



Heroes

*This lesson plan is designed for children ages 3-8 and meets the following Minnesota Academic Standards

Minnesota Academic Standards in English Language Arts: Kindergarten

6. Writing

0.6.2.2 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

8. Speaking, Viewing, Listening and Media Literacy Code Standards

0.8.1.1 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

Minnesota Academic Standards in Social Studies: Kindergarten

2. Civic Values and Principles of Democracy Standard

2: The civic identity of the United States is shaped by historical figures, places and events, and by key foundational documents and other symbolically important artifacts.

Minnesota Academic Standards in the Arts: Grades K-3

Standard 3: Demonstrate understanding of the personal, social, cultural and historical contexts that influence the arts area

*This lesson plan also connects to the following MN Early Childhood Indicators of Progress

Domain: Social and Emotional Development Component

S1-3: Self and Emotional Awareness

S1.10 Demonstrates increasing confidence and inclination to express opinions and ideas

Domain: Language, Literacy and Communications:

LLC 1-2: Listening and Understanding; Receptive Language

L3.16 Shares information about experiences, people, places and things in sequence

Domain: Social Systems Component



SS1-2: Community, People and Relationships

SS1.7 Identifies similarities and differences in people

SS2.6 Describes different roles of people in the community

Procedures:

At circle time or over a meal, ask your children about superheroes. Are there particular superheroes they especially like? What do they like about them? Make a list of superheroes they admire.

Later in the day or another day, invite children to make pictures of their favorite superheroes. Ask them to tell you about their drawings and write what they've said and the names of their heroes on their paper (older children can do some of the writing themselves). Save the drawings.

The next day, bring the drawings to circle time, summarize the list of superheroes brought up by the group and ask, "so what is a hero? What makes each of these superheroes a hero?" Write down the key points of the children's answers. Ask if they can think of any real people who are heroes.

If you have Kindergarten or first grade students, you may ask them to write/draw about what makes someone a hero and look at their work together during circle time.

Over the next two weeks, bring in examples of real-world superheroes, using resources from the teacher's forum. (list of examples with links). Use video interviews from the forum as well as photos of the people you are talking about. You can even invite real life heroes of yours to come and visit. If you left click on the photos in the registry you can paste them into a word document and make them bigger.

Here are just a few examples of heroes you could reference. Pick heroes that reflect your children's interests and identities.

- [Thomas Clarkson](#), who worked to end slavery in England, when many people around him hadn't yet figured out how wrong it was.
- [Elizabeth Freeman](#), who fought to end slavery (and succeeded in Massachusetts) and was a nurse that many people counted on.
- [Henri Christophe](#), who was born a slave and became a king.
- [Sarah Moore Grimke](#), who fought to end slavery and to make sure women could vote.
- [Henry Lewis](#), the first black conductor of a major symphony orchestra who made beautiful music at the Los Angeles Philharmonic.



- [Rebecca Crumpler](#), who was a doctor almost 200 years ago when very few women or black people were doctors in America.
- Tuskegee airman [Rosco Brown](#) born, who was a pilot and a hero during world war 2, and then was a college professor
- [Claire O'Connor](#), civil rights activist and freedom rider (working to integrate the buses in Mississippi – short video interview segment).
- [Bayard Rustin](#), organized many major civil rights events including the Montgomery bus boycott. He stuck with his commitment to the civil rights movement throughout his life even when it was very hard (he was beaten by the police and harassed for being a Gay man among other things).
- [Efe Mensah Brown](#), Efe is a webmaster (makes the internet work for you) and she's a lover of math.
- The First Black Firefighter in Los Angeles, [George W Bright](#), who fought fires back when fire trucks were pulled by horses.

These are just a few examples- dig around on the site and find your own favorites.

Help your children notice how some of the real people they interact with are heroes. Remember that ordinary things like the way the school maintenance people accomplish urgent repairs, or the teacher who rescued a bird who flew into a glass window can count as heroism. Make sure your list of community member heroes includes many women, people of color and people who work with their hands as well as people in white color professions. Include both historical and current day figures.

Extra: [Watch some kids talk about who they admire.](#) This video brings family members into the heroes narrative.

At the end of the project, ask the children to draw pictures of their heroes a second time. Ask them to write or dictate a message about what makes this person a hero. Notice how their definition of heroes has grown and changed.

Optional addition: Talk to your children about the ways they help other people. Notice all the times you see them helping other people in your classroom community. Keep track of all these examples on a piece of chart paper on the wall. Don't write down the names of who helped but do make sure each of the children has a contribution recognized. (Even the children you are struggling with do something helpful every week). At the end of the week, bring out rectangles of white fabric and fabric crayons and help them make Super helping heroes capes. These can be pinned to their shoulders and taken home at the end of the day.