

Lesson 10: Heroism

PURPOSE

To motivate students to embody heroism in their daily lives.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

1. Understand the main characteristics of heroism.
2. Recognize that heroic persons embody the characteristic of perseverance.
3. Identify heroic people in their own surroundings, culture, and history.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- Captain's Coming Game
- [Video](#) 28 Men Lost in Antarctica
- Newspaper Portrait of a Hero Worksheet

VOCABULARY

- Heroism: possessing habits of excellence

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lesson. Remind students that the key to achieving every habit of excellence is: perseverance. Reflect with students on the [Perseverance Habit Tracker](#). Explain that it is not a problem if students struggle or fail in the challenge. It's normal to struggle and fail, especially if you've set yourself a big challenge. The point of the challenge is to *practice* persevering. Encourage students to start again, if they have missed a few days or stopped.

Step 2: Play the game, [Captain's Coming!](#) In this lesson, you'll learn about a heroic captain and crew. Explain that the "Captain" will call out a command, such as: "Bow," "Stern," "Port," and the crew are to respond to the command with the corresponding action. Here are the commands and their corresponding actions:

Bow: Move towards the front of the room
Stern: Move towards the back of the room
Port: Move towards the left side of the room
Starboard: Move towards the right side of the room
Captain's Coming: Stand at attention and salute
Clean the deck: Make a scrubbing motion
Strong winds: Stand on one leg and lean against the wind

Players who respond incorrectly, slowly, or not at all are eliminated. The last player remaining wins the game!

Step 3: Explain that today's lesson is on heroism, which is closely linked to perseverance. Write the definition of heroism on the board:

Heroism: possessing habits of excellence

As we learned about last class, the more someone performs an action, the more that action becomes a habit. This is true of both excellent and non-excellent habits. When it comes to habits of heroism, there are five points to consider.

1. Heroism is developed through the everyday practice of excellent choices
2. Heroism is about possessing multiple (different) habits of excellence
3. Heroism involves sacrificing for others
4. Heroism is NOT about never making mistakes, but about getting back on the right track after making a mistake
5. Heroism is enhanced by excellent friendships

Watch the [video: 28 Men Lost in Antarctica](#). After watching the video, discuss the following scenario: imagine that you are on a large wooden ship, completely locked in by ice. There is only snow, as far as you can see. You felt like a hero when you left for this adventure. Now, the whole trip is doomed. There are no telephones, so you can't even let your family know that you're alive. You are cold, angry, disappointed and scared. *What do you do?*

As we learned in the previous lesson, there is one important key to unlocking every other habit of excellence: perseverance. This brings us to our first point about heroism: heroism is developed through the *everyday practice of excellent choices*. Everyday practice. Do you know that when the crew was stranded on the ship locked in by ice, that Captain Ernest Shackleton made the crew do daily chores like scrubbing the deck? Why? Captain Shackleton knew that it was important to focus on the small things, the daily habits, that each person could control every day.

Another important point to remember is that Heroism is enhanced by excellent friendships. Nobody gets there on their own. When the ship was locked in the ice, the crew worked together to try and saw through twenty feet of ice to free the ship. It didn't work. So, then the crew had to abandon the ship and together pull the row boats across the ice, with each boat weighing about two thousand pounds. Excellent friends stand by you in good times and in difficult times.

When Ernest Shackleton knew they needed to go find help, his crew wouldn't let him make the perilous journey alone. Shackleton and a small crew faced down waves as high as a house and climbed freezing cliffs to reach the nearest whaling village. The crew who stayed behind on Elephant Island also had to survive the conditions, trusting that their friends would keep their promise to return and rescue them.

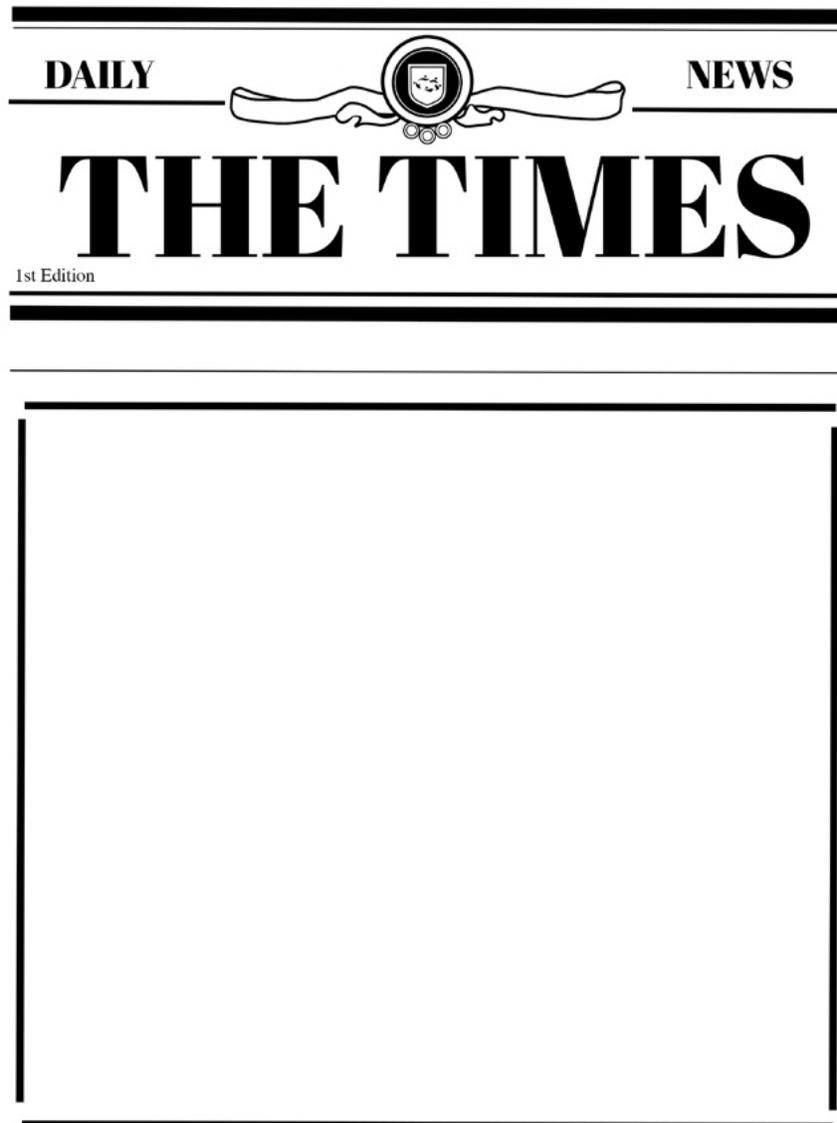
The story of Ernest Shackleton and the ship *Endurance* is talked about to this day, not because the original objective of their journey was a great success, but because Shackleton and the crew never, ever, gave up. The story is recognized as an epic journey of heroic perseverance.

Step 4: Hand out the [Newspaper Portrait of a Hero](#) worksheet to the class. Ask students to draw themselves as a hero or crew member of the HDC ship, *Heroic Perseverance*. Like the newspaper titles at the beginning of the video about Ernest Shackleton, write a newspaper headline about yourself. What kind of hero are you? Then, in the space provided, write a brief few sentences about the habits you try to practice every day to grow in heroism and perseverance.

Once students are finished, encourage students to share their newspaper portraits or display them in the class.

Step 5: Summarize. Highlight some of the heroic everyday actions that students identified in their writeups. Conclude by reminding students of the five points of heroism:

1. Heroism is developed through the everyday practice of excellent choices.
2. Heroism is about possessing multiple (different) habits of excellence.
3. Heroism involves sacrificing for others.
4. Heroism is NOT about never making mistakes, but about getting back on the right track after making a mistake.
5. Heroism is enhanced by excellent friendships.



KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER:

1. Heroism is developed through everyday practice of excellent choices
2. Heroism is about possessing multiple habits of excellence
3. Heroism involves sacrificing for others
4. Heroism is NOT about never making mistakes, but about getting back on the right track after making a mistake
5. Heroism is enhanced by excellent friendships.