



PURPOSE

To place students on the path of aspiring toward heroic excellence.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Explain heroes as people who have lived excellent lives.
2. Identify concrete ways to imitate a personal hero.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- **My Hero** worksheet (see Materials)
- **I Want to Be A Hero** worksheet (see Materials)

VOCABULARY

- **hero**: a person who lives an excellent life, respecting the dignity of all people
- **habit**: a person's regular practice or tendency, especially one difficult to give up

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lessons. Play the **1, 2, 3 Affirm!** activity. Ask students to form two circles. The inner circle will stay seated while the outer circle will move clockwise. When you say, 1,2,3 Affirm!, the students will stop at a person from the inner circle and say: You are (positive trait). The teacher may ask the outer circle to sit down and let the inner circle move next time.

Explain: Last time, we learned how love affirms our human dignity—and recognizes the value of another by helping them grow in excellence. This can be seen in the big things as well as the small things, like showing appreciation with a compliment. We also learned about how love calls for selflessness and that we must practice a kind of simplicity to properly express this love.

Step 2: Teach that intentional, excellent actions put us on the path toward becoming heroes.

Ask students: When we hear the word "hero," what sort of qualities do we think of? List these qualities, then write on the board:

- **hero**: a person who lives an excellent life, respecting the dignity of all people
- **habit**: a person's regular practice or tendency, especially one difficult to give up

Explain: True heroes, whether they are known by the entire world, or whether they're hidden and quiet, are those who live an excellent life. What we often forget is that they weren't always heroes in the beginning. They *become* heroes by developing excellent habits—those regular, intentional actions that pursue excellence. We say "pursue" because it is something they constantly have to strive for, even if it starts becoming hard. They have to start with choosing one excellent decision which lead to more choices and circumstances. But despite the challenges this entails, the good news is that it is possible and worth it!

Read the **Desmond Doss** story out loud.

Desmond Doss was an American man born in 1919. He served in the U.S. army during World War II, but due to his personal beliefs and religion, he vowed not to kill. Because of this, he did not carry a gun into battle. He enlisted as a medic, whose purpose was to administer medical care to wounded soldiers in his regiment. In 1945, he went into the Battle at Hacksaw Ridge on the Japanese island of Okinawa. His regiment was instructed to retreat due to heavy gunfire, but Doss stayed behind, refusing to leave his fallen comrades. He demonstrated incredible courage and his loyalty to his fellow soldiers as he continued to rescue approximately 75 men from danger and gunfire. The entire time, he was without a weapon: he ran across the enemy line over and over again and continued to bring his comrades to safety, risking his own life to save others.

Ask:

- What characteristics makes Desmond Doss a hero?
- Why do you think he chose to save lives?

Teach the three characteristics of a hero.

Write on the:

1. Heroes pursue excellence every day.
2. Heroes persevere. (Explain: When heroes fail, they choose to try again.)
3. Heroes respect human dignity.

Ask:

- With every man he saved, Desmond would say, "Just one more, Lord, just one more"—never letting a single man remain behind. How does this respect human dignity?
- What are some places in our lives we can do a better job not leaving others behind?

Step 4: Ask students to complete the **My Hero** worksheet, completing an essay about a person they recognize as heroic.

Step 5: Summarize: Today, we have begun to see how everything fits together. Despite sharing powers with other creatures on earth, only humans can become heroes since we have the powers to think and choose. These come into play when we choose to practice consistency and perseverance in the daily choices we make to grow in excellence. We do all this as we respect our own and others' dignity in the process.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Ask students to share their *My Hero* worksheet with parents, and to complete the *I Want to Be A Hero* worksheet before the last class.

SUPPLEMENTS

None.



MY HERO

Name: _____

Directions: Write an essay about a heroic person in your life. Explain who they are, why they are your hero, what heroic actions they have taken, and what challenges they have faced during their life.

[illegible]

MY HERO

Name: _____

Directions: Write an essay about a heroic person in your life. Explain who they are, why they are your hero, what heroic actions they have taken, and what challenges they have faced during their life.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.



I WANT TO BE A HERO

Directions: Answer each question below.

1. Someone twists their ankle during recess. What do I do?

2. Someone misplaced their library book. What do I do?

3. My bedroom is messy and cluttered. What do I do?

4. My soccer team loses most of its games this season. What do I do?

5. My mom gets sick and can't make dinner anymore. What do I do?

6. My neighbor is leaving town for a week and needs someone to water her garden. What do I do?
