color, mood, and interpretation	Students are encouraged to think of elements in a GN that impacts their reading that are not present in pure-text novels (20 min)
	Students watch Inside out trailer and discuss the color of the emotions as an

	<p>introduction to the use of color in graphic novels (10 min)</p> <p>Students complete a (digital) coloring exercise (20 min)</p> <p>Students write in response diaries (10min)</p>
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Lesson 4

<p>Reader- response Reader-response theory</p>	<p>Students are given time to share their thoughts on the reading, format and project in general, and are encouraged to discuss any theme that may arise (10 min)</p> <p>Students are briefly introduced to reader-response theory. (TT 5 min)</p> <p>Students are asked to think of a personal experience that relates to the GN, note it down and share it with their group (10 min)</p> <p>Students work on presenting their story in GN form. By writing down the story in more detail and beginning to story-board it.</p> <p>Students write in response diaries (10 min)</p>
--	--

Lesson 5

	<p>Students are given time to share their responses to the text and discuss topics they find relevant to it.</p> <p>Students discuss their chapter of choice in groups based on their selection and are asked to briefly summarize the action. (30 min)</p> <p>Students are given time to work on their GN stories. (20 min)</p> <p>Students write in response journals.</p>
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	(10 min)
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Lesson 6

	<p>Students are encouraged to share thoughts about the project and responses to the text and tasks.</p> <p>Students continue work on their personal GN stories (30 min)</p> <p>Students fill out the completion forms. (30 min)</p>
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D: Teacher Account

Teacher-Account on Julianne Dreyer's Master Study Research

Introduction

My name is **NAME** and I work as an English teacher at **SCHOOL NAME** in **CITY**, where I among others teach a 9th grade in which, Julianne Dreyer has carried out a master-study project on graphic novels. The intention of the research was to reveal to what extent the use of graphic novels can be used effectively in English language teaching by focusing on the Reader's response theory.

The class

As most classes, this 9th grade consists of a diversity of 21 students born in 2001; they are twelve girls and 9 boys; One is a foster child, one's father is American; one is a second generation refugee from Somalia and wears hijab; one lives in a lesbian home; some have divorced parents and others live with both their parents. Despite their different backgrounds, the class functions well as a group. They include each other as far as possible, but need some guiding on the way. They pay attention to each other and the teachers, which makes it a good class to work with. Without a lot of disobedience and mischief, the lessons normally proceed well.

The students represent different levels of English acquisition, even though they have completed the same lessons during almost nine years at school. This of course can have roots in a variety of reasons, but some are obvious. For example; there are three dyslexic students who struggle with the writing, and two of them additionally struggle with sentence construction in English, which might have to do with the degree of dyslexia they have. Another student has spent a year in America and attended school there, which certainly has improved his English. Some of them play a large amount of English spoken video games and watch English spoken YouTube videos at a large scale. Those have developed a specific vocabulary consisting of slang, abbreviations and text-speak. Otherwise, their level of English acquisition has to do with interest, capabilities and the amount of access to help with their English homework.

My approach to teaching English

Normally I teach English with a mixture of explicit grammar teaching, discussions on literary texts about specific themes, task based teaching and practical work as for example student-based research on given topics. I also use film to underline and promote certain values that I want the students to focus on. As the students need to be graded quite frequently they work mostly individually when practising grammar and working on presentations and written work, but for oral activity like discussions, reflections and sharing solutions to homework they work in pairs and groups of 3 – 5 students. In full class it is very difficult to engage all the students orally. Only around 4 – 6 students want to participate this way, so the practise of oral English is a challenge for the teacher to manage and at the same time keep an overview of how and how much they each speak. Additionally they are not very fond of correcting one another, meaning that they will keep on making the same mistakes unless the teacher steps in.

Julianne's project

Julianne presented the class with the Reader's Response Theory, which was a different way of working (in such a large scale) comparing to what they were accustomed. She supplied them with the Graphic novel, *Optical Allusions* to read, which was the base for her project. It was interesting to see their faces and hear their reactions when they were given the book: "Wow, is that for me?"; "Are we going to read this book?"; "Can we keep it?" and similar sayings – all in a positive tone. *Optical Allusions* clearly had a positive effect on the students' motivation for reading even before they started. Especially positive was the effect for one student who normally is exempt from doing homework. She came up to me and asked if she

could do homework during this project, and already for lesson number two she had finished reading the book.

Julianne arranged for a lot of group work during the project and my main impression was that the students loved it. They felt free in groups and could talk English about their perceptions of what they had read and not worry about this being right or wrong. Julianne also facilitated teaching on topics such as genres, the plot mountain, the setting and the power of colours. The students had to reflect and work a little on this individually and then discuss their work in groups. Finally, they were to create their own individual graphic story using the knowledge they had just acquired, but still working partly in groups to discuss and guide each other. They were given the choice of how to create the story, which facilitated the task for different skills and interests. They were introduced to different online programmes to use for creating their panels and were told that they could use already known programmes as Paint, PowerPoint and word, additionally they could draw by hand if they wanted.

Why oral presentation

My students have an age where they will not make an effort to learn anything not self-chosen unless they can see a personal goal in it. They need to be able to see that what they learn serves them on the way to a goal. Their visions are based on short-term reasons, and therefore I soon decided that they needed a visionary purpose to this project, which I planned to be an individual, oral presentation of their graphic story to be assessed with a grade. The students knew this from the beginning, which I believe prevented some of them from being “blind passengers” during the group work and others from doing mischief.

Reflections

My reflections about Julianne’s graphic novel project in my class are primarily positive. Julianne brought something new and different into my English classroom and I could observe my class with its constellations and interactions, while she was teaching, which must be a bonus for any teacher. She used OneNote to gather the students’ response diaries and homework, and since I too was connected to the OneNote Classroom folder, I was able to follow their thoughts and work. This was educational for me, because I learned that every student has a voice and an opinion, which are important to him or her, even though this is not displayed in the classroom. This way I discovered that many of them loved group work and wanted more of it and that a few of the students did not see the point to the project nor to the novel. This made it possible for me to help and guide those latter students, who otherwise would have remained anonymous.

The fact that the students were given a choice of tools for creating their graphic story lowered many students’ shoulders and made it a manageable project for everyone, while it also challenged those who wanted to strive for something new. In addition, the fact that Julianne did all the teaching in English was good, because repeating use of the same words supplied the students with a new vocabulary, which they need for their presentation. Some students commented that they did not understand everything Julianne said in English. She instantly considered this and started to translate what she said in English into Norwegian, which she continued to do throughout the project.

Some elements of the project could have been facilitated better, but as Julianne did not know the class very well, this was difficult for her to do. I soon interfered with the group divisions, as I saw some groups were more concerned with nonsense than the tasks. Julianne had planned for the students to choose their own groups to make way for more open discussions and prevent inhibitions to the oral activity. Of course, this worked well for some groups, but unfortunately not for others, so I rearranged the group divisions for the following lessons. The difficulty of the novel was too advanced for the low proficiency students, but they could still read the pictures and follow the lessons. Very few of the students read the scientific pages between each chapter, I believe because they were too difficult, but then again those pages

were optional pages to read. I still have the feeling that the difficulty of the graphic novel was what caused the confusion and frustration for a few students.

Overall, I see the project as very rewarding for both the students and me as a teacher. I feel privileged to underline this as the oral presentations showed widely that the students had acquired both good knowledge of the genre graphic novel; the elements of literary analysis taught and the study of colours. They rounded off each their presentation by reflecting on what they had learned and how they had chosen between the variety of tools to work with.

E: PRE Questionnaire

Pre-Project Questions

Reading

Noter hvor sanne disse utsagnene er for deg på en skala fra en til syv (1-7), der en (1) er ikke sant overhodet og syv (7) er helt sant.

Indicate below how true these statements are for you on a scale from one to seven (1-7), one (1) being not at all true and seven (7) being completely true.

1. Jeg leser leseleksen før timen.

Top of Form

Before class I read the assigned texts.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Bottom of Form

2. Vanligvis liker jeg ikke tekstene vi leser i lekse.

I generally do not enjoy reading the assigned texts.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. Jeg bruker lang tid på å lese leseleksen.

I spend a lot of time finishing the assigned reading.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. Det er gøy å jobbe med lengre tekster på skolen.

Working with longer texts in school is fun.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. Jeg kjeder meg ofte med leseleksen.

I am often bored by the assigned texts.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. Noen ganger leser jeg mer i boken enn jeg må.

I sometimes read more than what is assigned in the book.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. Jeg foretrekker leselekser over oppgaver.

I prefer assigned reading over assigned tasks.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Interpretation

Noter hvor sanne disse utsagnene er for deg på en skala fra en til syv (1-7), der en (1) er ikke sant overhodet og syv (7) er helt sant.

Indicate below how true these statements are for you on a scale from one to seven (1-7), one (1) being not at all true and seven (7) being completely true.

8. Jeg tenker ofte på det jeg leser.

I often contemplate the things I read.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. Jeg snakker sjelden med andre om det vi leser og diskuterer i timen.

I rarely speak to others about what we read and discuss in class.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. Det vi leser om i lærebøkene er ikke så viktig for meg.

What we read about in the textbook is not very important to me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. Jeg føler ofte at jeg ikke forstår hva leseleksene handler om.

I often feel like I do not know what the assigned reading is about.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. Leseleksene får meg til å tenke på viktige ting.

The assigned reading makes me think about important things.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. Når jeg ikke forstår hva jeg leser, leser jeg det ofte igjen flere ganger.

When I do not understand what I am reading, I often read it again several times.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. Jeg lærer sjelden noe nytt når jeg leser leseleksen.

I rarely learn something new when I read the assigned reading.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Expression

Noter hvor sanne disse utsagnene er for deg på en skala fra en til syv (1-7), der en (1) er ikke sant overhodet og syv (7) er helt sant.

Indicate below how true these statements are for you on a scale from one to seven (1-7), one (1) being not at all true and seven (7) being completely true.

15. Jeg liker å snakke om det jeg har lest.

I like to talk about what I have read.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. Jeg føler ofte at jeg ikke får sagt hva jeg mener om en tekst.

I often feel like my opinion about a text is not being heard.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. Det er lett for meg å ta ordet i timen.

Speaking in class is easy for me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. Læreren snakker for mye i timen.

The teacher talks too much in class.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19. Jeg er redd for å ta feil når jeg snakker om leseleksen.

I worry about being wrong when I talk about the assigned reading.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

20. Jeg har ofte en mening om teksten jeg har lest.

I often have an opinion about the text I have read.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

21. Jeg blir vanligvis ikke utfordret til å uttrykke meg om det vi jobber med på skolen.

Generally, I am not challenged to express my opinions on what we are working on in class.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

22. Det er viktig å høre på hva andre mener om leseleksen.

It is important to hear what others think about the assigned reading.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

23. Læreren burde fortelle meg hva teksten handler om.

The teacher should tell me what the text is about.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. Man må snakke engelsk for å bli god i engelsk.

One has to speak English to be good at English.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. Materialet vi bruker i timen har ingenting å si for hvor mye jeg deltar.

The material used in class is of no importance to how much I participate.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. Jeg liker å få tid til å øve på å snakke engelsk i timen.

I like to be given time to practice speaking English in class.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

27. Når noen tolker en tekst på en annen måte enn jeg har gjort blir jeg usikker.

When someone interprets a text differently than I have, I become insecure.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

28. Jeg blir mer selvsikker på mine ferdigheter i engelsk av å øve på å snakke engelsk.

Practicing speaking English makes me more confident in my abilities to do so.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Finally

29. Identifiserer du deg som gutt eller jente?

Do you identify as a boy or a girl?

Jente

Gutt

30. Hvilke karakter får du oftest i engelsk?

What grade do you usually get in English?

1 2 3 4 5 6

31. Hva kan få deg til å snakke/delta mer aktivt i timen?

What would make you talk/participate in class?

32. Har du noen kommentarer til denne undersøkelsen eller noen av spørsmålene? Henvis til individuelle spørsmål med nummer

Do you have any comments on the survey or any of the questions? Address individual questions by number

F: POST Questionnaire

Questions for Evaluation

Reading

Noter hvor sanne disse utsagnene er for deg på en skala fra en til syv (1-7), der en (1) er ikke sant overhodet og syv (7) er helt sant.

Indicate below how true these statements are for you on a scale from one to seven (1-7), one (1) being not at all true and seven (7) being completely true.

1. Jeg leste leseleksen før timen.

I finished the assigned reading before class.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. Jeg likte å lese i *Optical Allusions*.

*I enjoyed reading *Optical Allusions*.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. Jeg brukte lang tid å lese leseleksene.

I spent a lot of time on the assigned reading.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. Det har vært gøy å jobbe med *Optical Allusions*.

*Working with *Optical Allusions* has been fun.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. Å lese *Optical Allusions* kjedet meg.

*Reading *Optical Allusions* bored me.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. Jeg leste mer av boken enn jeg måtte.

I read more in the book than I had to.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. Jeg foretrekker denne typen leselekser over oppgaver.

I prefer this type of assigned reading over assigned tasks.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Interpretation

Noter hvor sanne disse utsagnene er for deg på en skala fra en til syv (1-7), der en (1) er ikke sant overhodet og syv (7) er helt sant.

Indicate below how true these statements are for you on a scale from one to seven (1-7), one (1) being not at all true and seven (7) being completely true.

8. Jeg tenkte ofte på det jeg leste om i *Optical Allusions*.
I often contemplated the things I read about in Optical Allusions.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. Jeg snakket sjelden med andre om det vi leste og diskuterte i timen.
I rarely spoke to others about what we read and discussed in class.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. Det vi leste om i *Optical Allusions* er viktig for meg.
What we read about in Optical Allusions is important to me.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. Jeg følte ofte at jeg ikke forsto hva *Optical Allusions* handlet om.
I often felt like I did not know what Optical Allusions was about.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. *Optical Allusions* fikk meg til å tenke på viktige ting.
Optical Allusions made me think about important things.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. Når jeg ikke forsto hva jeg leste, leste jeg det ofte igjen flere ganger.
When I did not understand what I was reading, I often read it again several times.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. Jeg lærte meg ikke noe nytt av å lese *Optical Allusions*.
I did not learn anything new reading Optical Allusions.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Expression

Noter hvor sanne disse utsagnene er for deg på en skala fra en til syv (1-7), der en (1) er ikke sant overhodet og syv (7) er helt sant.

Indicate below how true these statements are for you on a scale from one to seven (1-7), one (1) being not at all true and seven (7) being completely true.

15. Jeg likte å snakke om *Optical Allusions*.
I liked talking about Optical Allusions.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. Jeg følte ofte at jeg ikke fikk sagt hva jeg mente om *Optical Allusions*.
I often felt like my opinion about Optical Allusions was not being heard.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. Læreren snakket for mye i timene.
The teacher spoke too much in class.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. Det er lett for meg å ta ordet i timen.
Speaking in class is easy for me.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. Jeg var redd for å ta feil når jeg snakket om *Optical Allusions*.
I worried about being wrong when I talked about Optical Allusions.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
20. Jeg hadde ofte en mening om det jeg leste i *Optical Allusions*.
I often had an opinion about what I had read in Optical Allusions.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
21. Det er viktig for meg å høre hva andre synes om *Optical Allusions*.
It was important to hear what others thought about Optical Allusions.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
22. Læreren burde ha fortalt meg hva *Optical Allusions* handlet om.
The teacher should have told me what Optical Allusions was about.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
23. Jeg har snakket mer i timen enn jeg pleier i løpet av prosjektet.
I have spoken more in class than usual in the duration of this project.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
24. Materialet vi brukte i timen hadde ingenting å si for hvor mye jeg deltok.
The material we used in class was of no importance to how much I participated.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
25. Jeg likte at jeg fikk tid til å øve på å snakke engelsk i timen.
I liked that I was given time to practice speaking English in class.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
26. Når noen tolket *Optical Allusions* på en annen måte enn jeg hadde gjort ble jeg usikker.
When someone had interpreted Optical Allusions differently than I had, I became insecure.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

27. Jeg har blitt mer selvsikker på mine ferdigheter i engelsk av å øve på å snakke engelsk.
Practicing speaking English has made me more confident in my abilities to do so.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Finally

28. Identifiserer du deg som gutt eller jente?
Do you identify as a boy or a girl?

Jente

Gutt

29. Hvilke karakter får du oftest i engelsk?
What grade do you usually get in English?

1 2 3 4 5 6

30. Har du noen kommentarer til prosjektet, denne undersøkelsen eller noen av spørsmålene?
 Henvis til individuelle spørsmål med nummer.
Do you have any comments on the survey or any of the questions? Address individual questions by number.

G: Questionnaire Results

PRE												
Q/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	total	negative	neutral	positive
1	1	3	2	1	4	2	8	0	21	6	1	14
2	0	7	3	4	3	4	0	0	21	10	4	7
3	5	4	3	1	3	3	2	0	21	12	1	8
4	2	1	5	6	3	2	2	0	21	8	6	7
5	1	3	1	1	5	9	1	0	21	5	1	15
6	5	7	2	2	1	2	2	0	21	14	2	5
7	1	1	0	4	3	6	6	0	21	2	4	15
8	0	3	3	6	5	2	2	0	21	6	6	9
9	2	4	2	6	2	2	2	1	21	8	6	6
10	1	2	3	5	4	5	1	0	21	6	5	10
11	10	3	1	0	3	3	1	0	21	14	0	7
12	1	6	5	7	1	1	0	0	21	12	7	2
13	3	0	3	2	2	4	7	0	21	6	2	13
14	2	1	5	6	1	5	1	0	21	8	6	7
15	4	3	4	2	3	3	2	0	21	11	2	8
16	5	4	6	5	0	0	1	0	21	15	5	1
17	3	4	1	4	2	2	5	0	21	8	4	9
18	4	8	3	4	1	0	1	0	21	15	4	2
19	3	2	1	2	2	4	7	0	21	6	2	13
20	1	2	6	3	0	4	5	0	21	9	3	9
21	1	4	6	5	2	2	0	1	21	11	5	4
22	1	0	1	6	2	5	6	0	21	2	6	13
23	4	3	2	3	1	6	2	0	21	9	3	9
24	0	0	0	3	2	4	12	0	21	0	3	18
25	0	2	10	1	2	3	3	0	21	12	1	8
26	2	1	5	5	2	3	2	1	21	8	5	7
27	2	3	1	1	5	3	6	0	21	6	1	14
28	0	0	3	3	3	3	9	0	21	3	3	15

POST												
Q/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	total	negative	neutral	positive
1	1	0	2	0	1	4	13	0	21	3	0	18
2	0	5	1	4	4	5	2	0	21	6	4	11
3	0	4	6	5	1	4	1	0	21	10	5	6
4	1	0	4	4	4	6	2	0	21	5	4	12
5	3	8	4	3	3	0	0	0	21	15	3	3
6	9	3	1	2	1	1	4	0	21	13	2	6
7	1	1	1	3	4	4	7	0	21	3	3	15
8	3	3	4	6	3	2	0	0	21	10	6	5
9	2	2	5	3	4	4	1	0	21	9	3	9
10	3	8	4	4	0	1	0	1	21	15	4	1
11	7	5	3	2	1	2	1	0	21	15	2	4
12	3	8	5	2	2	1	0	0	21	16	2	3
13	3	0	1	3	7	4	3	0	21	4	3	14
14	1	9	4	4	1	2	0	0	21	14	4	3
15	1	2	2	7	4	3	2	0	21	5	7	9
16	7	6	3	2	1	1	1	0	21	16	2	3
17	9	11	0	1	0	0	0	0	21	20	1	0
18	3	2	3	2	3	2	6	0	21	8	2	11
19	5	3	5	0	2	2	4	0	21	13	0	8
20	2	4	2	2	6	2	3	0	21	8	2	11
21	2	3	2	4	4	6	0	0	21	7	4	10
22	4	2	4	3	3	3	2	0	21	10	3	8
23	5	4	2	4	1	3	2	0	21	11	4	6
24	1	4	6	2	2	5	0	1	21	11	2	7
25	0	3	0	2	3	7	5	1	21	3	2	15
26	3	3	1	5	3	0	5	1	21	7	5	8
27	0	4	4	3	5	2	2	1	21	8	3	9

H: Diary Entries

Response Diaries

Here is a copy of the response diaries in their entirety. To protect students' privacy, these pages have been excluded from the OneNote file. They are, however, copied word-by-word and have not been altered from their original. The entries are organized first with a title that is comprised of a randomly selected student number followed by an indication of that student's gender: M for male, F for female. The numbers under each of these headings indicate the project-class in which the entry was written. Students were supposed to write an entry for each day, and those who did not do it in class were asked to complete the entry at home. However, there were still some students who failed to make entries for every class, thus leaving some blank.

1M

1:

Jeg koser meg veldig. Det kunne ikke vært bedre. Det er blir koselig tror jeg.

2:

Vi får utdelt bøkene våre, jeg ser litt i den og jeg liker den. Brain er en levende meme.

3:

I cant find my book.. I think its gone ./ I've looked in my locker but it's no where to be found. However i found something else. A sign of some sort, but why?
It had a white man running away from someone...

And we had a super awkward conversation around the table, like new level awkwardness.

It was fun, lol..

4:

I enjoyed this class because we got to make me-mes. It was really fun and i had a great laugh almost the whole time. I love to get assigned to make me-mes because i get to express my creativity. Something we really dont do at all in school.

5:

I though it was fun but it was unecessary to have half the class learning about something we talked about last time, when we could have worked on our projects. Especially when we dont have that much time to work on it at school.

2F

1:

I think this lesson was fun!

2:

I think it was fun when we sat together in groups. It was fun to discuss my opinions with the others, and here their opinions too. Maybe it was a little bit awkward in the beginning, but it went better afterwards.

3:

Today's lesson was very fun! I really liked to colour the cartoons, and learning more about cartoons. I liked sitting in groups too, that is something we can do way more often!

4:

I really like this project. I like talking more in class, and share my thoughts with my classmates. I like to listen to what other people think of the same text, that makes me understand more and think different. I have learned that it is not that scary to talk in front of other people. I like to learn more about cartoons, and I am looking forward to work with my presentation.

5:

I like working with cartoons. In the beginning it was a little hard to figure out what i was supposed to write about, but once i had figured that out, it became more fun.

3M

1:

The book looks interesting and is probably a fun way to learn about the theme of the book and the english language. After the small part of the book I read the books looks even more interesting, I learn a lot from the small amount of pages that is between the chapters. They tell me a lot about science and history. The book is written in a way where I can have fun and learn at the same time.

The classes are fun too, were mostly doing group work which I like a lot at least compared to individual work.

2:

Some places I had a little difficulty with the reading because there are a lot of scientific words that I don't understand. I had to search the net for the meanings of the words and note them in my head for the next time I read or hear the word, which I probably will during the time of this master project.

3:

The class was fun and exciting, I like the continuing group work which I think is more exciting than working for myself. Drawing is something we rarely do in class and anywhere else so it's a fun thing to do once in a while. It's a good thing that our school work is partly based on the book we're reading, sometimes we have a theme at school in a subject, but in the homework we might have to practice a lot of grammar, this can make the stress grow. Although the class was fun there were one negative thing, it's bad that we have to write in our response diaries at home. This is because we already have a lot of homework and getting more homework we actually weren't supposed to do doesn't help to much.

4:

I still like the group work and especially the way we work with graphic novels, this is a way we have never worked before. It's also good that we get to work with the project at school because it might be a project that takes some time. I liked how we, at the start of the lesson, together in groups went through what we thought was hard to understand with the book. This doesn't only help the person who has a question, but it also helps the one that have to explain it in English.

One thing that could be a bit negative is that I don't think we have went through how to write graphic novels good enough, it's easy to write a graphic novel, but it's hard to write a good graphic novel.

5:

Its good that we get time ot work with the project at school and that you teach us how to do it. Making a graphic novel can be just as hard as writing a normal novel because we need time to draw and make the story. I like this project with the graphic novels because it is another way of working, and I would like to do it again.

I still like the group work and the way we respond to the tasks together in the response diaries.

4F

1:

Det var gøy å få en annerledes bok, men det er en del vanskelige ord i boka. Men det er bedre enn å lese i den vanlige boken. Mer spennende og gøyere å lese.

Det var litt annerledes hvordan vi jobbet, og man må tenke en del. Oppgaven vi fikk i dag var grei, men vanskelig.

2:

Jeg synes ikke det var så gøy, for det var ikke gøye oppgaver, og det er veldig vanskelig å forstå boken og oppgaver vi får. Derfor er det ikke gøy når vi må si til alle andre hva du har gjort i oppgaven fordi jeg ikke får gjort den. Boken har veldig vanskelige ord og derfor er det vanskelig å forstå. Og side 21-28 skjønte jeg ingenting av, og lekse var veldig vanskelig.

Det verste i klassen i dag var da vi fikk de lappene med spørsmål og vi måtte si svaret vårt høyt for alle. Og det ble enda verre da vi ble tatt opp.

I dag gikk det veldig dårlig med hvordan jeg har jobbet, fordi jeg skjønte ikke oppgaven eller leseleksen.

Jeg gruet meg veldig til engelsktimen, for jeg hadde hørt det meste vi skulle gjøre.

3:

Det var gøyere i dag da vi fargelagte. Det var morsomt å finne farger til følelser. Men det er fortsatt ikke gøy å dele det vi ikke forstår med andre. Når jeg får høre vi skal gjøre det får jeg en klump i halsen. Men det var en mye bedre time i dag.

4:

I dag var det en litt bedre time, men jeg liker ikke å si hva jeg ikke forstår til andre. Spesielt ikke til noen jeg ikke kjenner så godt. Og det prosjektet vi skal ha skjønner jeg ingenting av. Lage en tegneserie og så presentere den. Å få ideer fra Optical allusions. Jeg skjønner ikke hva prosjektet ditt handler om, og heller ikke hva vi lærer. Jeg skjønner ingenting av dette. Det jeg likte minst var da vi måtte jobbe med prosjektet. Det kan være bra, men jeg skjønner ikke. Jeg klarer ikke lage tegneserie, og vet ikke hva jeg skal skrive. Jeg lærer ingenting av boken, for jeg har ikke forstått noe, og bildene hjelper meg ikke i det hele tatt. Jeg vet ikke hvordan timen kan bli bedre, jeg synes ikke det er noe gøy eller spennende, fordi jeg forstår ingenting.

5:

Det var en gøy time i dag. Jeg klarte å komme på en historie jeg kunne ha. Jeg lærte at man må ha tålmodighet for å komme på tegneserier. Jeg lærte også hvordan man lager en *plot*. Jeg håpet på at timen skulle bli bedre enn den andre, og det gjorde den. Det var en bra gruppeoppgave og det var ikke ukomfortabelt. Jeg håper det blir andre timer som denne.

5M

1:

I think that the book is great, and that I am going to laugh a lot.

2:

It was a lot of fun when we was sitting i groups and answer our questions, because I think I am learning a lot when I am talking with my friends, instead of writing down what i can say. But when you said that you was going to use your phone so you can hear our answer another day, I think some of us was thinking that it was scary.

3:

It was a good lesson, and I learned something new. But I think it became very boring when we have to paint the cartoons, because that is something that I don't like to do.

4:

I really like to work like we worked today, like in small groups instead of in one big, and I think anyone likes to work like we did today. I learned what i didn't understand home, and then I understand a lot more from the hole book. I hope that we can job like this more, because I learned a lot.

5:

This was a lesson that I have done a lot, and my project is soon finish. I like to work like this, but it's hard to find information to my cartoon. I have learned very much from this project, and I hope that we can talk more English in the normal lessons.

6F

1:

I'm still not sure what is going on, I feel like a lot is going on at the same time. It was fun, like most of the time it was not boring, and I could concentrate more. It is a bit uncomfortable to have to teachers in the class room. In the group I wish maybe that I could be with someone that could understand more, like that I'm not the only person who understands, and that I need to explain it many times, over and over. I'm a bit comfortable to speak English, but not so much when the teacher is listening/stands over me.

2:

I liked today a bit more, like I understands more of what is happening. I really don't like comics, so I don't like this presentation too much, but I think it can be okay. It is a bit hard to make a story, but I think I have some ideas. The book we are reading, I like it a bit because I get to challenge myself, usually I have a hard time to challenge myself, because we just learn something that is pretty easy. It is a bit hard to keep up in the story, like the comic, because a lot of things are happening at the same time, and since I don't like comics I don't look at the pictures so much, but I like those fact texts more, or some of them. I think it would also a bit fun to have the presentation in groups or pairs, but on the other hand it is a bit okay to do it myself. I like also when we are in groups, it is a lot more comfortable to speak then, I'm not so uncomfortable usually, I just don't like to speak so much. I write English every day, so I like to write more than to speak, but both are pretty okay.

3:

I think this class was a little bit more fun than the others because colours are a bit interesting, but when we coloured it was not too fun, it was totally ok. I'm really not an artistic person, so this was not super fun, but it was again ok. It was a bit hard to find a colour that matches the feeling(s). I don't remember what else we did other than colouring and that we saw the trailer. I think colours are cool, but when we talk a lot about them it can be a bit boring. But all in all the class was okay, not too fun but not boring either.

4:

I were not in class most of the time, I were there for about 20 minutes, so I don't have much to say. I was only put in a group and then I needed to write about what I thought about that class, so I didn't write.. Because I did not have any thoughts.

5:

This class went fast by. I liked that we could talk about our plans for the comic and hear what the others had to say. It is also a bit nice to get started, but hard to make the comic. Making comics is not too fun, so I don't really want to have this presentation, but not something I can chose. I like that we work more in groups, because talking English is slightly more fun than writing, but when the teachers just ask someone, it is not too fun, sometimes it is ok, but other times not so okay. I liked that we could help someone else with the story, and make them start or get some good ideas. I think that this project it a bit more fun now, then it was at the start, because I understand more now, and I know what's happening. I think the classes are going

fast, and it is pretty nice. I hope that we still can have some of this after you og, but it should be about something else than comics. But I feel like I don't learn so much, like I'm not sure about what I should learn, or what to learn.

7F

1:

I think this lesson was fun, this will be exciting

Det var gøy, fordi vi fikk gjøre litt fysisk arbeid også

2:

Jeg synes at vi fikk litt lite tid på oppgavene, men jeg synes også at disse timene er morsommere en vanlig (disse timene jobber vi litt annerledes og mer variasjon)

3:

Jeg synes det var litt vanskelig å svare på de spørsmålene vi fikk.

Det var morsomt å fargelegge, og kombinere fargene til følelser. Fordi det er noe vi sjeldent gjør, og det er morsomt å ha litt avslappende oppgaver inn i mellom, i tillegg til man lærer noe nytt.

4:

I think it's a great opportunity to talk more freely in groups, than in hole class. But it can also be a little silence, in a big group. It ends up with that one or two in the group, says most. I think it would be better if we could work in par/three and choose by yourself who you want to be with.

5:

Jeg synes det var greit å få jobbe med presentasjonen/tegneserien denne timen. Da blir det ikke så vanskelig å jobbe med det hjemme. Jeg synes det er/var litt vanskelig å komme på hva en tegneserie skal handle om, så kanskje det hadde vært litt greit å fått litt mer tid til å tenke over hva handlingen. Jeg synes det er veldig kjekt at du viste oss et program vi kan bruke til tegneserien. Timen gikk veldig fort

8M

1:

Im not sure what im supposed to write about. I think this project was fun, and that it's something new, that is good.

..

My least favorite part today was finding out that you guys had not taken in all the books, meaning i had lost it. ./

I liked the tasks, i think that these tasks are very good, especially since we are in groups because i think that everyone loves being in groups, i know i do. MORE GROUPS!!!!!!!!!!!! :)

I think it was fun working like this, finding pictures and stuff, it made me see the story from several points of views and not all were as good as we thought, and some was better then us.

Btw i got a question, did you check out my music suggestions on the back of the paper that we delivered in? Did you listen to any of it? You should!

2:

I think working like this was also fun, reading what we thought was funniest and stuff, it was fun.

When we said out loud the questions we were given, and the answers we chose, was tbh, very entertaining to listen to, as some had very funny answers and jokes. I don't remember them though. I like working like this alot, it makes my mood g-o up.

3:

Im not sure if this were the day when we colored?

If so.

I don't really like drawing and coloring, but this was kinda cool. It was cool because i got told taht i could do whatever i wanted, so i could color whatever i wanted.

Like coloring the same character with different colors on like the other picture. I was not sure what we were supposed to learn tho.

4:

My group worked very good today, we went through the objectives with ease. I hope we will continue to work in groups, as it's very fun.

I

like working in groups because it can give me several ideas in the subject that we're working on, like more point of views.

Here's this day's song suggestion:

Logic-Young Sinatra 2

5:

Dette var en morsom time, jeg

This was a fun class, i learned more about how im gonna make my project now and how im gonna proceed with it.

I think i did pretty good today, i now know what i'm gonna write about in my project.

I hope we will continue to work in groups as it's very fun.

Today we talked alot of english, which is very good and funny cause it's fun to speak english.

The task

9F

1:

I think it was a great start on the project today, it was fun that we sat i groups and got to discuss different tasks.

2:

Today was great. We worked in groups, and we got to share our thoughts about our homework with the others.

3:

Dear diary. "Today was fun. I like to work in groups because it makes me talk more. I also like listening to what they have to say. The only thing i miss, is the chance to get to read out loud. That is something i like very much.

4:

Dear diary, today was very fun and our presentation is going to be very different than it used to be. It is a great opportunity to do something different in class, and i like to work in groups and practise on our orally.

5:

Today was fun. I have nothing else to say.

10F

1:

2:

Det kunne vært litt bedre. For det er vanskelig å gjøre oppgaver med folk som ikke er interesserte i faget. Og det å da gjøre en gruppe oppgave kan være vanskelig, når man kanskje bare er to, og man skal ha med hele gruppa. Så det at dere (lærere) er med og prøver å snakke med hver av gruppene under arbeid for å prøve å sette gruppa i gang hadde kanskje hjulpet litt?

3:

4:

Det var litt kjedelig i deg, for di jeg følte jeg ikke lærte noe nytt. Men jeg syntes det var ålreit at vi fikk snakke litt fritt. Det at vi får lov til å snakke om ting litt utenfor temaet er deilig (På engelsk så klart) og ikke bare om oppgaven. Engelsk er greit å snakke når man kan feile og det man snakker om ikke er et så vanskelig tema

5:

11F

1:

Denne time syntes jeg var ganske gøy egentlig. Fordi vi fikk velge grupper selv, og da er det liksom litt tryggere. Det var veldig gøy!

2:

Jeg syntes disse timene er gøyere enn de vanlige engelsktimene. Fordi i disse timene kan vi snekke mere fritt i grupper å jobbe i grupper. Det blir liksom litt tryggere så jeg syntes disse timene er bra og hittil har de vært ganske gøye. Men er litt liten tid på oppgavene.

3:

Jeg likte denne timen veldig. Den var kjempegøy! Det var utrolig gøy å fargelegge de tegningene og holde på med de fargene. Det var også ganske gøy med det bilde i teksten, og den siden vi skulle finne ting fra. Så tommel opp! Men de er litt liten tid til oppgavene

4:

Jeg syntes dette var en gøy time, akkurat som de andre. Det er morsomt med dette prosjektet fordi da gjør vi andre ting og jobber mere i grupper. Det var gøy å jobbe med oppgavene i gruppene i dag. Også syntes jeg det var bra at vi fikk starte litt på den presentasjonen i timen. Men det er ikke alltid jeg forstår alt du sier eller forklaret.

5:

Jeg likte denne timen! Da fikk jeg kommet litt videre på tegneserien, og jeg fikk litt tips av **NAME1** og **NAME2** som var på gruppen min. og jeg fikk tenkte litt mere på hva tegneserien min skal handler om.

12F

1:

I did not like what we did because the other on my group did not listen to me, and it was just two on my group who decided the how the comic would look like. And it was hard to say my opinion.

2:

I really liked what we did this time. It's so much easier to speak and say what i wanted to say, and i like being in smaller groups. It's a lot funnier in the classes if we are in smaller groups, many people feel a lot safer i feel a lot in smaller groups.

3:

I really liked this! It's fun to draw and colour, and have to choose colours to express our feelings. And the groups are great to be in, it's not hard at all to speak and ask for help in this small groups, it's fun to get to express yourself with in the classes

4:

I think this is funny because we get more social and we learn to not be so scared around everybody. But it's also a bit scary and unpleasant, when you have to speak out loud, I like how socially we are now. We express ourselves more now, but not all of us are having so much fun like others have.

5:

Jeg likte denne timen veldig mye fordi jeg elsker og tegne både på pc og på ark, fortsatt så liker jeg best og sitte i små grupper, men jeg syntes det er litt vanskelig at vi bytter grupper heltida, men det er jo bra læring også for oss, men jeg liker også og sitte alene og jobbe noen ganger.

13M

1:

I think this is going to be exciting. We have had some other projects, but not this big of a project. As long as we still be positive and serious.

2:

I thot that this was a good class. It was several times we worked in groups, and that is fun. I mean that you can speak more freely when we are in groups. You can get another perspective of what you were doing.

3:

I think this lesson was good. Beacuse I like working in groups but also good that you can chous to work alone. I liked that part when we was coloring the picture. I learned that if you have drawing who is angry has another colour then one who is happy

4:

This lesson was kind of boring, but I liked when we were drawing people and stuff. The bad thing was that I could not upload the drawing stuff on a paper. I usually like group work, but this time it was boring.

You don't need to tell anyone but I thot the groups were pretty bad. That was boring.

5:

Today was fun. We worked much with are project. It was gruop work and lots of fun stuff. I liked this lesson beacuse we worked in gruops and all by are selfs. It was sad to hear that the next lesson was the last one.

14M

1:

We sat in groups and had to sort out a puzzle with something likely half a page of the book, we chose our own groups, i thought this class was quite fun, but it was a little boring aswell in my opinion. I dont really remember if i learned anything from this class.

2:

I thought this class was ok i guess. I learn a bit about the litterary elements. We also sat in a big group that we took a note from a box and read what we have practiced on.

3:

I couldnt attend at this class because i was home and sick

4:

We talked about what we thought was hard to understand in the homework we had, i didnt really find any difficulties in the homework, but i had to answers what the others in th e group had to say and helped them. I think this class was kinda fun, but also boring at the same time.

5:

In this class we have talked about what type of comic we wanted to do in groups of 4 people, then we started working on our cartoons. I think this class was better than usually is because we got to do something different than either to read or do tasks.

15F

1:

I think it was fun to do things with the pictures

2:

Jeg var borte!

3:

I think today's lesson was fun, but when we should say which picture we liked best and why, I think that was the most difficult this lesson. I loved when we colorized the drawing and could talk to your friends and listen to music.

4:

Jeg ble litt forvirret av presentasjonen, men fikk hjelp og skjønnte litt mer. Det er veldig ekkelt når vi er grupper og må snakke engelsk, og høyt i klassen. Jeg sa ikke så mye i gruppa, men syntes denne ukens lekser var litt vanskelig og få med sammenhengen, og å forklare orda. Jeg syntes det har vært/er gøy med prosjektet og å lese tegneserie, selv om det er litt vanskelig sammenheng.

5:

Det var gøy å høre de andres tanker og ideer, jeg fikk litt mer inspirasjon til min egen fortelling. Vi jobba bra på gruppa, og fikk hørt de ideene som var ferdige. Det var gøy å begynne å jobbe på oppgaven.

16M

1:

2:

I enjoyed today's lesson. I liked working in groups and talking out loud. I think I learn more by talking in groups and using my own words rather than reading a book out loud.

3:

I liked today's lesson too, but I did not really understand why we were colouring the comic strip. I did also like the part where we were going to describe something in the book.

4:

When I came to school today, I did not think this class was going to be like this. I think it is good to talk in groups and talk because then we learn to pronounce words. I think this project looks interesting.

I think the things we do in class is good and it is not that boring. I did not understand the project at once, but I understood it after a while.

5:

Today's class was much like all the other classes, it was good. I did not think it was boring. I think the project still looks interesting but i also thinks its a bit weird to make a comic strip.

17F

1:

I think that the lesson was different. Vi jobbet på en annen måte enn jeg er vant til og fikk andre utfordringer enn det jeg er vant til.

2:

Jeg syntes egentlig ikke det var så gøy i dag fordi jeg likte ikke når vi satt i gruppe og forklarte det vi hadde svart på spørsmålet vi trakk. For jeg er redd for å si noe feil og jeg syntes det var veldig ukomfortabelt å prate da. Og jeg skjønnte ikke tegneserien helt så da ble det også vanskelig å svare på spørsmålet.

3:

Jeg var syk.

4:

Timen i dag var litt bedre siden vi var i mindre grupper og ikke alle sammen. Jeg fikk forklart det jeg syntes var vanskelig og skjønnte teksten litt bedre. Jeg skjønner egentlig ikke noe av boka og syntes den egentlig er kjedelig. Når jeg skjønnte hva vi skulle gjøre og lage den tegneserien. Tegneserien ble litt morsommere å lage når jeg skjønnte det.

5:

Det var gøy når vi skulle lage den tegneserien og prate om den. Jeg fikk tenkt ut hele tegneserien og vet hvordan den skal se ut men jeg har ikke skjønnet hvordan vi skal fremføre den helt. Gruppearbeidet var greit og jeg følte meg ikke ukomfortabel da. Håpet timen skulle være morsom og det var den.

18M

1:

In this class we got our book and we sat in groups and solved a comic book puzzle. It was fun doing the puzzle, but i don't see the point of it.

2:

In this class got we a piece of paper with a question on it and we answered it in a circle. I thinks this task was a bit awkward. It was awkward because people wasn't comfortable with talking English in such big groups while being recorded.

3:

In this class we got in groups and talked about the homework and then we coloured a drawing.

The first task was good, but i dont see the point in the second.

4:

In this class we talked about the text and the homework. After that we started on our project. I got a little bit done with my project and it was fun. I had fun because it was fun making the comic and the story.

5:

Today we worked on our project. We worked in groups to figure out what to write about. Then we started on our project. We got a lot done.

19F

1:

I think it was nice we got to read the comic book Optical allusion's, it was great and you learn a lot about your eye. (I actually hoped it was Optical illusion's when they first talked about it)

2:

I dag ble vi fordelt i grupper, så fikk vi noen biter fra en side i boka uten at vi hadde lest den siden, skulle vi sette den sammen. Det var litt urettferdig at hele gruppa var enig om en ting, og at min mening ikke ble tatt imot. :(

3:

4:

I dag forskjatte vi på tegneserien og

5:

20M

1:

The day was amazing! I loved to work in groups. I hope this will be some great classes.

2:

It was a fun class. I liked the class because we worked in groups and had fun.

It was a little bit awkward in the start but when we got into it we had fun and it seems like most of us enjoyed it. I think this type of class tasks is way more fun to do than other types of class tasks like reading and answering questions.

3:

As always the class was fun. It is always fun to

be working in groups instead of working alone on tasks. I think the classes would be

more fun if we could pick groups. I think we wouldn't be so shy and we would get more active.

4:

Today was a great lesson. It was great because it is always fun to work in groups. Today I tried to work on the comic or graphic novel but that wouldn't work. I also got to use my English a lot today.

5:

21F

1:

2:

Det kunne vært bedre. Jeg synes det er vanskelig å finne ord når jeg skal snakke, fordi jeg blir nervøs. Det hadde vært bedre hvis vi kunne jobbe en og en, noe jeg føler er enklere.

3:

Denne timen synes jeg var morsom på slutten da vi fikk fargelegge. Jeg likte også gruppen jeg kom på, fordi jeg følte jeg kunne prate engelsk uten å være redd for å si feil. Jeg synes starten av timen var ganske kjedelig.

4:

Jeg likte best slutten, da vi fikk finne på en historie. Jeg synes ikke det er så bra samarbeid på gruppene fordi det er vanskelig å holde i gang en samtale. Jeg liker ikke når vi må være muntlige, fordi jeg er redd for hva andre tenker hvis jeg sier feil. Jeg synes spørsmålene du stiller, ofte er litt vanskelige å svare på. Det er vanskelig å finne ord når jeg snakker.

5:

Denne timen synes jeg var litt kjedelig fordi jeg ikke var så fornøyd med gruppa jeg kom på. Jeg liker ikke å snakke engelsk foran guttene, fordi de ofte ler eller sier at man er dårlig osv. Det er vanskelig å finne på en bra tegneserie, og jeg synes de programmene vi bruker kan være litt vanskelige. Jeg liker bedre å jobbe på egenhånd istedenfor med andre. Jeg jobber bedre alene, fordi jeg får gjort mer.

I: Presentation Requirements

Oral presentation of your graphic story

Choose between the following tools to work with:

pen and paper – photograph your work.

paint/gimp/similar programmes

book creator (free download to your tablet)

Power Point

Choose your own.



Your presentation must be a story you want to tell, after

Allusions and it must last 3-5 minutes.

The presentation will be two-fold (todelt) where one part is showing your work and reading the story to the class, the second part is where you discuss and explain your thoughts and the choices you have made. For example choice of colours, inspiration to the story, tools you have used etc.

Part 1: your story should be presented visually to the class on the smartboard and demonstrate:

an understanding of the graphic format (layout, color, etc.)

knowledge of literary elements (clear storyline, well developed characters.)

images and text that complement (utfyller) each other and work together to tell the story

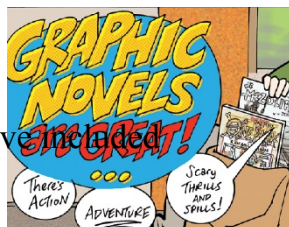
Part 2: your oral presentation must include:

Why you chose to tell this story

What program/tools have you used, and why

Some details about the illustrations and the text you have included

What you have learnt during this project.



This will be assessed:

Time spent

content – part 1

arguments/reflections – part 2

language: pronunciation and grammar

If necessary, answer to questions

J: Project Folder

The following pages are PDF copies of the censored project folder (beginning next page).

Welcome

WELCOME TO THE GROUP FOR THE OPTICAL ALLUSIONS PROJECT!

How to use the Response Diaries

11. januar 2016 21:44

Every class will end with five to ten minutes for writing in your response diaries. Only you and your teacher(s) will be able to see what you write. Make one new page every class and name it after the class. For instance: MONDAY 11.01 or Monday W2

When you are given up to 10 minutes to do this writing, you are expected to come up with more detailed entries than simply jotting down two or three lines like "it was fun", "It could have been better", or (worst of all) "lol".

Tell me **what** you liked, **why** it was fun, **how** it could have been better and what made you lol etc.

Here is an example of a poor diary entry:

"Today was fun, but also a little boring"

Here is an example of how it could be done better:

"Today was fun. I enjoy working in groups with my classmates because it makes me talk more. I also like listening to what they have to say. We laughed and had a lot of fun with making postcards for Santa. It was boring when we had to read them out loud though. I dont like to read out loud, and when the others read theirs, I could not hear what they were saying lol.

PROMPTS:

If you are struggling to find something to write about, here are some suggestions. Remember to give detailed answers.

What was you (least) favorite part about class today?

How did you like the task(s) we worked on?

How do you think you did today?

What do you think is the most interesting or important thing you learned today?

What did you think this class was going to be like when you came to school today?

What were some thoughts or ideas you didnt get to express in class today?

What do you think or hope we will do in the next class?

Would you want to have another class like this?

What are your thoughts on the project so far?

How did your group work today?

How could this class have been better?

Discuss how you practiced your English today.

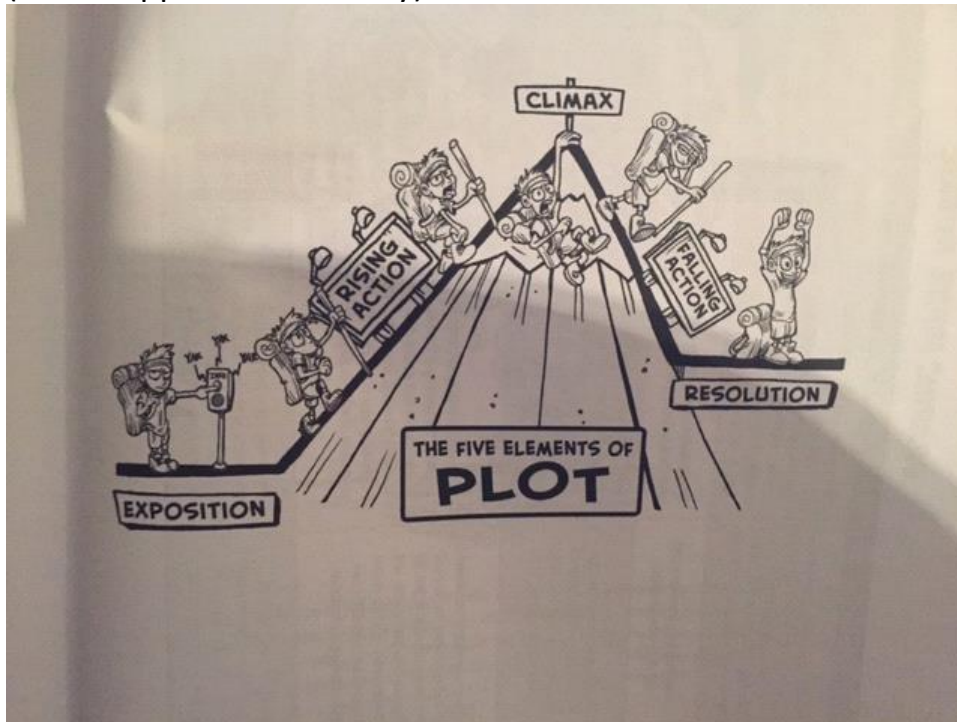
Lesson 2: Literary Elements

12. januar 2016 17:49

We are learning about 5 literary elements:

1: plot

(what happens in the story)



Behold plot mountain! The stages of a good story.

ex. Snow White:

exposition> castle, dead dad, jealous step-mom

rising action> S.W. runs away, stays with dwarfs

climax> S.W. bites the apple, deadly sleep

falling action> dwarfs mourn (sørger), prince arrives

resolution> prince kisses & saves S.W.

2: setting

(where the story happens)



Setting of the Walking Dead = post-apocalyptic America

3: character(s)

(who is in the story)



Characters in The Hunger Games: Mockingjay

4: point of view

(how the story is told)

1.st person



- You view the story from one person's perspective
- I -person-voice

EX. "I aimed at the dinosaur"

2.nd person



- ALMOST NEVER HAPPENS
- DIY-voice

EX. "You glue the beads on"

3rd. person



- The story is seen from the outside
- The teller is not a character in the story
- Multiple characters use the I-voice OR "(s)he" -telling

EX1: "I wonder what it means" "yes I do too."

EX2: He wondered what it meant, and she did too.

and **theme(s)**

(what the story is about - up for interpretation)



A theme in the Harry Potter movies might be FRIENDSHIP

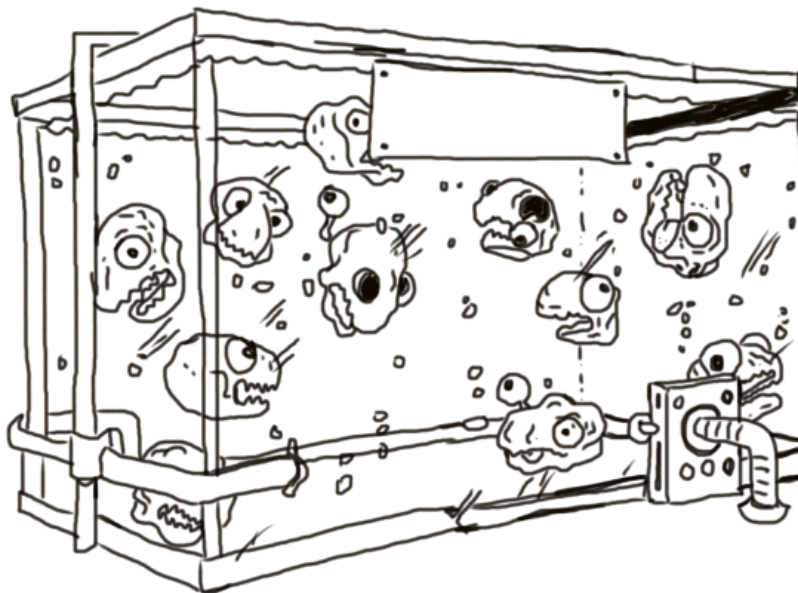
Lesson 3: Digital Coloring

17. januar 2016 17:01

Download the image file so you can open it in the [online coloring program](#) to fill in.
Pick a mood or emotion and use colors that fit that mood. If you finish early, start blank and do another mood/emotion.



Skjermbilde
2016-01-...



Lesson 4: Reader-Response Theory

20. januar 2016 08:22

This project is based in something called

Reader-Response Theory



This is a literary theory that focuses on the reader and their experience with a text, and not than what the author wanted to do with the text.

It began with a man named Rowland Barthes, who wrote a text called "the death of the author", which said that what the reader brings to the text (his life-experience and way of understanding things) **rewrites** the text and gives it meaning.

This means that when we are reading, we author a new text every time.

Many reader-response exercises ask the reader to take inspiration from the main text and write something new in **response** to the text.

When you take inspiration from a text, you can include as much of it as you want. You can continue the story, write it from a different perspective, predict what happens next, use the characters in a new story, use the setting with different characters, write about the same topic, make something with a similar theme, write in the same style... the possibilities are endless!

This is what you will be doing in your project. You will get inspiration from *Optical Allusions* to tell a story (any story!) in the graphic novel format (tegniserieformat). At the end of the project you will present your story. See handout below for more details.





Oral
presentat...

Lesson 4: Programs for Project

17. januar 2016 14:33

If you want to create your story digitally, you may use any tool you feel comfortable with. These are only suggestions that you can play with and try out. Please remember that if you decide to try learning and working with a new or unfamiliar program you may have to set aside more time to finish your project. All of the following are free to download and use.

Online:

Cogger comic strip creator @ <http://chogger.com/create> (this one is really good and easy)

Scratch @ <https://scratch.mit.edu/>

ScetchPad @ <http://galacticmilk.com/sketchpad/>

For any computer:

Inkskape @ <https://inkscape.org/en/>

BookCreator (in appstore/marketplace)

Tuxpaint @ <http://www.tuxpaint.org/>

Mac users only:

Comipro + @ <http://uze.mandxa.com/>

Gimp @ <https://www.gimp.org/>

Doink @ <http://www.doink.com/> (appstore)