Core Content Area 1: Choosing heroes and role models

STUDENTs

For students to explore the characteristics and appeal of superheroes today and how the heroic motif continues to influence the representation of superheroes, select from the following activities:

1. Investigate the relevance of superheroes in the 21st century.
   a. Analyse the characteristics of one or more superheroes.
      i. Read the statements about superheroes.
         
         Whether they're super-powered aliens, lone vigilantes, or teenage sidekicks, all superheroes share certain characteristics in common, "some sort of strength of character (though it may be buried), some system of positive values, and a determination to, no matter what, protect those values ... the superhero - more than even the ordinary fictional hero - has to represent the values of the society that produces him".
         
         A superhero must, by definition, be virtually ageless and immortal, capable of rising from the grave even after being killed (or, for that matter, canceled). Not only are superheroes unable to die, but they also cannot retire, quit, or decide to radically change themselves in any fashion (be it their costume, general appearance, or disposition.)
         
         We can always trust that everything will work out in superhero comic universes - that death will never truly come knocking, that oblivion will never finally arrive.
         
      
      ii. Choose one or more of the statements above and write a short rationale about how your favourite superhero demonstrates the characteristics outlined in the chosen statement/s and therefore why he/she is relevant or appealing to society today.
   
   b. Explore how the ancient concept of the archetypal hero continues to influence the representation of superheroes today.
      i. View the slideshow presentation about The Archetypal Hero.
      
      ii. Analyse how the representation of superheroes in comics and games today reflects the characteristics of the archetypal hero as presented in the slide show.
USEFUL RESOURCES

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