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Dear Educator,

When I was five years old, I wasn’t exactly starving for representations of myself in the media. It was 1985, and Michael Jackson was the biggest pop star in the world. I grew up in a city that worshipped Walter Payton and Michael Jordan, and my household television habits revolved around Diff’rent Strokes, Webster, The Cosby Show and Gimme A Break (with a little sprinkling of Good Times and Sanford and Son for good measure). Heck, you could have easily convinced me that Sesame Street was not far from my house, because a lot of those kids looked like me. Television, music, and movies did their best to give me multiple models of the Black experience. But the books I grew up reading painted the world in a different hue.

I LOVED reading, so my mom fed my interests at an early age by buying me titles from the Great Illustrated Classics series. I read The Red Badge of Courage, The Three Musketeers, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Oliver Twist, and a host of others. The thing was, outside of The Wizard of Oz, most of the books I grew up reading centered on White boys or men. Unfortunately, this isn’t a dying trend. In 2015, the Cooperative Children’s Book Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison conducted a study that showed of the 3,400 books they received that year, only 7.6% centered on African/African-American characters, 3.3% Asian/Pacific Islanders/Asian-Americans, 2.4% Latin and 0.9 First Nation/Native Americans. The rest centered on White characters, animals and inanimate objects. If, as Carlos Ruiz Zafrán says, books are mirrors, then far too many of our students aren’t seeing themselves reflected back at them. This is especially true for girls and women in comics, which is why I was so excited to see Lumberjanes when it was published.

Lumberjanes has the chance to do for young girls what Black Panther, Static Shock, Storm, and others did for me: show them that they can be heroes too. This book features girls with varied body types, race, sexual orientation, and on different parts of the gender spectrum. Even better, this book was written, drawn, colored, inked, lettered and edited by women. Where I had Dwayne McDuffie and Christopher Priest to look up to, the girls of today have prominent creators like Grace Ellis, Kelly Sue DeConnick, Becky Cloonan, Fiona Staples, Gail Simone, Lucy Knisley, Meredith Gran, G. Willow Wilson, and countless others who are creating some of the best stuff out right now. As Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children’s Defense Fund, once said: “It’s hard to be, what you cannot see.” Girls deserve the chance to see themselves in story and to feel as included in the thing they love as any boy who reads comics. Thanks to books like Lumberjanes and Ms. Marvel girls now have a chance to get that feeling I got when I was a kid: “That could be me.”

- Ronell Whitaker
Jo, April, Mal, Molly and Ripley are five best pals determined to have an awesome summer together...and they're not gonna let any insane quest or an array of supernatural critters get in their way! *Lumberjanes* is one of those punk rock, love-everything-about-it stories that appeals to fans of basically all excellent things. This female-led, female-authored, all-ages and inclusive title is a testament to the power of friendship and girl power.

Source: [www.boom-studios.com](http://www.boom-studios.com)
**Bleed** - images that run outside the border of the panel

**Border** - edge or outline of the comic page

**Captions** - contain information about a scene or character

**Colorist** - This person gives the comic color, and add to the weight and vibrancy of the image. The colorist is often responsible for helping set tone and mood via color.

**Dialogue Word Balloons** - contain character dialogue; communication between/among characters

**Emanata** - text or icons that represent what is going on in a character’s head

**Frame** - lines or boxes around a panel(s)

**Graphic weight** - a term that describes the way some images draw the eye more than others, creating a definite focus using color and shading in various ways

**Gutters** - space between panels where the reader infers movement and action between panels

**Panels** - squares or rectangles that contain a single scene

**Penciler** - Primary artist. This person takes the script and draws the comic. They draw the comic in pencil which then gets inked and colored later on.

**Sound Effect** - words that show sound is happening

**Thought Balloons** - contain a character’s thoughts

**Writer** - The writer writes the story and has the overall vision of how the story will go. They write the dialogue and how the story will progress.
**Archetype** - a typical character, an action or a situation that seems to represent universal patterns of human nature

**Stereotype** - a widely held, often wrong, and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person, group or thing.

**Allusion** - a brief and indirect reference to a person, place, thing or idea of historical, cultural, literary or political significance

**Stealth** – making moves in secret; moving sneakily

**Cryptic** – having a hidden meaning; mysterious

**Banter** – speaking in a witty or teasing manner

**Nocturnal** – active at night

**Heathen** – uncivilized people

**Liege** – master, person with servants
LUMBERJANES
HARDCORE LADY TYPES
HALL OF FAME

Joan Jett .............................................
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Bessie Coleman ....................................
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Mae Jemison .........................................
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Phyllis Wheatley ..................................
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Juliette Gordon Low ............................
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Anahareo .............................................
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There are several allusions to mythology that play a role in further illustrating stereotypes and archetypes throughout the story. Here are some resources you may want to frontload with.


**Jungian Archetypes** [http://www.soulcraft.co/essays/the_12_common_archetypes.html](http://www.soulcraft.co/essays/the_12_common_archetypes.html)

Using the Archetype Diagram below, have students identify archetypes in their favorite story, film, or television show. They will be using this skill later to identify these traits in the book.
Each chapter opens with a partial description of a Lumberjanes badge. Before reading each chapter, make predictions based on the badge discussed in the opener, and after reading the chapter describe how the openers foreshadowed what happened in the chapter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictions (before)</th>
<th>Foreshadowing (after)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1:</td>
<td>Chapter 1:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2:</td>
<td>Chapter 2:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 3:</td>
<td>Chapter 3:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4:</td>
<td>Chapter 4:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The very first page (page 3) has the original name of the Lumberjanes’ camp inscribed in the bottom. It reads “Miss Qiunzella Thiskwin Penniquiquil Thistle Crumpet’s Camp for Girls Hardcore Lady-Types.” Why do you think the word girl was scratched out?

2. Similarly, “The Lumberjanes Pledge” has a line scratched out and it says “Then there’s a line about God, or whatever.” Thinking of the rest of the pledge, why do you think this line was changed?

3. Why is it important to note that this book was created entirely by women?

4. Chapter 1 opens with an allusion to “Little Red Riding Hood.” What connections do the creators want us to make to that story, and fairy tales in general?

5. Page 16 introduces us to one of the central themes of the book with the camp’s slogan: “Friendship to the Max.”

6. How would you characterize each of the girls from Roanoke Cabin (the main characters) by end of Chapter 1?

7. Why do you think Rosie asks the girls about the Lumberjanes Pledge? What does the pledge mean? Why was it important in that instance?

8. When the girls tell Rosie about the weird things they saw that night, how does she react? Do you think the Lumberjanes should trust her? Why or why not?

9. Throughout the book, the girls exclaim the names of historic figures for various reasons. Why do you think the creators did this?

10. The artists chose to draw each Lumberjane with specific looks. Why do you think each character was designed so differently?

11. In Chapters 2 & 3, we get more of the Lumberjanes’ relationships to one another, but specifically Molly and Mal. What is their relationship like? How do you know?

12. Chapter 3 gives us more insight into the Lumberjanes’ talents and skills. Now that we’ve nearly reached the end of the text, what new information have we learned about each character?

   Jo
   April
   Mal
   Molly
   Ripley
   Jen

13. At this point we’ve seen several chapters end with snapshot photos and captions. What do you think is the purpose of this?

14. Chapter 4 introduces us to the Scouting Lads and the Mr. Theodore Tarquin Reginald Lancelot Herman Crumpus Camp for Boys. Compare and contrast the similarities and differences we see between the Scouting Lads and the Lumberjanes.

15. Why do you think Jo doesn’t trust the Scouting Lads? Is she right to be suspicious? Why or why not?

16. The Scouting Lads camp director is a great example of stereotypes (a widely believed, oversimplified image or idea about a particular type of person, group or thing). How do the Lumberjanes go against stereotypes we often hear about girls/women?

17. Why do you think the Lumberjanes never tell Jen about the monsters and other bizarre things that have happened to them?

18. What do you think is making the Scouting Lads go berserk? How are they connected to the other weird things that happen in the book?

19. This story ends on a cliffhanger with many of the mysteries still unsolved. What are some questions you think are still unanswered? What are your theories for those questions?

20. What do you think the “Kitten Holy” is? Why might it be important?
This activity can be completed right after the class has finished the book.

The badges in *Lumberjanes* were often a means of foreshadowing events in the story, but they were also effective at highlighting character traits in the *Lumberjanes* as they acquired them. For this project you can have students create their own badges that communicate accomplishments and personal traits that fit them! Using the badge descriptions at the beginning of each chapter, students will name, design, and describe the traits of a person who earns that badge.

Here are some guided questions to get students started in discovering their badges:

- What is a talent you have?
- What is one of your strengths?
- What is a task you were able to do after working on it?
- What is something you wish you were better at?
- What is something that others admire about you?

These are only the building blocks, but there are multiple ways to discover a badge that fits each student. Have students create and write descriptions for four (4) badges. You could even have students create and/or illustrate badges for your class and then earn them throughout the rest of the year.
PROJECT IDEA #2: HARD CORE LADY TYPES HALL OF FAME

When we think of the heroes of history, women, especially women of color, are often under-represented and rarely celebrated. This was one of the reasons why the creators of Lumberjanes inserted so many references to influential women in their book, so readers would learn more about these hidden figures in history and recognize the contributions women have made to society and culture. For this project, students can create their own list of inductees into the Lumberjanes Hardcore Lady Types Hall of Fame. This project can be done after completion of the book, and it can also be done individually or in pairs.

Using the attached template as a guide, students should nominate no less than four (4) women to be inducted in the Hall of Fame.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Reason She Is Notable</th>
<th>Why She Belongs in The Hall of Fame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In judging/explaining whether someone would be a good candidate for inclusion into the Hall of Fame, students should look at the Lumberjanes Pledge and the Lumberjanes themselves for points of comparison. What makes someone a good Lumberjane?* Why do the women they have chosen fit the students idea of what makes for a good Lumberjane?

*To further generate ideas for this, you could come up with a class list of traits for what makes a great Lumberjane.
First, using the “Archetypes Chart” below, identify which archetype* each Lumberjane fits, and explain how you know. (*characters can be more than one archetype at a time)

After completing this chart, students should apply some of the principals of the archetype chart to their own lives and people they know. Have students create their own chart for which archetype they and the people in their lives fit, and then justify why they chose those archetypes. They could list examples of when these archetypes were displayed in their lives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Archetype(s)</th>
<th>How you know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ripley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Project: The women referenced in the book are great women who the creators wanted to shine a light on. Have students do research into who these women were and discuss the connections between the story and these women.

Art Vocabulary: Select a number (teacher can determine amount) of the Comics Terms/Glossary terms, and find 2-3 instances of these terms in action in the book. Explain where it is found, what it is, and how your example works in the book. This can be a written, oral, or a group/individual presentation. Images should be shared in some way with the class for discussion.

Mixtape project: In single issues of the comic, each chapter ended with a mixtape composed by each Lumberjane that corresponded with the events of the story. For example, here is April’s Mixtape for chapter one:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Edge of Seventeen”</td>
<td>Stevie Nicks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Bad Reputation”</td>
<td>Joan Jett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Run the World”</td>
<td>Beyoncé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Now, Now”</td>
<td>Wolf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Up All Night”</td>
<td>One Direction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have students come up with their own mixtape soundtrack for the book, listing music you think best fits the mood of specific scenes/chapters. Another way to link songs to the text would be via elements of plot (rising action, climax, etc). For each track listed, have students explain why that song was appropriate for that moment in the story.
**GENERAL PROJECT IDEAS FOR VARIOUS CONTENT AREAS**

**Letter Home From Camp Project:** Have students pick a chapter and write a letter home from camp that a Lumberjane of their choosing might write home. How might the different characters express how they feel about specific points in the story? What details would they include and which would they leave out?

**Lumberjanes Camp Brochure:** Have students design a brochure to convince parents to send their children to Miss Qiunzella Thiskwin Penniquiquil Thistle Crumpet’s Camp for Hardcore Lady-Types. The brochure should also be attractive to children who might want to see the interesting things at camp. Students should consider their audiences when choosing what details to include. This is also a great opportunity to include artistic elements.

**Mini-Comic Project:** Have students complete the story in a mini-comic format (3-4) pages. What do they predict will happen next? How will some of the mysteries resolve? Students do not need to wrap-up the entire story, but they should address some of the questions the reader are left with at the end of this book.

The three-page comic does not need to tell an entire story; it can be a slice of a bigger story. There is no industry standard for scripting comics for artists, but there are plenty of examples available on-line. Use the text itself as a model for what their comic might look like. Students with familiarity with the graphic novel form might seek inspiration from other sources.

**Dream Cast Project:** Have students pretend to be in charge of casting the movie for Lumberjanes. Who would they have play each role and why? Have your students cast the “film,” write a short treatment of how it might be produced, and create a movie poster for their version of the film.

**Camp Newsletter Project:** Have students write a camp newsletter for the other campers detailing some of the news they might not know about the Lumberjanes’ adventures. Creative sections to include would be Weather, Sports, Advice, Headline News and a Cartoon Strip. All of these sections would be centered on events in the story.

**Presentation Project:** This project entails persuasive writing/speaking. Have students convince other teachers and administration that comics, but specifically this title, are worthwhile in the classroom. What might be their talking points? How would they sell others on using Lumberjanes in their classrooms?
POSSIBLE STEM MINI-PROJECT IDEAS FOR LUMBERJANES

Nature Walk-“Earn Your Beatrix Potter Badge”
Chapter Four opens with Jen trying to take the Lumberjanes on a Nature Walk so they can learn about the flora that surrounded the camp. Either as a class, or individually, go on a nature walk captivating the local flora in your area. Have students research the scientific names of local flora, take along a notebook and colored pencils and have them draw and catalog interesting plants that they find (or take pictures if you have technology). You can also collect samples then take them home and iron them between sheets of wax paper. This can be adapted to include local insects, minerals and bird watching with minor tweaks.

Breakout!
Chapter Three shows the Lumberjanes trapped in an underground lair and they have to perform feats of strength, knowledge and wisdom in order to escape it. While we don’t have access to an underground labyrinth, we can have students create their own puzzles! Using the link to the template below, students can craft their own Breakout.edu style puzzle using math clues, anagrams, and other information as the puzzle answers. If you are more interested in a physical puzzle box, you can adapt the Breakout EDU kit to your own needs and access to materials.

Google Form Online
Breakout -- https://sites.google.com/view/digitalbreakouttemplate

Breakout EDU Kit -- https://www.breakoutedu.com/create/
PAIRING
SUGGESTIONS

Women in Science: 50 Fearless Pioneers Who Changed the World and Women in Sports: 50 Fearless Athletes Who Played to Win by Rachael Ignotofsky; Rad Women Worldwide: Artists and Athletes, Pirates and Punks, and Other Revolutionaries Who Shaped History and Rad American Women A-Z: Rebels, Trailblazers, and Visionaries Who Shaped Our History…and Our Future! By Kate Schatz (author), Miriam Klein Stahl (illustrator) – These four texts center on illustrated biographies, and fit very much in the vein of Lumberjanes. Each woman featured in these beautiful illustrated books left an indelible impact on society. These books could easily serve as a jumping off place for the Hardcore Lady Types Hall of Fame project.

Giant Days (graphic novel) by John Allison (Author), Whitney Cogar (Author), Lissa Treiman (Illustrator) – Giant Days is like Lumberjanes go to college in Britain. It’s a bit sillier, but there is still a focus on the relationship between a group of girls.

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L’Engle – Winner of the Newbery Medal in 1963, this is the story of the adventures in space and time of Meg, Charles Wallace, and Calvin O’Keefe (athlete, student, and one of the most popular boys in high school). They are in search of Meg’s father, a scientist who disappeared while engaged in secret work for the government. Readers will see parallels between Meg and the leads of Lumberjanes, but they will also see similar themes mirrored here as well.
OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER LEARNING


In this interview, Grace Ellis, one of the creators talks about the feminist themes in Lumberjanes.


A personality quiz that corresponds to the different Lumberjanes. Students can connect this to the archetype chart.


Meryl is an educator and a great resource for teaching with comics.

Brooke Allen and Grace Ellis interview - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_NjHQW3J84

In this interview for publisher Punching the Walls of Reality, the two creators speak to why we need more women in comics.

Panel Discussion with Babs Tarr, Brooke Allen, and Grace Ellis - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vXuDP1FbC4

The three women discuss being a woman in comics, and their creative process.

Archetypes List - http://www.soulcraft.co/essays/the_12_common_archetypes.html

Further information on the Jungian archetypes previously mentioned.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AUTHOR
Ronell Whitaker