

Heroes Among Us

Developed by: Erin Montgomery, 2015 Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™

Discipline: Reading, Speaking, Research

Topic: Researching dog heroes and human heroes

Grade Level: Any

Resources / References / Materials Teacher Needs:

1. Book – *Alaska's Dog Heroes* by Shelley Gill
2. Website -
<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/trading-card-creator-30056.html>
3. A list of your local veterans (you can locate this at your local VFW) -
<https://www.vfw.org/oms/findpost.aspx> find your local VFW post

Lesson Summary: Students will be discussing the qualities of a hero. After reading about dog heroes in Alaska they will find heroes in their own community.

Standards Addressed: *Common Core Standards*

1. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.7.3 Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).
2. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

Learning objectives:

1. Students will be able to analyze short nonfiction stories about dogs in Alaska.
2. Students will be able to form critical thinking questions in the form of an interview.
3. Students will be able to formally introduce and give a short speech about their given hero.

Procedural Activities:

Part 1

1. Have students come up with a definition of a hero.
2. Discuss the definition of a hero.
3. Have students make a list of qualities or traits of a hero.
4. Discuss these qualities as a class.
5. In small groups students will read all, some, or one story from the book *Alaska's Dog Heroes* by Shelley Gill
6. In small groups students will list the qualities that the dog in their short story displayed. These qualities will be shared with the class, in addition to a summary about their story.
7. Students will use the website
<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/trading-card-creator-30056.html> to create an e-trading card about the dog in their story. Students will follow the step-by-step directions in creating their card.

Part 2

1. Students will now be looking for a "Hero Among Us"
2. In small groups students will choose a veteran from the list of local veterans
3. Discuss the similar traits that the dog heroes could have with our local heroes.
4. The small groups will form questions to ask their veteran – Length of enlistment, did they fight in a war, rank, branch of armed forces, etc.
5. Students will use the phone number they received on list from local VFW – they will call during classtime and introduce themselves. They will let the vet know what the class is doing. They will ask if it is ok to ask them a few questions. If they can ask, they will begin their short interview.
6. Students will take their information and create an e-trading card
<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/trading-card-creator-30056.html>
7. Students will print their trading cards and have them laminated.

8. Students will either make a medal or certificate for their vet – Certificate example – Name of Vet you are being honored by Camanche Middle School as a Hero Among Us.
9. Students will call their vet on the phone again and invite them to a “Heroes Among Us” Ceremony to be held at school

Part 3

1. Hold a small ceremony at school to honor your local vets – You can do this on or around Veteran’s Day (November 11)
2. Invite the vets the students worked with
3. Optional: Invite parents and community
4. At the ceremony/assembly: Choose a student to be the main speaker who introduces all the speakers and tells what the assignment in class was.
5. Each group will come up to the microphone and share the information they learned about their vet. They will call them up and present them with the trading card and medal/certificate.
6. Possibility: have a band student play Taps at the end of the ceremony.

Materials Students Need:

1. *Alaska Dog Heroes* by Shelley Gill
2. Computer
3. <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/trading-card-creator-30056.html>
4. List of local veterans and phone numbers

Technology Utilized to Enhance Learning: E-trading cards -

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/trading-card-creator-30056.html>

Other Information:

The ceremony/assembly is optional.

Modifications for special learners/ Enrichment Opportunities

1. Enrichment: Have students research a war veteran from Alaska
2. Enrichment: Have students research to find if any Iditarod mushers are veterans.
3. Enrichment: Make a book of local veterans similar to the *Alaska Dog Heroes* book.
4. Modifications: Students who struggle using technology could create their trading card by hand.

Note:

If you choose to do a ceremony, invite your local newspaper or news channel.