

Special Power!*

Often fairytale, book, or film characters have special powers — a fairy godmother can turn pumpkins into coaches and mice into horses, and Superman can fly. Kids *enjoy imagining* they too might have a special power that could help them solve problems and help others. It gives them a chance to think about how they'd like the world to be. This activity can lead to talking about what kids *really can do* through their strengths and abilities, which are their real “special powers.”

Here are several ways to do this:

First, read a story or book that has a character with special power — like *Cinderella*, *The Cat in the Hat*, *Harry Potter*, *The Phantom Toll Booth*, or any such story. Then choose one or more of the ideas below.

- 1) Ask your child how having that special power helped the character. Then ask, “*If you had a special power* what would it be?” Let them tell you what they would do with that special power. What would be fun and what would be hard about having it? Encourage the child to make up or write a story about having a special power. **OR**
- 2) Invite your child to imagine the character with special power was *his or her friend*. Then ask, “What would happen in our house if ___ walked in?” **OR**
- 3) Ask your child to tell you what special power they would like YOU, the grown-up, to have. This could lead to a lively discussion. Let them talk about why they'd want you to have that power and what they would want you to do with it.

Then you and your children can make a list of the *real strengths and powers they have*— such as friendliness, courage, curiosity, humor, honesty, perseverance, cooperativeness, and imagination. Hearing these words helps kids develop a rich vocabulary and a strong sense of their abilities.

If you like, write out their stories and list of strengths, and put them in the **Our Treasures** section of your

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I asked my grandson, ‘If you had a special power, what would it be?’ He didn’t hesitate. ‘I would be able to speak with birds and make their sounds and know what they mean. The birds can see what’s going on and could tell me about it. I want to know what birds think.’

Next time I see him, I’ll ask him how this power could help him do something good and useful. That stretches his imagination to think about possibilities. I like when kids feel that they can make a difference.

— *Grandma Anna*

**Special Power* supports the English-Language Arts Content Standards related to reading comprehension, narrative analysis, oral explanation, and inferential thinking.

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