

Superhero in the Making

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This project integrates language arts and physics standards while tapping into students' interests in comics and anime. Student pairs researched physics concepts such as magnetism, entropy, waves, thermodynamics, gravitation, and momentum to create superheroes or supervillians whose special powers embodied these concepts. They then developed short stories—and ultimately, colorful bound comic books—starring their characters.

Teacher Reflection

This project really gave students creative freedom. As a teacher, I got to see students' imaginations at work as they developed a story and translated it into comic book form. Their stories had to include the superhero's discovery of his/her power and how he/she ultimately decided to use that power. This presented an interesting challenge for students, since they had to really build a story line, develop their characters and set a tone. The results were great stories and amazing comic books. Through multiple drafts, critiques and revisions, the students also realized how much work is put into the comics and anime they love.

—Diana Cornejo-Sanchez

Embodying Ohm's Law

The science concept my partner and I were given was Ohm's Law. For this, we made a comic called "Strike." It was about a man named Walter Bithers, who felt that all mechanical objects were against him, from his electric toaster that shuts off while he is making his precious breakfast to his car that suddenly has a dead battery. It isn't until he is fired from his job and mugged by an unfortunate young kid—who is struck by lightning and dies instantly, with the voltage going through his body and affecting Walter too—that Walter realizes he has the power to put electrical charge back into objects. He uses this new power to his advantage, recharging the toaster and the car, and soon finds out that he can do illegal things like stealing from ATMs. He steals for months, becoming so rich he doesn't even notice the cops chasing him. But that's not where our story ends. What do you think will happen?

—Shanna McCue, 9th grade, HTHMA

To find out Walter Bithers' fate and to learn more about this project and others visit <http://www.hightechhigh.org/schools/HTHMA> and <http://www.hightechhigh.org/pbl>

