

HEROES
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Unit Description:

- This unit makes use of the CNN Heroes program to develop student awareness of heroes in every day life and the possibility of one person making a difference. (<http://edition.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cnn.heroes>)
- Unit was used in Middle School Ethics class; could be modified for use in Social Studies, English, Advisory program.

Academic Objectives:

- Students will develop an understanding of term “hero” and provide examples of how it can apply in every day context.
- Students will generate common attributes of heroes and compare prior knowledge from literature, history, current events, etc.
- Students will be able to name heroes in their own lives and explain why they chose them.
- Students will summarize projects generated by individuals that have caused them to be nominated for CNN Hero of the Year.
- Students will participate in a group reflection on CNN Hero of the Year.
- Students will choose one Hero project and make a 3-minute presentation to explain the choice.
- Students will consider what they have learned about heroes when developing goals for possible high school CAS projects.

Holistic Objectives:

- Reflective—able to give thoughtful consideration to own learning experience; able to assess and understand personal strengths and limitations
 - *Self-knowledge and relate to others*
- Knowledgeable—able to explore concept, ideas, and issues that have local and global significance
 - *Think like: philosopher, scientist, story teller*
- Thinker—exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.
 - *Gather data*
 - *Analysis*
- Caring—able to see and verbalize empathy, compassion and respect towards needs and feelings of others.
 - *Awareness – of one’s own emotions and emotions of others*
 - *Connecting – empathically with others*
- Risk-takers—will see models of risk-taking that could be applied to own lives.
 - *Risk awareness--thoughtful consideration of risk and reward*
- Communicators—understand and express ideas confidently and creatively.
 - *Social Awareness—social cognition*
 - *Social Facility--influence*

Essential Question:

What is a hero and how does this apply to you as student and to your future goals?

Activating Activity

Students are given a set of questions regarding heroes, attributes, individuals considered heroes, etc. They will then work in groups and discuss ideas.

- How would you define the word “hero”?
- What are some common attributes or characteristics among people we classify as heroes?
- Name some individuals you would consider heroes and explain why you believe each one is a hero
- Do you think heroes are “born” or “made”? Explain.

Content/Activities

- Explanation of CNN Heroes program
 - “Every day people changing the world”. Individuals are nominated for work they have done to help others or to change their communities.
- Written stories of past nominees
(<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cnn.heroes/archive09/index.html>)
- Group discussions of how nominees fit with questions in activating activity—what attributes to you see, etc.
- Watch video clips of final ten nominees, taking notes about individuals and their projects and why you think they were nominated.
(<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cnn.heroes>)
- Take notes and prepare brief speech to class, advocating for the one person who should be the finalist.
- Students login and vote for selected nominee. <http://heroes.cnn.com/vote.aspx>
- Write reflection on activity, connecting to CAS and how this could help shape projects for HS.

Assessment

- Participation in group discussion
- Short speech advocating for choice
- Reflective essay on personal relevance of activity