



A ☐

One of the most popular cinema **genres** of the twenty-first century so far is the superhero movie. Some people say that superhero movies are the new westerns. Both genres have similar themes: the good guys fighting the bad guys, protecting the innocent and giving up their life for the good of others. 5

B ☐

When a new superhero movie comes out, it dominates the **box office** for weeks. The **trailer** for *Captain America: Civil War* was one of the most downloaded trailers ever and **A-list** actors are keen to take on 10 superhero roles.

Many superhero films have had Oscar nominations, and fan events like Comic-Con* keep fans excited about the latest **blockbusters**.

C ☐

First of all, there's the adventure, the action and the 15 costumes, the great soundtracks, the special effects and **computer-generated images**. They're fun and entertaining, and we love the escapism. But is that enough?

You have to look deeper to find out why people love 20 them. Superheroes have feelings. They cope with human experiences that we can relate to. In other words, they are not so different from regular people. Psychologist Mary Tavost has written books about the psychology of superheroes, and she thinks that they 25 inspire their fans because their goals in life are similar to human goals.

They want peace, justice and love, just as we do. The lives of superheroes reflect real life as we know it.

D ☐

Batman dedicates himself to fighting crime after 30 somebody murders his parents in front of him. In real life, people who experience a trauma often decide to help others. But he also shows a very human side because love is his motivation. In *The Dark Knight*, his love for Rachel makes him weak. As a result, he often 35 makes bad decisions. When Hulk is angry, he causes terrible destruction. He finds it difficult to control his angry feelings, and then he feels guilty when he loses control. This is easy to understand – extreme anger is a very human emotion. 40

E ☐

Superheroes cope with problems and find meaning in loss and trauma. When they discover their powers they use them for a good purpose. X-Men are 'mutants' – people reject them because they are different and 'weird' – but they use their powers 45 to stand up for the innocent. They inspire us to accept ourselves and be proud of who we are. Before Spiderman had superpowers, his classmates bullied him at school. Later, he uses his abilities to protect people who can't protect themselves. These 50 superheroes may be larger than life, but we have no problems identifying with their human side.

*Comic-Con – a conference for comic book and film character fans