

Educator Information and Directions

This PDF provides the materials that accompany the lesson “A Comic Book Conundrum.” This PDF contains activities for students to complete before, during, and after they read the play. Highlighted words within the play indicate vocabulary words that will be referred to in assessment questions.

Student Reading Guide

Before Reading

- ❑ Read some information about today’s play.
- ❑ Start thinking about the topics in the play by answering the questions.

During Reading

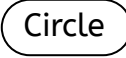
- ❑ Read the **Purpose for Reading**.
- ❑ Read the play.
- ❑ Take notes and annotate what you are reading.

After Reading

- ❑ Reflect on what you have read by answering the questions.
- ❑ Complete the **Online Assessment** questions.

Taking Notes and Annotating

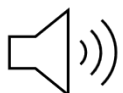
Here are some strategies for annotating and taking notes **in the text itself**:

- **Highlight** or underline important words or words you don’t know.
-  key concepts and ideas.
- Use abbreviations or symbols. For example:

?	To show confusion or questions
M	To show the mood
★	To show important details
♥	To show the main character’s feelings

Here are some strategies for annotating and taking notes **in the notes section** under the text:

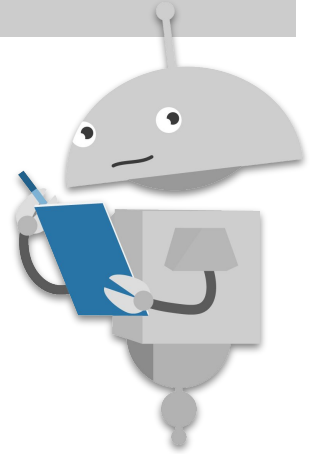
- Summarize key points in your own words.
- Write brief comments and questions.



If you would prefer to listen to the play, select the link to access an audio recording: [Link to Audio Recording of Play](#)

Before Reading

Today's passage is a short play, titled *A Comic Book Conundrum*, about two friends who enjoy reading comic books. When one friend faces a challenge, the other makes a choice that shows what it really means to be a hero.



Before you read today's play, think about a time when you had to make a difficult choice.



What is a difficult choice you have had to make? Which personal values helped guide your decision?



Imagine you are creating your own comic book. Who would the hero of your story be? Write or draw below to introduce your comic book character to the world!

During Reading



Purpose for Reading: The following play features two friends, a comic book, and a difficult dilemma that teaches us what it really means to be a hero. As you read, think about how the stage directions and dialogue help to develop the setting, plot, and characters.

While you read, remember to annotate and take notes! You can review strategies for annotation on Page 1 of this PDF.

A Comic Book Conundrum

Characters:

Alex - A comic book collector

Sam - Alex's best friend

Mr. Barnes - Comic book store owner



Scene 1: The Comic Book

(The scene opens in a park where Alex and Sam are sitting on a bench, engrossed in their comics.)

Alex: (Excitedly waving phone in front of Sam) Sam, you won't believe this! Look at the latest releases that have hit the comic book store! They've got the most unparalleled comic book ever, like nothing comes close to being this awesome. I've been saving up for a whole year mowing lawns to buy it, and tomorrow's the big day!

Sam: (Leaning in to examine the webpage on the phone) Oh, let me see that. Which one are you talking about?

(continued)

During Reading (continued)



A Comic Book Conundrum (continued)

(Alex points to the screen and holds it right in front of Sam's face.)

Alex: Right here. You know, Sam, this comic is not just any comic; it's like a piece of history. It's got the first appearance of my all-time favorite hero, the Crimson Crusader.

Sam: The Crimson Crusader? I've heard about that character. Super rare, right?

Alex: Exactly! And this one's in near-mint condition. It's my crown jewel, Sam.

Sam: Well, you better not drool on it when you finally get your hands on it!

(They both share a laugh.)



Scene 2: The **Conundrum**

(The next day, Alex and Sam meet up to walk to the comic store.)

(As they stroll down the sidewalk, Sam takes a deep breath.)

Alex: (Concerned) Is something wrong, man?

Sam: (Nervously) Ugh. My little brother's been really sick, and I overheard my parents talking last night. They're worried about how to pay for his medicine. I can't stop thinking about it.

(continued)

During Reading (continued)



A Comic Book Conundrum (continued)

Alex: Sam, I had no idea. That sounds really tough. Maybe we can brainstorm some ideas this afternoon, after we get that comic.

Sam: Thanks, Alex. I know you always have my back. (Sighs) Just not sure what we could do about it.

Alex: No worries. We'll come up with a plan to help your brother.

Scene 3: The Decision

(At the comic store, Alex approaches the store owner with the rare comic book in hand, while Sam browses the shelves.)



Mr. Barnes: (Takes the comic book from Alex) This is a nice one, right? Probably the rarest book we've had come through here in years.

Alex: I have had my eye on this since I came in here last summer and you showed it to me. Remember?

Mr. Barnes: (Laughs) Oh, yes, and I remember how you've come to drool over it a hundred times since, too!

Alex: To be honest, Mr. Barnes, I really don't know what to do right now.

(continued)

During Reading (continued)



A Comic Book Conundrum (continued)

Mr. Barnes: About what, son?

Alex: (Quietly) Well, my friend needs help, and I just keep looking at this money in my hand and thinking about how I can actually be the hero here. That's it. I've decided. (Alex hands the comic book back to Mr. Barnes.) I'm sorry, but I'm not going to be able to buy this today. Maybe next time? (Shrugs and smiles) Just a hundred more lawns to mow.

Mr. Barnes: This comic will be here, but opportunities to help a friend sometimes pass like shooting stars. If you don't look up at the right moment, you might just miss them. I'd say you are the rare hero we need in the world. Now, go help your friend, and I will be here next time.

Alex: (Nods) Thank you, sir. Next time, then.

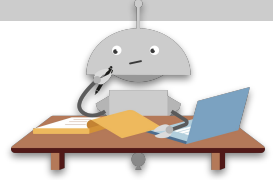
(Alex walks over to Sam with a smile on his face.)

(Curtain falls.)



Notes

After Reading



Create a summary of *The Comic Book Conundrum* using the “Somebody Wanted But So” strategy below.

Refer to this example from an adaptation of “The Three Little Pigs”:

Somebody	Wanted	But	So
The Big Bad Wolf	To eat the three little pigs	He could not blow down the brick house where the pigs were hiding	The pigs stayed safe
The Big Bad Wolf wanted to eat the three little pigs; but he could not blow down the brick house where the pigs were hiding, so they stayed safe.			

Somebody Who is the main character?	Wanted What did the main character want?	But What happened that changed things for character?	So How did the character resolve the action?

Now, combine the notes from your boxes to create a summary below:

After you are done reading and answering these questions, you may want to ask yourself some more questions, like “What is the theme of the play?”

You may even want to read the play a second or third time! When you feel ready, go ahead and take your assessment!