Superheroes: Innovation & Creativity

What is a Superhero? Their Superpowers? Sidekicks? Villains? Who creates art/drawings?

NOTICE: Most comic book superheroes displayed here are the intellectual properties of Marvel and DC. Images displayed in this presentation are utilized as Fair Use in a PLCH educational children’s program.
In the beginning...

Katzenjammer Kids (1897) and Happy Hooligan (1900) were influential early comic strips. Both were among the first popular comics with King Features Syndicate. A few years later, King Features introduced Barney Google (1919); no relation to google.com.
Golden Age (1930s–1950s)

Superman (1938) was the first crusader for social justice.

[Images of Superman comic book covers]

www.psu.edu/dept/inart10_110/inart10/cmbk2fungold.html
http://jeffhilimire.com
Batman (1939)

The Dark Knight: Does Batman exhibit a darker, heroic brutality?

Wonder Woman (1941)

Princess Diana is a heroine fighting for justice, love, peace, and human equality.

Source: USPS

http://memory.loc.gov/service/pnp/ppmsca/02900/02929v.jpg
Later Comic Book Eras

- Silver Age (1950s-1970s)
- Bronze Age (1970s-1980s)
- Modern Age (Recent decades)

http://img.lib.msu.edu/special-collections/
What is an author or artist?

- What types of works do authors and artists create?
- Have you written any short stories, songs, poems, or drawings?
- So...are you an author or artists?
- Then could superheroes be artists or authors too?
How do Superheroes or the author/artist creators of Superheroes protect their creativity and innovation?

• How might you protect your original drawing, storyline, or song?

• What about your invention for Superhero gadget?

• Or Superhero name or adventure story title?

Image Source: www.ipinbrief.com
Copycats are literary villains

• When we copy someone else’s story or artwork without crediting them, it is dishonest and wrong. However, when we give credit and list a source notice of the author or artist, this is also a way of thanking the author for the use of their information in our school papers or other creative projects.

• For today’s activity, you will create your own original Superhero. Please avoid copying from a popularly known favorite or another author.
What is © Copyright?

• Copyright is a form of legal protection given to the authors of books, music, movies, etc. Users of the books may not make copies without permission from the authors except in limited occurrences for school and personal use where there is no profit involved.

• Copyright infringement occurs when others take and use your work without permission.
Defending Copyrights of Characters and Storylines

- *Wonder Man* was introduced in 1939, the year after *Superman* premiered.

- Wonder Man’s powers are almost exactly like those of *Superman*, so close that Detective Comics, then the publisher of *Superman*, sued the publisher of *Wonder Man* for copying the character concept of *Superman*, which is also known as *copyright infringement*.

- This was the first *copyright lawsuit* in comic book history and set a precedent for DC Comics’ strong protection of its characters.


*Wonder Man* is an example of a character that has fallen into the *public domain*. 
Do you own any copyrights?

Did you know that whenever you write a poem or story or even a paper for your class, or a drawing or other artwork, you automatically own the copyright to it?
Source: www.copyrightkids.org

So any artwork or short story you create today could be copyrighted, if you just post the © symbol and your author name, for example: © Susan Jones. TRY IT: Practice drawing a letter “C” within a circle.

Image source: http://web.law.duke.edu/cspd/comics/

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/8/87/Captain_copyright.jpg
Spiderman teams up with Windex®

**Trademarks**

Trademarks protect *words, names, symbols, sounds, or colors that distinguish goods and services, including Superheroes.*

**Patents**

Patents are granted by the U.S. Government for inventions which are usually revolutionary and new!

RIGHT: Head Dress, design patent
Des. 329,321 - Sep 15, 1992
No, we’re not talkin’ trading bubble gum cards or switching personal identities.

Trade Secrets are related to keeping a secret, such as business secrets, or secret recipes or formulas.

Can you think of any famous secret recipes or formulas which you buy at a restaurant or store?

Some intellectual properties are better left a secret rather than a copyright, trademark, or patent.
Superhero Innovation & Creativity

• Now, create your own original Superhero
• What special powers will you formulate?
• Any gadgets or gizmos?
• Give your Superhero a trademarked name or adventure title.
• Share your creations with the group.
• Remember, you are now the copyright holder of your Superhero drawings and stories!