

BARTON

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Dare to know

Shōnen

Translated from Japanese as “boy” or “few years,” this category focuses on action, adventure, and fighting evil from the point of view of a male adolescent (12-18 years old). Despite the name, *shōnen* extends beyond its intended audience to include all ages and genders, and to include other subjects such as comedy, crime, drama, fantasy, historical fiction, mystery, romance, science fiction, and sports. Protagonists, usually male, are often characterized as outsiders. Through training and a strong will, they are able to embark on the hero’s journey, gaining victory in the end. *Shōnen* focuses more on events and the actions of a character than *seinen*. The artistic style known as *gekiga* (“dramatic pictures”) began as an alternative movement in the 1950s and 1960s before being accepted in the mainstream *shōnen* market in the 1970s. This style is aesthetically defined by sharp angles, dark hatching, and gritty lines, and thematically by a starker realism, maturity, strong characterization, and a bleak, noir outlook.

Common Elements

Friendship
Perseverance
Victory

Courage
Fighting spirit
The quest

Achieving great things in life
Good vs. evil

Graphic Novel Examples*

<i>Attack on Titan</i> (2009-2021) by Hajime Isayama
<i>Barefoot Gen</i> (1973-1987) by Keiji Nakazawa
<i>Black Blizzard</i> (1956) by Yoshihiro Tatsumi
<i>Black Butler</i> (2010-2015) by Yana Toboso
<i>Bleach</i> (2001-2016) by Tite Kubo
<i>Claymore</i> (2006) by Norihiro Yagi
<i>Death Note</i> (2003-2006) by Tsugumi Ohba
<i>Dragon Ball</i> (1984-1995) by Akira Toriyama
<i>Fairy Tail</i> (2006-ongoing) by Hiro Mashima
<i>Full Metal Alchemist</i> (2001-2010) by Hiromu Arakawa

<i>Goblin Slayer</i> (2016-ongoing) by Kumo Kagyu and Noboru Kannatsuki
<i>Hunter x Hunter</i> (1998-ongoing) by Yoshihiro Togashi
<i>Love Hina</i> (1998-2001) by Ken Akamatsu
<i>Naruto</i> (1999-2014) by Masashi Kishimoto
<i>One Piece</i> (1997-ongoing) by Eiichiro Oda
<i>Sgt. Frog</i> (1999-2007, 2013-ongoing) by Mine Yoshizaki
<i>Speed Racer: Mach Go</i> (1966-1968) by Tatso Yoshida
<i>WataMote</i> (2011-ongoing) by Nico Tanigawa

* The dates given reflect the original serial publications in Japan.