

Name: _____ Date: _____

Go to Scope
Online to listen
to the words
and definitions
read aloud.

Vocabulary:

"If I Were a Superhero"

1. **contort (kuhn-TAWRT)** *verb*; To contort is to twist into a strange or unusual shape. You might contort your body to squeeze through a small space. If a basketball player gets injured during a game, he might fall to the floor, his face contorting in pain.

2. **convey (kuhn-VAY)** *verb*; To convey something is to communicate it or make it known. You might convey a message from your mom to your sister. When you smile, you convey to the people around you that you are happy. A painting's dark colors might convey a feeling of sadness.

3. **degenerative (dih-JEN-er-uh-tiv)** *adjective*; The verb *degenerate* (dih-JEN-uh-rayt) means "to change to a worse state or condition." *Degenerative* means "tending to degenerate."
A degenerative disease is a medical condition that causes a tissue or an organ to become worse over time. Some degenerative diseases can be cured, but others have no treatment yet.

4. **fumble (FUHM-buhl)** *verb*; To fumble is to handle something in a clumsy and awkward way. You might fumble with a flashlight in the dark or fumble in your pockets for some change. (In football, *fumble* means "to lose control of the ball.")

5. **gnarled (nahrlid)** *adjective*; Something that is gnarled is full of twists, bends, bumps, or knots. Tree branches often become gnarled over time.

6. **strike (strahyk)** *noun or verb*; In a strike, workers refuse to do their work until the owners of their company agree to certain worker demands. Workers might, for example, participate in a strike to demand better pay or safer facilities.
As a verb, *strike* can mean "to stop working until certain demands are met," as in, "The factory workers said they would strike until they got improved health care." *Strike* can also mean "to hit something," as in, "I used a hammer to strike the nail."

Directions: Below, list any other words from the story whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the primary meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence using the word.

Vocabulary Practice

"If I Were a Superhero"

Directions: Choose the word or phrase that is LEAST similar in meaning to each word in bold.

1. fumble

- Ⓐ grip tightly
- Ⓑ handle in a clumsy way

3. gnarled

- Ⓐ rough and twisty
- Ⓑ straight and smooth

2. convey

- Ⓐ refuse
- Ⓑ express

4. degenerative

- Ⓐ declining in quality
- Ⓑ improving over time

Directions: Rewrite each sentence using a form of one of the words in the box. There are two words you will not use.

strike convey degenerative contort fumble

5. After I opened the extravagant gift from my grandma, I struggled to explain my gratitude.

6. The nurses decided to stop working until the hospital agreed to improve their working conditions.

7. Anna's face twisted into a look of pure disgust as she smelled the odor of a skunk.

Directions: Write a sentence that includes a word or words from the list on page 1 of this activity (including any words you added).

8. _____

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Conflict

In literature, conflict is a struggle between opposing forces that drives the action of the plot forward.
A conflict may be external or internal.

An **EXTERNAL CONFLICT** is a struggle that takes place between a character and someone or something else. Types of external conflict include character vs. character, character vs. society, character vs. nature, and character vs. technology.

Examples:

A ship captain struggles to survive on a desert island after a hurricane sinks his ship.

Dr. Strange invents a robot so intelligent it has a mind of its own—a mind for destroying the town.

An eighth grader named Dave bullies Tim on the school bus every afternoon.

An **INTERNAL CONFLICT** is a struggle that occurs within a character's mind; it's what's bothering a character on the inside. Internal conflicts are always character vs. self.

Examples:

The ship captain fights to stay positive and hold on to hope of ever being rescued.

Dr. Strange struggles with the decision of whether or not he should destroy his masterpiece in order to save the town.

Tim feels nervous about telling his teacher about the bully and doesn't know if he should.

Directions: Read "If I Were a Superhero." Then fill in the chart below.

The Narrator's <u>External</u> Conflict
1. What is the narrator's external conflict? Who or what is she struggling against?
2. Give two lines or groups of lines from the story that help reveal the narrator's external conflict. Line(s) 1: Line(s) 2:

The Narrator's Internal Conflict

3. What is the narrator's internal conflict? Who or what is she struggling with on the inside?

4. Give two lines or groups of lines from the story that help reveal the narrator's internal conflict.

Line(s) 1:

Line(s) 2:

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"If I Were a Superhero" Character Thinking Tool

The questions in this activity are about the character of
the narrator

1. The narrator says, "I think most of the terrible stuff in the world is just regular people forgetting themselves." What does she mean? What does this statement reveal about her outlook on the world?

2. How does the narrator feel when her dad struggles to use his hands? Why might she feel this way?

3. The narrator says, "*Lives to live*." What a thing to say." How is she feeling in this moment? How do you know?

4. Why does the narrator fantasize about being a superhero?

5. What does the narrator's comment to the woman—and how she says it—reveal about her?

6. The narrator says if she were a superhero, she wouldn't hide who she is. Does she hide who she is in this story?

7. A. The narrator says she'd choose a superhero name that made people feel safe and like they weren't alone. What kind of name could that be? Brainstorm names for her.

B. Select one of the names you created in part A. On the back of this page, create a poster for a superhero movie using that name as the title. Think about how you imagine the narrator looking and what sort of setting or situation she might be involved in.

Note: *Scope* does not accept Google Docs. If you are e-mailing your entry, please send a .pdf or .doc file.

Superhero Contest

Write your own story with the title "If I Were a Superhero." Give your central character an internal conflict. Your story should be no more than 800 words. Three winners will each get

The Benefits of Being an Octopus by Ann Braden.

Entries will be judged on:

- ⇒ creativity
- ⇒ clarity
- ⇒ strength of character development
- ⇒ grammar, spelling, and punctuation

My name: _____

My home phone number: _____ My grade: _____

My teacher's name: _____ My teacher's e-mail: _____

School name: _____

School address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

School phone number: _____

My parent or legal guardian consents
to my participation in this contest.

Parent's or legal guardian's signature: _____

Include this form with your entry and send both to: scopemag@scholastic.com
or mail them to: Superhero Contest, c/o *Scope*, P.O. Box 712, New York, NY 10013-0712

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY February 20, 2020!