



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2018 Volume IV: Big Numbers, Small Numbers

What Makes a Superhero Super? Putting Scientific Notation in Context

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This curriculum unit is designed with lessons to build foundational math skills and improve writing skills in enjoyable, relatable ways while students learn about the five stages of place value and base ten notation. Students will use of scientific notation as a useful tool for comparing very large and very small quantities quickly and efficiently. Lesson objectives include describing patterns in the placement of the decimal point when a number is multiplied by a power of 10; locating and comparing very large and very small values on a number line; writing and comparing quantities in scientific notation; and developing a superhero character through creativity and writing. Students will generate problems, develop an inquiry, critique the reasoning of others, and collaborate on ideas and solutions. The culminating project connects the narrative writing process more fully with mathematics instruction to increase student writing skills while engaging in activities that strengthen number sense.

(Developed for Mathematics and Writing, grades 7-8)

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