**HEROES**

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**Unit Description:**

* This unit makes use of the CNN Heroes program to develop student awareness of heroes in every day life and the possibility of one person making a difference. (<http://edition.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cnn.heroes>)
* Unit was used in Middle School Ethics class; could be modified for use in Social Studies, English, Advisory program.

**Academic Objectives:**

* Students will develop an understanding of term “hero” and provide examples of how it can apply in every day context.
* Students will generate common attributes of heroes and compare prior knowledge from literature, history, current events, etc.
* Students will be able to name heroes in their own lives and explain why they chose them.
* Students will summarize projects generated by individuals that have caused them to be nominated for CNN Hero of the Year.
* Students will participate in a group reflection on CNN Hero of the Year.
* Students will choose one Hero project and make a 3-minute presentation to explain the choice.
* ~~Students will reflect on and revise attributes of heroes based on attributes they see in nominees.~~
* Students will consider what they have learned about heroes when developing goals for possible high school CAS projects.

**Holistic Objectives:**

* Reflective—able to give thoughtful consideration to own learning experience; able to assess and understand personal strengths and limitations
	+ *Self-knowledge and relate to others*
* Knowledgeable—able to explore concept, ideas, and issues that have local and global significance
	+ *Think like: philosopher, scientist, story teller*
* Thinker—exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.
	+ *Gather data*
	+ *Analysis*
* Caring—able to see and verbalize empathy, compassion and respect towards needs and feelings of others.
	+ *Awareness – of one’s own emotions and emotions of others*
	+ *Connecting – empathically with others*
* Risk-takers—will see models of risk-taking that could be applied to own lives.
	+ *Risk awareness--thoughtful consideration of risk and reward*
* Communicators—understand and express ideas confidently and creatively.
	+ *Social Awareness—social cognition*
	+ *Social Facility--influence*

**Essential Question:**

What is a hero and how does this apply to you as student and to your future goals?

**Activating Activity**

Students are given a set of questions regarding heroes, attributes, individuals considered heroes, etc.They will then work in groups and discuss ideas.

* How would you define the word “hero”?
* What are some common attributes or characteristics among people we classify as heroes?
* Name some individuals you would consider heroes and explain why you believe each one is a hero
* Do you think heroes are “born” or “made”? Explain.

**Content/Activities**

* Explanation of CNN Heroes program
* “Every day people changing the world”. Individuals are nominated for work they have done to help others or to change their communities.
* Written stories of past nominees (<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cnn.heroes/archive09/index.html>)
* Group discussions of how nominees fit with questions in activating activity—what attributes to you see, etc.
* Watch video clips of final ten nominees, taking notes about individuals and their projects and why you think they were nominated. (<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cnn.heroes>)
* Take notes and prepare brief speech to class, advocating for the one person who should be the finalist.
* Students login and vote for selected nominee. <http://heroes.cnn.com/vote.aspx>
* Write reflection on activity, connecting to CAS and how this could help shape projects for HS.

**Assessment**

* Participation in group discussion
* Short speech advocating for choice
* Reflective essay on personal relevance of activity