

Who Is A Hero?

A Lesson Plan for Middle School Students



Quilt 3, Square 6

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Who Is A Hero?

To the Teacher

The media gives a great deal of attention to sports and entertainment celebrities who often become heroes to the youth in our society. The main purpose of this project is to help students realize that there are many kinds of heroes and that any person can make a difference in the lives of many. Even though not be publicly known, s/he can be called a hero.

When one person changes the lives of many, we call it “the power of one.” After students have defined the word ‘hero’ and have researched people who are called heroes, they will be asked to volunteer at organizations within their community. They will have the opportunity to exercise their “power of one” and be among the many “everyday” heroes who make a positive difference in our local community.

Goals

Students will define the word hero and state the characteristics of a hero.

Students will make a positive difference in society by selecting a community project and participating in it.

Students will discuss the various types of heroes.

Students will investigate one hero to honor and show support for their choice.

Students will explain how a variety of individuals have made a difference in the lives of many.

Students will discuss the social and/or political events that caused a person to make a difference and to be a hero.

Students will research the life of a hero and creatively and in an organized manner honor that hero.



Activity- Whole Class

Discussion -- Defining Heroism

Ask 'Who is a hero?'

Divide the class into small groups or pairs. Ask students to list as many 'heroes' as they can in five minutes and be prepared to tell why these people were chosen. If there are more than five on the list, rate them in order of importance.

On the board, list each group's five top choices and ask the class to choose their five favorite heroes. Discuss why these were chosen and have the class create a list of characteristics that make a person a hero.

Have the students come up with a definition of a hero.

Put website on board and ask students if the people listed on the website meet their definition of a hero.

Useful website

http://www.homeoftheheroes.com/2nd_floor/opportunity/hero_entrance.html

Make sure the class discussion includes the difference between a celebrity and a hero.



Activity- Whole Class **Discussion – Redefining Heroism**

The purpose of this activity is to help students recognize the heroes within their community, neighborhood and families, the people who live near us and perform small acts of kindness and generosity.

Ask: Are there different kinds of heroes?

List on the board –

Someone who volunteers to work with paralyzed children

Someone who volunteers in a soup kitchen

Someone who regularly gives blood to the Red Cross

Someone who comes over and listens to you when you are upset

Someone who volunteers to walk your dog while you are on vacation

Someone who visits a nursing home with their dog to cheer up residents

Someone who raises money for charities.

Ask students to compare these people with the heroes they have already identified.

Have students discuss if there are different types of heroes.



Activity –part one

Review define the word “hero.”

List the characteristics mentioned.

Remind them that often heroes are people who live near us and perform the small acts of kindness and generosity that can change our lives.

Ask students to think of someone in their life who they consider to be a hero (e.g. parents, firefighters, teachers, relatives, etc.)

In pairs, have students interview each other and answer the following questions:

Who is your hero?

Where does your hero live?

Complete the sentence: I admire this person because...

As a class, refine the definition of the word to include those from their community. Enhance the previously made list of characteristics.



Activity –part two Honor your hero in a special way.

Ideas for sharing information to honor heroes-

Sketch a scene from your hero's life that could be used as part of a museum display.

Design a souvenir that could be sold in a museum gift shop that shares something significant about your hero.

Write the script for an interview that was recorded after an important event in your hero's life.

Create a time line of important events in your hero's life. Include dates, events and their importance.

Make a collage or a mobile of pictures showing the contribution your hero made to society.

Write a thank you note to your hero describing exactly what he or she did that you appreciated.

Write a journal entry that tells what led to your hero's contribution - what caused the hero to make a difference.

Activity

Looking beyond the neighborhood

Hurrah for a Hero

Who is a hero? You and your teammates have discussed the characteristics of a hero, and now it is up to you to choose your hero to honor.

Please sign up on our Heroes Hall of Fame as soon as you know who that special person (or group) is.

Now you must be ready to share:

who is your hero?

0. what are the person's accomplishments?
0. why are you honoring her/him?
0. where was the person born?
0. when was the person famous?
0. where is this person now?



Present your hero to the class and then honor your hero in one of the ways listed in on previous page (See Activity –part two - Honor your hero in a special way) or use a treasure chest*. Share as many accomplishments of your hero as you can.

You and your teammates will induct your hero into our **Heroes' Hall of Fame**. Each member will present for 4 minutes or less.

*You will need a shoe box to decorate and filled with items that show why this person deserves to be honored.



Websites for Heroes

<http://www.myhero.com/myhero/go/directory/>

This comprehensive directory will provide students with examples of individuals who cover a wide-range of heroes. Before they begin their project they might want to look at these examples.

<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cnn.heroes/>

CNN honors for unheralded heroes -- people driven to exceptional achievement in service to others. Interviews and videos bring the researcher closer to the chosen hero. Also offers an opportunity nominate individuals to be honored.

<http://www.homeofheroes.com/>

“Military Times’ comprehensive site to preserve the history of recipients of the Medal of Honor as well as stimulating discussion about heroes at multi-grade levels through articles about everyday people who contributed to the preserving the liberty we have in the United States.

The Hall Of Heroes is a "Virtual Museum" was created to bring these heroes into to helps us remember the true heroes, so their service will not be forgotten.

<http://www.myhero.com/myhero/go/directory/>

This comprehensive directory will provide students with examples of individuals who cover a wide-range of heroes. Before they begin their project they might want to look at these examples.

<http://www.costcoconnection.com/connection/200907/?pg=25&pm>

Specific examples of ordinary people changing the world

From [Tell Me a Mitzvah Book Study Guide](#)

www.babaganewz.com/teachers/studyGuide.cfm?sg=64book.pdf



Culminating Activity- Making a Difference Being the Power of One

Each student will sign up to work with one group, charity or organization for a minimum of 4 times during the year. There should be a written agreement between the student and the teacher stating the student's name, the organization involved, the person to contact at the organization and the student's responsibility. This may be a local group, a national concern or an international one. The service offered may range from reading to an elderly person, collecting for a food bank or cleaning up the neighborhood park with recycling. Suggestions of resources for making a difference at the end of this unit.

Some visible proof of the volunteer work is necessary.

The student may keep a journal describing the service rendered, draw a picture of what was done or have a photo taken of him/her working.

The proof will be displayed on a bulletin board entitled –

Local Heroes - The Power of One.

Each student who completes the service is presented a Certificate of Achievement – becoming an official member of the school's POWER OF ONE CLUB. Having the teacher and principal's signatures on it makes it look even more official.

POWER OF ONE CLUB

Certificate of Caring About Others
Awarded to



_____ name of student _____

this ____ day of month, year

for volunteering at

place of service

being the Power of One
and making a positive difference in our community.

Teacher signature

Principal's signature

The Power of One Websites

Sites that offer ways to make the world a better place

<http://www.freethechildren.com>

To learn more about this group click on

<http://we.freethechildren.com/need-to-know/who-we-are>

The primary goals of the organization are to free children from poverty and exploitation and free young people from the notion that they are powerless to affect positive change in the world. Through domestic empowerment programs and leadership training, Free The Children inspires young people to develop as socially conscious global citizens and become agents of change for their peers around the world.

<http://www.epals.com/content/humanrights.aspx>

To learn more about this group click on

<http://www.epalscorp.com/>

ePals is a safe social networking site that kids in classrooms around the world use to connect to one another, often doing joint projects. But what intrigued me most as a publisher was the possibility of harnessing those kids to demonstrate the emotional side of human rights.

<http://www.nothingbutnets.net/>

Nothing But Nets is a grassroots campaign to save lives by preventing malaria, a leading killer of children in Africa. With the money you raise, the UN Foundation and its partners work with the [Measles Initiative](#) – one of the most successful vaccination efforts ever undertaken – to purchase bed nets and distribute them in countries and communities in greatest need.

<http://www.volunteersolutions.org/uwsem>

United Way volunteer opportunities

Working with United Way organizations

How to locate volunteer opportunities:

Enter area of interest under Keywords- add your zip code, click arrows at right of zip to show within 10 miles from your zip code.

Select your special issue/interest

Call agency and see if you can be a volunteer for them

<http://www.SERVEnet.org>

A website on service and volunteering that users can enter their zip code, city, state, skills, interests and availability and be matched with

organizations needing help.