

TEACHERS ACTIVITIES



Theme:

Everytime you pick up a good book, your imagination brings the story and characters to life.

Topics For Discussion:

People have always been fascinated by superheroes and their amazing feats. Ask students: if they could have superhero powers, what kind of powers would they like to have? What would be the advantages and disadvantages of having these super abilities?



Discuss "real life" heroes with whom students are familiar. Why are they heroes? What does it mean to be a "hero?"



Television and video typically use the following visual techniques: live action (real people or animals acting), iconographic (the camera sweeps across still art), and animation (figures are specifically created for movement). View some **Reading Rainbow** programs and discuss the use of these techniques.



Students have seen LeVar on **Reading Rainbow**, and most of them have also likely seen him on "Star Trek: The Next Generation." Compare and contrast LeVar's two acting roles. (It may seem to children that LeVar is being himself on **Reading Rainbow** when, in fact, he is performing as an actor.)

Curriculum Extension Activities:

Brainstorm a list of superheroes that students have seen on television, in movies, or in comic books. Next to each superhero, write the unique ability or power each one has. Have students ask parents and grandparents if any of the superheroes on the list were famous when they were young. Discuss why they have been popular for so long.

Take a survey of the students' favorite television shows and graph the results. To obtain a larger data set, have students survey other classrooms in the building. To keep the survey from becoming unwieldy, they might reduce the number of choices to six or seven programs (thus creating a forced-choice survey). Post the graph in a location where all participating classes may see the results.



Have students invent a superhero. They will need to decide on a name for their hero and her/his unique capabilities. Have them draw a picture of their superhero and create an adventure for her/him that they tell their classmates or write in a book.



Make a roll-paper TV for students to use for storytelling. Obtain a large cardboard box and cut a TV-type window in the bottom. Turn the box on its side so the "screen" is visible and draw some push buttons along the bottom of the screen. On the side panels of the box, cut holes directly across from each other at the top and bottom about two inches from the front (screen side) of the box. Slip wooden dowels through the holes, so that there is a dowel at the top and at the bottom. Cut the dowels long enough so they extend from the box. Students will need to be able to turn the dowels. Have students draw pictures for a story on roll paper cut to fit the TV screen. Tape the last picture of the story to the bottom dowel and roll the paper around it. When the entire story is wound around the bottom dowel, pull up the paper and tape the beginning of the story to the top dowel. The story is now ready to tell by turning the dowels and showing the pictures on "TV." Students may wish to add music and sound effects to their story.



Invite someone who has acting experience into the classroom to talk with the students. Have the actor address how to get acting jobs, the skills an actor needs, how to prepare for a role, the work that is done before the finished product is ready, etc.



Obtain a copy of *Take a Look, It's in a Book* by Ronnie Krauss (Walker, 1997). It's an informational book illustrated with full-color photographs about the making of a **Reading Rainbow** program. Read the book to students and discuss the process of making an episode of this popular series from the idea stage to airing the program.

Take a field trip to a local television station so that students can see the equipment needed to make a TV program and hear about some of the behind-the-scenes activity that takes place in its production.

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:

MAXI, THE STAR

by Sal & Debra Barracca, illus. by Alan Ayers (Dial)

THEATER MAGIC: BEHIND THE SCENES AT A CHILDREN'S THEATRE

by Cheryl Walsh Bellville (Carolrhoda Books)

EUREKA! IT'S TELEVISION!

by Jeanne & Robert Bendick, illus. by Sal Murdocca (Millbrook)

AN ACTOR

by M. B. Goffstein (HarperCollins)

LET'S GO TO A TV STUDIO

by Alison Graham, illus. by Nik Spender (Marshall Cavendish)

SPECIAL EFFECTS IN FILM AND TELEVISION

by Jake Hamilton (DK)

TAKE A LOOK IT'S IN A BOOK

by Ronnie Krauss, photos by Christopher Hornsby (Walker)

THE BUNNY PLAY

by Loreen Leedy (Holiday House)

TV & FILMS: BEHIND THE SCENES

by Odile Limousin & Daniele Neumann, illus. by Francois Vincent (Forest House)

Page 4 TELEVISION: WHAT'S BEHIND WHAT YOU SEE
by W. Carter Merbreier, illus. by Michael Chesworth (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

MOUSE TV
by Matt Novak (Orchard)

FILM
by Richard Platt (Alfred A. Knopf)

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