



CIVIC SUPERPOWERS

Activity Guide

Recommended for grades 5 – 12

Adaptable for grades 3-4

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Made by Us developed the concept of Civic Superpowers to emphasize that it takes all of us to shape our communities and country for the better and that there is not just one way to contribute. We can see the superpowers of Amplifiers, Connectors, Nurturers and Defenders in history who have shaped our democracy. Our unique perspectives, experiences, interests, and gifts mean that we all have a superpower to contribute! This activity encourages your students to find examples of the Civic Superpowers in the past and today and then to consider their own talents and the superpower they identify with the most.

GOALS:

- ◆ Broaden students' understanding of civic engagement through the concept of Civic Superpowers.
- ◆ Build content knowledge and give students practice with research and persuasive writing as they identify people from the past who exemplify the Civic Superpowers and provide an opportunity for students to express their ideas visually.
- ◆ Encourage students to identify and recognize their own Civic Superpower and capacity for civic engagement.

THIS GUIDE INCLUDES:

- ◆ Standards Alignment
- ◆ Activity Instructions
- ◆ Civic Superpowers Definitions
- ◆ Student Graphic Organizer for Historic Examples
- ◆ Short biographies of people featured on posters.
 - ◇ *Connector:* Studs Terkel, *Defender:* Dolores Huerta, *Nurturer:* Anna Elizabeth Hudlin, and *Amplifier:* Ida B. Wells
- ◆ Civic Superpowers posters (8.5x11 size). Design adapted from the murals created by Natalia Virafuentes.
- ◆ Resources including link to Civic Superpowers Quiz
- ◆ *Separate download* – Civic Superpowers posters (11x17 size)

ABOUT MADE BY US

Made by Us promotes access to history and civics education for young adults by meeting them where they are with credible, timely content and resources sourced from a nationwide network of cultural institutions, one of which is the Chicago History Museum. Made by Us connects young people with history institutions to inform and inspire their civic journey. One signature program is the annual Civic Season which runs from Juneteenth to July 4. The Civic Superpowers were developed by Made by Us for Civic Season, and CHM applied them in our own programming through arts integration. This activity adapts the public program experience for the classroom. Made by Us continues their Civic Season work but has also launched an exciting, multi-pronged initiative for commemorating the nation's 250th anniversary, especially aimed at engaging Gen Z.



STANDARDS ALIGNMENT — This packet is aligned the Illinois Social Science Standards, National Council for the Social Studies C3 Framework, and Common Core Anchor Standards.

Illinois State Learning Standards

Middle School:

- ◆ SS.6-8.IS.2.MC
- ◆ SS.6-8.IS.4.MCa
- ◆ SS.6-8.CV.1.MC
- ◆ SS.6-8.CV.2.MCa
- ◆ SS.6-8.H.1.MC

High School:

- ◆ SS.9-12.IS.1
- ◆ SS.9-12.IS.5
- ◆ SS.9-12.IS.11
- ◆ SS.9-12.CV.1
- ◆ SS.9-12.CV.5
- ◆ SS.9-12.CV.8

High School Continued:

- ◆ SS.9-12.H.3
- ◆ SS.9-12.H.4
- ◆ SS.9-12.H.5
- ◆ SS.9-12.H.7
- ◆ SS.9-12.H.8

National Council for the Social Studies C3 Framework

Middle School:

- ◆ D2.Civ.2.6-8
- ◆ D2.Civ.6.6-8
- ◆ D2.Civ.10.6-8
- ◆ D2.Civ.14.6-8
- ◆ D2.His.3.6-8
- ◆ D2.His.4.6-8
- ◆ D3.1.6-8
- ◆ D3.1.6-8
- ◆ D4.3.6-8
- ◆ D4.7.6-8

High School:

- ◆ D2.Civ.2.9-12
- ◆ D2.Civ.5.9-12
- ◆ D2.Civ.10.9-12
- ◆ D2.Civ.12.9-12
- ◆ D2.Civ.14.9-12
- ◆ D2.His.3.9-12
- ◆ D2.His.4.9-12
- ◆ D3.1.9-12
- ◆ D4.3.9-12
- ◆ D4.3.9-12

Common Core Anchor Standards (apply to both Middle and High School)

Reading

- ◆ 1
- ◆ 4
- ◆ 7

Writing

- ◆ 1
- ◆ 2
- ◆ 7

Speaking and Listening

- ◆ 2
- ◆ 5
- ◆ 6



CIVIC SUPERPOWERS

Activity Instructions

Materials:

- ◆ Copies of student graphic organizer
- ◆ Writing utensil
- ◆ Books and/or internet for student research
- ◆ Copies of the 4 posters (either 8.5x11 or 11x17)
- ◆ Art supplies for posters such as colored pencils, gel pens, or markers.

Suggested Activity:

1. Introduce the concept of Civic Superpowers to your students, without discussing each one deeply.
2. Divide your students into at least 4 small groups to define one of the Civic Superpowers, repeat the Superpowers as needed. Assign each group one of the Civic Superpowers: Amplifier, Connector, Defender, and Nurturer. Each group will need paper and a writing utensil. Students should work together to come up with a definition for that word **AND** how they think it applies to Civic Engagement.
3. Have each group verbally share their work. Then share the definitions from *Made by Us* (see following page).
4. Next, students will match a superpower to a person in history. To do this you can keep the same groups and superpowers or students can work individually choosing for themselves the superpower they want to research.
5. You can model this for students by reviewing the people we have featured on each poster. These are thought starters. Distribute the graphic organizer and writing utensils to students. It might be helpful for them to have the *Made by Us* definition for reference as they research. Your students can find examples from history in their textbook, other books in your classroom or school media center, and online. We have included a list of websites on the resources page in this guide that will work well for this activity. Give students time to select a person from the past who matches the Civic Superpower they are working with and complete the graphic organizer.
6. When groups have finished, they can add their person to the corresponding poster. They will need a copy of the poster and colored pencils, gel pens, or markers. Encourage students to come up with colors, symbols, sketches, and words that represent how that person exemplified that Civic Superpower. Groups can create one poster or multiple groups can collaborate on a poster. Use as many posters for each as you need. If time allows, students can color in the poster and add other decorative details.
7. Invite students to do a gallery walk to see the various historic figures who are featured on the posters. Display the posters in your classroom or elsewhere in your school if possible.

Conclude the lesson with a discussion about the Civic Superpowers:

- ◆ What person from history and superpower resonated with you the most? Why that one?
- ◆ Who (or what organization) in contemporary American life embodies a superpower? What impacts have they had?
- ◆ What people and groups are active in your own school community and neighborhood(s)? What superpowers do they embody?

Extension Activity:

- 1) Invite students to take the Civic Superpower Quiz (link on Resource page) to find their superpower. Students can journal about their feelings about their superpower and consider how to leverage that superpower in their own civic journey.
- 2) Students can research current local and national activists and their corresponding superpowers.



CIVIC SUPERPOWERS

Definitions

Civic Season and Civic Superpowers were developed by Made By Us. The Chicago History Museum is a proud Civic Season partner. For more information on Made by Us, visit: <https://historymadebyus.org/>

Amplifier	Connector
<p>You know how to capture the imagination of everyone around you. With creativity and passion, you can translate ideas, making them interesting and easy to understand. Whether on stage or online, with words or images, your willingness to speak up makes progress possible.</p> <p><u>Historic Amplifiers:</u> Frederick Douglass, Harvey Milk, Thurgood Marshall, Helen Keller, Ida B Wells, Dorothea Lange, Rachel Carson</p>	<p>Through your contact list and your commitment, you bring people, ideas, and movements together. You don't just know the right people – you're willing to connect the dots. You are open-minded and make unlikely connections, helping build the bridges to overcome obstacles and reach the future we envision, together.</p> <p><u>Historic Connectors:</u> Carrie Chapman Catt, Larry Itliong, Benjamin Franklin, Tisquantum (Squanto), Edna Gellhorn, Frances Perkins, Jane Jacob, Studs Terkel</p>
Defender	Nurturer
<p>On the front lines, you keep the movement MOVING. You don't take no for an answer, and people count on you to show up. You aren't scared of confrontation or getting in trouble for standing up for what you believe in.</p> <p><u>Historic Defenders:</u> Harriet Tubman, Yuri Kochiyama, Edna Gellhorn, Čháj Óhanj (Crazy Horse), Sylvia Rivera, Ed Roberts, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, Dolores Huerta</p>	<p>You are crucial for sustaining the marathon of change. Do people need to be fed? On it. Does someone need cheering on? You're there. You know change can't happen without community, and you encourage and support those around you. Your work ensures everyone has what they need to keep building a better future.</p> <p><u>Historic Nurturers:</u> Clara Barton, Jane Addams, Susan La Flesche Picotte, Henry Bergh, Fred Rogers, Pura Belpré, Anna Elizabeth Hudlin</p>



IDENTIFYING CIVIC SUPERPOWERS

Consider the Civic Superpowers below. Who or what group from history embodies those superpowers? Circle ONE superpower of your choice and answer the questions.

<p>Amplifier An individual who inspires and articulates demands, amplifying voices for social change.</p>	<p>Connector Someone who brings people together and organizes collective action for a common cause.</p>
<p>Defender Someone who stands up for what they believe in and protects others.</p>	<p>Nurturer A person who supports their community by providing for needs and offering support.</p>

1. Who is your person/group?

2. Where did you find this example?

3. How does this person/group demonstrate this superpower?

4. How will you show this person/group's efforts on the poster? What words, symbols, and colors can you use?



CIVIC SUPERPOWERS

Biography Sheet

Ida B. Wells – Amplifier

Ida B. Wells-Barnett was born in Holly Springs, Mississippi, in 1862. She was born into slavery and later emancipated when the Civil War ended. She worked tirelessly on social justice issues as an investigative journalist, writer, speaker, anti-lynching activist, women's suffragist, and early civil rights leader. She authored *The Reason Why the Colored American is not in the World's Columbian Exposition* and *A Red Record* that provided statistical data on lynching of African Americans in the United States. She founded critical organizations such as the Alpha Suffrage Club and was a co-founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909.

Studs Terkel – Connector

Studs Terkel was born in 1912 in New York City, but moved to Chicago when he was nine years old. He considered a career in law, but after failing the bar exam, he changed his mind. During the 1930s he had a job with the Works Progress Administration Writers Project. That led him into radio acting, but he also covered news, sports, and music. In radio and early television, he honed his talent for interviewing people from all walks of life. In the 1960s he started to use a tape recorder during his conversations with people outside of his radio show. In 1967 he published *Division Street: America*. He followed with many famous oral history works including *Hard Times*, about the Great Depression, *Working*, about how people make a living, *The Good War*, about World War II, and *Race*, about how Black and white people experience and think about racial issues. Studs was a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and a pioneer in the field of oral history.

Dolores Huerta – Defender

Dolores Huerta was a co-founder of the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), a forerunner to the United Farm Workers Union (UFW), and she is considered one of the most influential labor organizers of the 20th century. She was born in 1930 in New Mexico. As a teacher in the 1950s Huerta saw hungry children of farm workers coming to school. She felt she could do more to help them as a labor organizer than in the classroom. She met Cesar Chavez who was also interested in organizing farm workers and they co-founded the NFWA in 1962. Huerta helped organize the 1965 Delano grape boycott of 5,000 growers. She was the lead negotiator for the farm workers in the contract talks that followed. She served as the UFW vice president until 1999 and continues to work for Chicano rights.

Anna Elizabeth Hudlin – Nurturer

Anna Elizabeth was born free in Uniontown, Pennsylvania. Her mother had been born into slavery but was freed by the Quakers. Anna moved westward in search of a better life, spending time in St. Louis, Missouri. Along the way she met her husband Joseph and they settled in Chicago. The Hudlins, who married in 1855, were the first African Americans in Chicago to build their own home. During the night of October 8, 1871, they awoke to the noise of people fleeing the Great Chicago fire. Fortunately, their home was out of the path of the blaze. Anna decided to open their home as shelter for their neighbors. She tended to the scared families, both Black and white, offering food, drink, clothing, and a safe space. After the fire, the *Chicago Tribune* published a story about Anna's generosity, writing that she was "The Angel of the Fire."

SUPER POWER!

AMPLIFIER



**WHAT DOES THIS CIVIC SUPERPOWER
LOOK LIKE IN ACTION?**

**WHO IS AN AMPLIFIER
THAT INSPIRES YOU?**



IDA B. WELLS

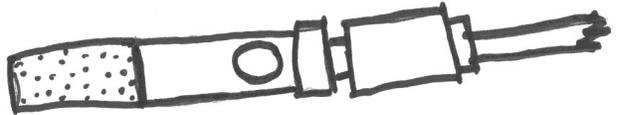
SUPER POWER!

CONNECTOR



**WHAT DOES THIS CIVIC SUPERPOWER
LOOK LIKE IN ACTION?**

**WHO IS A CONNECTOR
THAT INSPIRES YOU?**



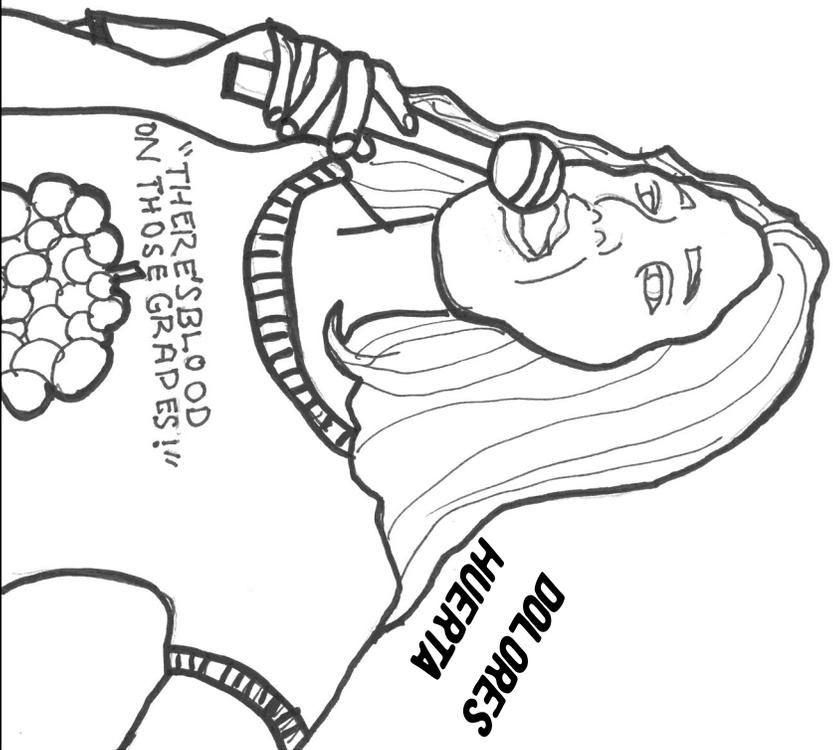
STUDS TERKEL

SUPER POWER! DEFENDER



WHO IS A DEFENDER
THAT INSPIRES YOU?

WHAT DOES THIS CIVIC SUPERPOWER
LOOK LIKE IN ACTION?



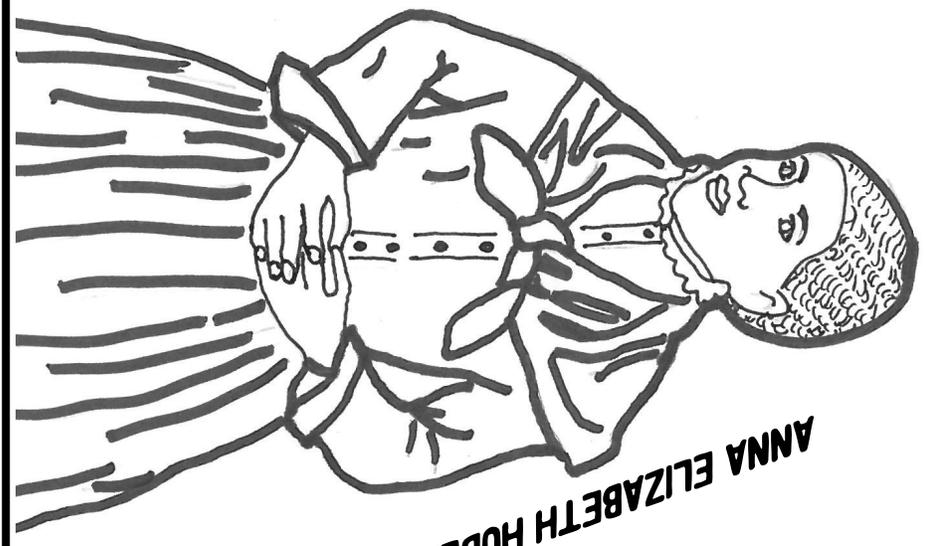
SUPER POWER

MURDERER



WHO IS A NURTURER

**WHAT DOES THIS CIVIC SUPERPOWER
LOOK LIKE IN ACTION?**



ANNA ELIZABETH HUDDLIN



CIVIC SUPERPOWERS

Resources

Made By Us

- <https://medium.com/history-made-by-us/find-your-civic-superpower-to-turbocharge-change-601d00a4a6ed>
- This blog entry by our colleagues at Made by Us describes people who fit into the various superpowers.
- <https://www.thecivicseason.com/quiz/>
- Use this hyperlink to take the quiz and find your or your students' Civic Superpowers.

Chicago History Museum Resources to help find historical people/events:

Facing Freedom

- <https://facingfreedom.org/>
- This website looks at 8 moments in US History when people have answered the question "What would you do for freedom?" The website features primary sources and brief histories of the varied movements.

Democracy Limited Chicago Women and the Vote

- <https://democracylimited.com/>
- This online exhibition explores the ways women organized to challenge the status quo and how these different paths led to a mass movement for suffrage. It also connects to activist women and groups today.

Designing for Change: Chicago Protest Art of the 1960s and 70s

- <https://www.chicagohistory.org/designing-for-change-learning-guide/>
- This exhibition explored the role "activism" (art + activism) played in the social movements in the 1960s and '70s. This link takes you to the learning guide created to accompany the exhibition. It contains readings and art making activities that could be integrated into classroom instruction.

CHM Blogs

- <https://www.chicagohistory.org/blog/>
- The Chicago History Museum blog series examines historical events and people related to Chicago and CHM's exhibitions and collection items. This website can be searched by category and tags to assist in looking for biographies, or scroll through the pages.

Another source for finding historical examples:

New York Historical Society – Woman and the American Story

- <https://wams.nyhistory.org/>
- The Chicago History Museum was a partner on this digital curriculum project. It features biographies, primary sources, and videos about a wide range of women in history.