

# Hero Statues – Lesson Plan

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**Grade Level:** 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Content Area:** Social Studies

**Date for Implementation:** 3/4/14

**Lesson Title:** Hero Statues – People Who Make a Difference

Small Group/**Whole Class**

**Social Studies Alive! Strategy:** Problem Solving Group Work

**Goal:** (CA HSS 2.5) Students understand the importance of individual action and character and explain how heroes from long ago and the recent past have made a difference in others' lives (e.g., from biographies of Abraham Lincoln, Louis Pasteur, Sitting Bull, George Washington Carver, Marie Curie, Albert Einstein, Golda Meir, Jackie Robinson, Sally Ride).

**Content Objective:** In a group, students will create a plaque summarizing how each individual made a difference in the lives of others and present their work to the class.

**Language Objective:** Given sentence stems and vocabulary, students will describe the impact an individual made on the lives of others, orally and in writing.

## Assessment:

**Formative Assessment:** While the students are working I will walk around and conduct short interviews with the students. I will ask the students questions such as:

- What did the individual do that made them famous?
- How did that help the community the individual was living in?
- How does that make a difference in the lives of others?

**Summative Assessment:** I will collect and look at the plaques that the students write detailing the contributions of individuals to determine if the information is factual and the students met the content objective. I will also listen to their presentations for additional assessment. I will check their work to make sure that the plaques contain descriptions of the individuals, correctly using the vocabulary words and/or the sentence frames.

## Materials:

- *People Who Make a Difference* Summary Chart (from previous lesson)
- Biographies of individuals (including pictures)
  - Thomas Edison, George Washington Carver, Wright Brothers, Sally Ride, Ruby Bridges, Sitting Bull, Harriet Tubman, Cesar Chavez, Mother Teresa
- White construction paper (one sheet per group)
- Template of plaque (one per group)
- Markers, crayons, colored pencils
- Glue

## Differentiation:

- Review vocabulary words: contribution, invention, inventor, courage, compassion, plaque

- Mixed ability grouping: every group will be made up of children with different strengths so that they can work together and help each other complete the project
- Gradual Release of Responsibility: I will model writing a plaque with the class before the students are released to work on their own. I will model using Abraham Lincoln because they are already familiar with his life and have written biographies about him.
- I will check in with the EL students to make sure they understand the project. I will re-explain or model the directions again if they need help.
- I will provide the students with sentence stems to aid them in writing their plaques. Each sentence stem uses increasingly more complex vocabulary:
  - (individual's name) made a difference by...
  - (individual's name) helped the community by...
  - (individual's name) contribution was...

### **Instructional Sequence:**

#### ***Introduction:***

1. I will introduce the lesson by saying that now that we have learned about all these people who have made a difference, we are going to be doing a project to celebrate all their contributions. But before we start, we should review who we learned about.
2. I will call on kids to name a person we studied and how they made a difference. I will remind them that they can use the summary chart to help them.
3. I will then ask the kids if they know of any ways that we honor these people. I will open it up for a class discussion. If someone suggest statues and plaques I will build on that idea. If not, I will ask students if they have ever seen a statue or a plaque. I will ask students to remind me what the word *plaque* means. They should remember it as a vocabulary word in a previous story. I will use that story to spark their memory.
  - a. Why are statues built?
  - b. What do the plaques usually say?
  - c. Where would we find statues and plaques?
  - d. Do plaques always go with statues? Where else do we see plaques?
4. I will show them images of different statues and plaques.
5. I will then tell the students that they will be working in groups to draw a picture or a statue of one person we learned about and then they will write a plaque under the statue honoring the person. After they are done they will have a chance to share their project with the class. I will share an example with them.
6. I will then suggest we write a plaque together to practice. We will use Abraham Lincoln as an example. I will tell them that the plaque should include the person's name, they years they lived, and the reason we remember them. I will show them the sentence stems and tell them that these are different ways of starting their sentences when they are writing their plaque. I will read through all of the sentence stems.
7. We will clarify what the word *contribution* means. Hopefully they remember from the previous lesson. I will ask for examples of contributions.
8. I will then model how to use the sentence stems with an example for Abraham Lincoln. I will have the class repeat it back to me. I will then ask the class to think of another way to complete the sentence stems (using any one) and whisper it to their partner. Finally, I will ask the class what they would like to put on our plaque and we will fill it out together.

9. I will then ask the class if they have any questions before I assign groups. I will also ask them to list some of our rules for working in small groups. I will write their suggestions on the board.

**Body:**

1. I will divide the class in groups of 3 (or 4 depending on attendance) and each group will be assigned a different individual. I will tell them that they are allowed to use our summary chart, the picture, or the biography we read to help them out. I will give them construction paper and a plaque template. As the kids are working on drawing their picture and making their plaque, I will circulate and ask questions.
2. I will begin with my ELs to double check they understand the assignment and help clarify any questions they may have.
3. Then I will circulate around the room conducting short interviews with the kids.
  - a. What did the individual do that made them famous?
  - b. How did that help the community the individual was living in?
  - c. How does that make a difference in the lives of others?

**Closure:**

1. Once all groups are finished working, I will have the groups come up to the front of the class to present. I will have them share who they drew and have them read their plaque.
2. After all groups have presented, we will have a class discussion. I will ask them:
  - a. Why do you think we studied all these people?
  - b. What did they have in common?
  - c. Do you know of anyone else who has made a difference?
3. I will tell students that just because our lesson is done, that does not mean they have to be done learning about people. As a class we will list some ways that they can learn more about people who have made a difference in the world.
4. Finally, I will tell them that their posters will be out for their parents to see during Open House.

## Notes about the Lesson

### CT's Feedback:

#### *Positive:*

- Taping prior knowledge
- Review of previous lessons
- Students participation – students explain summaries of individuals and their contributions
- Expectations for working in small groups were set
  - Tied back to previous math lesson where a list of rules for working with small groups was constructed
- Lots of good discussion was happening while students were working in their groups
- Students displayed good teamwork and cooperation
- ST handled student who did not want to compromise during group work well
  - Gave options: working alone or with a group (compromise required)
  - Other students dealt with the situation maturely

### My Notes:

#### *Positive:*

- Students were working together
  - Taking turns
  - Sharing responsibilities and materials
- Detailed and creative pictures were produced using a wide variety of resources (posters, books, textbooks, etc.)

#### *Things to Work On:*

- Some students were writing a biography on the plaque instead of a summary of the individual's contribution – model/review synthesizing? What is the difference between a biography and a contribution?
- Behavior management – could the situation with the student have been avoided? Maybe, maybe not?
- Students needed more time to finish

#### *Things to Work On/Next Steps:*

- One group needed help summarizing a contribution
- One group needed help understanding the concept of compromise
- I need to give the groups more time to finish their posters – intro to the lesson took longer than anticipated
- Reviewing group work expectations in more depth would have been helpful
- I need to sit down with the one group and help them come up with a sentence summary statement for the contribution of the individual
- Ran out of time so I need to find some time to allow the students to present and share their posters

### **Reflection of Social Studies Lesson**

#### **Introduction:**

I taught my lesson in a second grade classroom in an elementary school located in Oceanside, CA. The California History/Social Studies standard that the lesson was based on was standard 2.5: *Students understand the importance of individual action and character and explain how heroes from long ago and the recent past have made a difference in others' lives.* The objective of this lesson was to have students work in a group to create a plaque summarizing how each individual made a difference in the lives of others and present their work to the class. This was the culminating lesson in a unit on individuals who have made a difference in the lives of others. Prior to this lesson, students learned about Thomas Edison, George Washington Carver, The Wright Brothers, Sally Ride, Ruby Bridges, Sitting Bull, Harriet Tubman, Cesar Chavez, and Mother Teresa. In order to complete their statues and plaques, students could use the co-constructed chart summarizing the individuals' contributions, biographies, textbooks, books, and posters that I provided.

#### **Lesson Implementation and Multiple Intelligence Strategy:**

The Multiple Intelligence Strategy that I implemented from the Social Studies Alive! textbook was Problem Solving Group Work. I did this for several reasons. First of all, the topic of the lesson lent itself to working in small groups. Because there are a limited number of individuals that we could feasibly learn about during a unit, it made sense to group students to create one statue and plaque for each person instead of having students work individually on the same person. Secondly, although the students have ample experience with partners, they have not had as much exposure to collaborative work in small groups. I thought that this lesson would be a good opportunity to help reinforce ideas

about teamwork and cooperation. Finally, I wanted to draw on all the strengths of the students so that each student would feel like an integral part of the group. I have some students who are gifted artistically but struggle with expressing themselves in writing, while other students would prefer to write rather than to draw. By having them all work in a group together, students can capitalize on their strengths to contribute to the success of the project as a whole. Although we did not get to it in this lesson, I was also planning on having the students present their work to the class. This would have allowed some of the more verbally articulate students in the class utilize their Intelligence.

At the start of the lesson I had the students help me review what we have been learning in Social Studies over the past couple of lessons. I then had the students explain to me what the summary charts were for. During this time individual students shared the contributions of the individuals we have studied. After we talked about the individuals, I asked the students what are some ways that they have seen that people honor important people who have made a difference. Ideas such as posters, books, plaques, and statues came up. When plaques were suggested, we reviewed what the word meant and I referenced back to a story they read early in the year that talked about a plaque. I then told the students that they would be working together in groups to create statues and plaques for all our important people. To help them with this, I showed them some pictures of various different types of statues and plaques. We reviewed what information should be on the plaque, such as their name, the dates they lived, and their contribution. Next, I modeled how they would write their plaque using Abraham Lincoln because I know the students are familiar with his life from previous lessons, but he is not one of the individuals they learned about for this lesson. Before assigning groups and individuals and letting the students work, I talked about behavior expectations during group work and I referenced the list of "rules" they had created the week before during their small group math lesson. Finally, the students had time to work.

### **Checking for Understanding:**

As the students were working, I walked around and checked in with all the groups. I made sure that the writing on the plaque and their drawing corresponded to the individual they were assigned. I also asked the students questions about what they thought the individual's contribution was. I judged their understanding by seeing if their plaque matched what we had talked about in class. I also asked them how they decided on their drawing. Some students drew the individual while others drew the contribution that made them famous. For example, the group working on Thomas Edison drew a light bulb as their statue, the Wright Brothers group created an airplane statue, and the George Washington Carver group drew him holding some peanuts. These key elements showed me that the students understood what made these individuals important.

I also checked for student understanding during the introduction to my lesson. While we were reviewing the individuals we learned about, we had a class discussion about their contributions. Some interesting conversations came about due to the question: What would life be like without the individual? In order to answer this question, students had to reflect on what the individual's contribution was, how it affected their lives, and how life would be different if that contribution was never made. This led to a discussion about having several different races in our classroom which would not have been possible without Ruby Bridges. Another interesting conversation followed Thomas Edison and The Wright Brother and how we would not be able to travel in airplanes or use lights in our classroom. Although I was not taking notes on individual levels of understanding, the conversations helped me gauge the general engagement of the class with the material.

As I am looking through the plaques and posters that the groups made, I will be checking for the individual's name, the dates he/she lived, how the person made a difference, and that the picture is representative of the individual. If the poster meets all these criteria, I will hang it on the wall for Open House. If the poster is lacking in one of these areas, I will sit down with the group to give them feedback

and then I will ask them to add to their poster to make sure that all the criteria are covered. As soon as the posters meet my expectations and I feel the students have understood the content objective, I will hang the poster on the wall. I want to make sure that I give all the students the opportunity to show me their learning, or give them a chance to review the material so that all groups are successful.

**Strengths, Areas of Improvement, and/or Next Steps:**

As mentioned above, I think one of the strengths of the lesson was the class discussion about the individuals' lives and how their contributions affect our lives. The students showed me that they were making connections with the material in greater depth than what was written on our summary chart or the biographies we studied. I could see that they did not just have a surface level understanding, but rather were interacting with the lives of people in history. Another strength of the lesson was how well the students were working in small groups. For the fact that they have not had much experience doing collaborative work, they were very successful. I saw students sharing the work and the materials, taking turns writing and drawing, and delegating tasks so that all students were participating. Finally, the students were producing detailed and representative pictures of the individuals showing me that they were drawing from their resources and grasping how the person made a difference.

There were, however, some areas of the lesson through needed improvement. First of all, I noticed that one group in particular was not writing a summary of the person's contribution, but rather was copying down their biography onto the plaque. I should have been clearer that the resources that I was giving them were supposed to help them write a summary. Also, reflecting back I realized that I forgot to give the students the sentence stems like I had planned. If I gave the students the sentence stems, maybe they would have had a better idea of what was to be written on the plaque because they would have had a guide to follow. Next time I teach this lesson I will be sure to include the prepared



sentence stems because I think they would be beneficial in guiding the students' thinking. Also, for this particular group, I want to meet with them tomorrow and have them write one summarizing sentence (using the sentence stem) that they could write on the bottom of their plaque so that it is clear what they think the individual's contribution was.

There was also one group that was having difficulty cooperating and compromising when it came to ideas for their picture. This was due to one student in particular who has significant behavioral issues. Because I anticipated some difficulty, I grouped him with some students that I know he has worked well with in the past. Although I did anticipate having issues, I did not expect that he would have trouble compromising to the degree that he did. Next time we will be working with small groups, I will have a private conference with him prior to the lesson. I will tell him that we will be working in small groups which means we will have to compromise on some ideas. I will give him options for participation so that he is prepared going into the lesson. Hopefully, frontloading these expectations will help him stay calm throughout the lesson.

Finally, there are a few things I would like to do to follow up the lesson. First of all, we ran out of time so some students did not have a chance to finish their posters, and we did not have a chance to present. I would like to give the students the opportunity to share their learning with the rest of the class. Also, giving the students a little extra time to work on their posters will help me see the full depth of their understanding as they add important details to their drawings and plaques.

### **Conclusion:**

Overall, I am satisfied with the results of this lesson because I feel the content objective was met. Students were interacting with what they learned about the individuals' lives and the contributions they made. They were making personal connections and hypothesizing about what life would be like without these individuals. Finally, the plaques and drawings that they made were representative of their learning and the material covered in class.