



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
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## **SHAZAM! Exploring Superhero Comics to Study Character Origin and Creative Writing**

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When we look at the word "superhero" our minds go to supernatural powers and larger-than-life characters. We instantly think of Superman, Batman, or Spider-Man, to name a few. These are characters that are universally known by young and old, foreign and domestic. Hollywood has recently had an influx of films based on comic book heroes. These movies are generating millions in revenue both domestically and in the foreign markets. In addition to Superman, Batman, and Spider-Man other comic superheroes have taken to the big screen. Characters such as Iron Man, Wolverine, and Incredible Hulk have gained wide popularity with movie audiences. Whatever the reason may be, the comic book superhero is someone that we are all familiar with. It is this notion that is explored in this curriculum unit.

This unit is designed for an eighth grade language arts classroom. The key objectives for this unit include sequencing, origin studies, character development, and creative writing. Although this unit is designed to work within the reading/writing workshop format it certainly can be tailored for standard instruction classrooms as well.

(Developed for Literacy, grade 8; recommended for Language Arts and English, grades 6-8)

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