EDUCATOR’S GUIDE
TO THE MY HERO PROJECT
The MY HERO Project is used in classrooms around the world to celebrate and foster the best of humanity.

MY HERO provides standards-aligned lesson plans, web-authoring tools, customized webpages for sharing student work, structured cross-cultural collaborations through virtual classrooms called Learning Circles and other media arts resources.
INTRODUCTION

A child’s education shapes who he or she will become. Unfortunately, funding streams for our schools and teachers have drastically diminished, while, at the same time, the concepts taught and platforms for delivery have changed dramatically. With limited resources available and a world characterized by new media, we must leverage the power of technology to ensure the successful development of our youth.

The MY HERO Project’s child-friendly website (myhero.com) hosts an array of educational resources and a digital library that enable individuals of all ages to create, share and discover inspirational stories, art, audio, and short films with a global learning community. MY HERO offers a variety of technology applications to match different learning styles, interests and subjects taught. Participants can design webpages in the Create Program; upload or listen to speeches and music in the Audio Studio; view and submit artwork to The Gallery; watch short films in The Screening Room; browse a vast Directory of Heroes; read Spanish content in Mi Heroé; reflect on heroism in The Forum; or access current events in Newswire. Every submission to MY HERO is reviewed carefully before it’s activated to ensure that it does not promote hatred, violence, racism and/or sexism and that it is original or properly cites sources, making The MY HERO Project a safe, uplifting online resource. By exploring and creating their own inspirational media through web-authoring programs, students build skills in critical thinking, project management, research, communication and new media literacy.

The MY HERO Teacher’s Room provides resources and technical support to help educators like you use MY HERO’s multimedia cognitive tools in the classroom (www.myhero.com/teachersroom). You can use existing standards-aligned, project-based lesson plans or develop your own and share them with others. The Organizer allows you to produce customized collections of your students’ work or selected content (based on a particular theme or topic) and then publish this index as a Web page that can be accessed anywhere at any time. Learning Circles act as virtual classrooms — by joining one of these, your students can communicate and collaborate with peers across the globe.

MY HERO also has other educational resources available upon request. The MY HERO Report: Youth Edition Volume I and II are DVD compilations of inspirational short videos about passionate young people and their heroes. My Hero: Extraordinary People on the Heroes Who Inspire Them is a collection of essays written by some of the most remarkable people of our time, including Nobel Prize Winners Wangari Maathai and Elie Wiesel. These materials can help to empower students and foster in them an understanding of the concept of heroism and an appreciation for diversity.

This Educator Guide will give you an in-depth look at some of the features available on The MY HERO Project website so you can more easily integrate these interdisciplinary, standards-aligned and skill-building resources in your own classroom. We hope The MY HERO Project helps to inspire, educate and empower your students. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please contact our team directly for support.

THE MY HERO PROJECT
Email: myhero@myheroproject.org
While academic subjects such as reading, writing, math, science, and social studies are vital in education, other skills such as collaboration, communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, information literacy, and creativity are equally as important. Beleaguered educators protest that they cannot add one more thing to all the subjects they are expected to teach for students to do well on standardized tests. I suggest that academic standards, skills needed to thrive in today’s world that have been identified by such organizations as the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (www.p21.org), can be addressed when students express their understanding of academic concepts through identifying inspiring people and then writing, creating short films, or developing art about them.

Not only does the Partnership for 21st Century Skills recognize technology literacy and creativity as important parts of learning and expression of understanding, but the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)’s National Education Technology Standards (NETS) Project includes these practices in their updated NETS for Students (http://www.iste.org/standards/nets-for-students.aspx).

Allowing students to use current technology to express their understanding and knowledge of academic subjects affords them practice with important tools and fosters effective communication through these media with a global audience.

STANDARDS

By Sara Armstrong, PhD

Both the national Common Core Standards in English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, and Mathematics are focused on students becoming “literate individuals” by such criteria as their ability to demonstrate independence, build strong content knowledge, use technology and digital media strategically and capably, and understand other perspectives and cultures.

Paste the below link into your browser to download a copy of the Common Core State Standards.
http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf

National and state standards in reading and writing can be addressed through composing stories about heroes modeled after those at the MY HERO website in the Directory of Heroes. Communication and technology standards, as well as writing and researching, are accounted for as students create short films on their topics. And art standards, as well as communication, writing, and other skills are encompassed in creating art works and developing the narratives about the pieces. Students complete work for an authentic audience and are motivated by the feedback they receive from their peers and adults around the world who come across their work at the MY HERO website.

Sara Armstrong, PhD, is a long-time educator who has promoted project-based learning for many years. She conducts conference presentations, workshops, and year-long coaching to help teachers develop and implement effective projects, including appropriate technology use. She also serves as editor of OnCUE, California Computer-Using Educators’ journal, and is an associate of the Thornburg Center for Professional Development.
GETTING STARTED
To submit content to The MY HERO Project, you and each one of your students must first register for a free account.

1 TEACHER REGISTRATION
Go to myhero.com/START and register for an account as an educator. This will give you access to special tools you can use to gather content for your class.

2 SURVEY
You are asked to complete a short survey with information about your class in the registration process. This information is vital in helping us assess and report on our impact.

3 APPROVAL EMAIL
You will receive an email when your account is approved.

4 LOG ON
Log on through myhero.com or myhero.com/start to access your personalized DASHBOARD. Each icon represents a different program of The MY HERO Project.

5 CREATE
Click any icon to create and share inspirational media!

6 STUDENT REGISTRATION
Instruct your students to register through the same myhero.com/start portal so they can participate. Ensure that they enter the school and teacher name correctly so you and MY HERO staff members can easily search for and collect your class’s media. Your students will receive approval emails after they register as well. You can also register via Facebook on the Teacher’s Room Homepage.
PARTICIPATE IN THE MY HERO PROJECT

STORIES Through the Create program, students are invited to build essays or stories about their heroes using text, images and links and publish these for an online audience.

ART In the Gallery, students can upload original art, photography and digital images about who or what inspires them.

FILMS Student and professional filmmakers can submit documentary, experimental, animated or narrative short films, 10 minutes and under, about those making a positive difference in our world. Students can also submit short inspiring films of any genre to the MY HERO International Film Festival (more info on p. 9). MY HERO has media arts resources to get you started. (myhero.com/mediaarts)

AUDIO Share original music, speeches, poetry readings, interviews or commentary about heroic acts here.

GUESTBOOK Sign the Guestbook to write just a few sentences about an organization or individual working for the greater good and read others’ contributions from around the world.

CALENDAR A feature made especially for educators, the Calendar notes hero birthdays, UN international days, thematic content and special events of interest to teachers and students.

MY PROFILE Here you can submit a short bio and a photo of yourself.

ORGANIZER This program was made for educators and leaders of community groups to create personal indices of MY HERO essays, art and films based on a topic, location or theme.

TUTORIALS Here you will find printable directions or short video tutorials for various programs available through myhero.com. The MY HERO staff is always available to help as well—email us at myhero@myheroproject.org.

VOTE You and your class can vote for the Audience Choice Award for our International Film Festival as well as other special MY HERO events throughout the year.

FEEDBACK Please take time to fill out our online survey. We rely on your feedback to improve this interactive project.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSIONS
As a child-friendly website dedicated to cultivating peace, tolerance and diversity, we will not publish anything that promotes hatred, violence or prejudice. Also, work must be in the student’s own words, not copied or plagiarized. Original sources (not search engines) must be fully credited.
MY HERO’S FREE ONLINE MULTI-MEDIA RESOURCES

Even without registering for an account, you and your students can discover uplifting media through many programs on myhero.com. Have your students view the rich galleries of MY HERO media as part of your existing unit or lesson plan. Go to myhero.com/PARTICIPATE to learn more.

DIRECTORY OF HEROES
Read inspiring stories about heroes from around the world.

ART
Browse the MY HERO Gallery for inspiring images to get your class thinking about what makes a hero.

FILMS
Watch award-winning short films made by professionals and students from around the world. DVD's are available of selected content for classroom use upon request.

AUDIO
Listen to stories being read about heroes from around the world and read along with the narrator if you like. This resource is excellent for ESL and early readers.

HEROES IN THE NEWS/NEWswire
This selection of stories from the Associated Press features technological and scientific advancements, community service, acts of kindness, philanthropy and heroism around the world. Individuals can build their research skills and think critically about the challenges and solutions in our world by looking at content in these programs.

LIBRARY
A virtual collection of books and poems focuses on heroes whose stories have been featured on the MY HERO website. Teachers and students are encouraged to use this online catalogue to find reading materials about heroes from all walks of life. Visitors can suggest their own favorite books and add comments. Please recommend any publications we might be missing.

FORUM
The Heroic Virtues Forum asks participants to share their insights on what qualities make someone a hero. Through various discussion board threads, visitors can read essays, posts and contribute their own ideas about the following characteristics of heroes: Vision, Humility, Love, Faith, Perseverance, Joy, Honesty and Hope. Another forum theme is “How Should We Choose Our Heroes?”

Mi HEROÉ
Read and submit stories in Spanish about heroes around the world. This is a great resource for students learning English or Spanish, as many stories are available in both languages.

SEARCH
Look for content by keyword, title, author, location or type. Through an advanced search, you can find stories, art, audio or short films about topics that interest you most.
TEACHER’S ROOM RESOURCES

WHAT CAN YOU DO IN THE MY HERO TEACHER’S ROOM?

You and your students can **VIEW** hero-related stories, art, and film. Teach your students how to **CREATE** hero-related stories, art, and film. **PLAN** your lessons with our Common Core, ISTE, and National Arts standards-based lessons. **CONNECT** with other educators in our global community via our Community Page. **COLLABORATE** on projects and discuss issues and ideas in the Forum.

**Lesson Plans, activity guides, handouts**
myhero.com/lessonplans

**Resources: Downloadable PDF flyers, DVDs, current newsletter**
myhero.com/resources

**SOCIAL MEDIA: MY HERO has gone 2.0!**

Twitter.com/myhero
Follow our Twitter feeds on the Teacher’s Room homepage, share resources by tweeting with the hashtag, #myheroteachers.

Facebook.com/MyHeroProject
Become part of our Facebook community by “liking” The MY HERO Project. Integrate your Teacher’s Room account with your Facebook account — and only sign in once!

**MY HERO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)**
The FAQs tab gives quick answers to questions you may have about The MY HERO Project, and how to use it in your classroom.
http://myhero.com/FAQ

**THE DAILY CALENDAR** lists the birthdays of many heroes: some with links to stories in the MY HERO database, and some whose stories need to be told by your students! http://myhero.com/calendar

Choose a date or event and instantly create a class project about it!
JOIN AN iEARN/MY HERO LEARNING CIRCLE

iearn.org/Circles  myhero.com/Teachers

Elementary, middle, and high school classrooms around the world collaborate on the subject of heroism.

MY HERO LEARNING CIRCLES

MY HERO Learning Circles is a joint venture between iEARN Learning Circles and The MY HERO Project (www.myhero.com). This Circle brings together students and teachers who are interested in collaborating with other schools from diverse areas of the world on the topic of MY HERO through writing, art, and digital video.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

To join iEARN Learning Circles, you must first be a member of iEARN and complete an iEARN Learning Circle placement form (http://media.iearn.org/coursesreglc) at least two weeks before the beginning of the session. Once you complete the placement form, you will be contacted via email in order to confirm your information and to determine your correct Circle placement.

SCHEDULE FOR LEARNING CIRCLES

Next Session: Begins every fall and ends in mid-January (16 weeks with a 2-week break in December). Learning Circle Placement forms are due in early September.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Barry S. Kramer: bskramer48@hotmail.com
Wendy Jewell: wendy@myheroproject.org

How to Become a Participant

Learning Circle Lesson Plan
A semester timeline for this collaborative project

Learning Circle Teacher Debbie Senger’s Class
CLASSROOM WEBPAGE

Watch Teacher Debbie Senger’s Class Project on GLOBAL TV
myhero.com/globalTV

Learning Circle Check List
MY HERO MEDIA ARTS TUTORIALS AND FESTIVALS

MY HERO’s annual International Film Festival and Local Hero Fests showcase short films and artwork about heroes around the world from all walks of life. Students, teachers, activists, filmmakers and families come together to celebrate the best of humanity. Winning films are available in the online Screening Room for our global community.

We encourage you and your class to produce short films and submit them to MY HERO’s festivals, where they are eligible for awards and cash prizes. There are various categories for different genres and levels of experience.

myhero.com/Winners

Tutorials and other resources are available to help your students bring their heroes’ stories alive through digital filmmaking. MY HERO’s Media Arts Educators can host workshops and/or provide online support throughout the filmmaking process. Email media@myheroproject.org for more information.

myhero.com/MediaArts

MY HERO gives materials to classes, schools or other groups interested in hosting their own local Hero Fest. The HOW TO HOST A HERO FEST booklet includes templates and plans that can be customized for your community. DVDs with award-winning short films are available upon request to supplement and enrich locally produced media.

myhero.com/HeroFest

Left to right, top to bottom: Ablaye Produced By Fary Sakho, Believe By Logan Cascia, Fambul Tok By Sara Terry, Rowena Gerber’s Solar Oven Project & Environmental Studies By Skip Blumberg & Jeanne Meyers, Jon Rose - Humanitarian Hero By Tom Aiello of HURLEY International, Composition For Sustained Rain By Grupo Humus from ARGENTINA, Roz Savage - Ocean Rower By Roz Savage, Ride A Wave By Rocky Romano

m yhero.com/W inners

m yhero.com/M ediaArts

m yhero.com/H eroF est
THE MY HERO REPORT: YOUTH EDITION VOLUMES I AND II DVDS

These compilations of inspirational short videos feature passionate young people and their heroes. The programming was developed from essays submitted to the MY HERO website and teacher nominations of young people doing outstanding work around the world. As an added bonus, the second edition DVD includes highlights from the Film Festival gifted by the filmmakers and producers. MY HERO has produced this video series with support from a grant from The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation.

MY HERO: EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE ON THE HEROES WHO INSPIRE THEM

This is collection of essays written by some of the most remarkable people of our time. Authors such as Wangari Maathai, Elie Wiesel, “Magic” Johnson, and Mohammed Ali contributed their stories so that readers could understand how an ordinary person becomes a cultural icon and what character values motive them.

THE MY HERO BOOKLET

Learn more about The MY HERO Project programs and impact and view excerpts of some of most exceptional stories and artwork in our digital archive. Available for download at myhero.com/booklet

Stickers and T-Shirts can be ordered at myhero.com/store. Fliers and bookmarks can be downloaded at myhero.com/resources.
EXEMPLARY MEDIA FROM OUR DIGITAL ARCHIVE

ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL AUTHORS:
- Angel Hero: Sadako Sasaki by Amanda E.
  myhero.com/Sadako
- Peacemaker Hero: Martin Luther King, Jr. by Nick Campbell
  myhero.com/MLK
- Writer Hero: Elizabeth Jane Cochrane by Penelope
  myhero.com/Cochrane
- AIDS Hero: Austin Gutwein by Lindsey
  myhero.com/Gutwein
- Earthkeeper Hero: Jean-Michel Cousteau by Slater
  myhero.com/Cousteau
- Peacemaker Hero: Peace Pilgrim by Shiloh
  myhero.com/PeacePilgrim

HIGH SCHOOL & UNIVERSITY AUTHORS:
- Artist Hero: Jim Henson by Joe
  myhero.com/henson
- Child Hero: Ruby Nell Bridges by Madison
  myhero.com/Ruby_Bridges
- Freedom Hero: Iqbal Masih by Kelly Frost
  myhero.com/Iqbal
- Peacemaker Hero: The 14th Dalai Lama by Catherine
  myhero.com/Dalai_Lama
- Family Hero: Dick Hoyt by Jay
  myhero.com/Hoyt
- Faith Hero: Immaculee Ilibagiza by Molly
  myhero.com/Ilibagiza

TEACHER AUTHORS:
- Literary Hero: Charlotte A. Cavatica by Amy Mack
  myhero.com/charlotte
- Artist Hero: Mamadou Tall Diedhiou by Cheikh Darou Seck
  myhero.com/Diedhiou

PROFESSIONAL FREELANCE WRITERS:
- Lifesaver Hero: Ryan Hreljac by Wendy Jewell
  myhero.com/Hreljac
- Artist Hero: Rembrandt Van Rijn by Rebecca Miller
  myhero.com/Rembrandt
- Freedom Hero: Chief Joseph by Jennifer Beck
  myhero.com/Chief_Joseph
- Student Reporter and Mentor: Slater Jewell-Kemker

MY HERO provides an interactive and dynamic program to nurture aspiring young writers, artists and filmmakers.
myhero.com/Slater

(1) ‘PEOPLE’S HISTORY’ AUTHOR HOWARD ZINN DIES AT 87 by Hillel Italie, AP National Writer
(2) No War Zone by Tomusia Koroma, Sierra Leone
(3) Doctor by Ireland, Learning Circle, Reeds Spring Primary School
(4) Fire Fighter by Austin, Learning Circle, Reeds Spring Primary School
(5) Beach Series - Mother & Daughter III by September McCue
(6) Anne Frank by Anna Sponer
(7) Freedom to Lead by Shepard Fairey
(8) Abraham Lincoln by Robert Shetterly
(9) Ms. Rosa Parks by Gail G. Slockett
WHAT CAN I DO WITH AN ORGANIZER PAGE?
Find thematic pictures, stories, and videos and organize them on one special webpage for your students to view! Click HERE to view examples of Classroom, Theme and Special Event Organizer Pages.

MAKE A THEMATIC ORGANIZER PAGE
MY HERO is rich with resources on a variety of topics, like Black History Month, Scientists, and Women. Want to take links, images, stories, and film on a topic and organize them all in one spot for your students? Make a Thematic Organizer Page!

MAKE A SHOWCASE OF STUDENT WORK
Do you want your students to create their own artwork, stories, or films to honor their personal hero? You can use an Organizer Page to collect all of their stories in one page! First they need to create some content, so follow these steps:

1. Students Register at www.myhero.com/start
2. Students access tools to create and share web tributes, digital art, audio, and/or short films
3. Students include the name of their school/teacher when they register.
4. Teachers can gather all links into one Organizer Page by searching the site for their school.
   Voila: your own Organizer Page of your student work!

REMEMBER: all submitted content is first reviewed and then approved by MY HERO staff. Approved web content is then published online.

Need assistance? Email myhero@myheroproject.org
WHO USES The MY HERO Project?
MY HERO’s educational resources are used by over 10 million participants age 2–94 from every state across the USA and over 190 other countries each year.

Teachers who use MY HERO discovered the project through:
- Internet search 53%
- Another teacher 30%
- Conference 6%
- iEARN 5%
- Other 6%

Teachers who use MY HERO Percentage by Grade Level:
- Elementary School 30%
- Middle School 42%
- High School 26%
- Adult/College 2%

Language arts
History
Science
Computer education
Foreign language
ESL
Fine Art
Media art ed
Character education
Other

COUNTRIES

United States
Italy
Canada
Australia
United Kingdom
Singapore
Mexico

Germany
Poland
Brazil
Netherlands
Japan
France
India
New Zealand

Indonesia
Senegal
Iran
Portugal
Turkey
Ireland
Argentina
China

Denmark
Spain
Malaysia
Ira
Hungary
Pakistan
Sweden
Thailand

Russian Federation
Czech Republic
Kosovo
Jordan
United Arab Emirates
Yugoslavia

Greek
Slovak
Republic
Croatia
India
United Arab Emirates

Saudi Arabia
Macedonia
Philippines
Peru
Chile
Egypt
Morocco
Montenegro

Bosnia & Herzegovina
Dominican Republic
Belarus
Vietnam
AND MANY MORE...
If you share our goals of inspiring, educating, and empowering people of all ages, please support The MY HERO Project. Donations from individuals, foundations, and corporations keep our award-winning, educational programs commercial-free and accessible to all. As The MY HERO Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, all donations are tax deductible to the extent of the law.

http://myhero.com/Donate