Getting started

      We may have tricked you; you may have thought this was a nice board game to be played while sitting around a table. While you're welcome to give that a shot, it probably won't go too well. Superherolympics was born out of a thought experiment, essentially "what if you could play a board game like it was a playground game?" That's why we call Superherolympics a "massive tabletop game": it's like traditional tabletop games, but it needs some space to really work. We imagined it in gyms, fields, and parks. You may have a better idea.

      If you don't have something like that available to you, think about the space you do have and use the existing Missions as a jumping off point for how to use that space. Let the kids come up with stories that guide new Missions. See if they can find ways to adapt the Superpowers to fit those new Missions. One of the underlying principles that went into this game's creation was the belief that kids of all ages are creative and adaptable. Admittedly, those virtues won't be on full display if you're trying to squeeze the game into a twenty minute window, and no one has ever played it before. If you're reading this in the midst of that scenario: sorry/good luck :)

      The initial setup of the game - creating superhero identities and setting up the field of play - takes around _5 minutes_. Each round of game play should take from _7-10 minutes_, so **_the whole game should last for 45 minutes to 1 hour._**

      Another quick note: unlike normal turn-taking games, one of the keys to Superherolympics is that everyone does the same activities at the same time; it is both collaborative and competitive by design.

Supply Swaps

      In order to make the physical challenges as much fun and as varied as possible, we integrated a lot of support materials into the game. A full list of materials is available and can be ordered online through our website (http://www.superherolympics.com), but you may have many of the materials already or something similar that's just as good. The table below tells you what each supply is used for and offers an idea of a potential replacement.

Material	Use	Replacement	Used for...
Bean bags	throwing/rolling object	Balled up tape	Throwing games
Flag belts	take from other players	Stickers	Chaos Flags
Blindfolds	...prevent people from seeing.	Sleeves from extra clothing, paper product w/string	Throwing games
Victory coins	tangible way to track progress	Paper clips, or even keep score on paper	Scorekeeping
Name badges	way to display identity and superpower	Name tags, Stickers, Pieces of paper w/paper clips	Identity creation

Sharing, Remixing, Distributing

This game came out of the Learning, Design, and Technology Master's degree program at Stanford University. As such, a lot of the design of the game is grounded in research into social and psychological development. For example, we made it a superhero game because of research showing that identifying oneself with a good but powerful entity primes a person for more empathetic behavior. We made it partner-based because of research showing that pairs are better at generating novel solutions than even a highly-advanced individual. We made it take place in a massive field of play because, well, because we thought that would make it a little bit crazy, and we like crazy.

With all that said, though, Superherolympics is licensed under Creative Commons; that means you can and should feel free to rework, reimagine, and change the game however you see fit. We even provide all of the files we used to create this game on our website (http://www.superherolympics.com) so you can mess around with those too.

For that matter, let your students, kids, or whoever it is that you're playing this game with do the same! They can create their own superpowers, their own missions, even their own game board. If they like witches & wizards more than superheroes, make it into a witches & wizards game. We are 100% cool with that. We are the people who packed up the tiny little snowball and started it rolling down the snow-covered hill. You are the ones who will turn it into an avalanche of awesomeness.

Our approach to designing missions was to brainstorm activities that required two people to work together, and then we often placed conditions on those interactions to minimize inherent advantages (for example, even if someone is great at throwing with accuracy that advantage is limited by a blindfold).

As we designed the different powers, we balanced them by giving each superpower:
● 1 type of activity where the power gave a _clear advantage_,
● 1 type of activity that was _unaffected_, and
● 1 type of activity where the power could be an advantage or a disadvantage _depending on how well the player used it._

To simplify this balance, we made all of the either/or powers apply to the Throwing games, so the clear advantages only come in the Race or Chaos games.