

Heroes and Villains

Heroes and heroines

There are a wide variety of heroes and heroines. A hero or heroine is often the main character in a story. They could also be a friend of the main character or someone who comes to the rescue later in the story. They have skills, powers or abilities that other characters do not have. They may have a clever mind, like Sherlock Holmes, be incredibly strong, like Superman, or be very brave, like Wonder Woman. The hero or heroine could also be an everyday person. Heroes and heroines will always try to do the right thing and save the day.



Vile villains

A villain is a character that does bad or evil things. There are many types of villains that appear in films or stories and in real life. Villains have certain character traits that make them infamous. They may be powerful, clever or angry and will stop at nothing to achieve their goal. Examples of villains are Darth Vader from *Star Wars*, Scar from *The Lion King* or the Wicked Witch of the West in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. The hero must work against the villain to defeat them or bring them to justice.



Fairy tales

Fairy tales are fictional stories that have been passed down for thousands of years across the world. They are usually set in magical places that have talking animals, giants, witches, fairies or dwarfs. There might be a hero in the story that must solve a problem or go on a quest. During their adventure, the hero may face a villain who is determined to stop them. The stories often have a moral or were written to scare children. The story of *Little Red Riding Hood* was written to warn children about the dangers of talking to strangers.



Cruella de Vil

Cruella de Vil is an example of a fictional villain. She is featured in Dodie Smith's book, *The Hundred and One Dalmatians*. Walt Disney has made animated and live-action films based on the original story. The appearance and personality of Cruella de Vil are similar in the book and films. She is cruel, bossy and rude. Cruella loves fur and will do anything to have it. She tries to get as many dalmatian puppies as she can to make a fur coat. In the book, she says, 'I worship furs. I live for furs! That's why I married a furrier.'



Bonnie and Clyde

Bonnie and Clyde were real-life villains. They were a young, American couple famous for their romance and for committing lots of crimes during the 1930s. They first met in Texas in 1930. Clyde was arrested and sent to prison not long after they met. Bonnie helped him to escape by sneaking a gun into the prison. Clyde was found and arrested one week later. He was then released in 1932, and the couple began their two-year crime spree. Bonnie and Clyde committed robberies, murders and escaped from the police many times. They were finally stopped in Louisiana on 23rd May 1934. The police shot and killed them.



Music

Music plays an important part in films. It is there to make the audience feel a certain way or used to add to the effect of the story. Music can be linked to characters or events in a story. A person who writes music is called a composer. Composers choose suitable instruments and use melody, rhythm, tempo and pitch to compose music that matches the pictures on the screen. For a hero in a film, the music may sound happy, be fairly high-pitched and have a fast tempo. For a villain, the music may sound scary, be low-pitched and have a slow tempo.

melody The tune of the music and made up of the rhythm and pitch.

rhythm The pattern of beats in music.

tempo The speed of music.

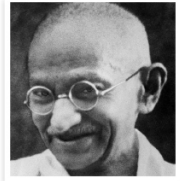
pitch The high and low sounds in music.

Heroes and heroines

Harriet Tubman (1820–1913)
Harriet was a slave who escaped and risked her own life to free other slaves through the Underground Railroad. She spent her life helping others and working to gain equal rights.



Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948)
Gandhi was a religious man who believed in non-violence and led India to independence from Britain. He was brave and wanted people to live peacefully.



Mother Teresa (1910–1997)
Mother Teresa was a nun who spent her life working for charities to help the sick and poor. She received many awards for her work and was made a saint.



Martin Luther King Jr (1929–1968)
Martin stood up for African-American rights. He believed in non-violence and was a strong leader. He gave a very famous speech called *I Have a Dream*.



Neil Armstrong (1930–2012)
Neil was an astronaut who was the first person to walk on the Moon. He was brave and was a good problem-solver. Neil received many awards for his work.



Everyday heroes and heroines

Everyday heroes and heroines can be anyone. They could be a member of the emergency services, such as a firefighter, or a person who decides to take a risk and help someone else. They are brave and can be admired for their actions. They do not usually decide to become a hero or heroine but become one because of their actions. They are people who make life better for others.

Charities and organisations

There are many charities and organisations that have been set up around the world to help those in need.

RSPCA

This is a charity that helps to prevent cruelty to animals. They rescue and rehome animals and raise awareness about animal abuse.



St John Ambulance

This is a UK first aid charity that provides medical support at events and helps the NHS to respond to 999 calls.



The United Nations

This is an organisation that has around 200 countries working together to secure peace, a safe environment, human rights and equality in the world.



Shelter

This is a charity that helps millions of people who are homeless or need housing advice.



Glossary

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| arrest | To take someone to prison for a crime they may have committed. |
| character traits | The words used to describe someone's personality or behaviour, such as kind, brave or mean. |
| charitable organisation | A non-profit organisation, such as Oxfam, the RSPCA and St John Ambulance, that exists to improve the well-being of people, animals or environments. |
| crime | An act, or a failure to act, that breaks the law and is punishable by law. |
| emergency services | The public organisations that respond to and deal with accidents and emergencies, especially the police, fire brigade and ambulance service. |
| equal rights | The treatment of everyone fairly by law. |
| independence | A country's freedom from being ruled by another country. |
| infamous | Well-known for something bad. |
| justice | The way of using the law to punish someone fairly for a crime. |
| spree | A short amount of time when something is done. |
| superpower | An amazing ability or power, such as being able to fly. |
| Underground Railroad | A system of secret routes and houses used in the United States for slaves to escape. |