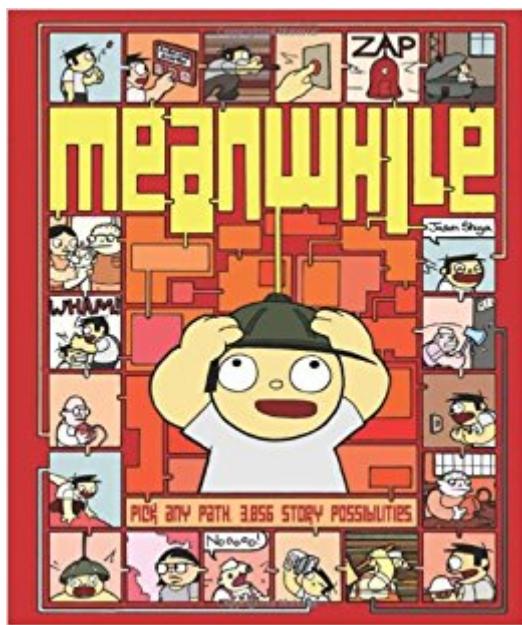


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# Meanwhile: Pick Any Path. 3,856 Story Possibilities. (Top Ten Great Graphic Novels For Teens)



## Synopsis

Chocolate or Vanilla? This simple choice is all it takes to get started with *Meanwhile*, the wildly inventive creation of comics mastermind Jason Shiga, of whom Scott McCloud said "Crazy + Genius = Shiga." • Jimmy, whose every move is under your control, finds himself in a mad scientist's lab, where he's given a choice between three amazing objects: a mind-reading device, a time-travel machine, or the Killtron 3000 (which is as ominous as it sounds). Down each of these paths there are puzzles, mysterious clues, and shocking revelations. It's up to the reader to lead Jimmy to success or disaster. *Meanwhile* is a wholly original story of invention, discovery, and saving the world, told through a system of tabs that take you forward, backward, upside down, and right side up again. Each read creates a new adventure! Awards and praise for Jason Shiga: 2004 Eisner Award, 2003 Ignatz Award, 2007 Stumptown Trophy Award, 1999 Xeric Grant Recipient. "Crazy + Genius = Shiga" • Scott McCloud, author of *Understanding Comics*: "If humankind ever finds itself at the brink of its own destruction and I am given the task to fill a small, space-bound time capsule with a collection of ten graphic novels that would present to alien eyes the best that the cartoonists of Earth had to offer the universe, Jason Shiga's *Meanwhile* would surely be among my picks." • Gene Luen Yang, author of *American Born Chinese*: "A creator of comix that can be at once funny, disturbing, thoughtful, deconstructed, and cleverly put together." • Time online: "Meanwhile is a wallop of a book/graphic novel! It delivers action, choices, problem solving, and engagement. And it reminds me of my own efforts in writing *Choose Your Own Adventure*, which I take as a great compliment coming from Jason Shiga. I wish I had written this book! Run, don't walk, to your favorite bookseller and pick up a copy!" • R. A. Montgomery, *Choose Your Own Adventure* author: "Ingenious" • Edward Packard, *Choose Your Own Adventure* author

## Book Information

Series: Top Ten Great Graphic Novels for Teens

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 9

## Customer Reviews

Grade 4 "6 "Shiga introduces readers to a whole new technique of reading comics. Jimmy must decide if he wants chocolate or vanilla ice cream. That's the first choice readers face in order to determine the fate of the world in this "Choose Your Own Adventure" style graphic novel. Rather than reading panels left to right, color-coded tubelike lines send children in the direction the panels should be read, from right to left/left to right, up to down/down to up, and flipping backwards to pages rather than going forward. Tabs on the edge of the pages help move the tubes along, directing readers to which page to read next. If a tube splits into two paths from a panel, readers then must choose which scenario to follow. Illustrations are drawn in ink, with color overlay. The text is clearly written by hand and will be easily deciphered by readers. Seasoned graphic-novel fans will be entertained by selecting scenarios throughout this action-packed book while developing problem-solving skills. Thousands of story possibilities will guarantee them a different experience each time they pick up this book. However, some readers may have to run their finger along the tube lines to keep track of their place in the story's path, as some of them can be quite long or zigzagged. "Janet Weber, Tigard Public Library, OR Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

\*Starred Review\* In this graphic-novel mind boggler, Shiga blows the choose-your-own-adventure concept out of the water. Readers play the role of little Jimmy and on the first page make the seemingly innocuous decision of ordering a vanilla or chocolate ice-cream cone. Tubes connect panels in all directions and veer off into tabs to other pages, creating a head-spinningly tangled web of a story (well, stories; the book claims to have 3,856 different possibilities). The crux is that Jimmy stumbles into the lab of an affable mad scientist and is allowed to tinker with three inventions: a mind reader, a time machine, and the Killitron, which obliterates all life on earth aside from the userâ™s. Jimmyâ™s carefree fiddling with the three devices isnâ™t merely a way to lead readers

through the subsequent head trip of an adventure; it's also just about the perfect kid-friendly initiation to the many-worlds interpretation of quantum mechanics (no, really), in which each decision and action split reality into distinct parallel universes. It's unfathomably, almost unreasonably complex. Given this book and a distraction-free hour or two, readers will either end up looking like Jimmy on the cover "clutching their skulls in googly-eyed exasperation" or will arrive at a nifty new way of looking at reality. It's maddening and challenging, all right, but that's precisely what makes it so crazy fun. Grades 4-9. --Ian Chipman

Bought this for my 11 year old son whom loves to read and is quite the creative thinker. He'll sometimes read a book and would say, 'I wonder what if the ending were different?' ... this is the book for your imaginative child. He decides which color pipeline to follow and the story just keeps unfolding. Very cool.

The book is pretty fun and entertaining for creative kids. My son is very creative and makes his own comics. "Meanwhile" allows him some freedom to come up with his own version of the comic. Pretty neat. Would recommend for kids 10+. Perhaps not younger due to a couple images that might be too much for the younger ones. Other than that, it is a great buy!

This is a great book! My 10 year old daughter has loved this book since she was 8 and found it in her school library. Its a comic book style book and its very unique because you get to choose the direction of the story by making choices along the way. Its one of those books that my daughter picks up again and again because there are so many variations to it. We purchased the hard cover edition of this book and it is made so nicely! The hard covered book uses paper that is thick and durable. On a side note... while My daughter absolutely loves to read, I think it would be great for a child that may not find reading very exciting...this may just be the type of book that sparks their interest because its different, its not a heavy read and it gives kiddos choices!

Ah, if only every book was this interesting. It's a fun take on the "choose your own adventure" format to begin with and then the story itself is even more fun and then as the cherry on the top it teaches a young reader some basic ideas of physics and quantum mechanics. As a school teacher I heartily approve of a book that appeals to a student who enjoys graphic novels and teaches them while also entertaining them. And the drawings and writing are a lot of fun. My personal favorite is when Jimmy uses an invention to see his father's entire life and the writer shows the whole life in a series of

about 12 images (from being a baby to ready physics books in school to meeting his wife to having Jimmy). On the slight downside, as is the case with many books of this type it doesn't really offer you the variety of choices it claims. The writer steers the reader towards a few key choices and there's really only a couple of stories in the book which limits the re-reading a bit. But it's still got more options than most stories where the reader is passively involved. My only other complaint would be that he doesn't give us more details on the computer algorithms he used to lay out the book pages but I don't think most readers will miss that as much ^\_\_^

I bought this book for my nephew who is almost 9. He is a pretty bright kid and so I thought he might like this book. Little did I know how much he would love it. He opened it at Christmas and we didn't hear a peep out of him for hours afterward. He took it to school the next week and showed it to his teacher, who asked if she could borrow it and show it to her team. She called my sister and told her how she was so impressed with this book as it was great for teaching consequences, "if/then" type situations, decision making and following directions, all while enjoying the story. I love this book, and while I myself didn't have the patience to follow all the twists and turns the story throws at you, kids (my nieces too) love it.

I bought this for my 7 year old nephew for Christmas. However, before wrapping it, I showed it to my fifth grade class to see what they thought. They all loved it and were asking if they could see it next/again. They were so excited, I showed it to some of my colleagues who were equally taken with it. When I gave it to my nephew, he loved it also. It was a hit all around. My only word of caution would be that when it arrived, the pages were stuck together slightly. I had to peal each one apart before giving it to my students to look at. I fear if I had not, they might have ripped it as there are tabs on each page. Otherwise, this book has been a total hit and I would recommend it to one and all.

I had a great time reading this book, for at least three reasons. First, it's FUN. You get to eat ice cream and check out zany inventions. While you're reading the book, you're a kid on an awesome adventure. And who can resist any story that lets you decide how it turns out? Second, without giving away too much, let me just say that the story will fascinate anyone who gets a kick out of imagining how the world could be. And I don't just mean sci-fi/fantasy fans--I'm not one myself, though I have no doubt that they will appreciate this too. I mean that the story describes a view of the world that is both fascinating and deeply satisfying from a scientific perspective. Third--and this is what surprised

me most about this book--the story is incredibly poignant at times. I definitely did not expect that from a choose-your-own-adventure comic book. I was nearly moved to tears by some pages (or panels, I should say, since the storyline twists along tubes connecting parts of different pages). The only suggestion I have for readers is to get yourself a pack of those Post-it flags, to mark the pages you've visited already. The opening pages of the book promise a single happy ending, and it took me FOREVER to find it. I could have saved a lot of time by marking my trail (which I eventually started doing). I would definitely recommend this book to anyone!

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