GRAPHIC NOVELS

EDUCATORS' GUIDE

ART AND TEXT UNITE.

Illustration © 2016 Jeffrey Brown

RANDOM HOUSE CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Follett

INTRODUCTION

Graphic novels for children and teens have grown in popularity over the past decade or two. Once a niche format, graphic novels are becoming an important component of classroom and school library collections. Adaptations of traditional texts such as *The City of Ember* and *The Golden Compass* are joining the stories of Lucy & Andy Neanderthal, Hilo, Babymouse, Squish, Lunch Lady, and other characters from graphic novel series. In the past, the value of graphic novels was often overlooked or not understood. Now graphic novels receive some of the highest awards in the industry, including the Newbery and Printz Medals from the American Library Association. Graphic novels can provide both an enjoyable and informative reading experience for a wide range of readers.

WHAT IS A GRAPHIC NOVEL?

Simply, graphic novels are a logical extension of the comic book. They tell a story using pictures in sequence, panels, speech balloons, and other conventions of the comic book form and format. The key difference between illustrated books, picture books, and graphic novels is that graphic novels are generally longer and have a more developed narrative than picture books; additionally, they differ from illustrated chapter books because the illustrations are an integral component of the story. Graphic novels might serve as bridges between picture books and illustrated chapter books or even between chapter books and traditional novels.

WHY USE GRAPHIC NOVELS IN THE CLASSROOM?

Graphic novels can and should be used as any other format of reading material. Like any traditional novel, a graphic novel tells a story. The literary elements of traditional stories are present: plot, character, setting, theme, climax, etc. Figurative language, symbolism, and other literary devices are also present in many graphic novels. As a teaching tool, graphic novels offer educators the same array of possibilities as traditional texts. And there is a bonus of sorts: the scaffolding of illustration in addition to the text will make some abstract concepts more concrete. This may mean that concepts such as flashback, foreshadowing, and symbolism might be more readily identified and understood. But graphic novels should also be used for independent reading recommendations and as part of book talks and displays. Graphic novel adaptations of traditional texts such as *The City of Ember* and *The Golden Compass* should be offered as alternative selections for students, especially those who may not be able to access the more traditional text. Finally, graphic novels can be used to develop skills in visual literacy.

HOW TO "READ" A GRAPHIC NOVEL

Do not assume that all readers will know *how* to read a graphic novel. Educators should take some time to demonstrate the structure of the graphic novel format. Using a document camera or an ebook version of a graphic novel, educators should familiarize readers with the various components and elements of the format. Begin with the discussion below of the important elements of graphic novels.

IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF GRAPHIC NOVELS

1. Color can be used in a variety of ways in graphic novels. Babymouse, Squish, and Lunch Lady do not use a traditional full-color approach; they have a more limited color palette. *The Golden Compass* and *The City of Ember* graphic novels use darker tones to help project mood and tone. Color plays an active role in the storytelling. The color in Hilo changes when he is having a flashback. The following are a few questions to consider along with readers:

- What colors are predominant?
- What might the colors represent/symbolize?
- What would happen if different colors were used?
- Does the graphic novel use a full-color process? Why, or why not?
- Are the colors bold, muted, or pastel?

up to pg 3

Art from top: Lucy & Andy Neanderthal art © 2016 by Jeffrey Brown; Lunch Lady art © 2016 Jarrett J. Krosoczka; Babymouse art © 2016 by Jennifer L. Holm and Matthew Holm

IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF GRAPHIC NOVELS *continued*

2. Line is a component of the art in a graphic novel, and the direction of a line (horizontal, diagonal, vertical) can imply different things. A diagonal line might indicate movement or loss of balance. A horizontal line could mean rest or peace or calm, while a vertical line could indicate not just height but strength. Readers should be able to determine if the direction of an illustration or a panel or even a page or more is horizontal, vertical, or diagonal. Here are a few questions to consider along with readers:

- Are lines thin or thick? Bold or sketchy?
- How does the artist use line to draw the readers' eyes in a certain direction?
- How are lines used to frame the panels or to separate the white space from the text and illustrations?

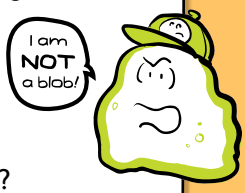
3. Composition is how the illustration is put together (composed). Size and placement are two critical components of composition, so think about these questions in your exploration with readers:

- What is in the center of the panel? At the top? The bottom? What might the placement of objects signify?
- Are some elements of the illustrations in the various panels larger than others? Why, or why not?

4. Frames can be used to contain text and illustration and create panels. Readers should begin to determine if the frames are created by lines or simply become boundaries where the text and illustration end.

- What type(s) of frames are used in the book?
- Do the frames vary throughout the narrative or remain consistent?
- Are there frames within frames to accentuate anything in the story?
- If the frames were removed, how might the story change?
- The art sometimes breaks the borders of the frame. What might the artist be conveying with this technique?

5. Speech balloons contain the text and dialogue of the graphic novel. Does the book separate text from the illustration, or does the text bleed into the illustrations without separation? These other questions are also valuable when talking about text, especially speech balloons:



- Does the text appear in black-and-white or color? Are different colors used? If so, why?
- Do the words differ in shape and size? How does the illustrator indicate emotional intensity, humor, etc., using speech balloons, colors, lines, and other devices?
- Is there text in addition to speech? How is it set apart from the dialogue? Why is it necessary?

6. White space is important in graphic novels. Events often happen in the white space. This is similar to the action that happens offstage in plays. The gutter is the space between panels. Students should think about some of the following questions concerning white space and gutters:

- Are the panels roughly the same size and shape? Why, or why not? What could a change in shape and size signify?
- Does anything bleed into the white space or gutters? If so, why do you think the author and/or illustrator used the space for this purpose?
- Does more happen in one panel than in another?
- How does the author/illustrator move the reader from one panel to the next? Are there connections provided to the reader?

7. Media and technique/style of illustration functions in graphic novels as it does in any art. Just as the work of Picasso and the cubists differed from the work of Monet and the impressionists, different artists use different approaches in their graphic novel work. The following are some questions for discussion:

- What media is being used? Are illustrations done with colored pencil, watercolors, tempera, etc.? Sometimes information about the media can be found on the copyright page of a book.
- What sort of illustrative style is present? Is this cartoon art? Are there elements of other techniques such as pointillism, impressionism, or realism?
- Is it possible to identify the illustrator's work in other books or series? What are the critical attributes of the work of various illustrators?

Squish art © 2016 by Jennifer L. Holm and Matthew Holm; Squeak art © 2016 by Jennifer L. Holm and Matthew Holm; Lucy & Andy Neanderthal art © 2016 by Jeffrey Brown

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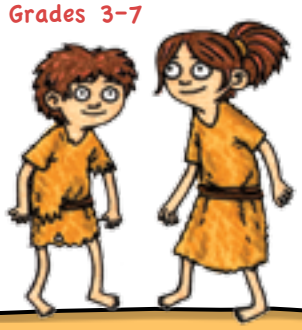
GRAPHIC NOVELS FOR THE CLASSROOM

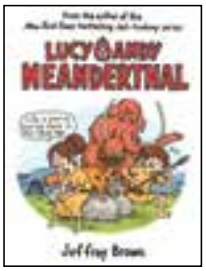
SERIES

LUCY & ANDY NEANDERTHAL

Jeffrey Brown

Grades 3–7





Lucy & Andy Neanderthal
HC: 978-0-385-38835-1
Follett Series #A282916

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of the Star Wars: Jendi Academy books comes a new, humorous, graphic novel series about two Neanderthal siblings living 40,000 years ago. The laugh-out-loud adventure features Lucy and her goofball brother Andy, as the duo take on a wandering baby sibling, bossy teens, cave paintings, and a mammoth hunt. But what will happen when they encounter a group of humans?

Humorous and entertaining, Jeffrey Brown's signature comical touch enlivens the scientific and historical content, including a special paleontologist section that helps to dispel common Neanderthal myths.

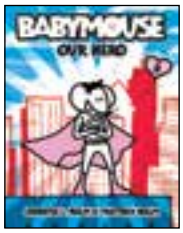
"Brown has created a graphic novel that is as much nonfiction as fiction, containing historical context and a lovely fictional story with siblings, crushes, and other adventures. The resulting blend is sure to draw reluctant readers and send some students scurrying for more in-depth material."—*School Library Journal*

BABYMOUSE / squish

Jennifer L. Holm and Matthew Holm

Grades 2–5 Grades 3–7

#1: Queen of the World!
HC: 978-0-375-93229-8

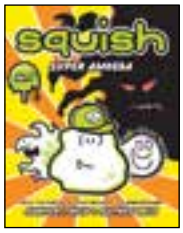


#2: Our Hero
HC: 978-0-375-93230-4

Follett Series #A163429

Babymouse lives in two worlds. In her day-to-day existence, she longs for excitement and travel. What she gets, however, are dodgeball games, a recalcitrant locker, and garbage detail at home. In her dream world, though, Babymouse assumes secret identities, solves mysteries, and generally wins the praise and adulation of her peers. Babymouse has an active imagination, one that frequently gets her into tough situations at school and at home. Somehow she manages to triumph by the end of each story and stay true to herself.

Visit cloud.k12edu.follett.com/randomhouse for a Babymouse educators' guide.



#1: Super Amoeba
HC: 978-0-375-93783-5

#2: Brave New Pond
HC: 978-0-375-93784-2

Follett Series #A163682

Squish began as a minor character in Babymouse #14: *Mad Scientist* and has become the star of his own series. Despite being single-celled organisms, Squish and his friends attend school, play sports, and participate in a wide variety of activities. Though they face obstacles, there is always a solution to their problems.

PERFECT FOR SCIENCE CONNECTIONS!

For a complete list of the Babymouse and Squish graphic novels, visit cloud.k12edu.follett.com/randomhouse.

5 Worlds

Mark Siegel and Alexis Siegel; illustrated by Xanthe Bouma, Matt Rockefeller, and Boya Sun

Grades 3–7

5 Worlds: The Sand Warrior
HC: 978-1-101-93586-6

5 Worlds: The Cobalt Prince
PB: 978-1-101-93591-0

Follett Series #A155124

Time is running out in the 5 Worlds. Can an outcast, an orphan, and an imposture rise to the challenge and face down the forces of evil in time to save their home?

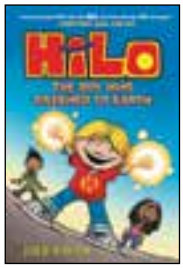
For a complete list of 5 Worlds graphic novels visit cloud.k12edu.follett.com/randomhouse.

5 Worlds: The Sand Warrior #1 Spot Art Copyright: Art from 5 Worlds: The Sand Warrior © 2017 by Antzu Pantzu, LLC
Art from top: Lucy & Andy Neanderthal art © 2016 Jeffrey Brown; Babymouse art © 2016 by Jennifer L. Holm and Matthew Holm; Squish art © 2016 by Jennifer L. Holm and Matthew Holm;

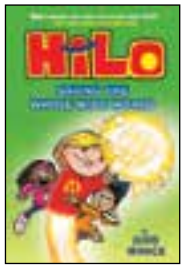
GRAPHIC NOVELS FOR THE CLASSROOM *continued*

HiLo

Judd Winick
Grades 3–7



#1: The Boy Who Crashed to Earth
HC: 978-0-385-38617-3



#2: Saving the Whole Wide World
HC: 978-0-385-38623-4

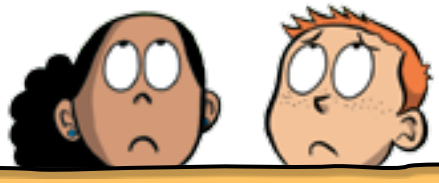
Follett Series #A155507

MEET HILO, D.J., and GINA!
D.J. and Gina are TOTALLY ordinary kids. But Hilo . . . isn't.
Hilo is a boy who crashes to Earth. He doesn't seem to know where he came from or why he is on Earth. Thus begins the humorous adventures of a robot boy who has an important mission . . . if he could only remember what it is. Fortunately for Hilo, he has two human friends who will help. And he'll need all the help he can get when robot monsters manage to break through to Earth as well. For a complete list of the Hilo graphic novels, visit cloud.k12edu.follett.com/randomhouse.

★ "A universally appealing tale." —*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred

COMICS SQUAD

Grades 2–5



#1: Recess!
HC: 978-0-385-37004-2

#2: Lunch!
PB: 978-0–553-51264-9

Follett Series #A160837

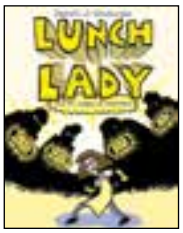
Several all-star graphic novel artists contributed to this collection. Jennifer L. Holm, Matthew Holm, Jarrett J. Krosoczka, Dav Pilkey, Dan Santat, Raina Telgemeier, Gene Luen Yang, Cece Bell; Jeffrey Brown, and Ursula Vernon. The stories includes ninjas, superheroes, and warring cupcakes and veggies.

For a complete list of the Comics Squad graphic novels, visit cloud.k12edu.follett.com/randomhouse.

LUNCH LADY

Jarrett J. Krosoczka
Grades 3–7

#1: Lunch Lady and the Cyborg Substitute
PB: 978-0-375-84683-0



#2: Lunch Lady and the League of Librarians
PB: 978-0-375-84684-7

Follett Series #A162732

Lunch Lady and her assistant, Betty, serve up more than food to the Breakfast Bunch, a group of friends who somehow seem to become involved in all sorts of adventures at school. From substitute teachers who are really robots to evil librarians and crazed authors, it's up to the kids and crime-fighting Lunch Lady to solve the cases and rescue the school. Betty provides Lunch Lady with a variety of food- and kitchen-related gadgets to assist her in her efforts to thwart the villains.

For a complete list of the Lunch Lady graphic novels, visit cloud.k12edu.follett.com/randomhouse.

Rickety Stitch & the Gelatinous Goo

James Parks and Ben Costa
Grades 7 and Up

The Road to Epoli
HC: 978-0-399-55613-5

The Middle-Route Run
HC: 978-0-399-55616-6

Follett Series #A15649X

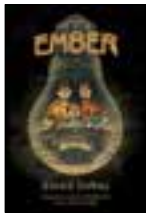
Rickety Stitch is a skeleton minstrel—the only animated skeleton in the dungeon who seems to have retained his soul. Now he's on a quest to learn why.

For a complete list of Rickety Stitch visit cloud.k12edu.follett.com/randomhouse.

GRAPHIC NOVEL ADAPTATIONS

The City of Ember: The Graphic Novel

Jeanne DuPrau; adapted by Dallas Middaugh; illustrated by Niklas Asker
Grades 3–7



PB: 978-0-375-86793-4
Follett Series #A159227

This adaptation of Jeanne DuPrau's novel transports readers to an underground city, a place where residents have lived for as long as anyone can recall. Lights help dispel the natural gloom of the city, but now the electricity is beginning to fail. The future of Ember depends on Lina and Doon, who must discover a way to decipher an ancient message that might help them save their city.

The Golden Compass: The Graphic Novel, Volumes 1–3

Philip Pullman; adapted by Stéphane Melchior; art by Clément Oubrerie
Grade 5 and up

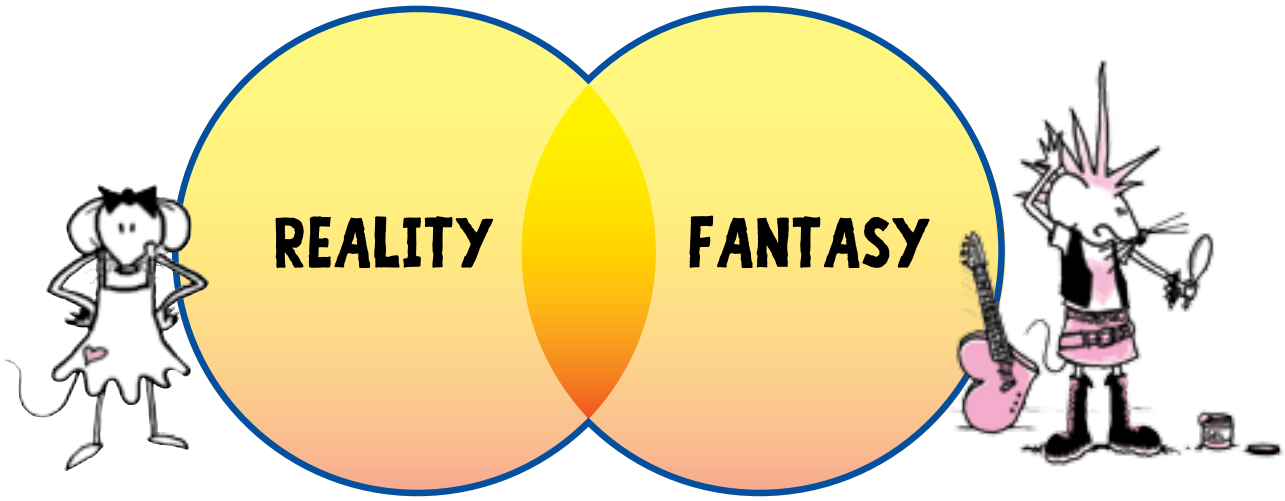
HC: 978-0-553-52371-3
Follett Series #A155027

The world of Philip Pullman's beloved *His Dark Materials* saga is brought to visual life in book 1 of a three-volume graphic adaptation of *The Golden Compass.* Lyra Belacqua is content to run wild among the scholars of Jordan College, with her dæmon familiar always by her side. But the arrival of her fearsome uncle, Lord Asriel, draws her to the heart of a terrible struggle—a struggle born of Gobblers and stolen children, and a mysterious substance known as Dust.

Art from top: Hilo art © 2016 by Judd Winick; Sonia and Josh art © 2016 by Raina Telgemeier; Lunch Lady art © 2016 Jarrett J. Krosoczka
Rickety Stitch Book #1 Spot Art Copyright: Art from Rickety Stitch and the Gelatinous Goo: The Road to Epoli © 2017 by James Parks and Ben Costa

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR FEATURED GRAPHIC NOVELS

1. Babymouse leads two very different lives. Her imaginary life is always happy and fulfilling. Reality, however, is quite different. Have students create a Venn diagram that shows the differences between fantasy and reality, as well as the overlap between the two (see sample). This same chart could be used for *Lucy & Andy Neanderthal* and Hilo.



2. Ask students to create a list of items various characters love and hate. Babymouse loves cupcakes; she fears her locker. What about Felicia, Wilson, and others? Lists can be shared via Padlet.com or in another format using different programs or simply with paper on the wall. What about Squish? What is Hilo afraid of? How about Lyra? What things does Andy love? Hate?

3. What other adventures might be in store for Babymouse? She has been a rock star, a derby racer, a scientist, a tycoon, and even a dragonslayer. Individually or in groups, students could create a new adventure for Babymouse and her friends. Now that Lucy and Andy and the others have met the humans, what do you think will happen in the next book? What sort of problems might occur between the two communities? What could happen to Squish in a subsequent adventure? Is there something still unresolved for Lyra that might lead to another story? Is there a minor character in Lunch Lady who might be worthy of their own story?

4. In some ways Lucy and Andy and their family not only reflect the Neanderthal world in which they live, but they also share some experiences with contemporary humans. Ask students to talk about characteristics they or someone they know share with one of the characters from *Lucy & Andy Neanderthal*. For instance, does someone have a younger sibling that they have to watch sometimes? Does someone feel left out because they are younger than others in the family? What other situations and experiences might they share with Lucy and Andy and others from the story? What about Hilo?

Art from top: Babymouse © 2016 by Jennifer L. Holm and Matthew Holm; Lucy & Andy Neanderthal art © 2016 Jeffrey Brown

DISCUSSIONS FOR ANY GRAPHIC NOVEL

1. How is character revealed and developed through the text? Through the illustrations? Do you learn something different from text than from the illustrations?

2. How does the artist use color? What colors seem to be emphasized? Does color play a role in relating the mood and tone of the story?

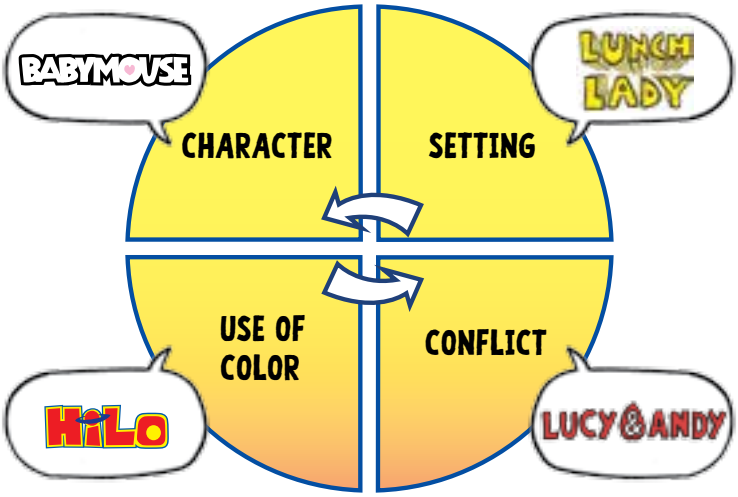
3. Which, if any, of the characters from the graphic novel series would make for an interesting spin-off? Why?

4. How is mood conveyed through the illustrations? How is it conveyed through the text? In your opinion, which is a better medium for conveying mood and tone?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Provide students with panels from a graphic novel and ask them to put them in some sort of sequence. They need to be able to explain how they arrived at their particular sequence (for example, what clues did they use from the various panels?).

2. For the series graphic novels, break the class into groups. One group should read several of the Babymouse books, another Squish, another Lunch Lady. After each group has read and taken notes on their series, ask them to form new groups so there is a mix of readers of different series in each group. Have them compare and contrast their series. How are they alike? How are they different? The discussion could center on some of the elements of graphic novels (see pages 2–3) or other topics as needed. This same activity could be done for any two series, such as Hilo and Comics Squad.



3. These graphic novels all have elements of fantasy and/or science fiction. Ask students to create a table or chart listing the fantastic elements on one side and the realistic elements on the other.

4. In a graphic novel, the format plays a significant role in the telling of the story; while there is text, some of the story is told through the illustrations. Ask students to discuss which elements of the story are told in traditional words and which elements are relayed more in the pictures. What information is conveyed only in text? Only in the illustrations? In both the text and the illustrations?

5. Of course, a logical extension activity would be to have readers design and create their own graphic novels. Brainstorm ideas about characters, conflict, theme, action, and resolution before they begin to develop their stories.

6. Both *The City of Ember* and *The Golden Compass* have been made into movies. Compare and contrast the graphic novels with their movies. What events, characters, etc., are different from graphic novel to movie? Alternatively, how would students cast a movie from the Babymouse or Hilo or Lunch Lady or Squish books? Would it be animated, or could it be live action?

Art from left to right: Tiny cat © 2016 Jeffrey Brown; Squish art © Jennifer L. Holm and Matthew Holm

The activities in this guide can be correlated to the following Common Core State Standards: CCRA.R.1, CCRA.R.2, CCRA.R.3, CCRA.R.3, CCRA.R.5, CCRA.R.6, CCRA.R.7, CCRA.R.9, CCRA.R.10

Prepared by Teri S. Lesesne, a professor in the Department of Library Science at Sam Houston State University, where she teaches classes in literature for children and young adults.

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REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

Name: _____

BE A FACT SCAVENGER!

Lucy & Andy Neanderthal not only presents the story of a fictional clan of Neanderthals and their daily life, but author Jeffrey Brown also includes lots of facts and theories about the Neanderthals themselves. Using the book, see how many of these facts and theories you can find. Be sure to include the page number(s) where you found the answer. Hint: sometimes the information can be found on more than one page.

1. The truth about Tiny, Andy's pet

2. The correct pronunciation of the word *Neanderthal*

3. Whether women worked outside of the "home"

4. Whether Neanderthals used tools and, if so, what tools were used

5. Facts about the woolly mammoth

6. What marrow is, and why it was important to the health of the Neanderthal

7. How Neanderthals might have used plants for medicinal purposes

8. The ways in which Neanderthals used woolly mammoths for more than just food

9. The language system used by Neanderthals

10. Which factors were important when Neanderthals were selecting a cave

11. Where more information about Neanderthals can be found

12. Describe the work of a paleontologist

RANDOM HOUSE CHILDREN'S BOOKS

CROWN BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS

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Download the guide and see the graphic novel resources, **cloud.k12edu.follett.com/randomhouse**

Lucy & Andy Neanderthal art © 2016 by Jeffrey Brown
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