



Philosophy in KS2

Year – all from ages 5 – 11 (Primary Age) Superheroes and Miracles

Root them in the problem:

Start the lesson with a statement, picture or clip introducing the problem they need to solve:

Think about this statement:

Anyone can be a superhero.

Is it true? What makes someone a superhero? Are we talking just about fiction or real life? Does the idea of a real superhero even exist?

Get them talking:

Pose some questions to the class, these should be simple but have the potential for many different answers:

Superheroes only exist in stories.

Is this true? What makes a superhero a superhero? Where do we get the ideas from that feed into stories like Spiderman or Superman? Or even David, Achilles or Hercules?

Start the debate:

Pose a controversial solution to any problems arising in the previous section:

Superhero stories are purely based on made up nonsense.

Are there any situations when stories about heroes are based, at least in part, on real life? Do we know of stories that feature normal people doing amazing things? Think back to David from the Bible.

Final Section:

Step outside the argument and look at it critically. Ask the class to summarise their points of view and ask if they are truly justified.

Think about Biblical stories about David or Joshua or tales of great warriors like Beowulf or Achilles, are these stories fact or fiction? Could any part of them be true?

What if Achilles was a real warrior but he just happened to be unhurt in battle, purely by chance – would people start to tell tales that explain his luck and exaggerate? Was Goliath really a giant?



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Teaching:

Link this to any in depth exploration of the subjects covered with some direct teaching. Look at the type of thought or school of thought you are exploring. What would a philosopher/theologian/believer/thinker say about the argument we've just explored?

Think about miracles and miraculous events in history, mythology and in religious stories. Where do these accounts come from? Can they be trusted? Why would someone want to make them up? Can they be believed? What is the reason that religious people believe in miracles?

Look at the work of David Hume and miracles here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CeG1HDOgzCQ>

This is a very short, animated video – WARNING: contains a brief reference to recovering from life threatening illnesses.

What are the reasons people talk about, believe or 'witness' miracles? Can we ever be sure that they happen? Can we ever say that someone has performed something so amazing that they can be considered a 'Superhero'?

Think about the miracles found in the Bible – are there any that could be explained by modern science or, in order to believe them, do you need to take a 'leap of faith'?

This is a slightly more in-depth video about Hume and Miracles, it's 8mins long but the important part finishes at 5mins.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SViCYjyoPtQ>

Research Greek Mythology or Biblical stories (some video links are below) and think about the point at which Hume would say that they become false.

Stories:

The Myth of Hercules:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIijhAuC76g> This is made in 80s/90s computer graphics, so it is not realistic but WARNING: He is said to have murdered his entire family at the beginning and is on his knees surrounded by blood – pixelated blood is present in the animation! This may not be ok for younger viewers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7zLAcUZkxHA> This story is about David and Goliath.