



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades K-3

Universal Recognition

The Dalai Lama is a man of peace. In 1989 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent struggle for the liberation of Tibet. He has consistently advocated policies of non-violence, even in the face of extreme aggression. He also became the first Nobel Laureate to be recognized for his concern for global environmental problems. His Holiness has travelled to more than 62 countries spanning 6 continents. He has met with presidents, prime ministers and crowned rulers of major nations. He has held dialogues with the heads of different religions and many well-known scientists.

Since 1959 he has received over 84 awards, honorary doctorates, prizes, etc., in recognition of his message of peace, non-violence, inter-religious understanding, universal responsibility and compassion. He has also authored more than 72 books.

He describes himself as “a simple Buddhist monk”.

Other Related Activities

Week 1&2

- ***Is a Bully Really A Bully?***
- ***Caring for others***

Kidzlit

- ***Swimmy***
- ***Hey Little Ant***
- ***Amos & Boris***
- ***Ira Sleeps Over***

Mathematics

- ***Kindness Campaign***
- ***Under the Lemon Moon***



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 3-5

Grades 3rd-5th

Students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the concept “compassion.”
- Identify elements of compassion shown in various images.
- Begin to develop a vocabulary of words related to compassion.

Lesson Plans for Unit:

- Lesson 1: What does compassion look like?
 - Kidzlit book: *Chicken Sunday*
 - Kidzlit book: *The Hundred Dresses*
- Lesson 2: Why is compassion important?
- Lesson 3: Who are the heroes of compassion?
- Lesson 4: When is it a challenge to be compassionate?
- Lesson 5: How can you be hero of compassion?

Lesson One: What does compassion look like?

Introduction to Compassion:

Select five to eight images that show compassion in action.

Examples:

- Acts of kindness and caring.
- Acts of help about helping others.
- Acts of empathy.
- Acts of reaching out to others.

Guide class discussion about what they see and what all the images have in common. Suggest that the word that describes what is happening in all the pictures is “compassion.” Write the word on the board.

Engage students in a discussion about compassion to determine their pre-existing knowledge on the subject and to introduce them to a vocabulary of words related to compassion. Add your own definition to the examples given below:

- Compassion is an understanding of how another person feels.
- Compassion is caring about others.
- Compassion is showing concern through kind thoughts, words and actions.
- Compassion is helping and giving.
- Compassion is listening and being patient.
- Compassion is a response to suffering.



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 3-5

Refer to Kidzlit Kit 3rd-5th Set 3: *Chicken Sunday*

1. Introduction Activity: Falsely Accused (20-25 minutes)

Role-Play: Have the kids form groups of four. Explain that the groups will practice and then take turns acting out a scene in which some children are wrongly accused of doing something. Either use the scenario described below or have the kids role-play actual experiences they've had.

Read the following scene aloud a few times to get the kids thinking:

Two children in a classroom are playing on the floor with several objects. Suddenly, one child points to the window and says "Look! The sun's out. Let's go out and play" The two rush away, leaving the objects on the floor. Two new children enter the room. Each picks up one of the objects and comments on it. As they're talking, their teacher arrives. The teacher is unhappy about the clutter and blames them for making the mess.

They Respond

Explain that the actors representing the "innocent children should respond in a way that helps resolve the situation in a positive way.

Group Discussion: After each group has performed, discuss the various role-play responses and outcomes. Ask questions such as:

- How did the "innocent" kids feel about the teacher's accusation?
- What do you think about the teacher's handling of the situation?
- Which conversations and behaviors brought about positive feelings and outcomes? Why?
- Have you ever done something wrong and found out someone else had been blamed?
 - What did you do when you found out?

2. Reading (20-30 minutes)

Read aloud to your group, pausing occasionally for the kids' comments and questions about the story, its illustrations, or words they don't know

3. Discussion: (10-15 minutes)

- What is your favorite moment in the story?
- What impression do the children have of Mr. Kodinski at the start of the story? Why?
- Why do you think the boys threw the eggs?
- How does Mr. Kodinski feel about the three friends at the beginning?
 - Why does he feel that way?
- Why do the children and Mr. Kodinski change their impressions of each other?



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- What do they learn about each other
- Mr. Kodinski and Miss Eula seem to respect each other. What parts of the story show it?

The children took some actions as to show Mr. Kodinski that they wouldn't throw eggs at his shop. Have you ever done something to prove you weren't to blame for a bad behavior? What did you do?

4. Try this Activity: Individual Writing (10-15 minutes)

Patricia Polacco describes three different cultural traditions that she and her friends share: "Chicken Sunday" with Miss Eula, Tea with Mr. Kodinski, and Pysanky egg-making with Patricia's mom.

Ask the kids to write a sentence or two explaining what the friends enjoyed about or learned from each other. Have them share their ideas. Record their ideas for each of the three traditions on paper under separate headings for each one.

5. Cool Words: (15-20 minutes)

Baptists (p.1) people who follow the Baptist religion and belong to the Protestant Church

- Babushka (p.1) grandmother (Russian)
- Churchin' up (p.1) going to church
- Sigh (p.1) let out a deep breath in disappointment
- Collard greens (p.3) green, leafy vegetables
- Hoppin' john (p.3) dish made of cowpeas, rice, and meat
- Spoon bread (p.3) soft bread made of cornmeal and served with a spoon
- Bonnet (p.3) hat made of cloth or straw with a ribbon that ties under one's neck.

Try This Activity:

Ask:

- Where do we see compassion in our school?
- What does it look like? Feel like? Sound like?

Take two to three suggestions from students. Encourage them to describe acts of compassion in specific behavior terms.

Examples:

- Kids including others who are left out of their game on the playground
- The nurse helping a hurt child.
- The principal making sure that a new student feels welcome.
- The teacher helping a student at recess who is struggling.



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Divide students into groups of three.

Give groups 10 minutes to think of an example of “what compassion looks like.” Plan a way to share it with the class by acting it out, writing a poem, describing it in words, drawing a picture, singing a song etc.

Wrap-up:

Have groups share as time allows.

Encourage students to continue to notice acts of compassion and to add them to the class bulletin board/science project display board (described below).

Follow-up:

Bulletin Board: “What does compassion look like?”

Set aside some space on the bulletin board (Science Fair Tri-Fold). Ask your students to begin to identify examples of compassionate acts. Cut out pictures of compassionate acts they find in the newspaper or magazines.

Make a bulletin board with three sections:

- What does compassion look like? [behaviors]
- What does compassion sound like? [words]
- What does compassion feel like? [emotions]

Refer to Kidzlit: “*The Hundred Dresses*”

Introduce “The Hundred Dresses” by Eleanor Estes, Louis Slobodkin, and Helena Estes

This story was written a long time ago – in 1944 – about a young girl and her experiences with her classmates. The story helps children think about the need for compassion and the role that forgiveness plays in furthering compassion. Follow this guide and the Kidz Lit. guide as well. The Kidz Lit guide provides many more activities you can include in these chapter activities.

Read: Chapter One of *The Hundred Dresses*

Discuss:

1. What words would you use to describe Wanda?
2. How do you think the other students feel about Wanda? What are the clues in the story that make you think that?
3. How do you think Wanda might feel about the other students in the classroom?
4. Peggy and Maddie looked for Wanda because they wanted to “have some fun with her.” What do you think that might mean?



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Lesson Two: Why is compassion important?

Students will:

- Understand that compassion is being able to recognize when someone is suffering and to respond to the suffering in sensitive ways that recognize the needs and feelings of the person suffering.
- Understand that compassion begins with feeling empathy with how another is feeling.
- Recognize the lack of compassion.

Introduction / Opening:

Read this quote from the Dalai Lama: **(Refer to story attached at the end of this unit)**

"I believe that this suffering is caused by ignorance, and that people inflict pain on others in pursuit of their own happiness or satisfaction."

Discussion:

1. What does it mean to suffer? (Dictionary definition: To feel pain or distress. To experience loss, injury, harm, or punishment.)
2. Do you agree with the quote from the Dalai Lama – that some people cause suffering in others because they are only thinking about themselves?

Encourage students to describe situations in their community or school where people might be suffering.

1. Where do we see suffering in our community?
2. Where do we see suffering in our school?

List examples that students offer. Have students discuss how people might be feeling in these examples.

- When we understand how another person feels, that is called having empathy.
- Compassion starts with empathy – the ability to know and understand how another person is feeling.



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Activity:

Read aloud this short story about a child who is bullied:

Marko is new at school -he just moved to the neighborhood with his mother, older sister and grandfather. He rides the bus every day and every day he is miserable. There are three boys who bully him at the bus stop, on the ride to school -even in the lunchroom. They make fun of his name, the way he talks, his skin color, his size, what he eats for lunch. The leader is named Harlan – who also pushes Marko and threatens to make him miss the bus.

There are others – girls and boys who are bystanders – who don't do or say anything to help -in fact, they stay away. But they watch – and they see what is happening. Most days

Marko stands alone and often feels like crying but he knows that would just make it worse.

He feels ashamed so he hasn't told his parents or teachers. So, he goes to school every day – suffering with his head down – hoping that this might be the day that the other boys stay home; that this might be the day that he meets a new friend like his old best friend, Aaron.

Ask students to imagine what it might be like to be Marko.

1. How do you think he is feeling? Help the students name the feelings that Marko might be having.
2. How do you think the other kids who are watching might be feeling? Help the students name the feelings that the bystanders might be having.

Put students into groups of four.

Talk about, and in two to three sentences, describe what you think the bystanders might do that could help Marko feel differently.

Wrap-up:

Have each group share their ideas of what might help Marko. (Include behaviors of the bystanders, of possible adults, what Marko might do, as well as the behavior of the kids who are bullying.)

Discuss how the suggestions are examples of showing compassion.

Read: Chapters Two and Three of *The Hundred Dresses*

Discuss:

Think about Wanda in her classroom.

1. Discuss how Wanda might be feeling from her point of view about being part of this classroom.
2. Where was compassion lacking?
3. What could compassion have looked like in her classroom?



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Lesson Three: Who are the heroes of compassion?

Students will:

- Describe characteristics of one who is a hero of compassion.
- Learn about the 14th Dalai Lama, and why he is recognized as a hero of compassion.
- Understand that compassion can be shown in many ways – to people, animals, and the environment.

Introduction / Opening:

What does it mean to be a hero? A hero is:

- Someone who commits an act of bravery, or shows courage, strength of character, or other admirable qualities.
- Someone who is admired and looked up to for outstanding qualities or achievements.
- We have learned about what it means to show compassion. What might it mean to be a “hero of compassion?”
- Someone who is brave or shows courage or strength of character in being compassionate.
- Someone who notices suffering around them and acts to try to change that suffering.
- Someone who is looked up to for being a compassionate person.

There are world leaders who many consider to be “heroes of compassion” because they help bring positive change through their actions to help rid the world of suffering. Today we are going to learn a little bit about the 14th Dalai Lama.

Introduce the 14th Dalai Lama, by sharing photos and reading “Who is the Dalai Lama?”
(Refer to story attached at the end of the unit)

- Thinking about our definition of “hero,” why do you think the Dalai Lama might be considered a “hero of compassion?”

There are many ways to be a hero of compassion. The Dalai Lama is a hero of compassion toward people and also toward the environment. The Dalai Lama would like us to think about how we can notice suffering and then act in compassionate ways. We’ve talked about how people might be suffering – but there is other suffering in the world.

- In what ways do you think the environment might be suffering?



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Activity:

Divide class into groups of four.

Have students find pictures online or in magazines and newspapers that show examples of the environment – or nature – in crisis. For example: endangered animals, pollution, climate change, overcrowding, etc.

Each group makes a poster of four to six selected pictures. Under each, create a caption that says:

“We can show compassion to our world by [specify action].”

(Fill in the action that would help address the environmental concern. Examples: Under a picture of a polar bear, students might write “protecting our wildlife,” or under a picture of a polluted stream, students might write “cleaning up our streams,” etc.)

Wrap-up:

Have each group share their posters and captions. Post in the classroom or hallway.

Discuss:

1. What do you think a “hero of compassion” might have done in the story?
2. Who had a chance to be a hero of compassion?



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 3-5

Extended Activities

Who Are Your Heroes? Grade 3-8

Brief Description: Students write about famous people, family members, and friends who are personal heroes.

- Discuss the meaning of the word *hero*.
- Tell students to think about people who are their heroes -- family members, friends, and famous people. Provide each student with a copy of Who Are Your Heroes?
- Discuss students' work sheet answers.

DIRECTIONS: *Directions: Write a few words to complete each statement below.*

1. A person who is my hero is

- . This person is my hero because

3. Two words that describe this person are

 and

4. One thing the person does that I admire is

5. One way I can be more like my hero is by

Are you a hero? Write a few sentences telling about something that you did that you think was heroic.



Compassion Reading Lessons

Grades 3-5

Heroes in History ABC Book

Grade 3-8

Brief Description: Students create an ABC book about heroes in history.

Materials Needed

- teacher-selected resources and student-researched library or online sources
- computer(s) with word-processing program or writing paper
- different colored construction paper
- drawing paper
- glue
- scissors
- markers or crayons
- chalkboard and chalk or chart paper
- hole punch
- brass fasteners or loose-leaf rings
- computer(s) with Internet access (optional)

Complete this activity over two lessons.

Lesson 1

1. Ask students to name famous people in history we recognize as heroes. Write students' responses on the board or on a chart. Ask students which names on the list they would include if they were to going to write a book about different heroes.
2. Check off students' responses. Ask students to tell the first letter of the last name of each person they mentioned.
3. Write the letters of the alphabet on the board. Check off the letters associated with names suggested by students.
4. Tell students that they are going to create their own ABC book of heroes. The book will include some names on their suggested list plus others that are added to complete the alphabet. (For younger students, you may want to omit the letters Q, X, and Z.) You might share with students a few previously published ABC books from the school library.
5. Let students choose a letter of the alphabet or assign each student a letter. Students will research a hero in history whose last name begins with that letter.
6. Have students write a short biography about the person and draw a picture of the person.
7. Let students use teacher-selected or student-researched library sources or online sources to complete their research. Give students a few days to complete their research, write their biographies, and draw the illustrations.

Lesson 2

1. Let students paste their biographies and pictures onto different colored construction paper. Let one or two students arrange the pages in ABC order. Ask students to create a title for the book.
2. Punch two or three holes on one side of each page. Assemble the pages using brass fasteners or loose-leaf rings.



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 3-5

Heroes Mural

Grade: K-8

Brief Description: Students create a mural showing famous people regarded as heroes.

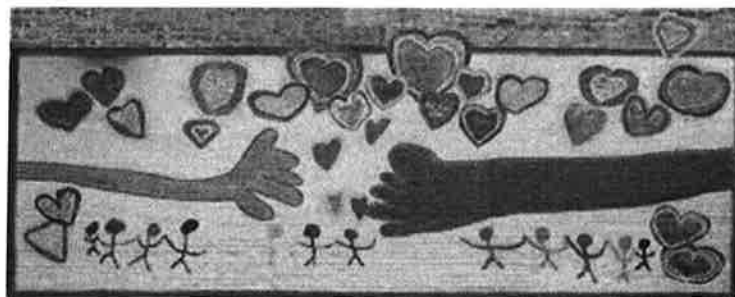
Materials Needed

- library sources or computer(s) with Internet access
- drawing paper or construction paper
- a roll of large paper (brown or white)
- student-selected art materials (crayons, markers, paint, etc.)
- glue

Lesson Plan

1. Explain the meaning of the word *mural*. If possible, show students examples of murals from art books or other sources.
2. Explain to students that they are going to create a mural showing pictures of famous heroes. Assign each student a famous hero. Have students research pictures of heroes from school texts, library sources, or online sources.
3. After students have completed their research, have students draw and color their pictures on drawing or construction paper.
4. Have students cut out their pictures. Unroll the large paper to the length desired. Have students paste the pictures in different places on the roll. Display the mural on a classroom wall or in a hallway.

Suggestion for younger students: Have students work together as a group to research the pictures of famous heroes or provide the pictures that students use as models for their illustrations. Assist students when cutting and pasting pictures on the roll.





Compassion Reading Lessons

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Lesson Four: When is it a challenge to be compassionate?

Students will:

- Understand that showing compassion sometimes takes courage.
- Understand that forgiveness can help us to act with compassion when we have been wronged.

Introduction / Opening:

Draw out stories from the children.

- Can you think of a time when someone was compassionate toward you?
- How did that feel?
- When have you been compassionate toward others?
- How did that make you feel?

You have given some good examples of compassion in action. But sometimes it is a challenge to act with compassion. Think about the story of Marko:

1. Who didn't act with compassion?
2. What are some reasons that it might have been hard for the bystanders to act with compassion and come to his defense?
 - Bystanders were afraid that they might be bullied.
 - They didn't know what to do.
 - They didn't feel safe.
 - They didn't know Marko.
 - They were embarrassed for him.
 - They didn't think anything would change.
3. What action could make the bystanders a "hero of compassion" for Marko?
4. What do you think might happen if they all worked together against the bullying?
5. What about Marko? What can he do?



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 3-5

Let me read you the next part of the story:

One day Marko came to the bus stop as usual. He was early, it was raining hard, and he noticed that none of the boys who bullied him were at the bus stop. A few of the other kids were there – but no one said anything to him. Before long, he saw Harlan – one of the kids who bullied him – crossing the street. Just as Harlan stepped up on the curb, he tripped and fell – hitting his head on the sidewalk and spilling his books and papers into the wet road.

Marko hesitated just a minute – not sure what to do or what he wanted to do. A car was heading right toward Harlan. Marko took a deep breath, rushed forward, put out his hand, and pulled Harlan out of the way. Then, as Harlan sat on the curb in pain, first Marko – and then the boys and girls who were bystanders – picked up Harlan's papers and books, handed them to him, and helped him to his feet. Harlan looked around the group as they clustered around Marko in silent support and protection. Marko stood tall, feeling like he finally had some new friends. He looked Harlan in the eyes, and . . .

Discussion:

Remember the definition of a hero:

- Someone who is brave, or shows courage, strength of character, or other admirable quality.
 - Someone who is admired and looked up to for outstanding qualities or achievements.
 - How do you think Marko was feeling?
1. How did Marko show courage and compassion?
 2. Did the bystanders show courage or compassion?
 3. How do you think Harlan felt?
 4. What did the bystanders do that might have helped Marko act like a hero of compassion?
 5. Could Marko's actions or the actions of the bystanders make a difference for how Harlan acts in the future?
 6. If Harlan changes his actions, do you think Harlan can forgive him?
 7. What could Harlan say or do so that Marko might forgive him?
 8. What do you think happened next?

Activity:

Divide students into pairs.

Think about what happens next. Practice what you think Harlan might say to Marko that would show compassion and help Marko forgive him. Practice how Marko could respond with compassion and forgiveness.



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 3-5

Wrap-up:

Have students demonstrate their skill practice for the class as time allows.

Read: Chapters Six and Seven of *The Hundred Dresses*.

Discuss:

1. Why was it a challenge for Maddie to be a hero of compassion?
2. What did she do to get past the challenge?
3. When is it hard to feel or act compassionate?
4. One way we can show compassion toward ourselves or others is through forgiveness -do you think Wanda forgave Peggy and Maddie for their unkind behavior?
5. What did Wanda do?
6. How did that make Peggy and Maddie feel?
7. How do you think it made Wanda feel?



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 3-5

Lesson Five: How can you be a hero of compassion?

Learning Objectives:

Students will:

- Develop plans for compassionate action as part of a class project.
- Demonstrate compassionate actions while implementing that plan.

Introduction / Opening:

We have learned a lot about what it means to be compassionate and how we each can be heroes of compassion in different ways. Today, I would like for us to think about what might help our school be a more compassionate place for everyone.

- What are some things we can do as a class to make our school a more compassionate place for everyone?

Create a chart labeled: “How to be a Hero of Compassion” Have class brainstorm ideas for what they each can do to demonstrate compassion. List suggestions on the board or chart. Draw from this list as needed to spark imagination.

How to be a Hero of Compassion

1. Practice simple acts of kindness – give a smile, include others on the playground, say a kind word, apologize, forgive.
2. Share what you have with others.
3. Adopt a pet or do something to take care of animals in nature.
4. Do your part to take care of the environment.
5. Spend time with someone who is lonely.
6. Take time to listen to someone who is suffering or sad.
7. Be compassionate with yourself. Take time for reflection, practice deep breathing and think calming thoughts, to reduce your own anger.
8. Look for the good in others. Stop criticism and negative judgments.
9. Spend time with compassionate people. We catch our attitudes from others.
10. Look for compassion in actions and words around you. Observe how you and others feel when compassion is present. Notice when compassion is lacking and make a small plan to practice it.
11. Volunteer your time and effort to help make your school a better place for everyone.



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 3-5

Discussion:

Review the list.

1. Which ideas do you think you could do?
2. What could WE do together as a class to make our SCHOOL more compassionate?

Activity:

Design a project to spread compassion in the school. Help students brainstorm possible ways that the entire class could work together on a compassion project.

Examples:

- Adopt a nursing home to visit -send pen-pal notes, or pictures.
 - Start a compassion club in the school.
 - Write a class pledge of compassion. All sign it and share at a school assembly.
 - Make a plan to include others – who might usually get left out – in playground games.
 - Read to students in a kindergarten or first grade classroom.
 - Mix up the seating during lunch so you get to know different students.
- Develop an environmental project such as cleaning up the playground or school grounds.

Have class choose one collaborative project. Record the compassionate actions that will take place as a result of the project. Assign roles and responsibilities for making sure the project is completed.

Wrap-up:

Implement the plan and share your wonderful results!



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 3-5

Extended Activities

Characteristics of a Hero

Grades K-8

Brief Description: Students complete a work sheet about the characteristics of a hero.

1. Begin the lesson by asking students what the word *hero* means to them. Write students' answers on the board.
2. Tell students to think about characteristics or personality traits that they think make someone a hero. Provide each student with a copy of handout What Makes a Hero? Have students complete the work sheet on their own.
3. When everyone has finished, lead a discussion of the students' work sheet answers.

For younger students:

Variation 1: Have students complete the work sheet together as a group.



Compassion Reading Lessons

Grades 3-5

WHAT MAKES A HERO?

DIRECTIONS: *Directions: Read the statements below. Circle the word agree next to each statement that matches your opinion of what makes a hero. Circle the word disagree if the statement does not fit your opinion of what makes a hero.*

- | | | |
|--|-------|----------|
| 1. A hero is brave and strong. | Agree | Disagree |
| 2. A hero is caring and thoughtful. | Agree | Disagree |
| 3. A hero is selfish. | Agree | Disagree |
| 4. A hero is never frightened. | Agree | Disagree |
| 5. A hero wants to be rewarded for his or her actions. | Agree | Disagree |
| 6. A hero makes mistakes. | Agree | Disagree |
| 7. A hero is never silly. | Agree | Disagree |
| 8. A hero is dishonest. | Agree | Disagree |
| 9. A hero puts others before himself or herself. | Agree | Disagree |
| 10. A hero stands up for himself or herself. | Agree | Disagree |
| 11. A hero never gets angry. | Agree | Disagree |
| 12. A hero is always a popular person. | Agree | Disagree |

Use your own words to finish the sentence. In my opinion, a hero is someone who:

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Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 3-5

Honor Your School and Community Heroes

Grade: All

Brief Description: Students create a special event or an award to honor a hero in the school and/or community.

Lesson Plan

- Discuss the kinds of jobs that people often associate as being heroic, such as police officer or fire fighter. Discuss the characteristics and actions of a hero.
- Ask students to think about people in their school and community who they think fit the characteristics of a hero or who have acted in heroic ways. List students' responses on the board or on a sheet of paper.
- Ask students to choose one of the people on their list. Have students create an event or an award to honor that person. Some suggestions:
 - Create a plaque for the person.
 - Invite the person to a special breakfast or lunch.
 - Develop a special program to honor the person. Hold the program in your classroom or other room in the school.
 - Write "thank you" letters to the person.
 - After students decide how they want to honor the person, let students work together to develop the event or award.



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 3-5

The Story “Who is the Dalai Lama?”

The 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is both the head of state and the spiritual leader of Tibet. He was born on 6 July 1935, to a farming family, in a small hamlet located in Taktser, Amdo, northeastern Tibet. At the age of two the child, who was named Lhamo Dhondup at that time was recognized as the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso. The Dalai Lamas are believed to be manifestations of Avalokiteshvara or Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Compassion and patron saint of Tibet. Bodhisattvas are enlightened beings who have postponed their own nirvana and chosen to take rebirth in order to serve humanity.

Education in Tibet

He began his monastic education at the age of six. The curriculum consisted of five major and five minor subjects. The major subjects were logic, Tibetan art and culture, Sanskrit, medicine, and Buddhist philosophy which was further divided into a further five categories: Prajnaparimita, the perfection of wisdom; Madhyamika, the philosophy of the middle Way; Vinaya, the canon of monastic discipline; Abidharma, metaphysics; and Pramana, logic and epistemology. The five minor subjects were poetry, music and drama, astrology, motre and phrasing, and synonyms. At 23 he sat for his final examination in the Jokhang Temple, Lhasa, during the annual Monlam (prayer) Festival in 1959. He passed with honors and was awarded the Geshe Lharampa degree, the highest-level degree equivalent to a doctorate of Buddhist philosophy.

Leadership Responsibilities

In 1950 he was called upon to assume full political power after China's invasion of Tibet in 1949. In 1954, he went to Beijing for peace talks with Mao Zedong and other Chinese leaders, including Deng Xiaoping and Chou Enlai. But finally, in 1959, with the brutal suppression of the Tibetan national uprising in Lhasa by Chinese troops, he was forced to escape into exile. Since then he has been living in Dharamsala, northern India, the seat of the Tibetan political administration in exile.

Since the Chinese invasion, he has appealed to the United Nations on the question of Tibet. The General Assembly adopted three resolutions on Tibet in 1959, 1961 and 1965.

Democratization Process

In 1963 he presented a draft democratic constitution for Tibet that was followed by a number of reforms to democratize our administrative set-up. The new democratic constitution promulgated as a result of this reform was named "The Charter of Tibetans in Exile". The charter enshrines freedom of speech, belief, assembly and movement. It also provides detailed guidelines on the functioning of the Tibetan government with respect to se living in exile.

In 1992 he issued guidelines for the constitution of a future, free Tibet. He announced that when Tibet becomes free the immediate task would be to set up an interim government whose first responsibility will be to elect a constitutional assembly to frame and adopt Tibet's democratic constitution. On that day he would transfer all his



Compassion Reading Lessons

Grades 3-5

historical and political authority to the Interim President and live as an ordinary citizen. He also stated that he hoped that Tibet, comprising of the three traditional provinces of U-Tsang, Amdo and Kham, would be federal and democratic.

In May 1990, the reforms called for by Dali Lama saw the realization of a truly democratic administration in exile for the Tibetan community. The Tibetan Cabinet (Kashag), which till then had been appointed by His Holiness, was dissolved along with the Tenth Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies (Tibetan parliament in exile). In the same year, exile Tibetans on the Indian sub-continent and in more than 33 other countries elected 46 members to the expanded Eleventh Tibetan Assembly on a one-man one-vote basis. The Assembly, in its turn, elected the new members of the cabinet. In September 2001, a further major step in democratization was taken when the Tibetan electorate directly elected the Kalon Tripa, the senior-most minister of the Cabinet. The Kalon Tripa in turn appointed his own cabinet who had to be approved by the Tibetan Assembly. In Tibet's long history, this was the first time that the people elected the political leadership of Tibet.

Peace Initiatives

In September 1987 he proposed the Five Point Peace Plan for Tibet as the first step towards a peaceful solution to the worsening situation in Tibet. He envisaged that Tibet would become a sanctuary; a zone of peace at the heart of Asia, where all sentient beings can exist in harmony and the delicate environment can be preserved. China has so far failed to respond positively to the various peace proposals put forward.

The Five Point Peace Plan

In his address to members of the United States Congress in Washington, D.C. on 21 September 1987, he proposed the following peace plan, which contains five basic components:

1. Transformation of the whole of Tibet into a zone of peace.
2. Abandonment of China's population transfer policy that threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a people.
3. Respect for the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms.
4. Restoration and protection of Tibet's natural environment and the abandonment of China's use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste.
5. Commencement of earnest negotiations on the future status of Tibet and of relations between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.

Strasbourg Proposal

In his address to members of the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 15 June 1988, he made another detailed proposal elaborating on the last point of the Five Point Peace Plan. He proposed talks between the Chinese and Tibetans leading to a self-governing democratic political entity for all three provinces of Tibet. This entity would be in association with the People's Republic of China and the Chinese Government would continue to remain responsible for Tibet's foreign policy and defense.



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 3-5

Universal Recognition

The Dalai Lama is a man of peace. In 1989 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent struggle for the liberation of Tibet. He has consistently advocated policies of non-violence, even in the face of extreme aggression. He also became the first Nobel Laureate to be recognized for his concern for global environmental problems. His Holiness has travelled to more than 62 countries spanning 6 continents. He has met with presidents, prime ministers and crowned rulers of major nations. He has held dialogues with the heads of different religions and many well-known scientists.

Since 1959 he has received over 84 awards, honorary doctorates, prizes, etc., in recognition of his message of peace, non-violence, inter-religious understanding, universal responsibility and compassion. He has also authored more than 72 books.

He describes himself as “a simple Buddhist monk”.

Other Related Activities

Week 1&2

- *KWL Chart*
- *Is a Bully Really A Bully?*
- *Compassion/Caring*

Art

- *Honest to Goodness Fortune*
- *Beyond A Magic Dragon*

Mathematics

- *Kindness Campaign*
- *The Warlord's Tang's Story*

Compassion Reading Lessons

Grades 6-8

Grades: 6th-8th

Students will

- Explain the word compassion in a comprehensive way
- Create their own definitions of compassion and reflect on its meaning
- Share their new understanding of compassion with their peers.

Lesson Plans for Unit:

- **Lesson 1:** What does compassion look like?
- **Lesson 2:** Why is Compassion important?
 - **Kidzlit book:** *Kids With Courage*
- **Lesson 3:** Who are the heroes of compassion?
- **Lesson 4:** When is it a challenge to be compassionate?
- **Lesson 5:** How can you be a hero of compassion?
 - **Kidzlit book:** *The Book of Three*

Lesson One: What does compassion look like?

Critical Question: What is compassion?

Discussion:

Student Hand-out: Photos of victims of Hurricane Katrina, Iraq, Darfur or other examples from recent history. See attachments

1. Distribute these photos around the classroom or have students view them online individually or in groups. Instruct students to work in small groups to record their responses on paper.
2. After examining and journaling about their responses to these images, ask students to share their thoughts or feelings in the class. Ask:
 - *What thoughts did you have as you were looking at these images?*
 - *What is compassion? Did you feel compassion when you saw these images? What are some synonyms for compassion?*
3. Write the responses on the board. Next, as a class, come up with a class definition of compassion that incorporates the students' ideas. Compare this definition to the dictionary and adjust if you feel necessary to include all aspects of compassion.

(Note: Dictionary.com defines compassion as "a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.")

- *Think about a time when you felt compassion for another person. What did you do in response?*
- *Does compassion always require an action? Why or why not?*



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 6-8

Activity:

- What does compassion look like in our world today?

Have students create a poster with a partner showing examples of compassion from recent history. They can use the internet, newspaper, or magazines to find images or headlines that exemplify compassion. Share these posters as a class, and ask students to respond to one another's examples on paper. Are there any examples of compassion that they disagree with? If so, ask them to explain why. If possible, find a place in your community to display and share these posters with others.

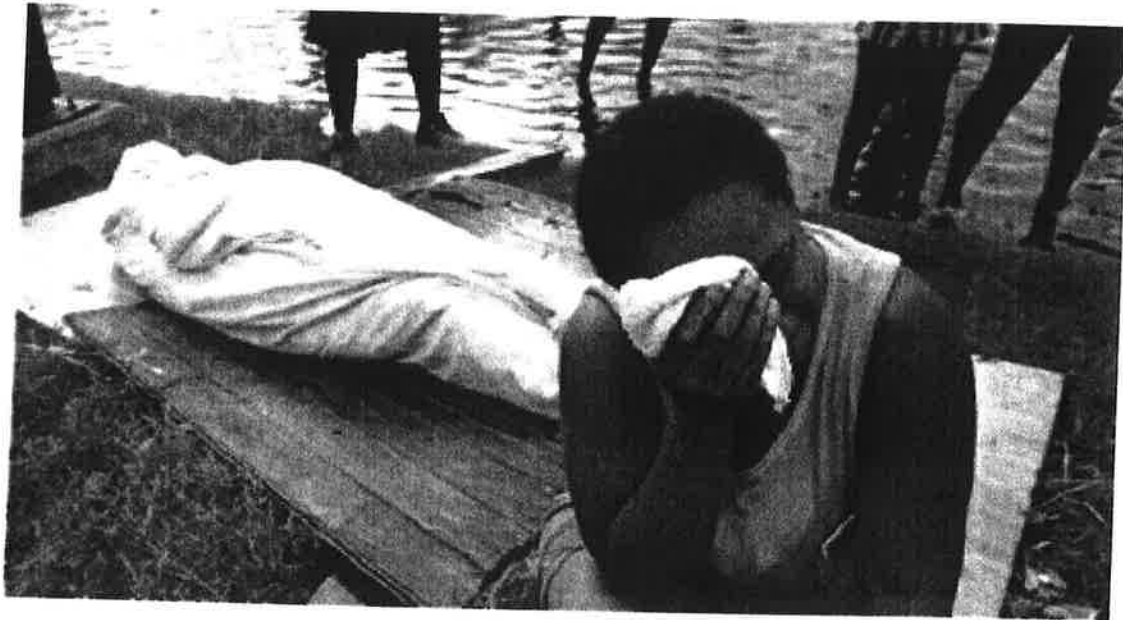
Wrap-up:

Create a monthly "hero of compassion" program in your school or classroom. Have students vote on classmates who they feel have set positive examples of compassionate action, and reward them with a special privilege or honor.

Create bulletin board space for the examples of compassionate action in your school.

Hurricane Katrina

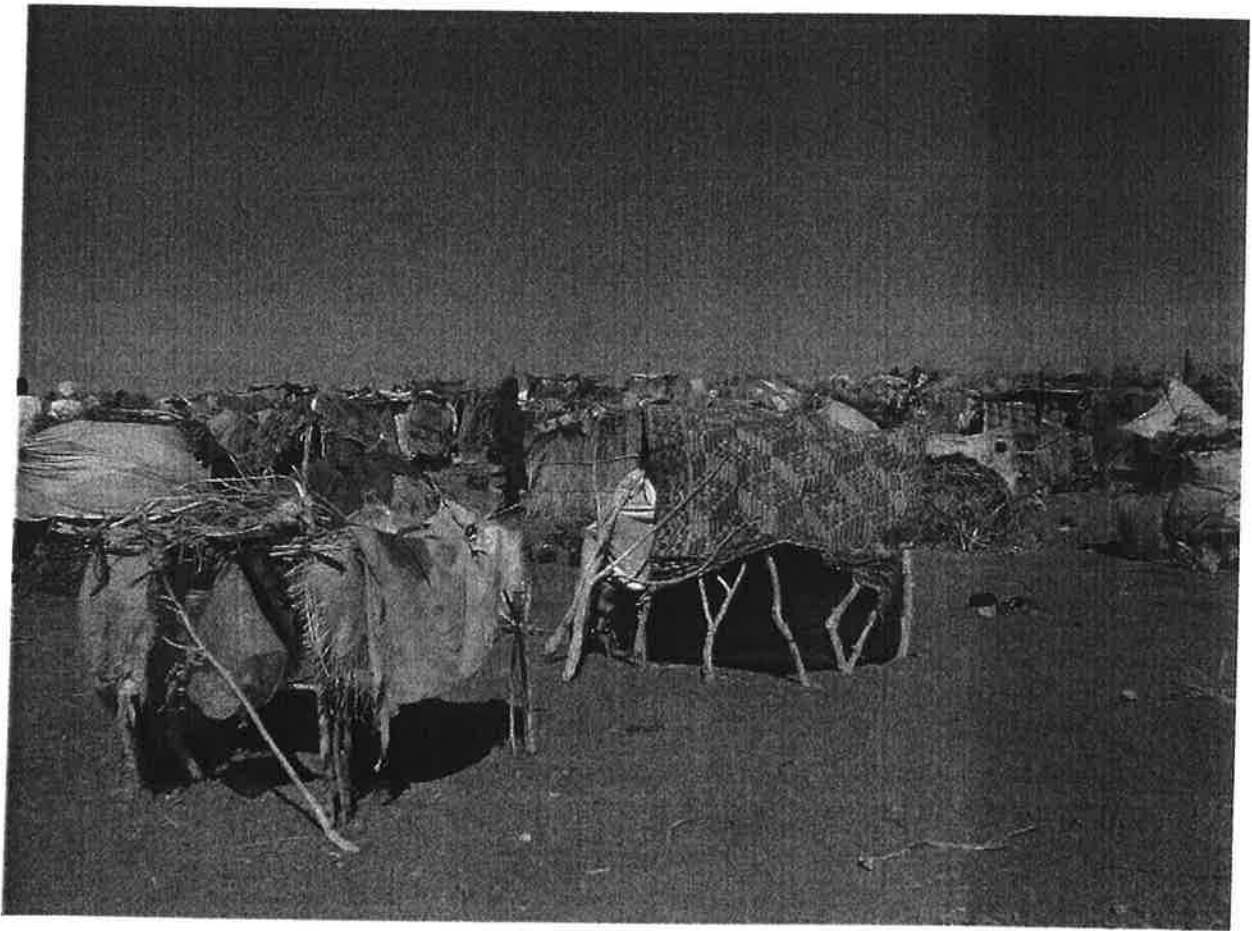




Darfur



"This mother had just arrived at Abu Shouk with her sick baby. Under the best of circumstances, some predict that as many as 300,000 will die." Abu Shouk camp is located in North Darfur.



Camp of Darfuris internally displaced by the ongoing conflict

Compassion Reading Lessons

Grades 6-8

Lesson Two: Why is compassion important?

Learning Objectives:

Students will

- Understand the characteristics of a just society
- Understand the role of compassion in valuing diversity
- Understand the role of compassion in defending human rights
- Identify societies past and present that are considered “just”

Critical Question: What role does compassion play in a just society?

Refer to the Kidzlit Kit 6th-8th Set 1: *Kids with Courage* reading # 3 “Reaching Out To A Stranger”.

1. Introduction Activity: Powerful, Powerless (15 minutes)

Brainstorm: Tell the kids that the book features stories about kids like them who have moments of feeling powerless and moments of feeling powerful. Write the questions “What makes kids feel powerless?” and “What makes kids feel powerful?” on separate sheets of butcher paper. Lay them on the floor and ask the kids to write their responses to either or both questions. Allow enough time for all the kids to record their ideas. Then post the sheets and read the comments aloud. Explain that the stories in the book focus on some remarkable occasions when individual kids both felt and were powerful.

2. Reading 3 (35-45 minutes)

Read pages 10-11 (*Reaching Out to a Stranger*) aloud to your group, pausing occasionally for the kids’ comments and questions about the story, its illustrations, or words they don’t know

3. Discussion: (10-15 minutes)

- What do you think motivated Frank to give his shoes to the woman?
 - How was he feeling toward her?
 - How was he feeling about himself?
- Why do you think “an invisible person, marginal, forgotten by society” pops into Frank’s head when he hears the woman’s story?
 - Who are the invisible people in our society, and what makes them invisible
- Frank believes “all have the potential to be heroic in some way”. Have you ever felt heroic or felt you have the potential to be heroic? When
- How do you think Frank might have felt if he hadn’t taken action?
 - What makes you think this?



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 6-8

4. Try this Activity:

After discussing this question as a class, have students consider the value of each of the following to society through mind-mapping these concepts in small groups:

- Equal opportunity
- Freedom of speech
- Freedom of religion
- Helping those in need
- Access to health care
- Equality of wealth

Ask one representative from each small group to record the group's ideas in a mind-map (Attached). Post these visuals around the classroom, then engage students in a class-wide discussion to determine what, in their view, is a just society.

5. Cool Words: (15-20 minutes)

- Clambered (p.81) climbed noisily
- Aced (p.81) got a very good grade
- Slouched (p.81) sat hunched over
- Search and Destroy (p.82) mission to find an enemy and ruin it completely
- Clannish (p.82) grouped together and excluding others
- Invisible (p.83) unseen
- Dubbed (p.83) gave a nickname
- Thawing (p.83) melting
- Pried (p.84) lifted off using a lever
- Heroic (p.85) very brave or daring

Try This Activity: (2) 30 minute activities

Have students research a society of their choosing, using the following questions as a guide. Next have them work in pairs or individually and report their findings in a presentation to the class.

- *Do people in this society have enough to eat, adequate housing and access to health care? How does this society provide adequate food, housing and health care?*
- *Do people in this society have equal access to education? What is the educational system like?*
- *Is medical care costly, universal, accessible, etc? What is the medical care system like in this society?*
- *Are there adequate employment opportunities? What kinds of jobs are available and who gets those jobs?*
- *Are all people able to participate in political decision making? How is the government decided?*
- *What are some of the challenges this society faces in maintaining justice for all?*



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 6-8

Note: Suggested links for students' research. The following web sites may be helpful to identify and guide research on a variety of world societies:

- A guide to global education:
<http://www.globaleducation.edu.au>
- The world fact book from the CIA:
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>
- Library of Congress country studies:
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cshome.html#toc>

Ask students to describe examples and non-examples of “valuing diversity” and “defending human rights” that they learned about in their classmates’ final products.

Wrap It up: (45-60 minutes)

What would a world without compassion look like?

Ask: students to journal on this topic then write a short story set in a world without compassion. Have students create an illustration or collage that represents a world without compassion.

Compassion Reading Lessons

Grades 6-8

Lesson Three: Who are the heroes of compassion?

Learning Objectives:

Students will:

- Think critically about society's heroes, and examine who demonstrates compassion.
- Recognize the qualities of compassion in an individual.
- Produce a profile of the Dalai Lama.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the Dalai Lama's qualities.

Critical Question: Who is compassionate?

Discussion:

- Who are your heroes? Do these people show compassion in their words or actions? If so, how?
- In the newspaper or other current events resource, find examples of prominent people in our society today. Do these people exhibit compassion in their words and actions?

Who are some of the heroes of compassion that you know about? How have they been recognized? How have some of them been either rewarded or persecuted for their words and deeds?

Activities:

Student Handout: The article on compassion by the Dalai Lama (**Refer to story attached at the end of this unit**)

1. Do a KWL Chart exercise with students about the Dalai Lama before reading his article on compassion. (See week 1&2)
 - *What do they know about the Dalai Lama?*
 - *What do they want to know about the Dalai Lama?*

2. Ask students to explore the web site of the Dalai Lama and record their observations and questions.

Ask them to consider these questions:

- *What is a Dalai Lama?*
- *Where does the present Dalai Lama live?*
- *Where did he live?*
- *What does he represent?*
- *Is he easily recognizable?*
- *What makes him recognizable?*

2. KWL is a strategy in which students manage their learning by mapping out what they Know, Want to know, and Learned. KWL charts help students access prior knowledge and help teachers assess where students are in their learning.

Compassion Reading Lessons

Grades 6-8

4. Have students read the Dalai Lama's words on compassion.* (Depending on the reading level of your students, you may prefer to divide the essay into sections and break students into small groups to each read a small section of the reading.)

They should record their thoughts and observations as they are reading and, in pairs, discuss their responses before sharing with the class.

5. Ask students to share what they think of the Dalai Lama's ideas about compassion. Ask:

- *Is the Dalai Lama a hero of compassion? Why or why not?*

6. Revisit the KWL exercise and have students reflect on and share what they now know about the Dalai Lama.

Wrap-up:

Anne Frank was a young Jewish girl who hid from the Nazis during the Holocaust and eventually died in a concentration camp. She wrote in her diary before she died, "I keep my ideals, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart." Ask students to reflect this quote and write an essay explaining how Anne Frank is considered by many to be a hero of compassion.



Compassion Reading Lessons

Grades 6-8

Extended Activities

Who Are Your Heroes?

Grade 3-8

Brief Description: Students write about famous people, family members, and friends who are personal heroes.

- Discuss the meaning of the word *hero*.
- Tell students to think about people who are their heroes -- family members, friends, and famous people. Provide each student with a copy of Who Are Your Heroes?
- Discuss students' work sheet answers.

DIRECTIONS: *Directions: Write a few words to complete each statement below.*

1. A person who is my hero is

2. This person is my hero because

3. Two words that describe this person are

 and

4. One thing the person does that I admire is

5. One way I can be more like my hero is by

Are you a hero? Write a few sentences telling about something that you did that you think was heroic.



Compassion Reading Lessons

Grades 6-8

In Your Opinion: Are Athletes Heroes?

Grade: 6-8

Brief Description: Students participate in a classroom debate about athletes as heroes.

Materials Needed

- teacher-selected and student-researched articles and commentaries about various athletes from print and/or online sources
- paper
- pens/pencils
- box or paper bag
- small slips of paper with the words *pro* and *con* written on them

Lesson Plan

Before teaching the lesson: Write the words *pro* and *con* on slips of paper. Put the slips into a box or paper bag.

Complete this activity over several days.

Lesson 1

1. Discuss the meaning of the word *debate*. Discuss examples of debate topics.
2. Ask the following questions: In your opinion, what is a hero? Are athletes heroes? (If yes) What qualities make an athlete a hero? (If no) Why not?
3. Tell students that the class will hold a debate on this topic. Explain general debating guidelines. An Introduction to the Debating Process and Debate Rules Discuss the meanings of the words *pro* and *con*.
4. Organize students into small groups or teams. Present the box or bag containing the slips of paper with the words *pro* and *con*.
5. Have a student from each team pick a slip of paper from the bag or box to determine which side of the debate they will cover.
6. Tell students that each group must research print or, if Internet access is available, online sources to support their side of the debate. Give students a few days to complete their research, write their position papers, and rehearse for the debate.

Compassion Reading Lessons

Grades 6-8

Lesson 2

Hold the classroom debate.

Extension: Ask students if their opinions about athletes as heroes changed as a result of participating in the debate.

DEBATE ROLES and RULES

Opening Statement Presenter:

Gathers the main arguments into an introductory statement. Does not give specific information; just say "this is true because of A and B and C."

1. _____

Topic Presenters:

Present the main arguments for the team. Each presenter give specific details that **prove** A and B and C. (2 or 3)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Rebuttal Presenters:

Answer the arguments of the other team. These presenters must take notes as the other team is presenting their arguments and respond to every argument, using specific information to **disprove** them. (1 or 2)

1. _____

2. _____

Closing Statement Presenter:

Presents the closing arguments for the team. Repeats the main idea for this and this and this reasons.

1. _____



Compassion Reading Lessons

Grades 6-8

Debate Rules

No put downs.

You must raise your hand if it's not your time to speak.

Teams lose 1 point for each interruption.

Teams lose 1 point for whispering while another speaker is talking.

TIMES

Opening statements for both sides = 3 minutes each

Arguments for both sides = 3 minutes each

Rebuttal conference = 1 minute

Rebuttals = 2 minutes each

Closing statements for both sides = 3 minutes each

The Debate

Date:

Class:

PRO

CON

Clear statement of main idea in opening statement

Points

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Rebuttals

Closing statement

Compassion Reading Lessons

Grades 6-8

Portrait of a Hero

Guiding Questions

- What is a hero? What does a hero look like?
- What characteristics must someone have to be a hero?
- Who are some heroes from American history, and in what ways were they heroic?
- Who are some famous and not so well-known heroes in the world today?
- What can they teach you about behaving like a hero? Could you be a hero?

Activity 1. Who Are Your Heroes?

Prepare a large chart divided into three columns labeled TV, Movies, and Books. Then ask students to brainstorm a list of TV shows, movies, and books they enjoy, and record the titles of these in the appropriate column. Next, draw a horizontal line beneath each list. Ask students if they know of any heroes in these three sources. Record these names beneath the corresponding columns. For example, if a child suggests that Harry Potter is a hero, record Harry's name under your column labeled Books.

Each time an example is given, ask the student to explain why he or she believes the character is a hero. Students may say that Madeline is a hero because she's friendly, Mulan is a hero because she's determined, and Lance Armstrong is a hero because he won the Tour de France. Next to each character's name, use a different color marker to write keywords indicating these characteristics and accomplishments.

Activity 2. What Makes a Hero? Developing a Chart Checklist

In a separate sitting, prepare another chart with each suggested hero's name listed down the left-hand side of the page and all the heroes' characteristics listed along the top. Leave room at the top for a title. (Tip: Feel free to expand this list of characteristics by adding some that you believe children would agree their characters share.) Briefly review the first chart with your class. Then introduce the second chart. As students look on, draw vertical lines down the chart, placing each characteristic into a separate column. Read each suggested hero's name and make an X mark beneath the characteristics that apply to that figure. As you develop your chart, point out that many of the figures they think of as heroes share certain characteristics. Title your chart "What Makes a Hero?" Your finished chart should resemble the one shown here.

What Makes a Hero? (TABLE)

	Friendly	Determined	Brave
Madeline		X	
Mulan	X	X	X
Lance Armstrong		X	X

Activity 3. Is There a Hero in You?

Ask each student to recall a heroic trait he or she admires in his or her real-life hero. Have students think about how they might begin to behave in these same ways. For example, if a student says his real-life hero was kind, ask that student for some specific ways he might become kinder himself. (Tip: Use this process to emphasize the small ways children can be heroic—for example, by making a special card for someone who is sick, or by speaking up if one child is hurting the feelings of another.) Offer students drawing paper preprinted with the sentence starter, "I can behave like my real-life hero when _____." Help students complete the sentence and then ask them to use the rest of the page to illustrate their ideas. After sharing the pages aloud in class, display the pages as part of your Hero Hall of Fame display. Later, bind the pages into a class book of "Ways I Can See a Hero in Me."



Compassion Reading Lessons Grades 6-8

Grade 6-8

Debate:

Ask students to select a debatable premise from the list below or develop their own relevant topic within the realm of "heroes" to conduct in-class debates.

1. Can someone be considered a hero if he/she does something against the law to challenge injustice or protect others?
2. Can heroes really be heroes if only a certain group in a society calls them heroes?
3. Can someone who is noble and admirable in one aspect of his/her life but contemptible or immoral in other areas still be called a hero?
4. Must a heroic person always behave as a hero in order to be considered a hero?
5. Can the notion of what makes a person a hero change over time as societal values change?
6. Must a person possess physical strength and be courageous and brave to be considered a hero?
7. Can a person who possesses courage, intelligence, conscience and selflessness but is unwilling to act be called a hero?

Hero Activity

Grade 4-8

1. Have students fold a piece of letter-size paper into four squares.
2. For the first square, ask students to use their imaginations and write the name of or draw a picture of their favorite superhero (e.g. Green Hornet).
3. For the second square, ask students to write about and/or draw a picture their favorite well-known "real" hero (e.g. an astronaut).
4. For the third square, ask students to write about and/or draw a picture of their favorite community hero (e.g. police officer or nurse).
5. For the last square, students to write about a time they themselves were a hero, had a chance to be a hero but chose not to act and/or will try to be a hero in the future.
6. For all the squares, make sure the students include reasons for their choices.
7. Ask the students to explain how they plan to conduct themselves so that someday they may be considered heroes.
8. Ask the students to share and discuss their class papers with the rest of the students.

Final Discussion:

After students have all shared the information they included on their "squares", begin a class discussion with the following:

1. Who are the people you know who make the choice to help their communities? Why? How?
2. Can choosing to serve your community make you a hero? How?
3. Can students be heroes? If so, give some examples.
4. Make a list of five things you as students can do to help your community.
Make a list of five ways you as students can be heroes in your school, in your families and in your community.

Collect all of the lists and post them on a bulletin board or compile them in a booklet for students to review.