

# **SUPERHEROES : What makes a Superhero ?**



## **Mission :**

- Write a definition of what a Superhero is.
- Find the common points between all Superheroes
- Learn about Supernames.
- Find 4 characteristics that make a Superhero by comparing a hero and a Superhero.



# SUPERHEROES :What makes a Superhero ?

## *Introduction :*

A Superhero is a generic term for **both** a male or female fictional character (Female Superheroes are also called Superheroines).

These imaginary protagonists are **mainly** represented in comics (American comic-strips) and in their movie adaptations (**usually** Blockbusters). Most comic Superheroes come from two American enterprises: DC Comics (DC is **short for** Detective Comics) and Marvel Comics.

A Superhero is **always** a costumed **masked** crime fighter, a champion of Justice with a strong moral code, with a supporting team of friends and sidekicks and a number of enemies (Supervillains.)

*Characteristics :* For a hero to be a Superhero, he needs to possess **at least 3** of these 5 characteristics

- ❑ A Supernatural physical force : extraordinary **superhuman** powers. **However**, some **like** Batman or Catwoman are considered as Superheroes **although** they don't have any supernatural powers.
- ❑ Specific gear, mask and weapons in order to perform extraordinary actions and fight Supervillains (the baddies). **That's why** Tony Stark/ Iron Man can be considered a Superhero **event if** he doesn't have any real superhuman powers, but only an expensive high technological armour with powers to compete with Superheroes.
- ❑ A double identity : Superheroes share a real-life identity (often quiet, classical) and a secret identity when transformed into Superheroes. **Nevertheless** we can find exceptions, **for example**, The Fantastic FOUR whose private and public identities are the same.
- ❑ A recognizable costume with an emblem : Superheroes wear colourful body-tight outfits that show their muscles. They got their inspirations in legendary characters **such as** Robin Hood or Zorro, the Masked Avenger, in mythological gods or demi-gods **as** Thor or Achilles or real life artistic people **for instance** circus performers.
- ❑ A traumatic childhood : Superheroes' births or childhoods usually follow a tragic accidental back story (parents killed, exposition to Supernatural forces **and so on..**) **Moreover**, that explains the circumstances by which the character acquires his or her abilities as well as his or her motivation for becoming a superhero.

# SUPERNAMES : Figures of speech

Some principles for good Supernames :

- **Alliterations** : the **repetition** of the same letter or the same sound at the beginning of the first name and of the family name.

For example : **Peter Parker**, **Otto Octopus**, **Jack Jack**,  
**Clark Kent**, **Wonder Woman**, **Lois Lane**, or **Villains :**  
**Lex Luthor**, **Green Goblin**.

- **2 syllable firstname + 1 syllable surname or vice versa**

→ **3 syllables in all.**



**Alan Scott** (original **Green Lantern**), **Carter Hall** (**Hawkman**),  
**Matt Murdoch** (**Daredevil**, also *alliterative*)

- **Ending in -man or -woman, -boy or -girl**

**Superman**, **Catwoman**, **Elastigirl**,  
**Hellboy**

- **Composed of an adjective + Noun**

**The Green Lantern**, **The Blond Phantom**, **The Incredible Hulk**,

**The Dark Knight**, **The Human Torch**