

What is Manga?

Simply put, manga is the Japanese word for comics. Literally translated, it means "whimsical pictures." Like American comics, manga is a sequential storytelling format in which both images and words are equally important to the narrative, though sometimes the images carry more weight.

Manga is big business in Japan. In fact, manga accounts for 40 percent of the country's printed material and is published in just about every genre imaginable. It's even used to teach in classrooms!

Most of what's published in the United States is intended for adults, but manga is becoming increasingly popular with American children. VIZ Media created the VIZ Kids imprint to serve this growing audience.

Manga Terminology

ani-manga (ah-nee mahn-ga)

a manga created from anime stills

anime (ah-nee-may)

Japanese animation

manga (mahn-ga)

Japanese comics

otaku (oh-tah-koo)

an extremely devoted fan of manga and/or anime

shojo (show-joe)

manga specifically targeted at a young female audience

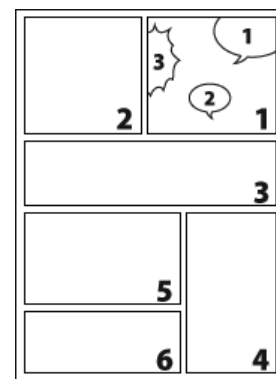
shonen (show-nen)

manga specifically targeted at a young male audience

How to Read Manga

Manga reads from right to left.

1. Start in the upper-right corner of the upper-right panel. Read the panel from right to left.
2. Repeat the process in the panel to the immediate left.
3. Once you've read the last panel on the left, move down the page, and continue the same process starting with the panel on the right.



VIZ Media publishes manga in the original Japanese format in order to preserve the orientation of the original artwork.

Why Kids Like Manga

It's hard to know exactly why kids like manga, but there are several things that make it appealing for young readers:

- **Kids love comics.**

Let's face it, with all the sound effects and detailed art, comics are cool. But the art is more than just fun to look at. It provides context cues and supports the text to help aid reading comprehension.

- **Manga is from Japan.**

This definitely adds to the cool factor, especially because manga is read in a specific, nontraditional way. But more than that, manga introduces students to an important part of Japanese culture.

- **Manga features their favorite characters.**

In Japan, manga series inspire anime, video games and lots of other merchandise. The anime and games often make it to the United States before the manga does, so by the time American children read the comics, they're already devoted fans of the characters.

Why Manga Is Good for Kids

- **Most children's manga has strong child-centric themes.**

All VIZ Kids manga feature children or childlike characters confronting the world in extraordinary ways. Whether defending their friends, fighting for something they believe in, or just trying to be the best at what they love, children are the heroes of every story.

- **Manga provides a form of rich, involved storytelling.**

Many manga—especially those intended for children—feature very involved narratives that can be used to enhance any reading comprehension lesson. Because manga is a form of sequential storytelling, it is ideal for lessons about story structure and sequencing. Most manga series feature well-defined characters, making them ideal for compare-and-contrast exercises and exercises that ask students to predict how characters might react in certain situations. The introduction of manga into the literacy curriculum suggests a number of innovative teaching possibilities.

- **Manga can improve vocabulary.**

Because manga is a visual storytelling medium, children's manga offer more visual support than, say, traditional chapter books, even though the reading levels are about the same. In other words, more challenging vocabulary can be introduced in manga because the format offers richer context cues to help readers figure out the meanings of new words.

Recommended Reading

Check out our list of great manga and manga-inspired titles!

Action and Adventure

Pokémon Diamond and Pearl Adventures manga
Pokémon Adventures manga
The Legend of Zelda manga
BakéGyamon manga
Naruto chapter books
Dragon Ball chapter books

Humor and Fun

Happy Happy Cloverv
Dinosaur Hour
Leave It to PET!
ChocoMimi
Kirby (Available Summer 2010)

Games and Play

Let's Find Pokémon! picture books
Pokémon Fun at the Amusement Park! activity books

Be sure to check our release calendar on VIZKIDS.com for more titles and updates

vizkids
our mission

VIZ Kids offers engaging manga and manga-related content intended specifically for a younger audience. All VIZ Kids products share the same core values of strong storytelling, eye-popping graphics, empowering themes, and lots of good humor to capture the imagination of a whole new generation.