

Book Summaries

In "Almost Super" by Marion Jensen, Rafter and Benny Bailey are excited to finally get their superpowers so they can join the rest of their family in fighting the evil Johnson family. But when the time comes, the superpowers they're given turn out to be duds. How will they be able to protect themselves from the Johnsons, their mortal enemies? The story follows the brothers as they try to get to the bottom of what happened.

About This Module

Overview	In this Upper Elementary module, youth read the book "Almost Super." They will engage with the text through discussion and reflection. At the end of the module, participants make superhero portraits and consider ways they can be superheroes in their own lives.
Guiding Questions*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is "superhero thinking"? • Who are real-life superheroes? • What is your real-life superpower? • How are you a superhero in your own life story?
Culminating Activities	Youth share their superhero short stories and portraits.
Session 1	Meet the Baileys Youth read the first chapter of "Almost Super" and make connections to their lives. They then create mood boards with words and pictures to help them improve their moods.
Session 2	Superheroes Thinking Youth discuss the Bailey superhero mantra and formulate their own personal mantras. They use "superhero" (strategic) thinking to think through tricky situations.
Session 3	Superpowers Youth discuss the various superpowers depicted in the book and talk about real-life superheroes and their superpowers.
Session 4	The Superhero in You Youth reflect on their real-life superpowers, write short stories, and make portraits of themselves as superheroes.
Session 5	Superhero Showcase Youth share their superhero short stories and portraits.

*Guiding questions are not specifically asked in the sessions themselves but are meant to guide your preparation and facilitation of the module. Keep these questions top of mind so you can help youth make connections and capture key takeaways relating to the topic.

Key Terms

Word	Definition
Feud	Long and bitter conflict, often between families.
Devastated	Really upset, extremely dissatisfied.
Telekinesis	The ability to move objects with one’s mind.
Resolved	Firm in purpose, determined to accomplish something.
Ferocious	Very fierce, extreme or intense.
Courage	The ability to face a problem, even if afraid.
Mantra	Affirmation or statement to motivate and inspire.

Supplies

Facilitator Needs	1	Whiteboard or flipchart and marker
	1	Computer and projector (optional)
Each Group Needs	Several	Old magazines or catalogs that can be cut up (optional)
	1	Scissors
	1	Glue or tape
Each Participant Needs	1	<p>“Almost Super” by Marion Jenson</p> <p>If you don’t have enough books to provide one for every participant, youth can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share a book and read in pairs • Watch YouTube video read-alouds at youtube.com/watch?v=VWYVuxzjQis&list=PL81Wt87jiAhoc-dGomqyzoRKJD9Uve88G • Listen to the audiobook on Scribd (which offers a free 30-day trial) at: scribd.com/audiobook/237953473/Almost-Super
	Several sheets	Paper
	Several sheets	Colored paper
	1+	Pens or pencil
	Multiple	Crayons, markers or colored pencils
	1	Index card
		Refreshments (optional)

Literacy Strategies

During this module, readers will:

- Activate prior knowledge
- Use context clues to understand a word
- Make connections between the text and their own lives
- Use critical thinking skills

Extension Activities

- Create skits in which youth act out their favorite scenes in the book.
- Allow youth to animate their superhero short stories.
- Have youth design a mask, costume and logo for their superhero selves.
- Invite youth to research real-life superheroes.
- Start a book club and read the sequel “Searching for Super.”
- Watch “The Incredibles,” a movie about a superhero family.
- Plan a video game party with superhero video games. Check out **Marvel HQ** (marvelhq.com) or DC Super Hero Girls games on **Cartoon Network** (cartoonnetwork.co.uk/show/dc-super-hero-girls/games) for free online games.
- Check out other extension ideas (and add your own) here: padlet.com/lsexton6/9vqf21v43issrrmg.

Extension Books

- “The Mighty Odds” by Amy Ignatow
- “Captain Nobody” by Dean Pitchford
- “Powerless” by Matthew Cody

Career Connections

- In this module, youth discuss a variety of jobs held by people in their community. Plan a career fair and invite individuals from the community to share about their jobs.
- In this module, youth have opportunities to identify their own strengths and skills, which can get them thinking about careers. Staff can integrate career exploration further by sharing some of the careers that match youth strengths. For example, if a young person says they’re really good at listening to people and solving problems, you could tell them that’s what a lot of healthcare workers have to be good at.

MyFuture

If your Club or Youth Center wants to connect this theme with activities on MyFuture, we recommend:

- **Everyday Hero Challenge** (myfuture.net/activities/At-Home-Activities/Whatever-It-Takes-to-Be-a-HERO/414-Everyday-Hero-Challenge-571): Youth are encouraged to identify actions they can take to give back to others and become an everyday hero.
- **Show Your Support!** (myfuture.net/activities/At-Home-Activities/Future-Forward/309-Show-Your-Support!): Youth make a sign or note to say thank you to essential workers.

- **Whatever It Takes to Be a HERO Livestream** (myfuture.net/activities/At-Home-Activities/Whatever-It-Takes-to-Be-a-HERO/416-Whatever-it-takes-to-be-a-HERO-Livestream): Teen moderators sit down with actors from the CW Network’s Superhero TV shows to discuss what it means to be a hero and how we can all be everyday heroes.
- **Passport to Manhood “Who Is Your Hero”** ([myfuture.net/activities/Teens/NKC-Rise-Up!-We-Won’t-Be-Stopped/503-Passport-2-Manhood-%22Who-Is-Your-Hero%22](https://myfuture.net/activities/Teens/NKC-Rise-Up!-We-Won't-Be-Stopped/503-Passport-2-Manhood-%22Who-Is-Your-Hero%22)): Youth make a short video about their heroes.

Family and Caregiver Engagement

- Invite families to the culminating event to see youth showcase their real-life superhero short stories and portraits. Have youth talk about what they did and learned in the sessions; ask family members to name some real-life superheroes they admire.
- Use a bulletin board or newsletter to encourage families to try these activities at home:
 - Read a superhero comic or watch a superhero movie together; talk about which superpower each member of the family would like to have and how they would use it.
- Check out pbskids.org/xavier/games/hidden-heroes to play Xavier Riddle and the Secret Museum, where they’ll tackle everyday problems and learn from real-life inspirational figures.
- Talk about real-life superheroes you admire and why.
- Reflect on your own real-life superpowers and how to apply them to real-life situations.

Notes to Facilitator

Except for Session 1, when youth read aloud a portion of “Almost Super,” sessions do not provide enough time for youth to do the reading and the activities. Consider designating time during the day for youth to read, or allow youth to take the books home.

If you don’t have enough books for all participants, schedule time in the Club for video read-alouds (which can be found on YouTube) or share the URLs for listening at home. It’s easy to find online videos of teachers reading “Almost Super” aloud, one chapter at a time. Club staff can record themselves reading chapters – or enlist Keystone or other teen members – and share the video or audio recordings through the Club’s virtual programming channels.

You could also extend the module over two weeks to allow additional reading time.

If youth aren’t meeting in person, you can facilitate this module virtually. See the resource [Tips for Virtual Facilitation of Summer Brain Gain](https://mybgca-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/lsexton_bgca_org/EfHFLB8ut_hJupY89wAXlx4BSg9hU3Tzw2e-8v42_UUHeg?e=tgSoH6) (mybgca-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/lsexton_bgca_org/EfHFLB8ut_hJupY89wAXlx4BSg9hU3Tzw2e-8v42_UUHeg?e=tgSoH6).

Session 1 of this module features an activity in which youth can make mood boards using basic art supplies or by cutting up magazines. If you’d like youth to use magazines for the activity, begin collecting these a few weeks in advance of facilitating the module.