



OPERATION SUPERPOWER!

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WELCOME!

DEAR EDUCATORS,

**OPERA IS A LIVING,
BREATHING ART FORM. IT'S
FOR ANYONE, ANYWHERE.**

So it's a good thing the Canadian Opera Company's 2015 Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour is once again bursting out of the opera house to bring incredible singing, gripping drama and magical sets and costumes to your schools and communities! Every year over 15,000 students in southern Ontario and beyond are treated to some of the best young singers, directors and musicians this country has to offer. It is our mandate to create opera of the highest quality and many of our school tour performers have gone on to grace the stages of the world's major opera houses.

Operation Superpower is a unique experience created to inspire students to find the qualities and skills that make them special. It will not only introduce your students to the world of opera, but, through an interactive process that starts with this study guide, will help them discover and nurture their very own inner superhero. This guide contains all you need to start this journey in your own classroom.

**GOOD LUCK, BRAVE
SUPERHEROES!**

Vanessa Smith
School Programs Manager

OPERA 101

WHAT IS OPERA?

The term "opera" comes from the Italian word for "work" or "piece," and it is usually applied to the European tradition of opera. Opera is a story told through music, drama and design. Musical equivalents to European opera can be found in Japan, at the Peking Opera in China, and in Africa where it is called Epic Storytelling. The COC presents works in the western European tradition.

HISTORY OF OPERA – IN TWO MINUTES OR LESS!

Opera started in the late 16th century in Florence, Italy, at the beginning of the Baroque period of music. The first opera composers took many of their ideas from the ancient Greeks, who combined music and drama to tell a story more effectively. The Greeks also used a chorus to further the plot and comment on the action of the story.

Early operas recreated Greek tragedies with mythological themes. During the 17th and 18th centuries, opera used many different stories: some serious (called *opera seria*) and some light-hearted (called *opera buffa*). Since then, operas have been written on a wide variety of topics such as cultural clashes (*Madama Butterfly*), comedic farce (*The Barber of Seville*), politicians on foreign visits (*Nixon in China*), the celebration of Canadian heroes (*Louis Riel*), and children's stories (*The Little Prince*).

You probably know more about opera than you realize, as music from Bizet's *Carmen*, Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* and Verdi's *Rigoletto* (to name just a few) are featured in countless movies, cartoons and television commercials.

HOSTING AN OPERA PERFORMANCE AT YOUR SCHOOL!

We are truly excited that your school has chosen the Canadian Opera Company to perform for you. We recognize how much planning and co-ordination is done by the teachers in advance of our visit. To make things easier for you, your colleagues and our cast, here are some tips on how to host a COC opera at your school!

REQUIRED TIME FOR EACH PERFORMANCE

Set-up: 60 minutes
Performance: 45 minutes
Q&A: 15 minutes
Load-out: 30 minutes
TOTAL TIME: two hours 30 minutes

AUDIENCE

The opera is designed to perform for a maximum of 300 students in Kindergarten to Grade 3.

SPACE

The opera is designed to be performed on the gym floor to allow for optimal sightlines for children.

WHAT TO PREPARE IN ADVANCE OF THE PERFORMANCE

- ♦ Distribute this Study Guide to colleagues.
- ♦ Reserve performance space for the total time (see previous page).
- ♦ Ensure that the space is cleaned and cleared prior to COC's arrival.
- ♦ Ensure load-in is accessible directly from the van to the performance space.
- ♦ Reserve parking for vehicles.
- ♦ Arrange for four to six older students to help unload the sets, props and costumes from the van the day of the performance.
- ♦ Arrange for a space where the artists can change into their costumes (adult washrooms, change room, etc.).
- ♦ Check the availability of a full-size digital or acoustic piano (complete with 88 keys). If you have an acoustic piano please check if it is in tune. If the piano is in a different room, please confirm that it can be moved into the performance space. If you do not have a piano, please notify the COC's stage manager as soon as possible.
- ♦ Notify the stage manager* if you are hosting another school at the performance.
- ♦ Arrange for bells, announcements and PA systems to be turned off during performance.

*Please note that approximately one week before your performance, you will be contacted via e-mail by the COC's stage manager as well as a COC publicist. The stage manager will send you a list of questions and reminders that will ensure a smooth performance, and the publicist will only contact you if any media outlets are interested in covering the performance at your school.

ON THE DAY OF THE PERFORMANCE

- ♦ Greet the artists at the arrival time.
- ♦ Direct the artists as to where to park the van.
- ♦ Have the older students ready to help the artists unpack the van.
- ♦ Provide water for the artists or direct them to the nearest water fountain.
- ♦ Direct the artists to their changing room.
- ♦ Arrange for the student audience to be seated by the performance start time. COC performers are unionized and Prologue to the Performing Arts has crafted a detailed itinerary which adheres to our union agreements and ensures that we can arrive at each school in a timely fashion, set up, and begin the performance on time.
- ♦ Introduce the performance!

Mezzo-soprano
Rihab Chaieb
with enthusiastic
audience members
after a performance of
the Glencore
Ensemble Studio
School Tour production
of *Cinderella*, 2010.

Photo: Michael Cooper



SUGGESTED INTRODUCTION TO THE PERFORMANCE

Note: Whoever is making welcome remarks should connect with the stage manager prior to beginning the speech to ensure that the performers are ready to begin.

Good morning/afternoon! We're very pleased to welcome the Canadian Opera Company to our school. Today, the COC (pronounced "see-oh-see") will present the opera *Operation Superpower!* At the end of the performance you will have a chance to ask the performers questions about what you saw and heard and about opera in general.

A couple of things to remember during the performance:

- ♦ Listen quietly so you don't miss a word and so you can easily follow the story.
- ♦ Please sit on your bottom during the show so those behind you can see.
- ♦ Save thoughts and comments until the question and answer time at the end of the performance. Please remember to put up your hand if you have a question for the performers during the question and answer session at the end.
- ♦ A special note for the teachers or any guests in the room (excluding media): please put away any cameras or recording devices as we are not permitted to take photographs, videos or make audio recording of the performance due to union regulations.
- ♦ Save trips to the water fountain or washroom until after the opera, so you don't miss a note and so you don't disrupt your fellow audience members.

Please join me in welcoming the Canadian Opera Company!

PHOTOGRAPHY/MEDIA AT PERFORMANCES

A COC publicist actively engages local media to publicize school tour performances. They will contact you in advance to confirm whether media are allowed to be on school premises and, with the necessary permissions in place, will notify you of the possibility that media, including those with cameras, may be attending the performance. If your school or school board wants to arrange media or photography of the performance, you or the school/school board contact must notify the COC publicist a minimum of three working days prior to the performance. Due to COC union agreements, only media that has been granted permission by both the COC and the school can video or photograph the opera. This means that any media that did not obtain permission from both the COC and the school will not be permitted to take photos or video of the performance. The agreement also stipulates that no one, aside from approved media outlets, is permitted to take photos of COC artists and productions. Teachers, administrators, parents, parent council members, students, school board staff, or guests or any other individuals are not permitted to take photos of the performance. Approved production shots will be available for download for any school requiring photos for parent/guardian newsletters and other school materials.

If you have any questions or require approved images for school materials, please do not hesitate to contact Kristin McKinnon, the COC's assistant publicist, at kmckinnon@coc.ca or 416-306-2383.

OPERATION SUPERPOWER: THE STORY AND EXPERIENCE

**DISCOVER YOUR INNER SUPERPOWER WITH THE HELP OF
THREE HEROIC OPERA SINGERS!**

**THIS INTERACTIVE SHOW FEATURES OPERATIC SINGING AND
STORYTELLING THROUGH MUSIC.**

**THREE SUPERHEROES SHARE THEIR “ORIGIN STORIES” (OR
HOW THEY DISCOVERED THEIR SUPERPOWER) AND EMPOWER
STUDENTS TO IDENTIFY THEIR OWN SUPERPOWER THROUGH
STRENGTHS AND CHARACTER TRAITS THAT THEY ARE MOST
PROUD OF. THE SUPERHEROES ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO
NURTURE THESE POWERS AND USE THEM TO HELP OTHERS.**

**STUDENTS ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE DURING THE SHOW
IN MANY WAYS, INCLUDING SINGING THE “HERO CHORD”
AND SHARING THEIR SUPERPOWERS WITH THE REST OF THE
AUDIENCE.**



THE ORIGIN OF OPERATION SUPERPOWER

Operation Superpower was created by three graduates of The Juilliard School in New York: Armand Ranjbaran, Tobias Greenhalgh and John Brancy. *Operation Superpower* was created to inspire students to discover their inner superpower and learn how to use it to increase their confidence and help others.



**JOHN
BRANCY**

HOMETOWN: Mullica Hill, NJ

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT *OPERATION SUPERPOWER*?

I love how *Operation Superpower* has given my friends and I the chance to bring something truly special and helpful to students everywhere!

WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?
Singing and Cooking!

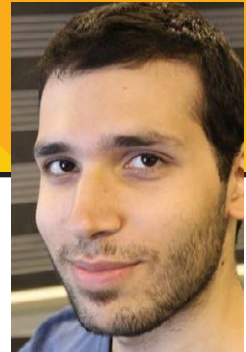


TOBIAS GREENHALGH

HOMETOWN: Rochester, NY (Not too far away from Ontario!)

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT *OPERATION SUPERPOWER*? I love the feeling of experiencing overwhelming amounts of positive energy in a supportive environment! I also love seeing children realize their superpowers and feel excited about it.

WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER? My main superpower is the ability to sing opera. Other superpowers include martial arts, being a good friend, and weight lifting.



**ARMAND
RANJBARAN**

HOMETOWN: Garden City, NY

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT *OPERATION SUPERPOWER*?

Collaborating with my friends and performing for audiences with undiscovered superpowers!

WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?
Composing music!

MEET THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM



**LESLIE
ABARQUEZ**

ROLE: Stage Manager

HOMETOWN: Newmarket,
Ontario

WHEN YOU DECIDED TO BE A STAGE
MANAGER: In university, I took a drama
course just for fun, then ended up
spending all my time in the theatre
working backstage on all the shows.

FAVOURITE PART OF SCHOOL TOUR:
My favourite part of school touring is
seeing the kids enjoying the show, and all
the great questions they ask!

WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?: My
super power is always having a smile and
being able to find the positive in most
situations.



**ASHLIE
CORCORAN**

ROLE: Director

HOMETOWN: White Rock,
British Columbia

WHEN YOU DECIDED YOU WANTED
TO DIRECT: When I was in first year
university, I started doing all sorts of
theatre jobs. I loved directing, as it meant
that I could work with every person on
the team.

FIRST TIME ON STAGE: Probably when I
was three, in a dance recital.

FAVOURITE PART OF SCHOOL TOUR:
Working with the talented members of
the Ensemble Studio!

WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?:
Collaboration



**JEAN-PHILIPPE
FORTIER-LAZURE**

ROLE: Superhero

HOMETOWN: Kitchener/
Waterloo

VOICE TYPE: Tenor

AGE WHEN YOU STARTED SINGING: I sang
as a boy in choir. At 14, when my voice
changed, I decided to start taking voice
lessons.

FIRST TIME ON STAGE: 16. I sang the role of
the young confederate soldier and Britt Craig
in *Parade* (by Jason Robert Brown)—it was
with a community musical theatre company,
and I've been hooked since!

FAVOURITE PART OF SCHOOL TOUR: Getting
to visit so many beautiful cities around Ontario
and sharing music and art that I'm passionate
about!

WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?:
Omnilinguism—I want to learn to speak to
and learn about all the different people in the
world!



CAMELLIA KOO

ROLE: Designer

HOMETOWN: born in London, Ontario, but grew up in Mississauga

AGE WHEN YOU FIRST STARTED DESIGNING: 18

FIRST THEATRICAL SHOW YOU DESIGNED FOR: *The Bundle* by Edward Bond.

FAVOURITE ASPECT OF SCHOOL TOUR: The challenge of designing a set that is imaginative and evocative but still fits into a minivan.

WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?: Invisibility



ERICA IRIS

ROLE: Superhero

HOMETOWN: Scarborough, Ontario

VOICE TYPE: Mezzo-Soprano

AGE WHEN YOU STARTED SINGING: Some say, since I was in my mother's womb! But I recall first singing at age 3.

FIRST TIME ON STAGE: Singing solos for church service when I was in first grade.

FAVOURITE PART OF THE SCHOOL TOUR: Meeting new people in the audience!

WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?: I always carry an "A" pitch in my head—I have relative pitch!



AARON SHEPPARD

ROLE: Superhero

HOMETOWN: St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

VOICE TYPE: Tenor

AGE WHEN YOU STARTED SINGING: 8

FIRST TIME ON STAGE: When I was in 3rd grade

FAVOURITE PART OF THE SCHOOL TOUR: The ability to share music and opera with all ages in a fun environment.

WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER? Quick reflexes that make me very good at XBOX.



JENNIFER SZETO

ROLE: Music Director

HOMETOWN: Calgary, Alberta

AGE WHEN YOU STARTED PLAYING PIANO: Age 5

FIRST TIME ON STAGE: Age 7

FAVOURITE PART OF THE SCHOOL TOUR: Travelling the country, spreading the "opera bug?" What's not to like! The best part is all the questions that students have about music and singing.

WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER? Being me!

HOW A SCHOOL TOUR OPERA IS CREATED

#1

STORY! WORDS! MUSIC! ... SOMEONE FINDS OR CREATES AN EXCITING STORY THEY THINK WOULD MAKE A GOOD OPERA. FOR OPERATION SUPERPOWER, TWO FRIENDS (JOHN AND TOBIAS) WORKED TOGETHER TO WRITE AN INSPIRING STORY ABOUT SUPERHEROES. THEY WROTE A SCRIPT, WHICH IS CALLED THE LIBRETTO. USING THIS, THE COMPOSER (ARMAND) WROTE THE MUSIC THAT TELLS THE STORY. COMBINED, THESE ARE CALLED THE SCORE.



#2

DIRECTOR: ASHLIE (FAR LEFT) READS AND STUDIES THE SCORE AND CREATES A CONCEPT OF HOW TO PUT THE OPERA ON STAGE.

DESIGNER: CAMELLIA (LEFT) STUDIES THE STAGE DIRECTOR'S CONCEPT AND WORKS WITH THE DIRECTOR ON A LOOK FOR THE PRODUCTION. WITH THE HELP OF BUILDERS, THE DESIGNER CREATES COSTUMES, PROPS AND A SET.



MUSIC DIRECTOR
JENNIFER WORKS WITH THE CAST ON HOW TO SING THE MUSIC, AND PLAYS THE PIANO FOR PERFORMANCES. IN LARGER OPERAS, THE PIANO IS REPLACED BY A FULL ORCHESTRA, WHICH IS LED BY THE CONDUCTOR.



#3

STAGE MANAGER
LESLEY HELPS THE DIRECTOR DURING REHEARSALS AND KEEPS NOTES. WORKS BACKSTAGE DURING PERFORMANCES TO KEEP EVERYTHING ON TRACK.



#4

CAST: THE SINGERS, (LEFT TO RIGHT) JEAN-PHILIPPE, ERICA AND AARON, PERFORM THE OPERA



#5

YOU THE AUDIENCE!
PERFORMING IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE IS WHAT MAKES ALL THE HARD WORK WORTH IT!

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

THIS RESOURCE IS DESIGNED TO GUIDE YOUR STUDENTS' JOURNEY TOWARDS BECOMING A SUPERHERO!

Each section links to an “element” of being a superhero—**courage, hope, honesty, imagination, and friendship**. Use the included activities to help your students discover and nurture their inner superpower before the performance—and then continue to nurture it during and afterwards. Each element also links to character traits you’re likely already covering in the Ontario Character Education curriculum. These links are highlighted within the guide and accompanying activities.

At the end of this guide, you’ll find activities and handouts to complete your superhero transition, including steps to create your superhero theme song, a superhero pledge, and a superhero certificate.

WHAT’S YOUR SUPERPOWER?

Your superpower is a skill, a talent, or a positive trait—something that makes you feel good! It could involve an art form or a sport, or you could have a special interest in science, history, or ecology. It could be a skill that lots of other people can do or a skill that very few people can do. It could be part of your personality that you are proud of and that makes others feel good. Your superpower makes you special and no one can take that away from you.

WHAT IS A “SUPERHERO”?

A superhero is someone who uses their superpower(s) to help others and bring good into the world.

HOW DO YOU BECOME A SUPERHERO?

Superhero training consists of the five elements: courage, hope, honesty, imagination, and friendship. These five elements, combined with a superpower, can make anyone become a superhero.

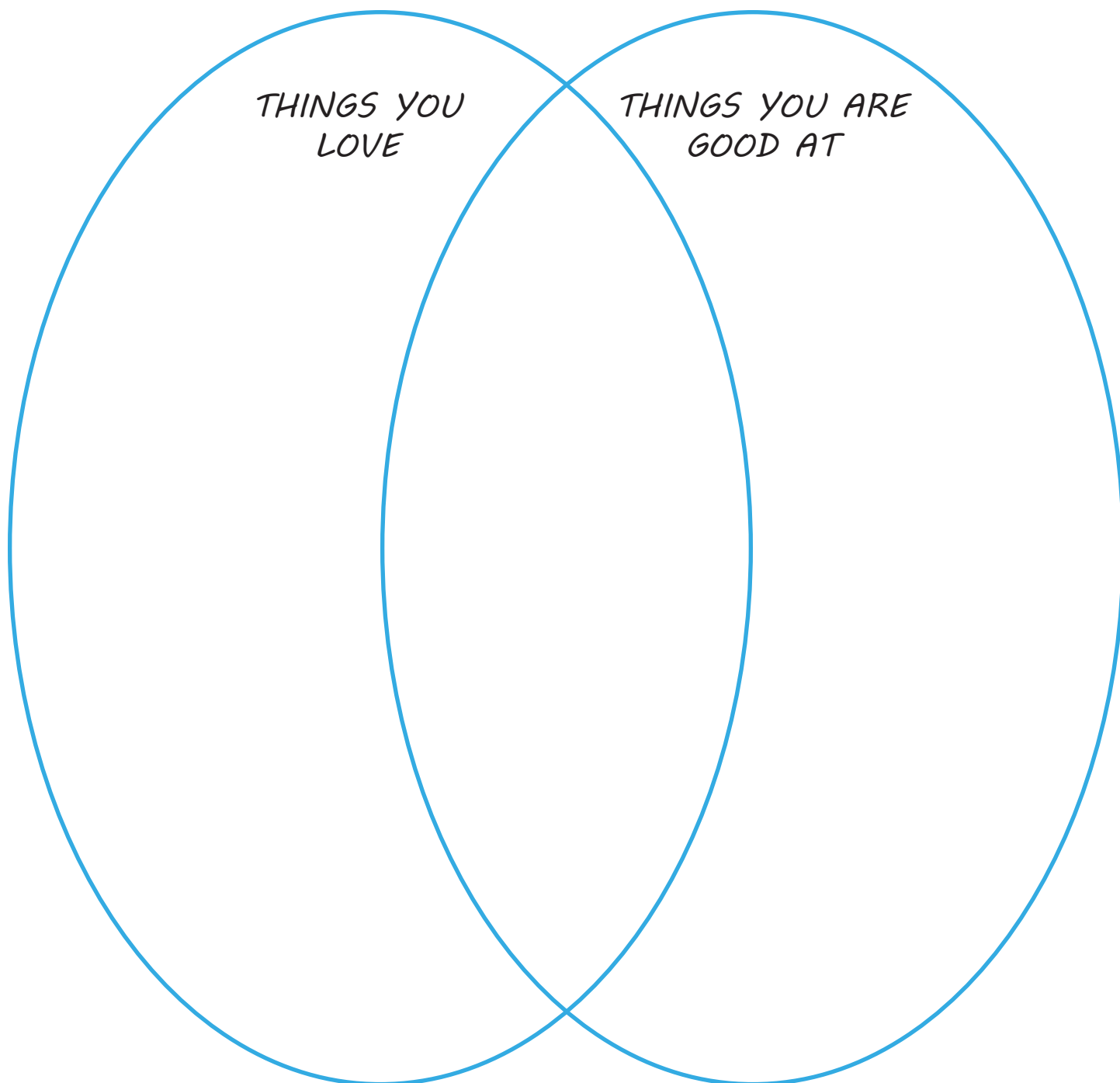
MUSICAL EXPLORATIONS: SUPERHERO THEME SONG

Explore the concept of *leitmotif*, how it’s used in this opera, and how to use it to make your own superhero theme song.

WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?

In the bubble on the left, list things you love to do. In the bubble on the right, list things you are good at. In the space where the bubbles overlap, list things that could fit on both sides. The list in the middle will help you pick your superpower!

NAME _____ DATE _____



FINDING YOUR SUPERHERO

STEP ONE: COURAGE

COURAGE IS BELIEVING IN YOURSELF AND CHALLENGING YOURSELF TO DO THINGS THAT SCARE YOU. AS A SUPERHERO, COURAGE IS AN IMPORTANT TRAIT TO HAVE. SUPERHEROES HAVE MANY CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME AND SOME OF THOSE CHALLENGES WON'T BE EASY. COURAGE IS MORE THAN HUGE ACTS OF BRAVERY—SOMETIMES, SHOWING COURAGE IS AS SIMPLE AS TRYING SOMETHING NEW OR CHOOSING TO DO THE RIGHT THING EVEN IF IT IS DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOUR FRIENDS ARE DOING.

QUESTIONS: WHAT IS THE FIRST THING THAT COMES TO YOUR MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORDS "COURAGE" OR "BRAVE"?

HAVE YOU DONE ANYTHING RECENTLY THAT TOOK COURAGE? WHAT WAS IT?

EXAMPLE: THERE IS A NEW STUDENT AT SCHOOL WHO HAS JUST MOVED TO CANADA. THE NEW STUDENT IS DIFFERENT IN MANY WAYS, AND SOME OF THE KIDS AT SCHOOL DON'T WANT TO SPEND TIME WITH THEM OR TALK TO THEM. YOU CHOOSE TO SIT WITH THE NEW STUDENT AT LUNCH AND MAKE THEM FEEL WELCOME.

CHARACTER EDUCATION TIE-INS: RESPONSIBILITY

RESPONSIBILITY: Being responsible involves being a reliable and dependable person—someone people can count on! Another part of being responsible is being responsible for your own actions. Sometimes, it can take a great deal of COURAGE to be RESPONSIBLE, because doing the right thing isn't always the easiest option.

Example: Your parents leave you and your older sibling home alone for an afternoon. They have asked that you have your room cleaned by the time they get home. Your older sibling wants to play video games and leave the cleaning for later, which means you won't have enough time to finish before your parents get home. You choose to clean your room first and play games afterwards.

Questions: Do you have any chores you are responsible for at home? What are they? Do you ever do your homework or chores before your parents have to ask you? How does it make you feel about yourself?

ACTIVITIES

MY BRAVEST MOMENT

Language, 15 minutes

Summary:

Students write about or discuss a time in their life when they displayed the most courage in the style of a journal entry.

Objectives:

- ♦ Use age appropriate vocabulary
- ♦ Use a variety of sentence types correctly
- ♦ Develop storytelling skills

Activity:

1. As a class, review what it means to have courage. (With younger students, it may be helpful to use a word wall.)
2. Have students write a short journal entry where they reflect on the time in their life where they displayed the most courage. Younger students can share verbally.
3. Invite students to share their stories with the class if they feel comfortable doing so.



COMIC STRIP HEROES

Visual Art / Language, 20 minutes
(for Grade 2 or 3)

Summary:

Students create a comic strip that involves themselves as superheroes doing something courageous.

Objectives:

- ♦ Plan and create art as a group
- ♦ Use a variety of sentence types correctly
- ♦ Use age-appropriate vocabulary

Activity:

1. As a class, discuss what it means to have courage. Make a list of actions that could be considered courageous.
2. Assign students to groups of three or four.
3. Have each group design a comic strip that shows themselves as superheroes doing something that demonstrates "courage." Each group member should be responsible for writing and drawing a minimum of three panels that will fit with other group members' panels.
4. When the comics are complete, each group can share their comic with another group and explain their artistic choices.

FINDING YOUR SUPERHERO

STEP TWO: HONESTY

HONESTY IS TELLING THE TRUTH TO OTHERS, WHILE ALSO BEING TRUE TO YOURSELF. HONESTY IS MORE THAN JUST TELLING THE TRUTH. HONESTY IS ALSO ABOUT PLAYING BY THE RULES AND ADMITTING WHEN YOU ARE WRONG. EVEN SUPERHEROES AREN'T PERFECT. SOMETIMES THEY CAN MAKE MISTAKES AND IT'S IMPORTANT THAT THEY CAN ADMIT THAT THEY'VE SAID OR DONE SOMETHING WRONG.

EXAMPLE: YOU ARE WRITING A TEST AND YOU DON'T KNOW ALL OF THE ANSWERS. THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU HAS LEFT THEIR PAPER ON THEIR DESK WHERE YOU CAN CLEARLY SEE IT. IT WOULD BE EASY TO GET THE ANSWERS FROM THEIR PAPER, BUT YOU CHOOSE NOT TO LOOK AT IT BECAUSE IT IS THE HONEST THING TO DO.

QUESTIONS: HOW DOES IT FEEL WHEN SOMEONE LIES TO YOU?
HAVE YOU EVER LET SOMEBODY ELSE TAKE THE BLAME FOR SOMETHING YOU DID?
WHAT HAPPENED? HOW DID THE OTHER PERSON FEEL ABOUT IT?

CHARACTER EDUCATION TIE-INS: FAIRNESS, INTEGRITY

FAIRNESS: Honesty and fairness have a lot in common. Being fair also involves playing by the rules as well as treating people equally, taking turns and always being open-minded.

Example: You have been on a swing for a long time and you notice another student standing nearby waiting to use them. You get off the swing and let them have a turn, because that is the fair thing to do.

Questions: What does treating people fairly mean?
What are small things you can do every day to make things fair for others?

INTEGRITY: Integrity is doing the right thing when no one is watching. The best superheroes don't need to have an audience to do good deeds and save the day.

Example: You are walking down the hall of your school and notice some trash on the ground. You stop to pick up the trash and put it in the garbage even though no one is watching you and no one asked you to, because it is the right thing to do.

Questions: What does the word "integrity" mean to you?

ACTIVITY

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Drama, 30 minutes

Summary:

Students create a dramatic performance that demonstrates what they would do if they witnessed acts of dishonesty.

Objective:

- Perform in a group
- Tell a story through performance
- Build character education

Activity:

1. As a class, discuss what might be considered honest/dishonest behavior .
2. Put students into groups and assign each group a scenario involving dishonest behavior (e.g. lying about breaking a friend's toy).

3. Students create a short dramatic piece that involves them acting out the given scenario and then acting out how they would handle the situation.
4. Groups present to the rest of the class.
5. Discuss how individuals feel doing the "right"/"wrong" action. How did the individuals on the receiving end "feel" about the "right"/"wrong" action?

Extension:

Have students act out the "right"/"wrong" thing to do for each scenario.



FINDING YOUR SUPERHERO

STEP THREE: **HOPE**

"HOPE IS WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING. HOPE LETS YOU KNOW THAT THINGS GET BETTER. HOPE CAN LEAD YOU TO A BRIGHTER TOMORROW"
— OPERATION SUPERPOWER.

HOPE IS ALL ABOUT STAYING POSITIVE. A GOOD SUPERHERO STAYS OPTIMISTIC AND IS ALWAYS CONFIDENT THAT EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT IN THE END.

QUESTION: WHAT ARE THINGS YOU OFTEN FIND YOURSELF HOPING FOR?

EXAMPLE: YOU JUST HAD A BAD DAY AT SCHOOL. INSTEAD OF GETTING UPSET ABOUT IT, YOU FOCUS ON THE THINGS THAT WENT WELL AND THAT FACT THAT TOMORROW WILL BE BETTER.

CHARACTER EDUCATION TIE-INS: PERSERVERANCE

PERSERVERANCE: Perseverance is never giving up, even if something is hard. Superheroes are faced with challenges all the time; real heroes will keep trying until they succeed.

Example: Learning how to ride a bike can be hard. Perseverance is continuing to try to learn even if you fall off the bike or if it takes longer than you would like.

Questions: What is a goal? How are attitude and success connected?

ACTIVITY

WRITE ABOUT IT

Language, 15 minutes

Summary:

Students write a paragraph about a time they were hoping for something.

Objective:

- Write proper paragraph format
- Develop communication skills
- Practice proper grammar and spelling

Activity:

1. As a class, discuss as a class what it means to hope.
2. Have students write a paragraph about a time they were hoping for something. Use the following prompting questions to get the class started:

What were you hoping for?

How did it feel?

Did what you were hoping for happen? If not, why? How did you feel when what you were hoping for did not happen?

(If students are too young to write, encourage them to respond verbally or by drawing a picture.)

3. Invite students to share their work if they feel comfortable doing so.



FINDING YOUR SUPERHERO

STEP FOUR: **IMAGINATION**

IMAGINATION IS WHAT ALLOWS YOU TO DREAM, AND TO BELIEVE IN YOUR OWN SUPERPOWER. IF YOU BELIEVE IN YOURSELF, THERE'S NO STOPPING YOU! IMAGINATION IS THE ABILITY TO THINK OF NEW THINGS THAT NO ONE ELSE HAS THOUGHT OF BEFORE.

EXAMPLE: DESIGNING A NEW TYPE OF JUNGLE GYM THAT WOULD BE FUN TO PLAY ON THAT NO ONE HAS THOUGHT OF BEFORE.

ACTIVITIES

WHAT IS YOUR SUPERPOWER?

Visual Art

Draw a picture of you using your superpower!

TRADING CARDS

Visual Art, Language, 20 minutes

Summary:

Students design and create a trading card for their superhero.

Objective:

- ♦ Produce a work of art that communicates their thoughts and feelings
- ♦ Use age-appropriate vocabulary
- ♦ Develop creative thinking skills



Activity:

1. Distribute template to each student.
2. Students draw a picture of their superhero in costume on the front. On the other side of the card, they write the name of their superhero and include facts like their superpower, their likes/dislikes, etc.
3. Invite students to trade cards with other students so they can see what the other superheroes are like.
4. Collect the cards at the end and use them to call on superheroes to help out with classroom tasks or to design groups for any groupwork during the year.

WORK SHEET

WHAT IS YOUR SUPERPOWER?

NAME _____ DATE _____

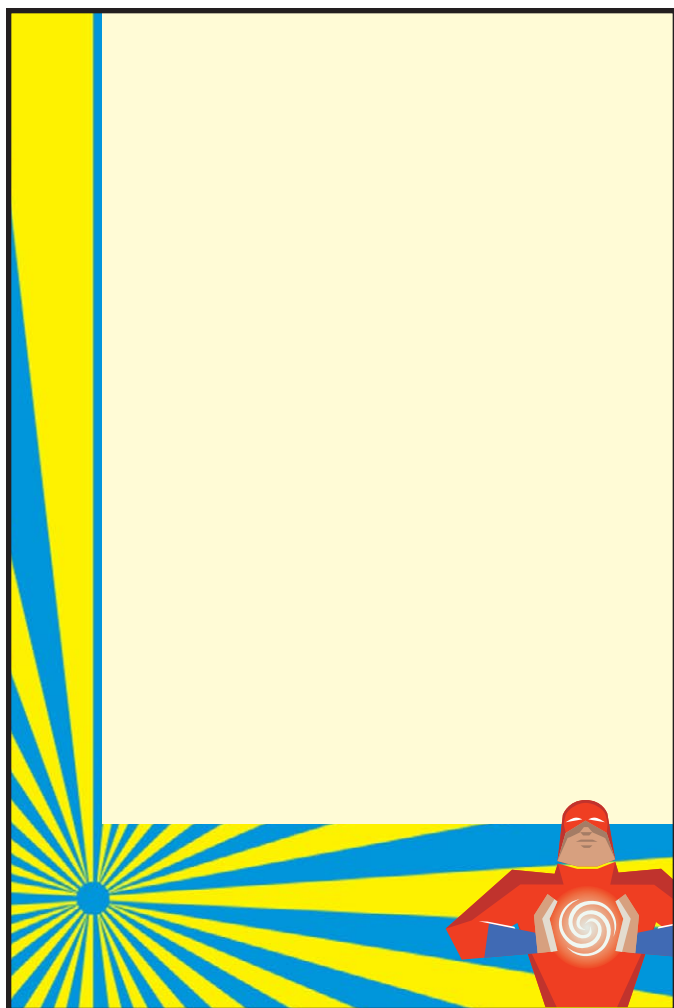
MAKE A LIST OF WAYS YOU COULD USE YOUR SUPERPOWER FOR GOOD:

DRAW A PICTURE OF YOUR SUPERHERO DOING SOMETHING ON YOUR LIST. DO YOU HAVE A SPECIAL SUPERHERO NAME? WHAT DOES YOUR COSTUME LOOK LIKE?

WORK SHEET

TRADING CARD TEMPLATE

NAME _____ DATE _____



FRONT

Use this to draw a picture of yourself as a superhero.

NAME
SUPERPOWER
TEAM MEMBERS

BACK

Write your superhero name, your superpowers, and any team members you might have.

FINDING YOUR SUPERHERO

STEP FOUR: **FRIENDSHIP**

**FRIENDSHIP IS WHAT CONNECTS US TO OTHER PEOPLE.
SUPERHEROES TRY TO MAKE POSITIVE CONNECTIONS WITH OTHERS.**

CHARACTER EDUCATION TIE-INS: KINDNESS AND CARING, TEAMWORK AND CO-OPERATION, RESPECT, EMPATHY

KINDNESS AND CARING: A true superhero always shows understanding and treats others with compassion. They use their talents to help others and they always consider the needs of others, not just their own.

Example: An example of caring is helping your parents look after a younger sibling or pet.

Questions: How do you feel when people show that they really care about you?

TEAMWORK AND CO-OPERATION: Teamwork and co-operation are all about working with others to achieve goals. Sometimes superheroes work alone, but sometimes they have to work alongside other fellow superheroes.

Example: Teamwork is one person washing the dishes while the other person dries the dishes.

Questions: What are some tasks that are easier to do as a team?

RESPECT: Respect involves being tolerant and accepting of others. Superheroes are accepting of everyone, even if they are different and must never threaten or hurt anyone. A respectful person deals with conflict peacefully instead of using violence or insults.

Example: Staying quiet in the library so that others can read without interruption.

Questions: What are some ways you can show respect to someone?

EMPATHY: Empathy is the ability to put yourself in other people's shoes. Empathetic people try to think about what someone might be feeling or experiencing, and imagine what it would be like to be in that position.

Example: You could show empathy by opening a door for someone on crutches because you can imagine how difficult it may be for them to open the door without assistance.

Questions: Have you ever been empathetic before? How?

ACTIVITY

SUPERHERO PARTY!

Drama/Dance, 15 minutes

Summary:

Students become their superhero and interact with the other superheroes in an improvisation game.

Objective:

- ♦ Improvise dialogue while staying in character
- ♦ Explore different ways of moving and using body language
- ♦ Interact with other students

Activity:

1. While sitting in a circle, have students go around the room and say their superhero's name and power to everyone in the class.
2. Play some fun party music at a low volume. While the music plays, have students stand up and move around the space. Instruct them to think about their superhero – how does their superhero move? Do they walk differently than the student normally walks? Do they have a gesture that separates them from other people? Are they heavy or light on their feet. Stop the music a few times and have the superheroes strike a pose – they can move again when the music restarts.

3. As they're moving around the room, ask the students to now think about their superhero's voice – what does it sound like? What is one word they say a lot? Stop the music again, and ask the students to turn to the student next to them and say their word. Stop and start the music a few times so they can say their words to other superheroes.
4. Have the students continue to move around to the music, this time thinking of a catchphrase their superhero might say – it might include the word they just used, it might not. Again, stop and start the music to allow them to say their phrase to multiple students.
5. If you think your students are up to further improvisation, continue stopping and starting the music, and have the students introduce themselves to other party-goers during the pauses. It can be as simple as "Hi, my name is _____", or their own, original introduction.
6. Return to sitting in a circle and have students share their favourite part of the activity – it may be something they created for their own superhero, or it may be something a fellow superhero did.

Extension:

What makes a friend? Students make a list of traits that they look for in a friend.



MUSICAL EXPLORATION: CREATING YOUR SUPERHERO THEME SONG

STEP 1: WHAT IS A LEITMOTIF

A *Leitmotif* is a short musical theme, usually found in an opera, which represents a specific character, place, thing or emotion. The *leitmotif* plays when that character or object is on stage and can be found in the vocal or instrumental part. *Leitmotif* means “leading theme” in German. You can hear a few different *leitmotifs* in *Operation Superpower*. There’s a different *leitmotif* used to represent each of the five elements, and you can hear the “hero chord” at various points in the opera. The Superhero Queen’s *leitmotif* is taken directly from music written by Richard Wagner.

Wagner, a famous German composer, frequently used *leitmotifs* in his operas. One of the things that makes Wagner unique is that he wrote both the *libretto* (words) and music for his operas. In the *Ring Cycle*, Wagner used *leitmotifs* to represent certain characters and objects. Wagner preferred to put *leitmotifs* in the instrumental parts, giving the orchestra an even more important role. He even invented some new instruments like the Wagner tuba so he could get just the right sound!

The *Ring Cycle* features hundreds of different *leitmotifs* but some of the better known ones include the themes for the **WORD**, **VALHALLA** and **SIEGFRIED**. Siegfried is the hero of the story and has a *leitmotif* that fits his character. *Operation Superpower* also contains a hero *leitmotif*! The “hero chord” is a musical theme that you will hear many times throughout the performance.

Click **HERE** to listen to more Wagner *leitmotif* examples.

Taken from the Metropolitan Opera Live in HD series, members of the Metropolitan Opera Brass section explain and demonstrate

Wagner’s use of *leitmotifs* throughout his *Ring Cycle*.

LEITMOTIFS IN THE MOVIES

You may have already experienced *leitmotifs* without knowing it, as they are often used in movies and television shows.

Examples:

Jaws (**for the shark**)

Peter Pan (**for the crocodile**)

The first two Harry Potter movies (**for Voldemort**)

The Wizard of Oz (**for the Wicked Witch of the West**)

Can you think of any other examples? Listen closely next time you are watching a movie!

ACTIVITY

STEP 2: EXPLORING LEITMOTIF

PETER AND THE WOLF - GUESS WHO?

Music, Language, 20 minutes

Summary:

Students expand their knowledge on *leitmotifs* by listening to examples. In this activity students use the elements of music and creativity to try and guess which character the *leitmotif* being played is supposed to represent.

Objectives:

- ♦ Identify examples of the elements of music
- ♦ Interpret the meaning behind musical examples
- ♦ Use age appropriate vocabulary

Activity:

1. Introduce/review the term *leitmotif*.
2. Discuss the elements of music and as a class, make a chart of describing words to use for each of the following elements:
 - ♦ Dynamics (loud or soft)
 - ♦ Texture (thick or thin)
 - ♦ Tempo (fast or slow)
 - ♦ Pitch (high or low)
3. Play *leitmotifs* for three different characters from *Peter and the Wolf* by Serge Prokofiev. Play each excerpt twice through and have students fill out the “*Peter and the Wolf—Guess Who?*” worksheet.

4. Discuss responses once all three excerpts have been played and students have completed filling out the worksheet.

5. Reveal the answers to students.

Extensions:

1. Play the excerpts again after answers are revealed. Do you think this *leitmotif* is a good choice for this character? Would you change anything if you had composed it?

[Click here for excerpts](#) from
*Vancouver Symphony Orchestra plays
Peter and the Wolf by Serge Prokofiev.*

Peter: 2:43

Bird: 3:40

Duck: 5:13

Cat: 7:31

Grandfather: 9:42

Wolf: 11:55

The Hunters: 21:40

WORK SHEET

PETER AND THE WOLF – GUESS WHO?

Possible characters: Peter, Cat, Duck, Wolf, Grandfather, Bird, Hunters

NAME _____ DATE _____

CHARACTER
(YOUR BEST GUESS)

EVIDENCE
(WHY YOU THINK THIS)

EXCERPT
#1



--

EXCERPT
#2



--

EXCERPT
#3



--

ACTIVITIES

STEP 3: CREATE A LEITMOTIF FOR YOUR SUPERHERO THEME SONG

Music, 15 minutes

Summary:

Students demonstrate the knowledge they have gained on *leitmotifs*, by designing a *leitmotif* for an assigned character trait.

Objectives:

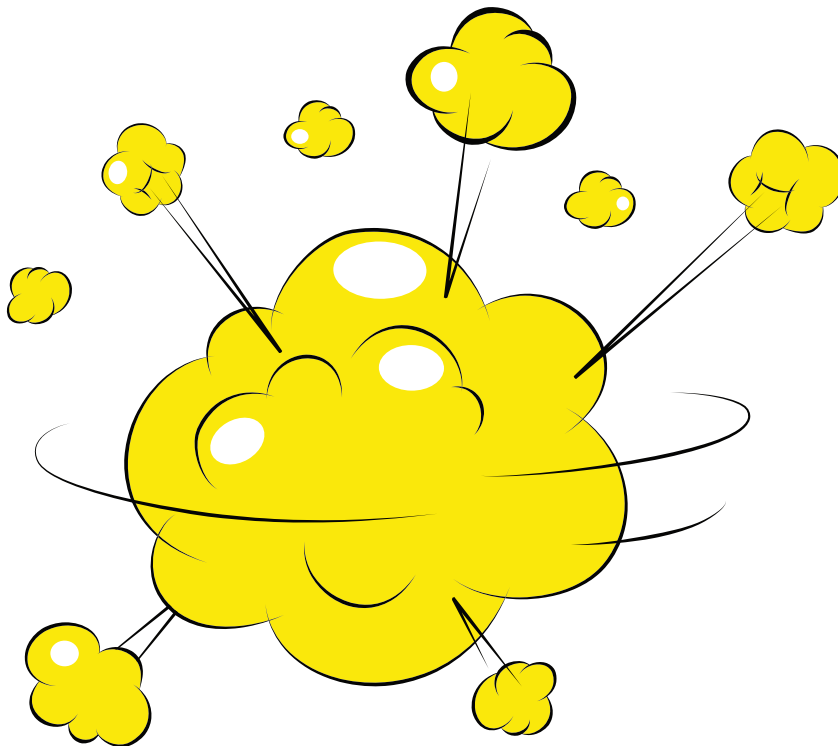
- ♦ Apply the elements of music
- ♦ Express current musical knowledge
- ♦ Demonstrate creativity

Activity:

1. Put students in groups of three or four.
2. Assign each group a different character trait to design a *leitmotif* for (for example: happy, evil, sad, angry, excited, proud etc.).
3. Have each group fill out a “*Leitmotif Creator*” worksheet for their character trait.
4. Once groups have finished the worksheet, have each group share with the class what their character trait was and what choices they circled on their worksheet.
5. Invite students to give each group feedback, ask what choices they liked, and what they would have done differently if assigned the same character trait.

Extensions:

1. Have older students design a *leitmotif* for their superpower using the same worksheet.
2. If instruments are available, have students create and perform the *leitmotifs* they have designed. If no instruments are available, use items from around the classroom, body percussion and voices to create sound.



WORK SHEET

LEITMOTIF CREATOR

Your group will be assigned a type of character and it is up to you to decide what the *leitmotif* for your character would sound like.

NAME _____ DATE _____

CHARACTER TRAIT:

1. CIRCLE THE
INSTRUMENTS
THAT WOULD
PLAY THIS
CHARACTER'S
LEITMOTIF

Flute Clarinet Saxophone
Trumpet Trombone Tuba
Piano Violin Drums Bass

2. CIRCLE THE DYNAMIC

LOUD

soft

3. CIRCLE THE TEXTURE

THICK

THIN

4. CIRCLE THE TEMPO

FAST

S L O W

5. CIRCLE THE PITCH

high

low

VOICE TYPES

FEMALE VOICES

Soprano: The soprano is the highest of the female voices. Some are able to sing very high notes and skip through rapid passages with ease (coloratura soprano). Others specialize in singing with great intensity and power (dramatic soprano). Still others have voices of exceptional beauty that can sustain long melodies (lyric soprano). Sopranos tend to play the heroines (lead female characters) in opera. Adrienne Pieczonka is a very well-known Canadian soprano. Click [here](#) to watch her perform!

Mezzo-soprano: These are lower female voices. Mezzo-sopranos have a darker sound and can reach low notes beneath the range of a soprano. Mezzo-sopranos often sing the roles of mothers, witches, confidantes, or even young male characters. Allyson McHardy is a notable Canadian mezzo-soprano and you can watch her by clicking [here](#).

Contralto: This is the lowest female voice. This voice type is often written for a very strong character, such as a goddess. Canadian Marie-Nicole Lemieux is a famous contralto. Click [here](#) to see her in performance.

Just as each person's speaking voice has a certain range and sound, each singer's voice falls within a certain range and possesses a unique tone or quality. In the same way that no two people are physically identical, no two voices sound the same. There is a tremendous variety within each vocal range.

MALE VOICES

Countertenor: A countertenor is a falsetto male voice with a very high register, so much so, that at first hearing he can sound similar to a female operatic voice. Daniel Taylor is a famous Canadian countertenor. To listen to him perform, click [here](#).

Tenor: Tenors are the higher male voices, and like sopranos, cover a wide variety of vocal colours. Ramón Vargas is an example of a "lyric tenor" with his ability to soar through melodies, while Canadian Ben Heppner exemplified the darker-hued intensity of the "dramatic tenor." They often play the hero. Michael Schade is a Canadian tenor, famous for his mastery of many Mozart roles. Click [here](#) to hear him.

Baritone: These are the middle male voices. Composers only began to write for this range in the 19th century. As with all the ranges, there are a number of types of baritones. Russell Braun is one of the world's leading lyric baritones. Click [here](#) to see him in performance. Many baritones have extremely flexible wide-ranging voices. They play the villains, fools, friends, fathers and other character parts.

Bass: The lowest of all voice types, the bass has a rich sound particularly suited to the wiser, older or evil characters in opera. Composers often challenge basses by writing notes at the extreme low end of their range. John Relyea is a highly acclaimed Canadian bass. Click [here](#) to see him.

SUPERHERO SUMMARY

THERE ARE SO MANY DIFFERENT SUPERPOWERS OUT THERE. EVERY HERO'S POWER MAKES THEM SPECIAL AND UNIQUE.

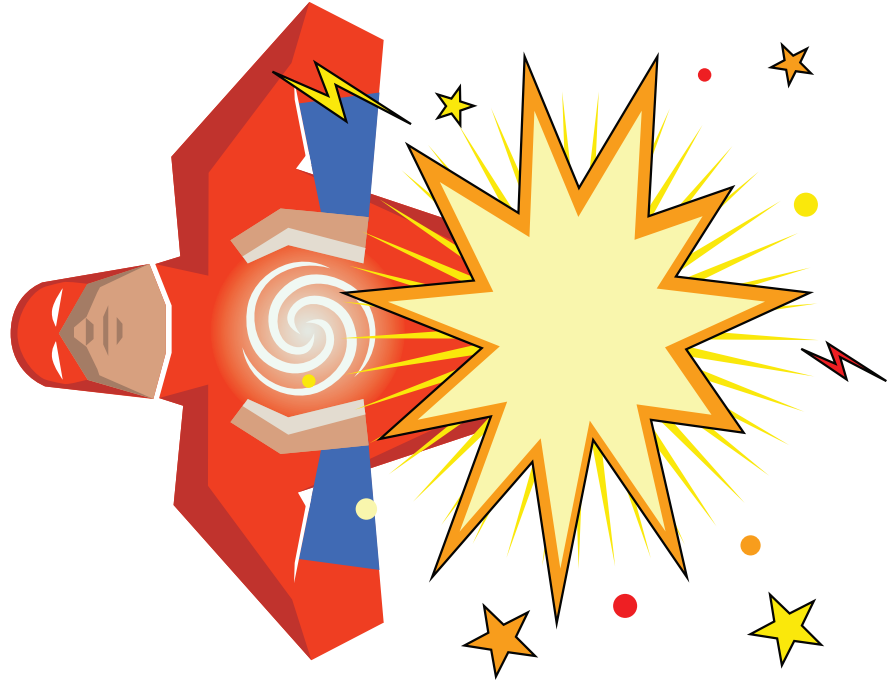
WITH THE COMBINATION OF YOUR SUPERPOWER AND THE FIVE ELEMENTS, NOTHING CAN STOP YOU FROM MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE!

NOW THAT YOU'VE COMPLETED YOUR SUPERHERO TRAINING, BE SURE TO HONOUR THE SUPERHERO PLEDGE (BELOW) AND FILL OUT YOUR SUPERHERO CERTIFICATE (NEXT PAGE).

YOUR SUPERHERO JOURNEY IS ONLY JUST BEGINNING. BE SURE TO CONTINUE TO LET YOUR POWER GROW STRONGER AND DON'T FORGET TO SHOW COURAGE, HOPE, HONESTY, IMAGINATION AND FRIENDSHIP EVERY DAY.

SUPERHERO PLEDGE

I PROMISE TO ALWAYS BE COURAGEOUS, HAVE HOPE, BE HONEST, USE IMAGINATION AND SHOW FRIENDSHIP TO OTHERS. I WILL CONTINUE TO USE MY SUPERPOWER FOR GOOD AND TO NEVER LET MY POWER STOP GROWING.



**OPERATION SUPERPOWER
CERTIFIES THAT**

**HAS COMPLETED SUPERHERO TRAINING
AND THEIR SUPERPOWER IS**

DATED: _____



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