

**VIDEO**

# Write Your Power: Superheroes and Science Fiction with Tony Weaver, Jr.

by Tony Weaver, Jr.,  
educator and author of  
the graphic novel  
*Weirdo*

**GRADES 5–12****TYPE****FANTASY/SCIFI  
NARRATIVE  
POETRY**

Author and educator Tony Weaver, Jr. invites students in grades 5—12 to explore science fiction with different writing prompts that invite them to build new worlds and reimagine what's possible.

**WHAT YOU WILL DO****Project Overview**

**Submissions are now closed.**

Inside all of us lives a story waiting to be told. 826 National's anthology project invites students in grades 5—12 to explore the stories they carry, as well as the limitlessness of their imaginations, by writing and submitting science fiction and superhero tales for a chance to become published authors!

The session is designed to offer you and your students multiple entry points to explore science fiction, a genre that encourages writers to view the world not as it is, but how it could and should be. It includes four options for writing prompts that touch on world-building, character development, speculative fiction, and poetry. Each prompt encourages students to think about superhero stories in a new way. They make space for students to dream new worlds, create characters that defy expectations, reimagine lived experiences with bold new outcomes, and reflect on what makes them uniquely powerful.

You can choose to teach one of the writing prompts, offer students a choice of prompts, or try all four prompts if time allows. See the **Before You Begin** section for recommendations for implementing the prompts with students.

**Time:** We recommend at least two to three hours total, depending on the prompt(s) students are responding to. Just like all 826 Digital lessons, you can break sessions into shorter blocks that best fit your classroom or program schedule.

For a full walkthrough of this lesson, please visit the [Write Your Power with Tony Weaver, Jr. Facilitator Guide](#).

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## About the Project

Each year, 826 National collaborates with an author or other creative leader to share a writing prompt and publishing opportunity with students across the country. For the 2025-26 school and program year, we're thrilled to team up with Tony Weaver, Jr., acclaimed author of *Weirdo*. Together, we invite young people across the country in grades 5-12 to explore what's possible through writing science fiction and superhero stories. When they finish, students are encouraged to submit their writing for a chance to be published in 826 National's student anthology! All published authors will receive two copies of the publication, which will be released and distributed in June 2026.

Tony Weaver, Jr. is an award-winning writer and educator who creates diverse stories that make young people feel seen and valued. After seeing the impact that media stereotypes had on students in his community, Tony embarked on a journey to create new media narratives that would challenge the status quo. He is the author of *Weirdo*, a graphic novel for middle grades that celebrates self-acceptance and belonging.

## Before You Begin

Before you get started, familiarize yourself with the prompt options and activities listed in **Choose Your Adventure: Writing Prompts** below, or in **STEP 3** of the [Write Your Power with Tony Weaver, Jr. Facilitator Guide](#). We suggest identifying at least two prompts so students can choose one that interests them most. Depending on time, of course, you can plan for students to respond to just one of the prompts or to all the prompts—they work together in beautiful ways!

All lessons and student handouts are available in English and Spanish. You can find the Spanish translations in the “Materials” section on each lesson page (see Choose Your Adventure: Writing Prompts below).

### Facilitator Note:

Students naturally gravitate toward different genres—some are inspired by real-life reflections, while others thrive in wildly imaginative new worlds. That’s why we have provided a variety of prompts, each with different brainstorming activities and entry points. We recommend reviewing them all and, if possible, selecting at least two that are a good fit for you and your students. Whenever possible, build in choice so students can pick the prompt(s) that ignite their creativity.

Some activities in these prompts encourage students to reflect on their identity, their power, and their place in the current world. When introducing the prompt(s), be mindful that students will exhibit a wide range of social and self-awareness. You know your students best—if you sense students are struggling with an activity or prompt, invite them to write about what they feel comfortable sharing and to take risks when they feel ready. All students should feel welcome to participate.

Visit the [Write Your Power with Tony Weaver, Jr. Facilitator Guide](#) to learn more about how 826 builds safe and brave spaces for students.

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## Choose Your Adventure: Writing Prompts

Click each title below to view the full prompt and handouts.

1. [Bold New Worlds](#) | **Flash Fiction, Grades 9-12**
    - World-building is a vital part of writing compelling science fiction. In this lesson, students will develop a new, in-depth world for their science fiction story.
  3. [Heroes \(and Villains, Mentors, and Sidekicks\) of the Future](#) | **Fiction, Grades 5-12**
    - What makes a hero? In this lesson, students will develop a captivating character that defies traditional archetypes and then write a superhero story featuring that character.
  5. [Reclaim Your Power](#) | **Speculative Fiction, Grades 9-12**
    - What if you could change the ending to a memory that left you powerless? In this lesson, students will retell a story with a new ending, reclaiming their power in the process.
  7. [Superhero Persona Poems](#) | **Poetry, Grades 5-12**
    - When was the last time you felt like a superhero? In this lesson, students will reflect on that moment and write a poem that shows off their inner strengths.
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## Revision

We believe revision is the heart of the writing process. In each writing prompt, you'll find revision strategies that help students build specific skills, reflect on their purpose for writing, and showcase their best work. No matter which writing prompt(s) you choose, we recommend dedicating at least thirty minutes, or an extra session, for students to revise and edit their work.

The revision strategies included for each prompt are designed to be adaptable, so you can integrate them into revision structures you may already have in place. If students are gathering for the first time, we encourage you to offer students opportunities to get feedback on their draft in pairs or small groups.

These revision strategies can also be used independently, for students to revise their own draft if needed.

If students are submitting their writing to 826 National's anthology, you might share with students that hundreds of pieces will be submitted for consideration, and revised, edited pieces are more likely to be selected during the review process. Focusing on revision will make their piece shine and help their chances to get their writing published in a real, professionally bound book!

For more ideas on how to approach revision, see 826 Digital's [Guide to Revision](#).

## **MATERIALS**

- [Write Your Power with Tony Weaver, Jr. Facilitator Guide](#)