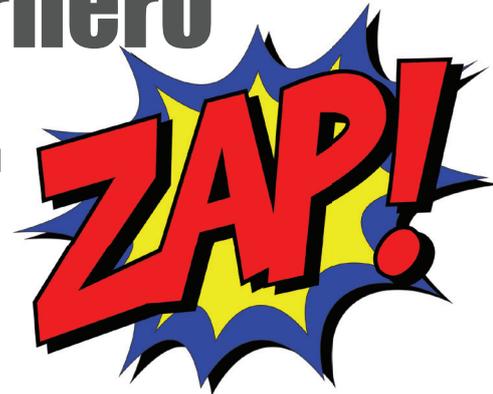




How To Be A Superhero

So you want to be a superhero? I don't blame you. It's a fantastic career. You get to travel the world, meet lots of interesting people and thwart their dastardly plans. I feel I must warn you, though. It's not all fun and games. Villains nowadays are cunning. They love nothing more than to see a superhero sliced into smithereens by a laser beam or catapulted into a volcano. It's not for the weak-hearted.



There are a few steps on the road to heroism. Ideally, you will already know who your arch-nemesis is going to be. If you are struggling to find a devious villain, look for large public items being stolen. Something like the Queen, Stonehenge or the moon would be a clue that somebody is up to no good. Make a point of contacting your nemesis as soon as you can to let them know you're onto them.

Your media personality is vital. Make sure you spend as much time in front of the news cameras as possible. You need to ensure that you are always on television. Remember, it doesn't count as a superhero good deed if you don't tell people about it!

So you've got your nemesis, and you know what your first mission is going to be. What next? Now it's time to act. I don't mean actually get the thing back. That will be later. You need to actually act now. You might not care that much about the moon, but you need to act as though the villain has stolen your favourite birthday present. People love it if you can cry on TV. A cute doggy sidekick will win you even more points.

Only once you've annoyed your enemy and boasted about how you'll destroy them on TV (all while crying) can you start your mission. You might find that somebody else has solved the problem by this point. That's a great outcome. You've had all the media without having to fight off angry laser-sharks or evade a series of frustrating booby traps.

Things get dangerous if you still have to carry out a mission. Try to minimise the danger by giving up when things get too tough. Even scientists aren't allowed to play around enormous rockets hidden in the middle of volcanoes, so why should you?

Sometimes things are a bit easier. Villains aren't always the sharpest tools in the box and like to tell everyone where they are hiding. Secret lair? More like a conspicuous mansion on a deserted island! You will inevitably get caught at some point. When this happens, just keep asking them questions. Villains seem incapable of carrying out punishments until they have talked about it for

hours and held an in-depth question-and-answer session. This can buy you valuable time.

Even if you do manage to complete your mission, you must let the villain go free. Once you put the villains in jail, you'll be out of a job. Make sure there's always a regular supply of villainy by always letting them go.



RETRIEVAL FOCUS

1. Find one thing that villains like to do to superheroes.
2. What will win you more points with a TV audience?
3. What can you avoid if somebody else solves the problem first?
4. If you catch the villain, what must you do?
5. What is one good thing about being a superhero?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

I What does the author seem to think is the most important part of being a superhero?

V What does the phrase “sharpest tools in the box” mean?

V Write a definition for “conspicuous”.

S What must you do before carrying out a mission?

I Why do you think the author doesn't want to carry out any missions?

Answers:

1. Slice them into smithereens with a laser or catapult them into a volcano
2. A cute doggy sidekick
3. Fighting laser-sharks and booby traps
4. Let them go
5. Travel the world, meet interesting people and thwart their plans

I: Being on TV and getting attention

V: They aren't very clever

V: Obvious/standing out

S: Annoy your enemy and boast about how you'll catch them

I: They are dangerous