

## Lesson One: Heroes to the Rescue

### Objectives

1. Students will be able to identify characteristics of various kinds of heroes.
2. Students will be able to develop a cartoon character (Superhero).

### Arizona Visual Arts Standards

CREATE: Creative Process: PO 101, 201, & 301: Contribute to a discussion about ideas for his or her own artwork.

### Common Core Standards

ELA-Literacy. SL.3.1b: Follow agreed-upon rules for discussion (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion. (Similar standards at other elementary grade levels = SL.1.1a, SL.2.1a, SL4.1b, SL5.1b.)

ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social science. (Similar standards at other secondary grades = RH.9-10.4, RH.11-12.4)

### Preparation

Preview Heroes to the Rescue PowerPoint and the *American Pop* exhibition preview. Consider opportunities for collaboration with English, music or drama teachers (see “Extensions Ideas” below).

### Resources

[Heroes to the Rescue PowerPoint](#)

[American POP Exhibition Preview PowerPoint](#)

### Activities

Unit Preview: Introduce the theme in life, that “Heroes are people who take action to make things better for others” by asking students to define what makes someone a hero and by asking them to name 1) fictional heroes they may know from movies or TV, real heroes from US and world history or everyday people who sometimes do heroic deeds.

Introduce the theme in art, that “Art can celebrate heroes” by explaining that artists make paintings, sculptures (monuments) to honor and help us remember heroes, for example, the Lincoln Memorial celebrating his courage to proclaim emancipation of slaves during the Civil War or the Martin Luther King Monument celebrating his actions to achieve equal rights for all in the US. Both these leaders sacrificed their lives as a result of their efforts to make things better for others. Throughout history, artists, playwrights, poets, composers and other artists have chosen historical and fictional heroes to inspire their art such as: Spartacus, who inspired a movie; Joan of Arc, who has inspired many painters; Paul Revere, who inspired Longfellow’s *Midnight Ride* poem, William Tell who inspired Rossini’s opera; Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King and John Kennedy, about whom Dion wrote the song *Abraham, Martin and John* and Che Guevara, who is celebrated in many popular art forms from poster art, to graffiti, to t-shirts.

Introduce the three key questions for viewing and making art that students will be working within the unit:

1. How did the artist use cropping in the artwork? How can I use cropping in my artwork?
2. How did the artist combine words and images to tell a story? How can I combine words and images to tell my story?
3. How have other artists celebrated heroes through art? How can I show the theme of heroism in my art?

Explain that students will explore various types of heroes in this lesson and will, ultimately, draw their own superhero action comic strip in lesson three.

Definition and Examples: Show *Heroes to the Rescue* PowerPoint, which:

- defines a hero (slide 2)
- presents mythological heroes from ancient Greece, medieval England, traditional Navajo culture, Africa and China (slides 3-6),
- presents historical American heroes (slides 7-10),
- presents heroes in our everyday world (slides 11-14), and
- culminates by introducing characteristics of fictional superheroes (slides 15 & 16).

Guided Practice: Elicit students' prior knowledge of heroes by posing questions as you show the PowerPoint, including these questions from the PowerPoint:

- Who is a hero to you? Is your hero a real person? Or is your hero a legend or fantasy? (slide 2)
- What other American hero do you know? What did she or he do to be admired as a hero? (slide 10)
- Who has acted like a hero for you when you needed one? What small act of heroism might you do for someone else? (slide 14)
- What superheroes can you name? What are their special powers? How do they protect their secret identities? (slide 15)

Brainstorm: Lead students in generating ideas for superheroes they might use in their own action comic strip, asking them to brainstorm possible: names, special powers, secret identities and heroic actions.

Transfer to TCA: Slide 16 invites students to visit the *American Pop* exhibition at the Tempe Center for the Arts. NOTE: Many of the works in the exhibition are also viewable in the *American Pop* exhibition preview PowerPoint.

### Vocabulary

hero, heroine, heroic, heroically,  
heroism  
myth, mythological  
Cyclops,  
knight  
mystery, mysterious  
silken  
rescue

inspire, inspiration  
agriculture  
historical  
expedition  
non-violent  
civil rights  
migrant  
crisis  
volunteer

donate  
bully  
celebrate  
extraordinary  
incredible  
identity  
superhero

### Extension Activities

ENGLISH: Collaborate with an English teacher to read and discuss heroes in grade-appropriate literature, such as Longfellow's *Midnight Ride of Paul Revere*, passages from *Beowulf*, Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables*, George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* and Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*.

FILM: Collaborate with film, drama, or music teacher to show and discuss grade-appropriate heroic films, such as *Camelot*, *The Man of La Mancha*, *A Woman Called Moses*, *Norma Rae*, *Sweet Green Tomatoes* and *Shindler's List*.

MUSIC: Collaborate with music teacher to compare grade-appropriate musical compositions inspired by heroes such as Harry Belafonte's version of African American folk hero railroad worker, *John Henry*, the overture of Gioachino Rossini's opera, *William Tell* or theme songs from *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, *Batman*, *Superman* or *Mulan* movies.

### **Assessment Checklist**

Objective 1: Students will be able to identify characteristics of various kinds of heroes.

\_\_\_\_ Student contributed to discussion during PowerPoint presentation.

\_\_\_\_ Student identified heroic actions of mythological, historical, or everyday heroes during discussion of PowerPoint presentation.

Objective 2: Students will be able to develop a cartoon character (Superhero)

\_\_\_\_ During a class brainstorming session after presentation of the PowerPoint, student proposed a superhero character s/he might develop in lesson 3, perhaps including, a name, special powers, means of protecting identity, or heroic action.