

SUPER WHO? SUPER YOU!

WEEK THREE

DAY NINE: IMAGINEERING A HERO

Remember that little question? You know the one. “If you had to create a superhero or super villain what would you use as inspiration?” Hope you’ve been thinking because you’re gonna have a turn behind that desk as a comic creator, a comic book writer, a superhero imagineer!

Review with students some of the superheroes and super-villains they discussed from the [Superhero Database](#) and from their favorites. List some of them (5-7) on the board. Ask the class how the characters impact society and the world at large; what issues do they focus on? (Often the answer will be something basic like stopping crime and fighting a particular villain who’s attempting to wreak havoc in the world; encourage students to elaborate, ask deeper questions such as, What are the root causes of the crime they fight?, or, Where did the villain come from and why is he up to no good?)

Now ask students to give examples of real-world issues of particular concern to s/he or to society in general. These can be broad issues such as global warming, poverty, or disease, or more personal issues such as bullying or troubles with school. List their answers on the board.

Explain that students are going to create their own superheroes or super-villains, and superheroes and villains are often motivated by and linked to social issues. Sometimes their power comes from without (gadgets, accidents, and thingamabobs) and sometimes it comes from within (genetics!)

For some inspiration and to get the juices flowing, let’s see what humans are capable of the real world.

CAN ANYONE BE ‘SUPER HUMAN?’

Watch clips from ‘Stan Lee’s Superhumans’ on [History](#) wherein Stan Lee, the man who co-created such legendary comic book characters as Spider-Man, Hulk, X-Men and the Fantastic Four, searches for some real superhumans, people who are gifted with



remarkable abilities because of their genetic differences. Lee is joined by co-host Daniel Browning Smith, dubbed the ‘world’s most flexible man.’ They find Rubber Band Man, the human ‘Jaw Breaker,’ the Human Submarine, Super Skateboarder, Superhuman Card Tricks, The Human Tugboat & more.

SO, WHO WILL BE YOUR HERO?

Drawing back on the sources of comic inspiration we’ve talked about other artists using. Every day objects, people you know, actors and actresses you admire. What do you want to base your story on? Who is yours? What are they going to be? Why?

Some things to consider are (write these on the board or chart paper for students to refer to):

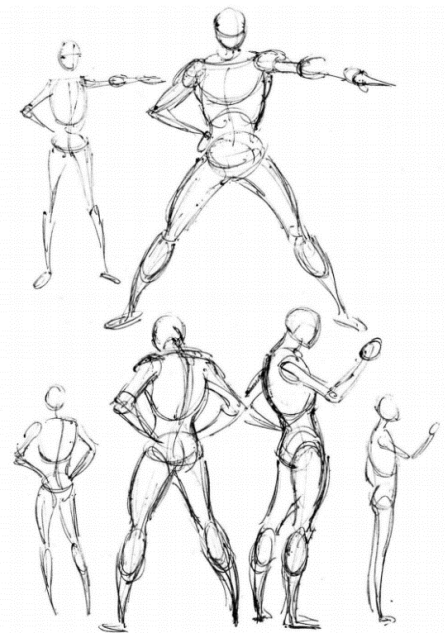
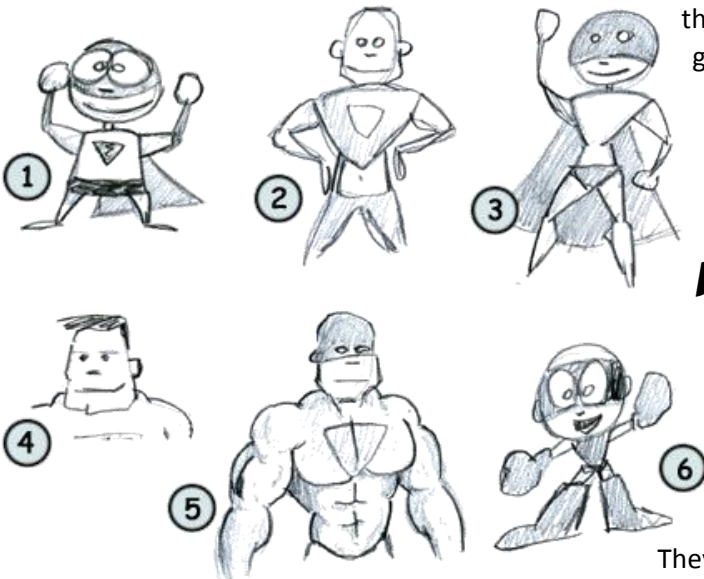
- Special powers—such as superhuman abilities, mutations, or scientific knowledge.
- Appearance—are they colorful, funny, serious, drab, dark, or menacing?
- Background—where did they come from, and did they go through a shocking experience that made them who they are?
- Public or “secret” identity—what is their social life like, do they have regular jobs, family, and friends?
- Special equipment—such as tools, weapons, or vehicles.
- Place of residence—rural or urban, apartment or house, secret lair or in plain sight.

As students work on their Superhero/Super-Villain Profile Forms individually or in groups, monitor their progress and provide feedback and encouragement for their ideas as a method of formative assessment. Focus on what distinguishes their super-characters from “regular folks” as well as what makes them interesting or complex.

Option: Project the Superhero/Super-Villain Sample Characteristics or put it on the board to provide helpful examples of “super qualities.” This is simply meant to be an aid to help trigger the imagination, but tell students to feel free to use the examples if they want.

SOCIAL JUSTICE: OPTION - Have each student choose one of the issues from the board to be his or her character’s “symbolic issue.” (For example, if a student chooses “global warming” and plans to create a super-villain, he

or she might make the super-villain’s goal to set off a giant volcano, melt the polar ice caps, and flood New York City. Conversely, a superhero might have “super-breath” and be able to create powerful winds to turn wind turbines for an alternative energy source.)



DRAW! Give each student a sheet of sketch paper and have them try to draw their hero, just a rough draft of skills and abilities have the students brainstorm each character’s distinctive qualities. **The reference guide at the end of the lesson list online is designed to provide help with this!** *The Super Book for Superheroes* is another great resource.

They can draw the characters, gadgets, residences,

vehicles, or all. Some children like to draw figures, while others like to draw mechanical things or landscapes; in this extension, they get to express themselves the way they like best. You might also suggest that students label their drawings, pointing out the parts that most contribute to their super-characters' powers or abilities.

Superhero/Super-Villain Sample Characteristics

Super powers

- super strength
- invisibility
- levitation
- laser vision
- shape-changing
- telepathy

Special abilities or traits

- magic
- acrobatics
- muscles
- giant
- gills
- insanity

Special knowledge

- chemistry
- archaeology
- robotics
- pilot
- computers
- genetics

Gadgets

- utility belt
- trick shoes
- laser gun
- whip
- trick hat
- magic watch

Vehicles

- jet
- spaceship
- tunnel digger
- sports car
- speedboat
- hovercraft

Landscapes

- tropical island
- swamp
- glacier
- desert
- volcano
- jungle

Homes

- cave
- fortress
- castle
- dome
- teepee
- tree house/nest

Weaknesses

- kryptonite
- garlic
- sunlight
- cold
- heat
- radioactivity

Superhero/Super-Villain Profile Form

Superhero

Super-Villain

Male

Female

Character

Name: _____

Describe your character's superpower(s), special knowledge, or special ability:

What is your character's goal or purpose? Be creative and specific:

What does your character look like? Include as many details as you can think of:

What helpful gadget(s) does your character use?

Does he or she drive a special vehicle? Describe it:

What kind of landscape does your character live in?

What kind of home or hideout does he or she live in?

Does your character have any weaknesses?

Other important things to know about him/her:



DAY NINE K-8 STANDARD ALIGNMENT

K

- SL.K.5. Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions [and stories] to provide additional detail.
- RL.K.7. With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin to craft their stories and create their heroes through descriptions, sketches, comic book panel illustrations, etc.

1

- SL.1.5. Add drawings to descriptions [and stories] when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings as well as plot points, events, etc.
- RI.1.6. Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin to craft their stories and create their heroes through descriptions, sketches, comic book panel illustrations, etc.

2

- RL.2.3. Describe how characters in a story (including their own) respond to major events and challenges.
- SL.2.5. b) Add drawings to stories to clarify events, plot points, characters, ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin to craft their stories and create their heroes through descriptions, illustrations, etc.

3

- W.3.3. a) Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters.
- SL.3.5. Add visual displays and drawings [to stories] when appropriate to emphasize or enhance certain facts or details.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin to craft their stories and create their heroes through descriptions, sketches, comic book panel illustrations, etc.

4

- W.4.3. a) Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters.
- SL.4.5. Add drawings and visual displays to presentations and stories when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin to craft their stories and create their heroes through descriptions, sketches, comic book panel illustrations, etc.

5

- W.5.3. a) Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters.
- SL.5.5. Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics) and visual displays (e.g., drawings) in presentations and stories when appropriate to enhance the development of plot, characters, main ideas or themes.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin to craft their stories and create their heroes through descriptions, sketches, comic book panel illustrations, etc.

6

- W.6.3. a) Establish a context and introduce a narrator and/or characters.
- SL.6.5. Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images) and visual displays (e.g., drawings) in presentations and stories to clarify information, e.g., plot, characters, events, main ideas, or themes.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin to craft their stories and create their heroes through descriptions, sketches, comic book panel illustrations, etc.

7

- W.7.3. a) Establish a context and point of view and introduce a narrator and/or characters.
- SL.7.5. Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images) and visual displays (e.g., drawings) in presentations and stories to clarify and emphasize salient points.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin to craft their stories and create their heroes through descriptions, sketches, comic book panel illustrations, etc.

8

- W.8.3. a) Establish a context and point of view and introduce a narrator and/or characters.
- SL.8.5.a Integrate multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images) and visual displays (e.g., drawings) into presentations and stories to clarify information and/or add interest.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin to craft their stories and create their heroes through descriptions, sketches, comic book panel illustrations, etc.

DAYS TEN & ELEVEN: STARTING OUR HERO'S JOURNEY

Bring in (or have students bring in) and/or remind students of a variety of examples of heroes and villains from books, comic books, movies, or television for the class to consider. Have students analyze what makes them memorable, vivid, or successful—or not. What characteristics do we see again and again? Students might also compare various super-characters to their own to see how closely theirs follow common superhero/villain formulas and in what ways their characters are original.



Do you remember what we talked about before? A kind of mono-myth or ancient story pattern? Remember, the hero's journey is an ancient story pattern that can be found in texts from thousands of years ago or in newly released Hollywood blockbusters. **It's now time for students to plan out their own hero's journey. The hero they created!** The 'hero's journey' structure is not intended to be a step-by-step process for creating an unoriginal copy of an already existing story. Regardless, understanding the basic components of the hero's journey is important because so many stories use it as a foundation. The hero's journey is also a great place for each of us to get inspiration for a story of our own. We can use some parts of it, and leave

others out, we can follow the structure entirely...no matter what we choose it's good to know what to look for!

SOME ELEMENTS TO THINK ABOUT

When people describe a hero, they often use words such as "honorable," "brave," or "strong." There's nothing wrong with these descriptions, but there is no certain way that every hero always looks, thinks, or behaves. A hero can be young or old, male or female, shy or outgoing. **What is your hero like? Have students look at their profile sheets for their character.**

UNUSUAL BIRTH: Oftentimes there are unusual circumstances surrounding the birth of a hero. The hero is frequently born to royalty or has a god or goddess as one of his or her parents. The hero is sometimes in danger at birth and needs to be hidden or disguised. **Does your hero have an unusual birth story?**

THE CALL TO ADVENTURE: Heroes can begin their journeys in a number of different ways, but usually a traumatic event occurs that leads to the hero wanting or needing to leave home. When the a hero is called to leave home, he or she may refuse to leave at first, only to be convinced, tricked, or forced into leaving later. In other cases, the hero leaves willingly. Still other times, the hero begins the journey on accident. **How did your hero start his or her journey to being a superhero?**

SUPERNATURAL HELPER: The hero is usually aided by someone, often old and wise, with magical and mystical power (or sometimes just really good advice.) This figure serves as a guide and mentor as the hero embarks into a new world and faces challenges to his or her life and character. **Does your superhero have someone older and wiser to help them?** (Like Batman's Alfred or Spiderman's Aunt May?) **Who?**

TALISMAN OR SPECIAL WEAPON: The hero often has a weapon or protective device given to him or her that will be useful on the journey. The supernatural helper may be the one to give the hero the weapon or to tell him or her about it. This could also fall under gadgets and tools for your superhero. **Does your superhero have any special tools or gadgets/devices? How do they work?**

CROSSING THE THRESHOLD: At some point, the hero leaves the familiar, safe world of childhood and home and enters fully into the new world of the journey. Perhaps this is the moment that your hero chose to be 'super' or first put on his or her mask (like Peter Parker when he became Spiderman or Mulan, pretending to be a boy, enters a new world at the all-male army camp.) **When did your superhero decide to leave safety and familiarity behind?**

TRIALS: Every hero faces trials. Perhaps an enemy shows up that can't be easily beat. Or, the hero has to succeed at a series of trials that challenge and build his or her moral strength and character. Typically, one of these trials involves a going into a dangerous place or into a fight where the hero may experience a wound that cannot be healed. **What trials has your superhero had to face?**

ACHIEVEMENT OF GOAL: Upon successful completion of the trials, the hero achieves the ultimate goal of the journey. **What is your hero's goal?**

RECONCILIATION WITH A FATHER-FIGURE: If a division or conflict with the hero's father or father-figure or mother-figure is part of the hero's journey, reconciliation or healing with the father or mother occurs as part of the hero's journey. **Does your hero have anyone they love that they have hurt or left behind?**

RETURN HOME: The hero, sometimes willingly and sometimes unwillingly, again crosses the threshold and returns home. He or she brings new wisdom and important cultural values back upon his or her return. **Can your hero go back to his or her home? Have they changed in any ways from the way they were at the beginning?**



TELLING TALES

Challenge students to begin telling an exciting part of their hero's story in three to six panels. *As they grow more comfortable with these single page strips they can start moving on to longer sequences of their hero's journey.*

Remind them to not get caught up thinking there are any right or wrong ways to making a comic because there aren't. Simply tell a story, draw it in pictures, and place it in a sequence. Because much of

the comic book story can be told through the characters' expressions and body language, your characters' conversations can be brief and to the point.

Since they don't need a lot of it, the dialogue should be interesting, tell us something about the characters, and move the plot forward. The images should also contribute to tell the story.



Remind students they can use sound effects (also called onomatopoeia) to help tell their story and what's happening too.

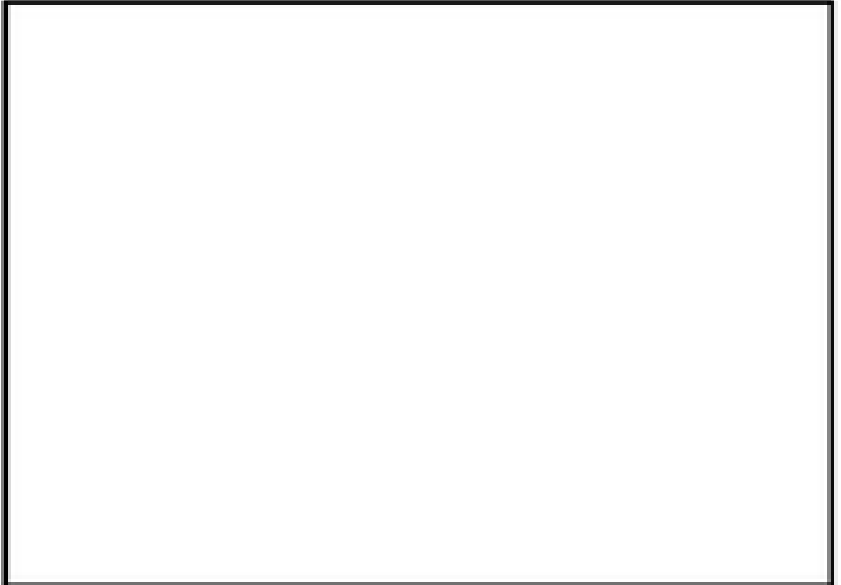
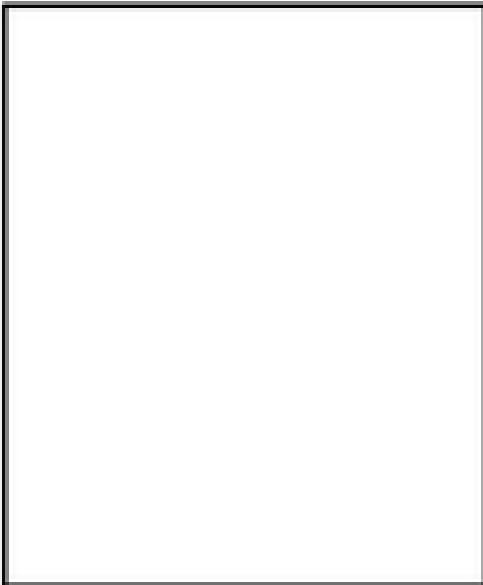
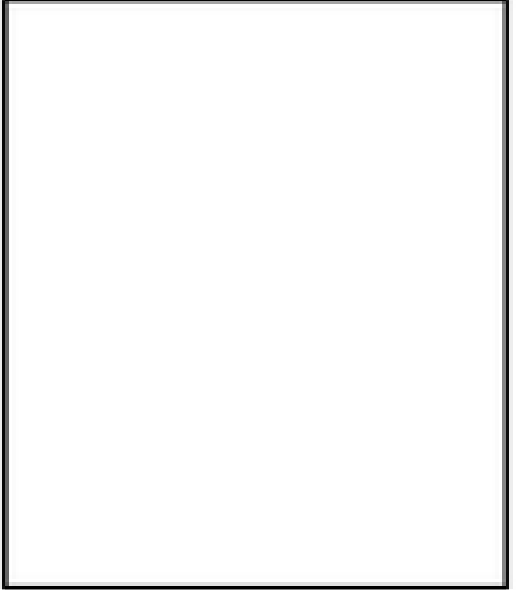
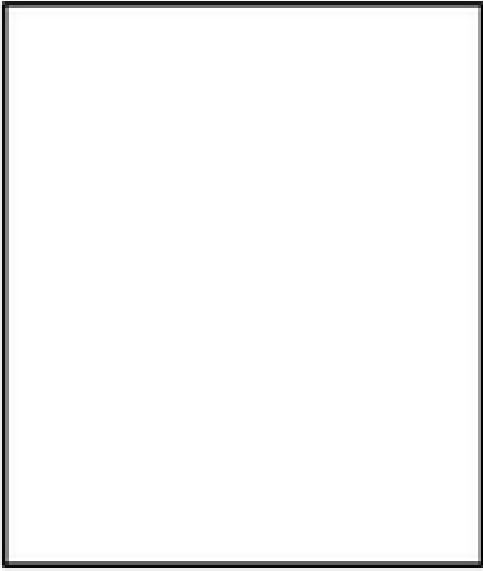
Have students think about how to use their characters to best tell the story. Craft a very quick script, in fact do several!, and then, using one of your completed scripts, draw a rough, quick sketch to correspond with each panel in your script. Don't take too long about it. When you're done, you will have a set of thumbnails outlining your comic sequence. Focus on drawing characters and setting first, and position your balloons or captions later, so they won't cover too much art.

Remember that professional comic artists draw about one to four pages a week on average! It's important for to take your time and do it right!

SHARING IS SUPER!

When they've finished give each student a chance to share his or her superhero or super-villain's name, encouraging the class to guess at the nature of each character based on that name. Then have them share their story panels and tell a bit about their hero's journey so far. What is the character doing? Who else is in the action with them? What's happening?





DAYS TEN & ELEVEN K-8 STANDARD ALIGNMENT

K

- W.K.3. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred
- SL.K.5. Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions [and stories] to provide additional detail.
- RL.K.7. With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin working on crafting their hero's narrative and developing their scripts, thumbnails, panels, plot etc. for their comic/story. These concepts will be part of our discussion on how we should think about developing our stories and what different story elements (dialogue, images, 'word art' or onomatopoeia) add to our stories to enhance them and how each part relates to the others and should work together to form a cohesive whole.

1

- W.1.3. Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened and use temporal words to signal event order.
- SL.1.5. Add drawings to descriptions [and stories] when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings as well as plot points, events, etc.
- RI.1.6. Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin working on crafting their hero's narrative and developing their scripts, thumbnails, panels, plot etc. for their comic/story. These concepts will be part of our discussion on how we should think about developing our stories and what different story elements (dialogue, images, 'word art' or onomatopoeia) add to our stories to enhance them and how each part relates to the others and should work together to form a cohesive whole.

2

- W.2.3. Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, and use temporal words to signal event order.
- SL.2.5. b) Add drawings to stories to clarify events, plot points, characters, ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
- RI.2.7. Explain how specific images contribute to and clarify a text.

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3

- W.3.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- W.3.3. a) Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
- W.3.3. b) Use [concise & vivid] dialogue, images, and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.
- W.3.3. c) Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order.
- SL.3.5. Add visual displays and drawings [to stories] when appropriate to emphasize or enhance certain facts or details.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin working on crafting their hero's narrative and developing their scripts, thumbnails, panels, plot etc. for their comic/story. These concepts will be part of our discussion on how we should think about developing our stories and what different story elements (dialogue, images, 'word art' or onomatopoeia) add to our stories to enhance them and how each part relates to the others and should work together to form a cohesive whole.

4

- W.4.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- W.4.3. a) Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
- W.4.3. b) Use [concise & vivid] dialogue, images, drawings, and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
- W.4.3. c) Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
- W.4.3. d) Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details and images to convey experiences and events precisely.
- SL.4.5. Add drawings and visual displays to presentations and stories when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin working on crafting their hero's narrative and developing their scripts, thumbnails, panels, plot etc. for their comic/story. These concepts will be part of our discussion on how we should think about developing our stories and what different story elements (dialogue, images, 'word art' or onomatopoeia) add to our stories to enhance them and how each part relates to the others and should work together to form a cohesive whole.

5

- W.5.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- W.5.3. a) Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
- W.5.3. b) Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, images, and pacing, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.

- W.5.3. c) Use a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses to manage the sequence of events.
- W.5.3. d) Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
- SL.5.5. Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics) and visual displays (e.g., drawings) in presentations and stories when appropriate to enhance the development of plot, characters, main ideas or themes.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin working on crafting their hero's narrative and developing their scripts, thumbnails, panels, plot etc. for their comic/story. These concepts will be part of our discussion on how we should think about developing our stories and what different story elements (dialogue, images, 'word art' or onomatopoeia) add to our stories to enhance them and how each part relates to the others and should work together to form a cohesive whole.

6

- W.6.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- W.6.3. a) Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- W.6.3. b) Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, images, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- W.6.3. c) Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- W.6.3. d) Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, clear images, and sensory language and details, to convey experiences and events.
- SL.6.5. Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images) and visual displays (e.g., drawings) in presentations and stories to clarify information, e.g., plot, characters, events, main ideas, or themes.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin working on crafting their hero's narrative and developing their scripts, thumbnails, panels, plot etc. for their comic/story. These concepts will be part of our discussion on how we should think about developing our stories and what different story elements (dialogue, images, 'word art' or onomatopoeia) add to our stories to enhance them and how each part relates to the others and should work together to form a cohesive whole.

7

- W.7.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- W.7.3. a) Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- W.7.3. b) Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

- W.7.3. c) Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- W.7.3. d) Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
- SL.7.5. Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images) and visual displays (e.g., drawings) in presentations and stories to clarify and emphasize salient points.

These standards will be met and reinforced as students begin working on crafting their hero's narrative and developing their scripts, thumbnails, panels, plot etc. for their comic/story. These concepts will be part of our discussion on how we should think about developing our stories and what different story elements (dialogue, images, 'word art' or onomatopoeia) add to our stories to enhance them and how each part relates to the others and should work together to form a cohesive whole.

8

- W.8.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- W.8.3. a) Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- W.8.3. b) Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- W.8.3. c) Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.
- W.8.3. d) Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, clear images and drawings, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
- SL.8.5 Make strategic use of graphics and multimedia components (e.g., drawings and illustrations) to express information and enhance understanding of presentations and stories.
- SL.8.5.a Integrate multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images) and visual displays (e.g., drawings) into presentations and stories to clarify information and/or add interest.

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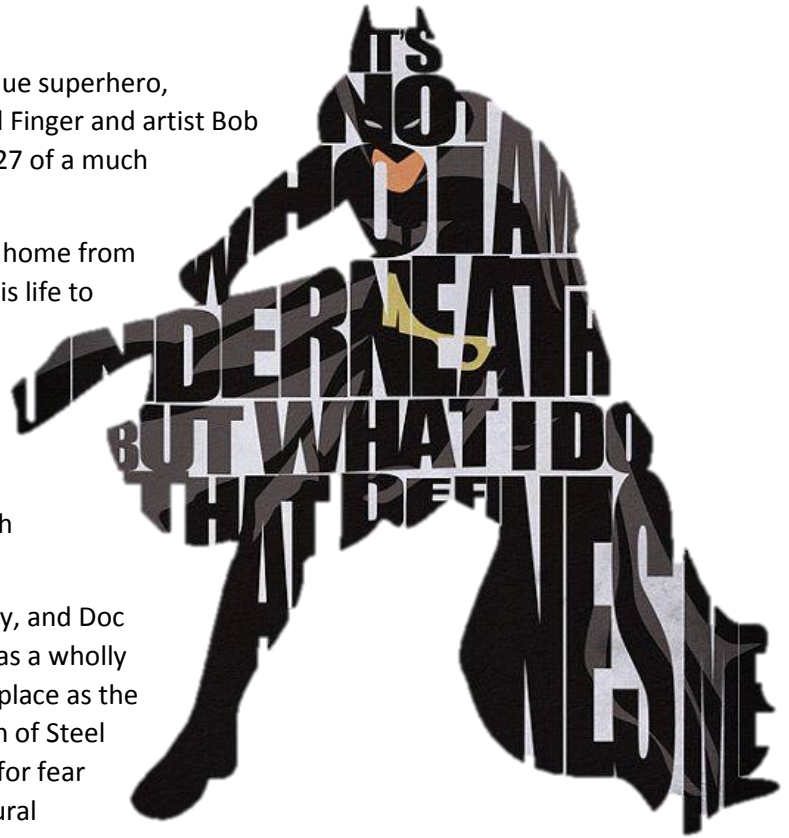
DAY TWELVE: THE CAPED CRUSADER

"I AM VENGEANCE.
I AM THE NIGHT.
I AM BATMAN."

In May of 1939, close to a year after the first true-blue superhero, Superman, appeared in Action Comics #1, writer Bill Finger and artist Bob Kane introduced a superhero in Detective Comics #27 of a much different stripe: the Batman!

Witnessing the murder of his parents while walking home from the movies, a young Bruce Wayne vows to devote his life to fighting crime. "I swear by the spirits of my parents to avenge their deaths by spending the rest of my life warring on all criminals." [Detective Comics #33] After years of study and training, he dons a cape and cowl, secures himself an assortment of gadgets, and goes off into the night to do battle with Gotham City's criminal element. Batman is born.

Equal parts Sherlock Holmes, the Shadow, Dick Tracy, and Doc Savage, the Caped Crusader nevertheless emerged as a wholly unique entry in the pulp hero canon, and found his place as the perfect counterpart to Superman. Whereas the Man of Steel stands for hope and justice, the Dark Knight stands for fear and vengeance. Whereas Clark Kent was raised in rural Kansas by a family of modest means, Bruce Wayne was raised in the sprawling metropolis of Gotham by a family of extraordinary wealth. And whereas Superman has a laundry list of spectacular powers that he gained simply in virtue of existing here on Earth, Batman is a mere man, but one who has pushed himself through rigorous training to become an expert investigator and fighter. (Having great looks and a nearly inexhaustible amount of financial resources doesn't hurt, either.) Together they really are some of the 'World's Finest.



A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Lots of superheroes have home cities that play an important role in making them who they are. Superman's Metropolis. Flash's Central City. Spider-Man's New York. But none play quite as central a role as Gotham City does for Batman.



“The Case of the Joker’s Crime Circus” in Batman #4 first refers to Batman’s city as “Gotham.” Is Gotham meant to be a fictional New York



City? Maybe. Its name is borrowed from Washington Irving’s regular use of the term to refer to NYC in his 19th century satirical magazine *Salmagundi*. Some associate Gotham with Chicago, though. In part that’s because of Christopher Nolan’s use of the city for his Batman films, particularly *The Dark Knight*, but in part that’s because of Chicago’s historical connection to the mob, especially to mobster Al Capone.

It’s a bit of a mistake, though, to worry too much about what city Gotham is “really” supposed to be. As it has been developed over the decades, it’s not supposed to be any one of them. Rather, Gotham is the dark reflection of all American cities—the seedy underbelly of urbanization. It doesn’t just have crime—it’s riddled with crime. It doesn’t just have some corruption—it’s wholly corrupt. It doesn’t just have income inequality—it’s defined entirely by the haves and have-nots. (Yes, that includes billionaire playboy Bruce Wayne.) Its architecture is dehumanizing. Its alleys are labyrinthine.

Batman fits into Gotham in a way that no other superhero fits into his or her surroundings. He is a creation of the city. When its pervasive crime got so bad that it finally impacted the city’s elite with the murder of Thomas and Martha Wayne, Gotham spat out their son as a response: a billionaire turned vigilante who targets everyone from corrupt politicians to police on the take and fights everyone from low-end burglars to master criminals. For their part, the people of Gotham endorse the Caped Crusader implicitly in their half-hearted attempts to bring him to justice and explicitly with their regular cries for help, showcased by good cops like Jim Gordon shining the Bat-Signal into the night sky when Batman’s services are needed.



Batman was a hugely popular character right out the gate in 1939 and has been going strong ever since. Although strictly-speaking lacking in superpowers, his highly-honed skills and enormous wealth render him super-heroic, and any fan of the Justice League of America will tell you that he can more than handle his own with the likes of Superman, Wonder Woman, and Green Lantern. The Dark Knight will make any comic book fans' list of the most important superheroes ever created, and each generation seems to find something in him that resonates. The Caped Crusader will no doubt continue to exercise our imaginations for generations to come.

SUPERHEROES: A REFLECTION OF THEIR CITY?



Hot and Cool Reflective Landscapes/Cityscapes by Joanna Davis at Ourartlately.blogspot All Rights Reserved. And by Erin at LaughPaintCreate.blogspot. All Rights Reserved.

You will need:

- [Scratch-Foam Printing board](#)
- White paper (12x18)
- Watercolors, brushes, wash bowl
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Printing ink, brayer and Plexiglas (or other material to put the ink on as a palette)

First use

watercolors to create the backdrop for your cities. Start with a white piece of 12x18 paper, fold it in half (long-ways/"hot dog style") and painted hot-colored watercolor on top and cool-colored watercolors beneath the folded horizon line. Paint the top half of the paper with warm colors to represent the sky and the bottom half with cool colors to represent water.

Now we draw our city design on printing foam (usually are thin sheets of Styrofoam, 9x12 sheets, cut in half fit perfectly).

Have students use a pencil to draw/etch their city and skyline, pressing firmly into the foam leaving the valleys that will be the lines when we print.



Have students cut the negative space off the top of the printing plate. Students then roll black water-based ink over their printing plate (It's a good idea to use Speedball water-based printing ink--- semi-pricey but sticks to the Styrofoam marvelously and transfers great too!)



Have them print the first print in the hot-colored section (the "sky") and then flip it (WITHOUT inking it again) and use the remaining ink to create a ghost print in the beneath it in the blue section (the "water"). It's not a direct reflection, but it still works. You may want to experiment with some other strategies to

try and get a more direct reflection, ex. it might also work if you printed the top and then quickly folded the paper and gently press it together to cause the ink to transfer a reflection print on the bottom.



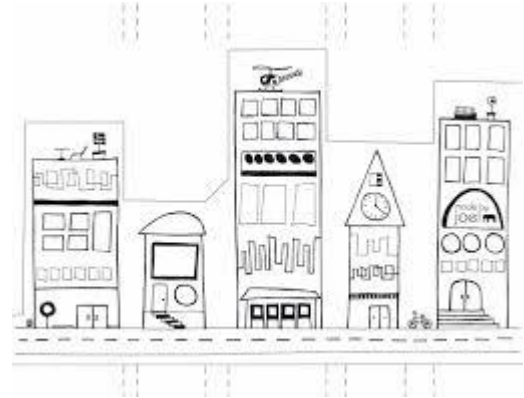
LAYERED CITYSCAPES

Color your sheets (they can also be left white), craft a background, and then hand cut a section of cityscape out of the pattern. Layer it on the front of your background paper, ex. Black cardstock, with pieces of foam tape, making sure to show some of the buildings of the background at the top.

The thickness of the tape will help to pop up the buildings and elements from the background paper. Keep adding additional layers of buildings (and even possibly a spotlight lit up calling for a hero) using the foam tape pieces.

Tip: To make it even easier to find buildings and elements for students to layer into their own heroic city some fun and creative black and white templates of cities (including variations on Sydney, Paris, Agrabah, and your everyday US City), the country, dinosaurs, the circus, vehicles (including helicopters, cars, vans, bikes, and more), people, animals, and more are available at MadebyJoel.com:

<http://madebyjoel.com/paper-city>



DAY TWELVE K-8 STANDARD ALIGNMENT

K

- 3.2.2 Identify subject matter, symbols, and ideas in the student's own art.
- 3.2.3 Explain subject matter, symbols, and ideas in the student's own art.

These standards will be met and reinforced during our discussion of Batman and other superheroes relationships to their home cities, examining the teacher's pre-made sample picture, and then working on incorporating super symbols and the idea of being a superhero's city into our art projects. Students will identify any elements of their cities and art projects that relate to their superhero or it being a superhero's home town once their project is complete.

1

- 3.2.1 Identify subject matter and symbols in the student's own art.
- 3.2.2 Summarize subject matter, symbols, and ideas in the student's own art.

These standards will be met and reinforced during our discussion of Batman and other superheroes relationships to their home cities, examining the teacher's pre-made sample picture, and then working on incorporating super symbols and the idea of being a superhero's city into our art projects. Students will identify any elements of their cities and art projects that relate to their superhero or it being a superhero's home town once their project is complete.

2

- 3.1.3 Implement chosen subject matter, symbols, and ideas in the student's own art.
- 3.2.2 Examine subject matter, symbols, and ideas in the student's own art.

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3

- 3.1.2 Integrate subject matter, symbols, and ideas in one's own artwork as guided by the teacher.
- 3.2.2 Reflect on subject matter, symbols, and ideas in one's own artwork as guided by the teacher.

These standards will be met and reinforced during our discussion of Batman and other superheroes relationships to their home cities, examining the teacher's pre-made sample picture, and then working on incorporating super symbols and the idea of being a superhero's city into our art projects. Students will identify any elements of their cities and art projects that relate to their superhero or it being a superhero's home town once their project is complete.

4

- 3.1.2 Integrate subject matter, symbols, and ideas in one’s own artwork as modeled by the teacher.
- 3.2.2 Reflect on subject matter, symbols, and ideas in one’s own artwork as modeled by the teacher.

These standards will be met and reinforced during our discussion of Batman and other superheroes relationships to their home cities, examining the teacher’s pre-made sample picture, and then working on incorporating super symbols and the idea of being a superhero’s city into our art projects. Students will identify any elements of their cities and art projects that relate to their superhero or it being a superhero’s home town once their project is complete.

5

- 3.1.2 Integrate subject matter, symbols, and ideas in one’s own artwork as coached by the teacher.
- 3.2.2 Reflect on subject matter, symbols, and ideas in one’s own artwork as coached by the teacher.

These standards will be met and reinforced during our discussion of Batman and other superheroes relationships to their home cities, examining the teacher’s pre-made sample picture, and then working on incorporating super symbols and the idea of being a superhero’s city into our art projects. Students will identify any elements of their cities and art projects that relate to their superhero or it being a superhero’s home town once their project is complete.

6

- 3.1.2 Analyze the use of subjects, themes, and symbols in works of art.
- 3.1.3 Apply subjects, themes, and symbols in works of art in an effective manner.

These standards will be met and reinforced during our discussion of Batman and other superheroes relationships to their home cities, examining the teacher’s pre-made sample picture, sample images created by other artists of ‘Gotham’ and how we know it’s Gotham (ex. The bat signal is a pretty strong giveaway—why? How about a silhouette of Batman on top of a building?) and then working on incorporating super symbols and the idea of being a superhero’s city into our art projects. Students will identify any elements of their cities and art projects that relate to their superhero or it being a superhero’s home town once their project is complete.

7

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8

- 3.1.2 Analyze the use of subjects, themes, and symbols in works of art.
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SAMPLES OF POSSIBLE WEEK THREE ACADEMIC VOCABULARY WORDS TO REINFORCE

K

- Illustrator
- Beginning
- Ending
- Drawing

1

- Character
- Setting
- Illustrate
- Sequence

2

- Discussion
- Main idea
- Message
- Draft

3

- Character
- Setting
- Summarize
- Punctuation

4

- Caption
- Audience
- Outline
- Time order/transitional words

5

- Main Idea
- Narrative
- Hyperbole
- Theme
- Visual image

6

- Hyperbole
- Imagery
- Symbolism
- Point of View
- Sequential Order

7

- Mood
- Foreshadowing
- Flashback
- Tone
- Nuance
- Climax

8

- Protagonist
- Antagonist
- Sensory detail
- Shades of meaning
- Tension
- Mood
- Tone

SAMPLE WEEK THREE SUPPLY LIST

DAY NINE

- Access to internet & videos
- Pencils
- Superhero/Supervillain Printouts
- Teacher samples
- Drawing reference guide from unit web page
- Optional: *The Super Book for Superheroes*

DAYS TEN & ELEVEN

- Comic Panel Printouts (plenty of copies)
- Completed worksheets from the previous day
- Pencils
- Drawing/art materials (colored pencils, crayons, rulers, etc)
- Teacher sample

DAY TWELVE

- Associated Power Point from unit web page
- Scratch-Foam Printing board
- White paper (12x18)
- Watercolors, brushes, wash bowl
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Foam tape
- Cardstock
- Printing ink, brayer and Plexiglas (or other material to put the ink on as a palette)
- Optional: Printouts of City Elements & Building Templates from madebyjoel.com