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| 1 | **OCTOPUS: Shape-shifting, invisibility** This deep sea shape-shifter is equipped with the best defenses Mother Nature has to offer. The eight-**tentacled** wonder hides from **predators** using its amazing powers of **camouflage** making it all but *invisible*. If discovered, the **wily** creature spews a cloud of ink that both creates a diversion so it can flee, AND dulls its attacker's senses making it harder to track. As a last resort, the fast-swimming octopus can **morph** its body to squeeze through narrow cracks and **crevices**, or give up a **limb** if caught and **grow a new one** later. Bottom line – don't mess with it. |
| 2 | **GECKO: Anti-gravity glue grip feet** The gecko – nature’s Spiderman – has many special powers, including its own chirping language and among its defensive weapons is the ability to shed its tail should a **predator** latch on. The tiny lizard also has a built in **feces** **catapult** to **repel** attackers. But the gecko's most famous super power is anti-gravity suction toes that allow it easily to climb up **vertical** surfaces and even across ceilings. But it's not a sticky web that gives the gecko its power - it is **microscopic** hair-like strands on each toe that trigger a pull allowing the gecko to **adhere** to (almost) any surface. The lizard does, however, have a Kryptonite - it can't stick to Teflon! |
| 3 | **PUFFERFISH: Inflatability, deadly poison** Don't be fooled by its cute face. The pufferfish, also called the blowfish, may not blessed with speed or **agility**, but the clumsy fish has the **miraculous** skill of **increasing** its size by several times to **intimidate**  **predators**. The fish has a stretchy, elastic stomach, and "**inflates**" by gulping water and air to **morph** into a ball. Pufferfish, is also highly poisonous. The fish contains a poison fatal to humans. In fact, one fish holds enough poison to kill 30 adult humans. |
| 4 | **CHAMELEON: Invisibility** Chameleons are in the running for best superhero costume of the animal kingdom – and they don’t even need to rush into a phone booth before making a quick change to **hues** of brown, black, gold, green and even pink or **turquoise**. The **unique** ability to blend in with their natural surroundings, thanks to special skin cells, makes these lizards incredibly difficult for predators to spot. Chameleons are also master climbers and have **stereoscopic** vision, allowing them to zero in on their prey with warp speed. |
| 5 | **CHEETAH: Speed on land** This cool cat is the fastest land **mammal** on earth, with the ability to go from 0 to 60 mph in just 3 seconds. Its speed, **coupled** with its razor-sharp eyesight, let cheetah **terrorize** the grasslands in which it lives hunting for prey -- and earn it the status of super beast |
| 6 | **PEREGRINE FALCON: Speed in air** Faster than a speeding bullet - you betcha! Superman's got nothing on this rad raptor. **Equipped** with a razor sharp beak and **talons**, peregrine falcons are the fastest-flying birds on earth. They mate for life, meaning the birds pair off in **dynamic** **duos** that bring death from above to their prey – bats, songbirds and ducks – at speeds of up to 200 mph |
| 7 | **SEA DRAGON: Camouflage** Is it flora or fauna? To hungry **predators**, it's almost impossible to pick out the well-**disguised** sea dragon from the plants in which it lives. The sea dragon has some of nature's most elaborate **camouflage** costumes. The graceful creature floats through the leafy seaweed on the ocean floor and looks just like the gently waving **kelp**. The willowy sea dragons live in waters off south and east Australia – and may or may not be pictured above. Like we said, flora or fauna? It's tough to tell |
| 8 | **TARSIER: Night vision** These huge, **freakish** eyes see all. The tasier's eyeballs are each as big as its brain and allow the tiny **nocturnal** **primate** to hunt by night. The **minuscule** creature also has **acute** hearing, thanks to its oversized ears – and is able to **swivel** its head 180 degrees in either direction to seek out its prey. On other words, you can run, but you can't hide |

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| 9 | **PLATYPUS: Electroreception!** This awkward duck-mammal may seem an unlikely animal super hero, but don’t be fooled! The **web-footed** creature has an amazing sixth sense: electoreception. This power allows the platypus – which has poor **vision** – to detect prey by sensing electric fields **generated** by muscle movement. Even in a dark room wearing a blindfold and ear plugs, the platypus will hunt you down. They're also naturally packing some powerful heat: sharp **venomous** **talons** on their heels allow the platypus to deliver a **toxic** kick to **predators** in hot **pursuit**, so moral – keep your distance. |
| 10 | **DOLPHINS: Ultrasonic hearing** Dolphins look like they’re smiling. But it’s their way of **communicating** among their own **pods** that makes them special. Dolphins have super-developed hearing and can detect sounds at least ten times above what most humans hear – and, they hear with their teeth! Dolphin teeth function like well-tuned **antenna** and serve the dolphin like an **internal** GPS system |
| 11 | **RHINOCEROS BEETLE: Amazing strength** It's the tiny tank of the insect world. The Rhinoceros Beetle is considered the world’s strongest creature and can carry up to 850 times its own body weight. A human would have to lift about 65 tons to match the **minuscule** bug's might. The beetle’s name is inspired by its fierce horn – and it's not just **ornamental**. Like gladiators in the ring, male beetles use them to **joust** – may the best beetle win |
| 12 | **HUMMINGBIRD: Helicopter hover flight** If you’re planning on **vanquishing** a villain by air, it’d be **ideal** to have an army of hummingbirds by your side. Hummingbirds have wings that beat so fast – up to 90 times per second – that they can hover in mid-air. They’re also the only birds in the animal kingdom that can fly backwards. How do they get so much energy for their feats? Their diet **consists** of super-sweet nectar, which they must **consume** about every 10 minutes, as well as insects and spiders for protein. Watch out, Peter Parker. |
| 13 | **FLYING SQUIRREL: It flies!** For these tree-dwelling **rodents**, the sky’s really the limit. Flying squirrels don’t really fly – they glide from tree to tree. These amazing rodents have been known to glide for over 200 feet before landing. The **tautness** of the webbed-parachute-like **membrane** keeps them in the air and their tail acts as a brake. |
| 14 | **SEA CUCUMBER: Body liquefication** When the sea cucumber senses danger, it melts – **literally**. These oblong creatures are able to loosen or tighten their outer body armour at will – allowing them squeeze through tiny cracks and pour into narrow **crevices** to take shelter from **predators**. |
| 15 | **ELECTRIC EEL: Zaps adversaries with electric shocks** This slithery sparker is isn’t actually an eel. It’s a knifefish. The electric eel uses its **current** to **incapacitate** its prey. These shocks aren’t just tiny tingles either. An electric eel is capable of producing a 500 volt shock – enough to kill an adult human. They also use these shocks to protect themselves from **predators** |
| 16 | **BATS: Echolocation, hyper-healing** Besides the fact that bats are they only mammal that truly flies – they have an **echolocation** power that allows them to **discern** the layout of a pitch black room and to **locate** hidden prey. The bat’s wings are very thin – allowing for **precise** and sharp moves – they beat birds by a long shot for flight skills. The thin **membrane** of webbing on the wings heals quickly if torn. The bat **emits** a sound intended to create an echo . |

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| 1  \* | **OCTOPUS: Shape-shifting, invisibility** This deep sea shape-shifter has eight **tentacles**  and hides from **predators**. Its powers of **camouflage** make it almost *invisible*. It can also spit out a cloud of ink in its enemies’ faces. The octopus can squeeze through narrow cracks and if one of its arms is pulled off, **it can grow a new one** later. Bottom line – don't mess with it. |
| 2 | **GECKO: Anti-gravity glue grip feet** The gecko has many special powers. It has its own language and can drop off its own tail should a **predator** latch on. The tiny lizard can also fling its poo at enemies. But the gecko's most famous super power is **suction** toes that let it easily climb up **vertical** walls and even across ceilings. |
| 3 | **PUFFERFISH: Inflatability, deadly poison** Don't be fooled by its cute face. The pufferfish may not be fast or **flexible**, but the fish has the **amazing** skill of **growing in** size to **intimidate**  **predators**. The fish **inflates** by gulping water and air to **change** into a ball. Pufferfish, is also highly poisonous one fish holds enough poison to kill 30 adult humans. |
| 4 | **CHAMELEON: Invisibility** Chameleons can make a quick change to **hues** of brown, black, gold, green and even pink or **turquoise**. This special ability to blend in makes these lizards very hard for **predators** to see. Chameleons are also really good climbers and have **very good** eye sight. |
| 5 | **CHEETAH: Speed on land** This cool cat is the fastest land **mammal** on earth, with the **ability** to go from 0 to 60 mph in just 3 seconds. Its speed and its razor-sharp eyesight, let cheetah **rule** the grasslands where it lives hunting for **prey** -- and earn it the status of super beast |
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| secret identity | hard working | determined |

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Notes:

We have been doing a cross-curricular project on superheroes in my year 5 class. In literacy, we have been looking at vocab and dictionary skills before we invented our own superhero. I used the pyramid sheet for paired work discussing the qualities with talk partners and then arranging those qualities on the pyramid in order of importance. The pictures and words I gave to the children to choose their top 3 super animals, and then locate the highlighted words in the dictionary to find a definition.