

Unit: Our Heroes/Ourselves

Kindergarten to 5th Grade

In Our Heroes/Ourselves Students:

- Participate in
 - The MY HERO Project
 - Cross-age activities
- Explore and Research
 - Range of heroes and heroic behaviors
 - Well-known heroes
 - Local heroes
 - Own heroic traits
- Attend and/or hear
 - Outside presentations
 - Teacher presentations
- Create
 - Artwork
 - Verbal/written

Unit Overview

Students, by participating in the online **The MY HERO Project**, explore a teacher-directed range of heroes and heroic behaviors.

As they identified and researched heroes from the nation and world at large, as well as local and regional heroes, students learned to recognize and appreciate “unsung” heroism in themselves, at home, at school, and in their community. The unit is centered on **cross-age** groupings, and includes online and real time research, as well as various presentations, including those of outside visitors.

Overall Outcomes

Students outcomes will:

- **Remember** as they
 - **Define** heroes and heroism
 - **Recall** specific vocabulary generated in groups
- **Understand** as they
 - **Identify** well-known heroes and heroic behaviors
 - **Recognize** personal heroes and heroic behaviors
 - **Classify** types of heroes
- **Apply** information as they
 - **Choose** a favorite hero
 - **Sketch** an outline of hero
- **Analyze** data as they
 - **Compare/Contrast** heroes vs idols
 - **Examine** traits of different heroes
 - **Question** outside adults on news on heroes/heroism
- **Evaluate** concepts of heroes as they
 - **Support** their choices of hero
 - **Appraise** value of their hero’s work

- **Create** as they
 - **Design** art projects/visual presentations of their hero
 - **Write** accompanying description of hero
 - **Formulate** an activity concerning their hero and others

Resources/Materials

- *Required*
 - The MY HERO website (www.myhero.com)- a source of visuals, videos, stories on a wide range of heroes
- *Suggested*
 - Cross-age groups
 - Outside speakers
 - Assorted art materials, tailored to teacher-selected projects

Sample Unit Plan created by Teacher Billie-Jo Grant from Notre Dame Elementary School- Morinville, Alberta

(Newspaper article attached about The MY HERO Project at Notre Dame Elementary)

After three years of completing this project successfully within a classroom, a vision was born to bring The MY HERO Project to everyone in school ultimately with each person realizing that there is a HERO within themselves. Students and staff were encouraged to use their interests, gifts, and talents to express themselves. This project involved the entire school community and a group of dedicated professionals willing to work collaboratively with students from kindergarten to fifth grade in cross-age groupings. (Our kindergarten students worked independently due to their scheduling and participated in our family finale night during Education Week.)

Note: Grade-specific student outcomes

Target outcomes for each grade level re-written into “I can” statements

Example: Social Studies

I can develop critical and creative thinking skills

Kindergarten- identify and name

1st Grade- compare and contrast information

2nd Grade- distinguish between fictional and a factual account, choose and justify a course of action, compare and contrast information from electronic sources

3rd Grade- evaluate ideas and information from different points of view

4th Grade- evaluate ideas and information from multiple perspectives: re-evaluate opinions

5th Grade- Generate original ideas and strategies

Students will:

1. Increase their understanding of the concept of heroes and heroism
2. Learn about particular heroes and their heroes
3. Categorize hero types
4. Build hero vocabulary
5. Identify their own living or non-living heroes
6. Participate in writing activities

7. Create an artistic piece on their own hero for display
8. State how they can be a hero

Resources/Materials:

- (varied from teacher to teacher)
- The MY HERO Project Website
 - You-tube video clips
 - Guest Speakers
 - Hero themed music/Itunes

Activities and Procedures

Step 1: Teachers were asked to host a group of multi-grade students (teachers determine range). Teachers identified a “type” of hero- News, Musical, Young Heroes, Peacekeepers/Freedom, Sports Heroes, Animal Heroes, Earth-Keepers, Family, Community, Literary, Historical/Military, Faith, Human Rights.

Step 2: Interest was sparked throughout the school for MY HERO.
-teacher written short stories about their heroes were read out over the morning announcements or homework page- ask parents/family about their heroes
-Hero themed music was played in the classroom
-”What makes a Hero” bulletin board was displayed
-Smart Notebook pages were created to spark discussions within the classroom

Step 3: Students were surveyed and asked to identify their top three interest categories from the teacher groupings. This survey was led and tallied by 5th grade.

Step 4: MY HERO launch in the gym with a teacher created Hero slide show. Students were introduced to their project group and group leaders.

Step 5: Over a *two week* period, groups met for *6 hours total*. Each teacher discussed, what makes a hero what are the characteristics of a hero? After identifying a specific hero research began. Heroes were explored and written about. Each student created a piece of art to display at our finale night. Each student was also asked how they could be a hero or how are they a hero?

Step 6: Culminating Hero display night. Each “hero”, which was everyone, was given a small chocolate bar (or badge/metal) with the quote- “we are the heroes of our own story”. The hallways were decorated with paper plates describing each groups hero. Our gymnasium was filled with hero art and stories. There was also student singing and dancing performances.

Step 7:

Service projects. Example: Earthkeepers collected bottles to raise money to fund their solar powered cars. Animal Heroes collected leashes, collars, toys and treats for Humane Animal Rescue Team. Artist Heroes recorded their singing and sold CDs to raise money to help with the Japan earthquake.

Assessment

Teacher observation or teacher created assessment tailored to state and school standards.

Suggestions

Remembering:

Activities

1. Listen to songs about Heroes.
Discuss words that are common in all the songs.
2. Variety of Graphic Organizers
3. Watch short video clips
4. Collage of heroic traits
Cut out pictures and words
5. Hero Bingo

Materials

1. Music source- ITunes or CDs
2. Google Links
3. myhero.com or youtube.com
4. magazines, glue, paper, scissors
5. teacher or student created bingo

Understanding:

Activities

1. Read stories out-loud
2. Reader's Theater
3. Build a Hero Sandwich (real or fake)
write own recipe for being a hero
4. Personal dictionary or thesaurus
5. Real life hero backgrounds. Find picture of hero, glue it on paper and draw the setting and people they work with in the background.
6. Outside Visitors

Materials

1. newspapers, books, magazines
2. online sources
3. real sandwich supplies, or paper, glue, markers
4. paper and pens/pencils
5. picture of hero, background paper, pencils, glue, markers, other art supplies
6. arrange for outside visitors

Applying

Activities

1. Full-body heroes, trace and write traits
2. Hero Jeopardy
3. Paper quilt based on heroes and their qualities
4. Digital Storytelling
Use PowerPoint with voice to tell story of your hero
5. Comic Strip
6. 3D Graphic Model
7. Tableau of Hero
Create scenes that show what the heroes you are learning about do. Take photographs.
8. Portraits
9. Collage of pictures and symbols that represent hero you are learning about. Add words

Materials

1. butcher paper, pencils, paint,
2. Student or teacher created, moderator, teams
3. paper, glue, fabric, art supplies
4. Computer, PowerPoint
5. Computer, Comic Life (computer program)
6. mobile supplies
7. Costumes, props, camera background materials, paint paper,
8. paper, paint, markers, colored pencils, pastels, watercolors, etc
9. newspaper, magazines, paper, markers, pencils, scissors, glue

Analyzing

Activities

1. Compare and contrast hero and idol
2. Hero vs. Villain
Create trading card for made up characters
3. Paper bag puppet of hero
4. Hero survey- older kids ask younger

Evaluating

Activities

1. Die-cut cubes of own heroic traits
2. Top 100 heroes
3. Interpret heroic quotes (individual or group)
4. Hero Rules- create a list of rules for heroes. Do they follow rules, do what they want? Why?

Creating

Activities

1. Hero sculpture. Place sculpture on index card that describes them
2. Hero MadLib
3. Quick Write – various topics
4. How can I be a Hero? Presentations
5. Guest Speaker- creating questions
How to write and ask respectful questions
6. Make real life people into super heroes
7. Poems, songs, skits

Materials

1. research, paper, pencils
2. paper, pencils, art supplies
3. brown lunch bags, art supplies
4. student or teacher created

Materials

1. die cuts, art supplies
2. paper and pencils or whiteboard
3. quotes, paper, markers
4. paper or poster, marker, pencils

Materials

1. clay, index cards, markers
2. internet, teacher or student created
3. journals, paper, pencils
4. written script, pretend (or real) microphone
5. paper and pencil or whiteboard
6. paint, paper, art supplies
7. student or teacher created

Pictures from the Project-



Students collaborating on their Hero mural. They added heroic vocabulary to the mural.



"I thought it would be fun to learn about humans and how they helped their communities," said grade 3 student Chantel Kennedy, who chose to learn about human rights heroes during Notre Dame Elementary school's My Hero project at the Morinville school. With cross-grade groupings, students in gr. 1-5 worked together to learn about others who have made a positive change in the world and to realize we each have that potential. —photos by Cynthia Wendler



Students created scenes where their heroes lived, worked, and did heroic acts. They wrote accompanying stories describing their images.



Kindergartener's wrote about their family heroes. They were given a template which allowed them (or an adult) to write about their hero and a space to draw or paste a picture.



Students helped paint different heroes on the wooden steps. They now enjoy sitting on their masterpiece while listening to stories. They also created peace sign stepping stones (sitting on floor next to steps).



Harmony – I like to volunteer and help a lot of different places like, Library Helpers, Custodial Helper, Christmas Concert, Choir, Lunch Monitor and Ref. Intramurals.

Students created portraits and wrote why they think they are a hero.



organization?

person?

animal?

MY HERO

My hero is:

What qualities does your hero have that makes him or her special?

In what way would you like to be like this person/animal?

Example of a worksheet that could be used by any grade.

**ANIMAL
HEROES**

Copyright © The Gorilla Foundation/Rick Dethier

We will honor animals who have saved lives and soothed spirits, and the people who have devoted their lives to helping animals.

Let's learn more about how these animals make a difference in the WORLD!



A poster to get the students excited about animal heroes.

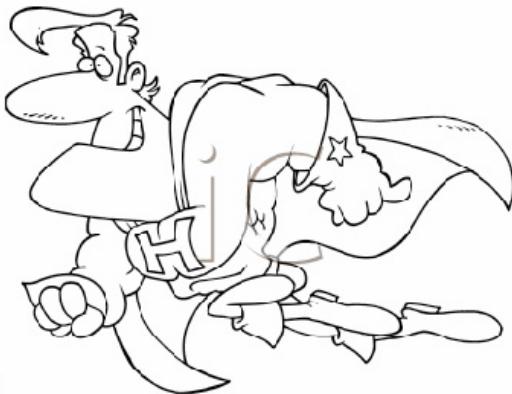
CALLING ALL SUPERHEROES

Get here in a flash

It is time to celebrate...

Our HEROES

Secret Hideout AKA: Notre Dame School
9717 Morinville Drive



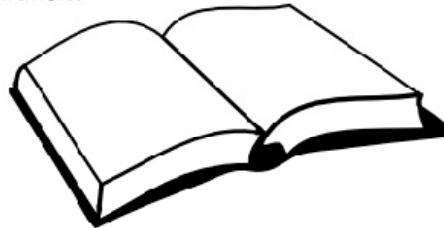
Report to headquarters on Monday, May 2nd 5-7pm

5pm-6pm View Our HEROES art/

writing

6pm - 7pm presentations

We are the HERO of our own story!



The invitation calling all families to the Hero Finale Night, the last part of the Unit.

Students celebrate the best of humanity by finding My Hero

by Cynthia Wandler

Morinville Notre Dame Elementary school is full of heroes. In a two week undertaking that grouped the gr. 1-5 students according to interest, the students took part in the international My Hero project to celebrate the best of humanity and to empower young people to realize their own potential to effect positive change in the world.

"It takes a real team effort," said principal Greg Lamer, to coordinate such an event, which coincided with Education Week.

While teacher Billie-Jo Grant's grade four students have been participating in the project for the past three years, this is the first time the whole school has worked together on it. In cross-curricular and cross-grade groups, students were grouped according to their chosen category and required to produce a piece of writing and a piece of art about their hero.

The categories were mostly chosen by the teachers facilitating the groups, "building on their strengths and interests". For example, Grant's family volunteers with the Humane Animal Rescue Team and fosters for them so Grant led the animal heroes group. Other categories included sports heroes, young heroes, dance heroes,

artistic heroes, freedom heroes, literary heroes, musical heroes and military heroes.

The project kicked off with an assembly and then the work began. The students had various guest speakers as they worked through the My Hero project, including dance troupe Fly Girlz, the Edmonton Humane Society, the Morinville Museum and Edmonton resident Lucille de Beau-drap who climbed Mount Everest last year at the age of 45.

In Lamer's sports heroes group, he found he had to differentiate with the students between their favorite players and sports heroes. They talked about a sports hero being someone who is good in their sport but who also does something for people, such as Wayne Gretzky who was an excellent athlete but did a lot of charity work. Grant said that by the end of the project, which is Internet-based, "the kids should realize they have things in common with kids all over the world" and the work is an opportunity to celebrate diversity and commonalities.

The May 2 presentation at the school exhibiting the culmination of the students' creations proved them to be varied, extensive and occasionally carrying a fundraising aspect. The musical heroes group, for instance, recorded a CD, the profits of

which will be donated to disaster relief in Japan; it was the students' idea. Other works included stepping stones, self-portraits, collages, solar-powered cars, dioramas and a student dance performance. Phys Ed teacher Tina McKinnon said that dancers are often viewed only for their entertainment value but pointed out that many dancers, such as Luke Geldert, hold performances and then donate the money

to charity.

Because of their scheduling difference, the Kindergarten students did not participate with the bigger groups but still wrote about who their heroes are and had their work displayed at the presentation.

Teacher Helen Cyr said the project was about teaching the kids "to use the talents you have to make a difference".



Max McGrath (gr. 4) and Chays Hall (gr. 2) display their seedlings, solar-powered cars and an upcycled object at Notre Dame Elementary school's celebration of heroes on May 2. Both of the Morinville students chose to learn about eco-friendly earth keeper heroes, with McGrath saying "I like paleontology and stuff about the dinosaurs and the earth."



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organization?

person?

animal?

MY HERO

My hero is:

What qualities does your hero have that makes him or her special?

In what way would you like to be like this person/ animal?