Fertile Question: *How could I live the life of a true hero?*

Core Content Area 1: Choosing heroes and role models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 1.1.1</strong></td>
<td>Exploring heroes and role models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 1.1.2</strong></td>
<td>Who would you be like?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 1.1.3</strong></td>
<td>What is a hero?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 1.2.1</strong></td>
<td>Heroic lives of ordinary people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 1.2.2</strong></td>
<td>The Golden Ladder of Charity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 1.2.3</strong></td>
<td>Against all odds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 1.3.1</strong></td>
<td>Heroes in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 1.3.2</strong></td>
<td>When good heroes go bad...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fertile Question: *How could I live the life of a true hero?*

**Core Content Area 1: Choosing heroes and role models**

**TOPIC 1.1: Defining heroism**

**Lesson 1.1.1 Exploring heroes and role models**

In this lesson students will explore definitions and stereotypes of heroes and role models.

**Teachers: Before You Start.**

1. Investigate [Voki](#) as a tool for use in this lesson.
2. Preview the movie clip for this lesson.
3. Read the [Teacher Background](#) about role models.

**For students to explore the definitions and stereotypes of heroes and role models, select from the following activities:**

1. Investigate perceptions about heroes and role models.
   a. View the movie clip that introduces this unit and complete the following activities.
      i. Analyse the film’s use as a teaching tool: Identify the message of the film; the purpose of the film; whether or not it suits its intended audience; any evidence of bias; and the question: Whose voices are missing that you might have expected to hear?
      ii. Discuss the stereotypes regarding heroes and role models and whether the film reinforced or challenged the stereotypes of secular and religious heroes.
   b. Reflect on your own thoughts about secular and religious heroes and role models.
      i. Create an avatar that represents an example of a hero or role model using [Voki](#) or by drawing. An example can be found [here](#). Further information can be found in [Useful Resources](#).
      ii. Analyse the created avatars in groups of four, considering the following in your discussion: the characteristics of heroes or role models, evidence of stereotypes, choice of spoken words.
      iii. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Voki compared with hand drawing to fully express your ideas about heroes and role models.
      iv. Create a class list of commonly held ideas about secular and religious heroes and role models.
Fertile Question: *How could I live the life of a true hero?*

**Core Content Area 1: Choosing heroes and role models**

**TOPIC 1.1: Defining heroism**

**Lesson 1.1.2 Who would you be like?**

In this lesson students will explore their own thinking about heroes and role models.

**Teachers: Before You Start!**

1. Examine the biographies of the people mentioned in this lesson. You might like to choose other people more suited to your class group.

For students to explore their own thinking about heroes and role models, select from the following activities:

1. Explore the reasons why humans need role models and heroes.
   a. Discuss the distinctive yet complementary nature of role models and heroes.
      i. Create a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast the purposes of heroes and role models. See [Useful Resources](#).
      ii. Compare with a partner.

2. Analyse the characteristics of role models.
   a. Explore the difference between good role models and bad role models
      i. Choose one of the following people and create a list of at least three reasons why your chosen person could be considered to be a good role model and three reasons why they could be considered a bad role model based on evidence within the following biographies or from other sources. Shane Warne, Kelly Osbourne, Julian Assange, Anna Bligh, Gordon Ramsay.
      ii. Draw a conclusion about whether you would choose this person as a role model and justify your conclusion to a partner or to the class.
   b. Identify the characteristics of the people in your life who are or who have been good role models for you.
      i. Complete the table in [Useful Resources](#). When listing the characteristics, identify what aspect of their character it is that you admire and inspires you to be like them. For example: do they demonstrate excellence, stand up for what they believe in, always show compassion or kindness etc.
      ii. Generate a class list of the characteristics of good role models.
      iii. Reflect on yourself as a role model. “Older students should always be role models for younger students.” Debate!
Fertile Question: How could I live the life of a true hero?

Core Content Area 1: Choosing heroes and role models

TOPIC 1.1: Defining heroism

Lesson 1.1.3 What is a hero?

In this lesson students will explore various definitions and perceptions about heroes.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Consider setting up a class Linoit wall and teaching the class how to use it. You will need to register yourself and have a list of the students’ email addresses.

For students to explore various definitions and perceptions about heroes, select from the following activities:

1. Explore and analyse definitions of heroes.
   a. Define the terms associated with this topic.
      i. Use a Frayer Concept Model to describe and define the following concepts: hero, heroine, hero worship, role model.
      ii. Review and improve your descriptions and definitions by locating dictionary definitions for the same terms as above. (Start with the Collins online dictionary.)

2. Explore understandings about different types of heroes.
   a. Investigate the class’s ideas about the characteristics of heroes.
      i. Generate a list of adjectives with a partner that you would use to describe heroes.
      ii. Collaborate with your classmates by posting your adjectives on the class Lino wall or share in class discussion.
   b. Explore the characteristics of heroes from different areas of life.
      i. Identify a hero in each of the following areas of life: public (people you don’t know, who are in public life), private (people you do know) and religious (people who are heroes in religious traditions and/or sacred texts).
      ii. Identify the characteristics of each of the three heroes selected and why you consider them to be a hero. Use the list of adjectives generated in the previous activity and/or those from the following list: courageous, determined, dedicated, humble, selfless, persistent, to support your descriptions of the characteristics. Record your information in a table. An example can be found in Useful Resources.
      iii. Reflect on the previous activity by creating a Twitter style statement of 140 characters that begins with: Heroes are people who … Post your response to the Lino wall.
Fertile Question: How could I live the life of a true hero?

Core Content Area 1: Choosing heroes and role models

TOPIC 1.2: Unsung heroes

Lesson 1.2.1 Heroic lives of ordinary people

In this lesson students will explore examples to illustrate the notion of the heroic life.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources referred to in this lesson.

For students to explore examples to illustrate the notion of the heroic life, select from the following activities:

1. Explore the lives of ordinary people who are living their lives heroically.
   a. Identify the characteristics of a heroic life.
      i. Examine the two pictures at these links: Firefighter, Woman.
      ii. Complete the table in Useful Resources about the two images.
      iii. View the movie clip about Donald Ritchie who was awarded Australia’s Local Hero award in 2011 and answer the following questions: Name the simple yet profound actions described in the movie clip that Donald Ritchie takes when he encounters something “suspicious”. What evidence is there in the clip to suggest that Donald is a religious person? What is the deeper significance of the heroic role of being a "look out" in this clip? Would you describe Donald Ritchie as a hero? Why or why not?
      iv. View the movie clip about Lynne Sawyers - Australia’s Local Hero 2012, and answer the following questions: What characteristics does Lynne have in common with Donald Ritchie? Could you describe Lynne Sawyers as an unsung hero?
      v. Discuss the difference between being a hero in a one-off situation and living your life heroically.

2. Explore the notion of a true hero.
   a. Debate the characteristics of a true hero.
      i. Form a group of three. Allocate one of the following statements about true heroes to each member of the group. Read your allocated statement and independently determine whether it captures completely your perception of a true hero. Present your critique to the other members of the group.

         A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.
         Christopher Reeve
         I think of a hero as someone who understands the degree of responsibility that comes with his freedom.
         Bob Dylan
         A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself.
         Joseph Campbell

      ii. Create a group statement combining your ideas beginning with “A true hero is someone who…” and share with the rest of the class.
      iii. Use the class statements as criteria to debate the following: Firemen are not true heroes because they simply are doing their job. This could be done as an actual debate or by dividing the class in half and each half researching information to support their side of the debate. Evidence could be posted on a class line or sticky wall.
Fertile Question: How could I live the life of a true hero?

Core Content Area 1: Choosing heroes and role models

TOPIC 1.2: Unsung heroes

Lesson 1.2.2 The Golden Ladder of Charity

In this lesson students will explore the meaning of the term "unsung hero".

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources referred to in this lesson.

For students to explore the meaning of the term “unsung hero”, select from the following activities:

1. Investigate the values of the unsung hero.
   a. Explore Maimonides’ Golden Ladder of Charity.
      i  Read the following about Moses Maimonides and the “Golden Ladder”.
         “We are obligated to be more scrupulous in fulfilling the commandment of charity than any other positive commandment, because charity is the sign of a righteous man.”
         Moses Maimonides, Jewish rabbi, scholar, philosopher and physician 1135-1204.
         The Golden Ladder provides a guide to the significance of a gift. The further one goes up the ladder, the more virtuous and meaningful the gift. Unsung heroes often give of themselves with time, money, compassion, patience and loyalty without expecting anything in return and often working behind the scenes, perhaps supporting the known hero. Consider famous examples like Merlin and Arthur in the Legend of King Arthur, or Dr Watson and Sherlock Holmes, or the Sisters of Charity and Mother Teresa. Check out the Unsung Heroes of our Nation on Australia Day 2012 for more examples.
      ii  Complete the following table with examples of people from your everyday life and the extra examples below:
         blood donors, lifesavers, people who pick up rubbish whenever they see it, volunteers who clean up unknown people’s houses during floods, fire-fighters fighting bush fires, buying a Big Issue magazine – proceeds to the unemployed person selling it, working with a Rosie’s van to give food to the homeless, bringing money in for class Project Compassion, assisting a village to set up sustainable food growing practices, SES volunteers, Meals on Wheels volunteers, Christians who risked their lives to hide Jewish people in World War II, sponsoring a child with World Vision, giving money to a beggar, scientist working on a cure for cancer.
   b. Consider sending a thank you note to one of the unsung heroes in your life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of giving from bottom to top</th>
<th>Example from your everyday life</th>
<th>Examples from the list</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Giving unwillingly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Giving willingly but inadequately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Giving adequately after being asked</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Giving before being asked</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Giving to an unknown recipient (but the recipient knows who the giver is)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Giving anonymously to a known recipient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Giving anonymously to an unknown recipient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Helping a person help themselves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iii Which level(s) of the Golden Ladder would best represent the actions of an unsung hero? Discuss.

iv Consider sending a thank you note to one of the unsung heroes in your life.
Fertile Question: *How could I live the life of a true hero?*

**Core Content Area 1: Choosing heroes and role models**

**TOPIC 1.2: Unsung heroes**

**Lesson 1.2.3 Against all odds**

In this lesson students will explore the actions of unsung heroes who act in the face of adversity.

**Teachers: Before You Start!**

1. Consider using a collaborative tool such as TypeWith.me for students to collaborate whilst viewing the program in this lesson. More information provided in Useful Resources.

**For students to explore the actions of unsung heroes who act in the face of adversity, select from the following activities:**

1. Investigate the actions of unsung heroes who act in the face of adversity.
   a. Explore the actions of a new generation of young women acting for change in Afghanistan.
      i. View the episode of Foreign Correspondent *Girl Power* (26 mins). Whilst you are viewing, consider the following questions: What are some of the difficulties facing women in Afghanistan? How is Noorjahan Akbar working to change the situation? Would the women of Afghanistan see the *Young Women for Change* as heroes? Why or why not? Do you see them as heroes? Why or why not? (If collaborating, using TypeWith.me during the viewing, ask and answer each other’s questions as well as answering the questions above.)
      ii. Discuss the responses to the questions as a class.
   b. Investigate unsung heroes in Indigenous communities in Australia.
      i. Choose one of the 2010 Unsung heroes working in Indigenous communities in Australia.
      ii. Listen to the brief audio presentation and or read their brief bio on the ABC website.
      iii. Record brief notes about the selected person, considering why you think that this person has been identified as an unsung hero and role model in their communities. Compare their achievements with the characteristics of heroes identified in previous lessons. How has your selected person demonstrated the characteristics of a hero?
Fertile Question: *How could I live the life of a true hero?*

Core Content Area 1: Choosing heroes and role models

**TOPIC 1.3: Community expectation and responsibility**

**Lesson 1.3.1 Heroes in the community**

In this lesson students will explore the community expectations of local heroes and what happens when they're not met.

**Teachers: Before You Start!**

1. Familiarise yourself with [Survey Monkey](#).

**For students to explore community expectations of local heroes, select from the following activities:**

1. Analyse the general characteristics of heroes in your local community.
   a. Investigate the heroes in your local community.
      i. Use a digital camera or similar to capture evidence of people held as heroes in your school or town community. Look for statues, plaques, school magazine and newspaper articles about prominent members of the community who seem to have acquired hero status. Work in pairs for this activity.
      ii. Locate information about the person or people identified in activity i including what they did or do, why they have been remembered, how long they were considered heroic and what for. Examples of resources include the local library, local newspapers (South East Advertiser for example), school magazines, members of the community who would remember that person etc.
      iii. Create a peoplescape style profile of the person/people you have chosen. Include photographic evidence and one or two sentences about who they are and why they are community heroes. Share with the class.
   b. Explore the expectations of the community regarding heroes.
      i. Devise a set of questions to determine the expectations of the community with regard to who is a hero, what they expect of heroes and how heroes should behave.
      ii. Determine as a class, the five to eight questions that would best determine the community's attitudes and expectations about heroes. Use these questions plus some demographic questions such as age, gender and occupation to set up a questionnaire on [Survey Monkey](#). Each student could nominate two people to whom they will send the survey.
      iii. Analyse the data gathered from the survey and draw conclusions about your local community and their attitudes and expectations about heroes.
Fertile Question: *How could I live the life of a true hero?*

Core Content Area 1: Choosing heroes and role models

**TOPIC 1.3: Community expectation and responsibility**

**Lesson 1.3.2 When good heroes go bad or when the villains turn good!**

In this lesson students will investigate the rise and fall of a hero of their choice.

**Teachers: Before You Start!**

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources referred to in this lesson.

For students to investigate the rise and fall of a hero, complete the following activities:

1. Investigate the factors involved in the rise and fall of a hero.
   a. Research a person who rose to hero status and then fell from grace.
      i. Discuss the meaning of the phrase “to fall from grace.”
      ii. Reflect on the role of the following virtues and vices that could lead a person either towards or away from living an heroic life: power, temptation, over indulgence, greed, pride, losing touch with reality, loss or gain of sense of purpose, broken relationships, community support, narcissism, fame, knowing who you are and what your values are, a healthy spirituality.
      iii. Choose a person in a field of your own interest who became a hero in the eyes of the community (local, national or international communities) and who then fell from grace.
      iv. Investigate the career of your chosen person, locating information about how and when they reached heroic status in the community’s eyes. Record their heroic characteristics, their achievements and personal attributes.
      v. Investigate their fall from grace. What happened? How did people find out? What role did the media, social media, word of mouth play in the event(s)? How responsible was the reporting?
      vi. Reflect on the treatment of heroes by the media and by the community: How much influence should the media have in the making and breaking of heroes? Do heroes in the public arena have a responsibility to be good role models? Do communities have a responsibility to their heroes?
      vii. Write an opinion piece in the style of a letter to the editor, based on how fair or unfair you think the treatment of this person was, and your opinion about the responsibilities heroes have to the public and the community has to its heroes.
   b. Investigate an example of a person who through a transformative or conversion experience, changed from living a selfish life to living the selfless life of a hero.
      i. Choose a person (fictional or real) from the following list (or other) and investigate how this person changed from living a selfish life to living the selfless life of a hero: Nelson Mandela, St Paul, Oskar Schindler, Hurricane, Jean Val Jon.
      ii. Discuss the responsibility of the community when a person has experienced a significant conversion experience, changing from a villain to a person of virtue.
Lesson 1.1.1

Voki is a Web 2.0 tool for creating avatars that speak. Be sure to use all of its features by exploring horizontal and vertical scrolling options, as well as the colour palette to change colours. Your completed Voki can be embedded on a web page or emailed with a link to a URL.

Lesson 1.1.2

Venn Diagram

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Model Category</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends/peers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 1.1.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hero</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Reason for being my hero</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private - My Aunt. South Australian Woman of the Year 2008 for her work with Aboriginal people.</td>
<td>Compassionate, patient, humble, generous, persistent, religious, intelligent, acted to bring about change for poor and marginalised people especially women, female, lifelong work, practised what she preached.</td>
<td>Doing something I greatly admire but would find very difficult to do myself. She goes above and beyond what she needs to do to be a good person. She is extremely generous and proud of who she is. She has changed and continues to change lives. She lives her life heroically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public - Dr Fred Hollows. An Ophthalmologist who saved the eyesight of thousands of people in Australia and overseas. Australian of the Year 1990.</td>
<td>Compassionate, talented, dedicated, acted to bring about change for poor and marginalised people in Aboriginal communities and overseas, intelligent, male, lifelong work.</td>
<td>Identified a need that he could not only fill but he filled it above and beyond the call of duty. Changed thousands of lives. Highlighted the plight of Aboriginal people and their health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious - Jesus. Described as Son of God by Christians. Three year public ministry preaching about love for one’s self and neighbour.</td>
<td>Compassionate, acted for change for the poor and marginalised, charismatic, practised what he preached, selfless, courageous, visionary, intelligent, male.</td>
<td>Subversive, acted against the authorities to bring about change. Started a massive movement. Made God accessible to people. Always put people before the law. Great teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lesson 1.2.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Image Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>What do you see?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What does the image suggest about fire-fighters?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is this person a hero? Why? Why not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What other information would you need to answer the question?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>What do you see?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where was the photo taken?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is this person a hero? Why? Why not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What other information would you need to answer the question?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Back to Lesson
Lesson 1.2.3

Typewith.me is a free collaboration tool that requires no registration, where many people can contribute to one document all at the same time in response to a stimulus such as a movie clip, photograph, newspaper article etc. The original author gives the page a name and sends the URL to those who are participating. Each person writes in a different colour. Students should be encouraged to ask their own questions as well as answering the set questions and should be encouraged to comment on each other’s answers by asking for clarification etc. The final document can be printed in a variety formats for later review or discussion.

Pitfalls to look out for are:

The novelty factor when you use it for the first time may interfere with quality responses.

Students using the chat function instead of focusing on the task.

Overwriting or deleting others’ work.

Less confident students may not want to participate, so allowing misspelling or allowing comments on others’ work may be a way to encourage their participation.

Positives include:

Encourages critical thinking.

Encourages students to engage without having to put a hand up and speak.

Allows opportunities to challenge each other’s assumptions in a non-threatening way.

Allows an opportunity to improve understanding of the stimulus.

Back to Lesson

Lesson 1.3.1

Survey Monkey is a free online tool for developing surveys. A variety of question styles are available and the instructions given make it very easy to produce surveys and analyse results.

Back to Lesson
Natalie’s New York (no real name given), November 3, 2007, via Flickr, Creative Commons Attribution.

PopCultureGeek, September 2, 2011, via Flickr, Creative Commons Attribution.

Vards Uzvards, June 18, 2006, via Flickr, Creative Commons Attribution.

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Manuel, December 25, 2006, via Flickr, Creative Commons Attribution.

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