Superheroes/Supervillains

In June 1938, after years of creating comic heroes that were rejected, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster finally published Superman with Action Comics. Their "Man of Steel" possessed many superpowers, such as the ability to fly, superhuman strength, and x-ray vision. That first issue of Superman is now worth $440,000!

**TASK**

In a few short paragraphs, create and describe your own superhero or a villain with superpowers.

**Brainstorming**

Focus on describing your hero or villain's incredible powers and unique physical traits. This will make your character appear more exciting.

**Study the character/Become an expert:** Think of superheroes you already know and write down some of the powers, strengths, and weaknesses that they possess. If your character is like a cat, for example, think about how cats behave. Try to incorporate these attributes into your character.

**Place of birth:** Think about an unusual and extraordinary place where your superhero/villain was born and describe it. How did your character get to Earth? Where does he or she live now?

**Profile:** What is your superhero's/villain's name? What does he/she look like? Is he/she muscular? Short? Funny looking? Describe the personality of your superhero/villain. Why did he or she choose good over evil (or evil over good)?

**Secret disguise:** What is your superhero's (or villain's) secret disguise? What does he or she wear when fighting (or committing) crimes?

**Powers and weaknesses:** What powers does your superhero/villain have? What can he or she do that other humans cannot? How are the powers of your character limited? Is there something that can make him or her weak?

**Goal:** What does your superhero/villain want to achieve on Earth? Is he or she a crime fighter or a modern hero who fights against pollution? Or is he/she a villain who wants to destroy things or rule all? How does he or she do that? Who is preventing the him/her from reaching this goal?

**Word Box**

Here are some words that you may want to use when describing your superhero or villain. Underline those that could make your character sound more amazing.

- superhuman
- power
- force
- vigor
- swift
- high-speed
- vigorous
- mighty
- robust
- good
- evil
- phenomenal
- extraordinary
- ready to lend a hand
- justice
- muscular
- beefy
- legendary
- well-known
- famous

Can you think of more words that could describe your superhero or villain? Write them down here.

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**Sketching It Out**

Use your Sketching It Out graphic organizer to write an outline for your description of your character. Your brainstorming ideas will help you.

**Putting It Together**

Using full sentences, write a complete description of your superhero/villain. Remember to use the words from the word box to make him/her come to life. Keep referring to your outline. Grab hold of your reader by starting out with an unusual lead, like:

In a far off, distant galaxy, millions of light-years beyond the Milky Way, there is an extraordinary planet...
Superheroes/Supervillains

Describe your character.

Describe his or her place of birth.

Describe your drawing.

Describe your hero’s/villain’s powers.

Describe your hero’s/villain’s weaknesses.

Show your superhero/supervillain in and out of disguise.

A simile is a comparison using the words like or as. Can you find similes for the following words to describe your superhero or villain?

My Superhero (or Villain)

is as strong as . . .

is as fast as . . .

is as big as . . .

jumps as high as . . .

is wicked and angry, like a . . .

GOAL

What does your hero/villain want to achieve?
ADVENTURE #4  Wouldn't you like to find a mermaid? Join the hunt! Keep your eyes open, and you might catch a glimpse of these fantastic creatures!

Read Maria’s diary about the Mermaid Hunt. Write the main idea for each diary entry. Be ready to explain how you decided on the main idea.

Thursday, May 18

Dear Diary,
Today I joined the crew of the submarine named Explorer. We are going on a hunt for mermaids. I have wanted to do this all my life. I am so excited! I hope I see one!
Maria

The main idea is


Saturday, May 20

Dear Diary,
I’ve been learning about the history of mermaids today. Irish legends say that mermaids were women who did not follow the religion of their day in Ireland. Because of this, they were banished from the earth by St. Patrick. The only place they had to live was in the sea.
Maria

The main idea is


Tuesday, May 22

Dear Diary,
Along with their belief in mermaids, many people in Ireland and Scotland believe in sea serpents. There are frequent reports of people sighting them. These are huge sea snakes that are about 300 feet long. Stories of the Scottish Loch Ness monster and the kraken of Scandinavia have been told for years. I'm hoping to see a sea serpent, too!
Maria

The main idea is


Friday, May 25

Dear Diary,
How thrilling! I am just sure I saw a mermaid today. She had the head and body of a woman. Below the waist, the creature was a fish with scales and a long tail. Really! I did see one swimming off the side of the boat!
Maria

The main idea is
ROCK INTO THE PAST

ADVENTURE #5 Attend the very first rock concert! Take an awesome time machine into the Stone Age and get ready to rock!

Use information from the poster to answer the questions.

1. Who performs *My Cave's on Fire*?

2. What follows the intermission?

3. What song does Mick Jagged & the Rolling Boulders perform?

4. Which song is sung by the Smashing Marbles?

5. Who sings with Bronto?

6. What do the Limestone Lovers perform?

7. Who is the lead singer with the Hot Rocks?

8. Who performs *The Gravel Pit Rock*?

9. Who sings about a brontosaurus?

10. Where is the concert held?

11. Who performs *Dancin' at the Quarry*?

12. When does the concert begin?

13. Who sings about granite?

Name

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Common Core Reinforcement Activities — 4th Grade Language

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MEET THE MAN OF LAMANCHA

ADVENTURE #8 Ride with the outlandish, mythical knight, Don Quixote, Man of la Mancha! See what fun he had on his outlandish adventures!

DRAGONS, WINDMILLS, & FIERCE ARMIES TO CONQUER

An unusual young man spent years reading wonderful tales about knighthood. His fantasies were filled with all the battles and quarrels, loves, adventures, dragons, and enchantments of the lives of knights. He read so much that his brain dried up and he got a little crazy. He decided to become a knight and do everything he had read about. He thought up an excellent, knightly name for himself: Don Quixote, Man of la Mancha.

The new knight got some old armor of his grandfather’s and saddled up his weak old horse. He took Sancho, a simple neighbor, along as his squire. Off he went to have the adventures of a knight.

Soon he came upon a gang of more than thirty giants. Sancho pointed out that these were windmills, not giants, but Don Quixote rode forward bravely to fight the giants, waving his sword wildly. He broke his sword and was thrown from his horse, but he still believed he had fought giants.

Next he saw two huge armies and decided to join one and lead it to defeat the other. The armies were two flocks of sheep, but Don Quixote did not seem to notice. Waving and whirling his sword, he charged into the midst of the sheep. The shepherds thought he was crazy. They threw stones at him to drive him off. He was sure he had been wounded by the swords of the enemy in battle.

Write a short summary of the story of Don Quixote.
BRING A MASK

ADVENTURE #11 Find yourself a great costume and a wonderful mask. You’re invited to be the guest of King Louis XIV at the great palace of Versailles!

On this page and the next page (page 35), read about each guest you will meet at the ball. Then answer the questions.

Count Pompous is strutting about the great hall with a fancy hat and his high-heeled boots. He will probably keep his nose in the air the entire evening.

Countess Dainté dances lightly across the ballroom floor. She seems to float around the room with a light step. Everything about her seems soft, sweet, and sincere.

1. What word would you use to describe Count Pompous? ________________________________________________________________________________

(Do not use one that is used here.)

What things in the description helped you choose this word? ____________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

2. From what you have read, tell what kind of an event this ball is.

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Use with page 35.

Name
Read about these guests, too. Then answer the questions.

Lady Columbine is busy showing off her beauty and grace. She just knows that everyone is looking at her, and no one else. If you are not a young, handsome, wealthy prince, she won’t want to waste her time on you!

4. What kinds of things would you expect Prince Mischief to do at this party?

Little Prince Mischief just loves these parties, too! He is so small that guests hardly notice him. He lurks around under tables and behind curtains, having loads of fun!

5. What guest would you most like to meet?

Why?

There’s Dowager La-de-da! How honored you should be to come into the presence of this rich old dame. Be sure you do not say anything rowdy or improper in her presence. She has no time for foolishness.

Judge d’Eclaire is a very important man. He loves these parties because of the plentiful food. Oh, how he loves to eat! If you stop to visit with him, do bring him a pastry or two.
Having put their children to bed, Mr. and Mrs. Martinez leaned back on the couch and put their feet up. They were set to enjoy their grown-up time, when they heard wild laughter coming from their children’s room. Mr. and Mrs. Martinez stormed into the room. “We’re really irate,” they cried, “and we’re getting angrier by the second. You know it’s time to go to sleep! This is our time to relax! Now be quiet, close your eyes, and go to sleep!”

“It was the hyena under the bed,” the children protested. “He’s the culprit! He’s the one who is doing all the wild laughing. You shouldn’t be mad at us. We’re innocent! We’ve done nothing wrong!”

“That’s enough!” the parents yelled before closing the door tightly behind them and heading back down the stairs. They hadn’t gone more than halfway down when the wild laughing started again. Immediately, they retraced their steps and swung the door open. “You’ve been warned!” they said, their voices shaking in fury. “Once more, and you will be punished!”

Despite the warnings, there was wild laughter from the room two more times. As they made their way back to the couch, Mr. Martinez said wearily, “I’m tired of their lying. They keep saying they’re innocent victims, and they blame a hyena under the bed. I’ve never heard of anything so ridiculous. I don’t know which makes me angrier: that we’ve ordered them to stop and they won’t, or that they think we would believe such a ridiculous story.”

Mr. Martinez stopped talking only when he bumped into Mrs. Martinez. She had stopped suddenly on the bottom step. Funny sounds were coming out of her mouth while she raised a shaking hand and pointed to the couch. There, making itself comfortable, was a crocodile. “I know what would make me the most irate,” the crocodile said as it rearranged cushions. “It’s ridiculous that your children expect you to believe their silly story about a hyena laughing while under the bed. Why would a hyena be under the bed when it could be on top of the bed? No animal would take a hard, cold floor over a soft, cozy piece of furniture.”
Hard to Believe (cont.)

Now Answer the story questions below.

1. Why did Mr. and Mrs. Martinez go into the children’s room?

2. Why didn’t Mr. and Mrs. Martinez look for the hyena under the bed?

3. In paragraph 1, you are told that Mr. and Mrs. Martinez “stormed into the room.” What does this expression mean in the way it is used here?

How does the story help you know this information?

4. In paragraph 5, Mrs. Martinez sees something. In the box below, draw a picture of what she sees. On the lines, write a few words that describe how she felt when she saw this.

How did you know what Mrs. Martinez was feeling when she saw this? Tell which parts of the story gave you this information.
Hard to Believe (cont.)

Reread the entire story one last time. As you read, think about how the last paragraph relates to the rest of the passage.

5. Do you think the children were ever punished? Tell why or why not. (Your answer cannot be wrong because it is your opinion, but you must defend your answer.)

________________________________________________________________________

Would your answer have been the same if you had only read the first four paragraphs? Tell why or why not.

________________________________________________________________________

6. Fiction can be realistic. Is this story realistic? Tell why or why not.

________________________________________________________________________

7. The story might have had a very different ending if Mr. and Mrs. Martinez had looked under the bed immediately after the children told them a hyena was under it.

Imagine you are the author. You are just beginning paragraph 3, and one of the parents is going to be looking under the bed. Write the first four lines of the paragraph.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Do hyenas really laugh? Look in books or online to find out.