



Lesson Plan: American Heroes

Context of the unit:

This third grade lesson is part of a Government and Citizenship unit. This unit is designed for students to understand that communities and nations need laws and leaders to help protect citizens and keep order, and that our government relies on participation from its citizens. The students will focus on why citizens need laws and leaders, what laws and leaders do, and how citizens help governments.

Context of the lesson within the unit:

“American Heroes” follows a lesson on the qualities of good citizens. Students have learned that citizens in our country have rights and responsibilities. Students have described the qualities of a good citizen, and identified people in their community who have shown good citizenship. This project will incorporate Standards 3.4.2 and 3.4.6 to demonstrate that good citizenship requires active participation in our government.

Standards Addressed: Social Studies

3.4 Students understand the role of rules and laws in our daily lives and the basic structure of the U. S. government.

3.4.1 Determine the reasons for rules, laws, and the U.S. Constitution; the role of citizenship in the promotion of rules and laws; and the consequences for people who violate rules and laws.

3.4.2 Discuss the importance of public virtue and the role of citizens, including how to participate in a classroom, in the community, and in civic life.

3.4.4 Understand the three branches of government, with an emphasis on local government.

3.4.6 Describe the lives of American heroes who took risks to secure our freedoms (e.g., Anne Hutchinson, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Fredrick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King, Jr.)



Standards Addressed: Reading

2.2 Ask questions and support answers by connecting prior knowledge with literal information found in, and inferred from, the text.

2.6 Extract appropriate and significant information from the text, including problems and solutions.

3.3 Determine what characters are like by what they say or do and by how the author or illustrator portrays them.

Standards Addressed: Writing

1.3 Understand the structure and organization of various reference materials (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, atlas, encyclopedia).

2.0 Students write compositions that describe and explain familiar objects, events, and experiences. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English and the drafting, research, and organizational strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0.

Standards Addressed: Listening and Speaking

1.0 Students listen critically and respond appropriately to oral communication. They speak in a manner that guides the listener to understand important ideas by using proper phrasing, pitch, and modulation.

1.3 Respond to questions with appropriate elaboration.

1.8 Clarify and enhance oral presentations through the use of appropriate props.

2.1 Make brief narrative presentations

2.2 Plan and present dramatic interpretations of experiences, stories, poems, or plays with clear diction, pitch, tempo, and tone.



Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects K-5

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading K-5

Key Ideas and Details

1. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing K-5

Text Types and Purposes

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening K-5

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Presentation and Knowledge of Ideas

4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.



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Curricula for K-12 Civics Education

Objective(s):

- Students will choose a biography to read about one American hero.
- Students will have a deeper understanding about this hero's life and of the risks they took to secure our freedoms as evidenced by their performance and research paper



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Big Idea(s):

- The strength of a democracy is equal to the strength of its citizens. (We must understand, participate in, and further develop our system of government to ensure democracy.)
- E Pluribus Unum: Out of many, one. (From a variety of sources, experiences, and people, we have developed a successful government and legal system.)

Essential Questions/Issues:

1. Is Citizenship a right or a responsibility?
2. Does social capital (involvement) strengthen a republic?
3. How do citizens help our government?

Higher Order Thinking Questions:

1. What kind of person is an American hero? (analysis)
2. Compare and contrast two different heroes. What similar qualities do they have? How are they different? (analysis)
3. What would have happened if these heroes didn't do what they did? (evaluation)
4. Which American Hero would you most like to meet? Why? (evaluation)
5. What qualities of these heroes are similar to you? (evaluation)



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Assessment:

Students will be evaluated through teacher observation, class participation, research paper, and performance. Students will collaborate in small groups to create a brief research paper, based on the biography read, regarding the life of their hero. Using this information, the students will dress as this hero and will "become" that hero, making an oral presentation to the class about their life, and while staying in character, the students will answer questions from classmates.

Quality Criteria:

Hero Biography Research Paper Rubric

4 Advanced	Excellent! Quality writing, focused, engages the audience with a clear understanding of the life of the hero and the qualities that person possessed to become a great American citizen. Has a great introduction, correctly ordered events, an engaging use of vocabulary, varied sentence structure, and few, if any, errors.
3 Proficient	Good! Good writing, shows clear understanding of the life of the hero and some of the qualities that person possessed. Has an introduction, events ordered mostly correctly, good use of vocabulary and sentence structure, and has few errors.
2 Basic	Satisfactory. Writing shows some understanding of the hero's life. Has a poor or no introduction, events are out of order and/or confused, incorrect or poor choice of vocabulary, some run-on sentences, some errors in spelling and grammar.
1 Below Basic	Needs Improvement. Writing is limited, confused, or underdeveloped. Has no introduction, careless word choices, many errors in spelling, grammar, and sentence structure.



Hero Performance Rubric

4 Advanced	Excellent! Fully understood the character and the risks that person took to secure our freedoms. Planned and presented an exciting presentation using proper dramatic expression and clear articulation that portrayed the character accurately. Correctly responded to questions with appropriate elaboration. Enhanced presentation through the appropriate use of props and costume.
3 Proficient	Good! Understood character and some of the risks that person took to secure our freedoms. Planned and presented an accurate presentation that could be clearly understood. Correctly responded to questions. Good use of props and costume.
2 Basic	Satisfactory. Partially understood character and some of the risks taken. Presentation was mostly accurate and could be understood most of the time. Responded to some questions. Used a prop or had a costume.
1 Below Basic	Needs Improvement. Did not understand character or risks taken. Presentation was not accurate and/or was hard to understand. Was unable to answer questions accurately. Did not have any props.



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Activity Steps:

Hook: Share story about my dad, an American hero with a purple heart.

Introduction: Review the qualities of a good citizen (follow laws, take part in government, responsible, respectful, caring and fair). Review specific attributes to be a good citizen in our classroom (follow classroom and school rules, take part in activities, be responsible for work, respectful of others, etc.). Write the word hero on the board and discuss what the word means. Explain project objectives.

Activity: Day 1: Read aloud a short biography of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, taking notes on board as read. Explain that when doing a research paper students need to take notes to use later. Show note taking handout. Using the notes from the board, demonstrate how to fill in the note taking handout. Explain that if all of the information cannot be found in one source, students need to select another source to complete handout. Assign groups and different heroes, displaying resources available to them. Pass out the note-taking handout and have them begin research. At the end of the class period remind students that they will "become and act as" their hero on day 6, and they should begin to look for props and costumes to use from home.

Day 2: Remind students that they need to find all of the information on their note-taking sheet. Review notes from yesterday. Display research paper form on Aver Media. Explain and model how to complete this form. Remind students that their group needs to work together to find all of the information and each one needs to complete their own form by tomorrow. Display Research Paper Rubric and answer any questions. Students continue their research, note taking, and research form. Teacher circulates the room to assist as needed. Teacher meets with groups who have finished note-taking handout and research form to review content with students. If complete, teacher demonstrates how to turn the research paper form into paragraphs. At the end of the class period remind students that they will "become" their hero on day 6, and they should be looking for props and costumes to use from home.



Day 3: Review all steps. Go back to FDR information. Discuss possible interesting opening "hooks" to begin report. Write several of the class generated hooks on board for their reference. Remind students that everyone must be finished with the note-taking handout and the research paper form today. Continue meeting with groups and assist those who have not started the writing process. Inform students that tomorrow will be the last day to work on the research paper in class. At the end of the class period remind students that they will "become" their hero on day 6, and they should be looking for props and costumes to use from home.

Day 4: Review steps as necessary. Display finished copy of FDR report and go over using the rubric. Remind students that this is the last day for working on the research paper in class. Model "becoming" FDR and allow students to ask questions. Explain that this is what they will do when they become the subject of their research. Display Performance Rubric and answer any questions. Groups that are finished writing their paper begin working on their presentations. Continue monitoring the groups that have not finished writing. Begin meeting with groups who are working on presentation.

Day 5: Every group works on presentations. Remind students to bring props and costumes for their presentations.

Day 6: Groups give presentations.

Special Needs of students are considered in this lesson:

Differentiation will take place as students will be grouped heterogeneously to benefit the learning styles and needs of all types of learners. Hands on learning with plenty of visuals, opportunities for movement, verbal, written, and nonverbal expression, and multiple learning modalities are available within the context of this lesson.

Extension Ideas:

Students can create a poster on their American hero; create flip books on qualities of good citizenship; propose other Americans that could be classified as heroes and explain reasoning.



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Materials and Resources Needed:

- FDR biography
- Aver Media
- Note-taking handout
- research paper form
- Biographies of American Heroes (at least two different sources for each group)
- paper
- props

Resources:

www.gardenofpraise.com

www.biography.com/articles

www.surfnetkids.com

Dare To Dream!: 25 Extraordinary Lives(Paperback) by Sandra McLeod Humphrey

50 American Heroes Every Kid Should Meet by Dennis Denenberg and Lorraine Roscoe

The Story of Benjamin Franklin: Amazing American (Dell Yearling Biography) by Margaret Davidson

George Washington (Rookie Biographies) by Wil Mara

Abraham Lincoln (Rookie Biographies) by Wil Mara

My First Book of Biographies: Great Men and Woman Every Child Should Know (Cartwheel learning bookshelf) by Jean Marzollo and Irene Trivas



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Martin Luther King, Jr. (DK Biography) by Amy Pastan

The Big Book of American Heroes by Mike Janulewicz, Richard Widdoves, Mike Ianvlelviaz, and Richard Widdows

A Picture Book of Thomas Jefferson (Picture Book Biography) by David A. Adler, John C. Wallner, and Alexandra Wallner

Thomas Jefferson: A Picture Book Biography by James Cross Giblin

A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman (Picture Book Biography) by David A. Adler and Samuel Byrd

Time For Kids: Harriet Tubman: A Woman of Courage by Editors Of Time For Kids

A Picture Book of Abraham Lincoln (Picture Book Biography) by David A. Adler, John Wallner, and Alexandra Wallner

They Led the Way: 14 American Women by Johanna Johnston



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Student Handouts:

American Hero
Note Taking

Hero: _____

Date born: _____

Place born: _____

Parents: _____

Schools: _____

Date died: _____

Place died: _____



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Interesting facts and accomplishments: _____

Notes for performance: _____
