

**Title:** *Hey Kiddo: How I Lost My Mother, Found My Father, and Dealt with Family Addiction*

by Jarrett J. Krosoczka

(Published in 2018)

Approved for use in English 1

<p><b>Summary of the Work:</b> In this intimate graphic memoir, Krosoczka looks back on his childhood and adolescence. His mother was a heroin addict, who was incarcerated or in rehab for much of his young life, and his father wasn't around. Until Krosoczka was in the sixth grade, he didn't even know the man's first name. The author/illustrator was raised by his loving but often amusingly coarse maternal grandparents, who were well past their child-rearing days. Though growing up without his biological parents was painful, Krosoczka had a supportive network of extended family and friends, and his art became both his passion and his salvation. The visuals beautifully re-create his early memories, with fluid lines depicting the figures and hand-painted washes of gray with burnt orange highlights in the backgrounds. Borderless panels and word balloons deftly draw readers into the action. Summary from <i>School Library Journal</i> Reviewed by <a href="#">Kelley Gile, Cheshire Public Library, CT</a>, Aug 01, 2018</p>	<p><b>Rationale:</b> During the freshmen year of English, common themes among novels used are that of resilience and coming-of-age. <i>Hey Kiddo</i> is an ideal choice for the 9th grade curriculum because it is the true story of Jarrett Krosoczka who has to deal with family and social struggles. As a novel, it allows students to discuss and understand issues they may be in the midst of from an objective point of view. It further allows readers to become more sensitive to situations others may be going through. Positive outlets for dealing with stress and depression are examined. Through examining a real person, students are able to openly discuss life's hardships and brainstorm ways they and their peers can develop their strengths thereby triumphing over adversity.</p>
<p><b>Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:</b></p> <p>"The story is a true reflection of the seesaw of life: There are moments of hardship and conflict, but also scenes of joy." -- <i>The New York Times</i></p> <p>"A candid, emotional graphic memoir about life with a heroin-addicted mother and rough but loving grandparents." -- <i>New York Times Book Review</i> Editors' Choice</p> <p>"Inspiring...poignant and funny...A testament to the power of art and creativity -- and a chain-smoking grandfather -- to save your life." -- <i>New York Times Book Review</i></p> <p>"Powerful...Krosoczka movingly reveals the complicated origins of his humor and art." -- <i>Washington Post</i></p> <p>"Deeply heartfelt...Sure to have a profound impact on those who pick it up." -- <i>Paste Magazine</i>*</p> <p>"Honest, important, and timely." -- <i>Kirkus Reviews</i>, starred review*</p> <p>"A must-have, this book will empower readers." -- <i>School Library Journal</i>, starred review*</p> <p>"This nuanced graphic memoir . . . tells a story of finding identity." -- <i>Publishers Weekly</i>, starred review*</p> <p>"Krosoczka has meticulously crafted a severely honest portrayal of addiction, resilient familial love, and the healing power of art..." -- <i>The Horn Book</i>, starred review*</p> <p>"Deeply vulnerable, moving." -- <i>Booklist</i>, starred review</p>	<p><b>Noted Distinction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Book Award Finalist</li> <li>• Denver Public Library's Best &amp; Brightest Books of 2019</li> <li>• Booklist Editors' Choice</li> <li>• YouthCBC/ TeenReads.com</li> <li>• Teen Choice Awards</li> <li>• ALSC Notable Children's Books In the Margins</li> <li>• *Recommended Nonfiction Book List and a Top Ten Title Action Book Club Selections</li> <li>• TLA Texas Topaz Reading List for Nonfiction</li> <li>• PA Young Reader's Choice Masterlist Children's and Young Adult Bloggers Literacy Awards (The Cybils) -</li> <li>• Winner Indies Choice Best Young Adult</li> <li>• Finalist EBSCO SEE-IT Award</li> <li>• (Finalist) Ann Arbor Kids Read Comics Awards</li> <li>• Nominee Maryland Black-Eyed Susan Book Award (Master List)</li> <li>• Oklahoma Sequoyah Masterlist</li> </ul> <p><b>Readability Level:</b> Ages 12 - 15 <b>Lexile Score:</b> 510</p> <p><b>Learning Resource Guidelines:</b> The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.</p> <p><b>Standards Alignment:</b></p> <p><b>Approval:</b></p> <p><b>Submitted to Committee:</b></p> <p><b>Approved for Adoption:</b></p>
<p><b>Notes on the Text:</b> This graphic novel sometimes includes crude language and disturbing topics but a majority of the students in Applied classes deal with many of the same challenges. Many also struggle with reading. The graphic novel format helps with comprehension as students can match words with pictures.</p>	<p><b>Connection to the Curriculum:</b> <i>Hey Kiddo</i> invites students to use their thinking skills to investigate possible solutions for real life problems. Journaling/drawing can be effectively implemented to compliment the writing style and respond to personal situations in the text. The readability of the novel allows freshmen to easily access the text and the themes within.</p>

**Additional Connections:** The novel is included in the Freshman English I Applied course description but is also appropriate for regular English I.