

Write Like a Superhero



It's a bird! It's a plane! It's, well, whatever you want it to be! Instead of Superman, it might be Captain Underpants. Instead of Spider-Man, it might be Magic Pickle. If you were a superhero, what would you be like? Here are some things to consider when writing your own superhero story:

1. Create your superhero.

- Pick a name. It should reflect something about the superhero's personality, strengths or abilities. It shouldn't be too modest (Captain Stronger-Than-Some) or too far-fetched (Mr. Most-Powerful-Being-In-The-Universe-So-You-Might-As-Well-Just-Go-Home-Now-And-Save-Yourself-The-Trouble and his sidekick, Perfect-Hair-And-Straight-Teeth Boy). And don't use an existing name, unless your superhero would rather fight lawsuits than supervillains.
- Pick a superpower. Flight, super strength, super speed, animal/insect abilities — they're good places to start,

but why not try to be a little more adventurous? That's easier said than done, especially with the glut of superheroes out there. Take a look at everyday objects and try to think of powers based on them. Among the objects on my desk right now there are a telephone, a pen and computer speakers. I could invent a hero with the ability to talk to anyone in the world without a phone, a hero who can alter reality through his/her creative writing, a hero who can yell loudly enough to topple enemies. Also, there's nothing wrong with using traditional powers, but try to use them in original ways (your hero can fly, except when there's a full moon).

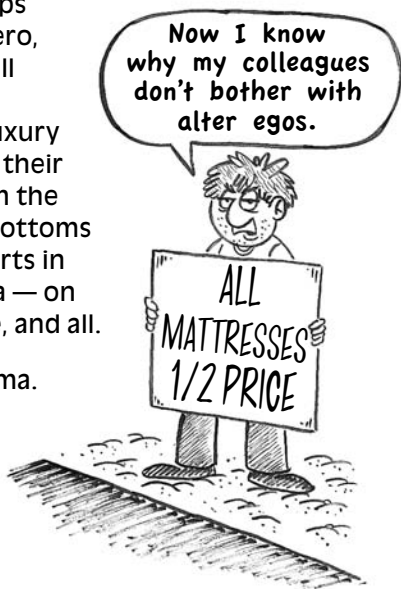
- Pick an alter ego. For every Spider-Man there's a Peter Parker. For every Batman there's a Bruce Wayne. If your hero has to worry about school, work, family matters, a love life and keeping a secret identity — all while trying to save the world — your story will be more relatable to the average reader.

2. Create your supervillain.

- Repeat the first two steps from creating a superhero, but don't worry about all that alter-ego business. Supervillains have the luxury of focusing full-time on their dastardly deeds, all from the comfort of lairs in the bottoms of volcanoes or snow forts in the middle of Antarctica — on account of being insane, and all.

3. Throw in a touch of drama.

- As cool as all the sky-flyin', bad guy-beatin', explosion-dodgin'-in-slow-motion is, there should be a little more punch to your



plot. Have your hero wonder if his/her power should be used for good or evil, throw in a sense of longing (many heroes are loners or have watched loved ones perish) or what the heck, give your supervillain an alter ego!

Inspiration can come from superheroes other than those with their own film franchises. Here are a few high-flying books you might get a kick from (of course, the way Hollywood works, many of these probably *will* have film adaptations by the time this book is published):

- The Bone series, by Jeff Smith
- The Babymouse series, by Jennifer L. Holm and Matt Holm
- The Captain Underpants series, by Dav Pilkey
- The Extraordinary Adventures of Ordinary Boy series, by William Boniface
- The Maximum Boy series, by Dan Greenburg
- *The Great Cape Rescue*, by Phyllis Shalant