

Unit I: Human Behavior

Grade Levels: K-3

Time: 45-60 minutes

Lesson EI-4: A Brave Hero

Interdisciplinary Connections:

Literacy, art, character education, social studies, music

Objectives:

- The student will realize that we are all able to make contributions and help others.
- The student will understand the effects of our words and actions on others.
- The student will understand that greatness isn't only for famous people or famous deeds.
- The student will appreciate the accomplishments of firefighters.

Key Terms:

Upstander

Rescuer

Hero pumper

Volunteer

Tenement

Wedged

Trolley

Materials:

- *New York's Bravest* by Mary Pope Osborne; Random House Children's Books; August 2006
- Drawing paper, crayons or markers, and journals
- Other books:
 - American Tall Tales* by Mary Pope Osborne
 - John Henry: An American Legend* by Ezra Jack Keats.

Activities/Procedures:

- Ask students the question: "What is a hero?" Ask students to describe their answers in writing and then draw an image representing a hero.
- Take student volunteers to share their descriptions and/or images with the class. (If available, teacher may use an overhead projector /elmo to project the images on a screen.)

Classroom Activity:

- Introduce the story and ask students to listen to the story about a hero.
- Read the story to the class and shows pictures from the book. Discuss the dedication page and the historical note.
- Think-pair-share activity focusing on discussion questions one at a time:
 - How was Mose brave? What did he do? Who did he save?
 - How are real-life firefighters like Mose?
 - How was firefighting different in Mose's day than it is now?
 - What qualities of firefighters are the same?
 - Which are different?
 - Who does Mose represent?
- The children should write their responses in their journals.

- Suggested concluding activity: Invite a firefighter to class for the day.

Evidence for Understanding:

- Ask the students why this book is considered a ‘tall tale.’
Ask them to name their favorite tall tales.
- Show the students the illustrations by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher in *New York’s Bravest*. Discuss the traits that make these characters “larger than life.” Brainstorm a list of the different adjectives to describe characters in the tall tales.
- Have students draw a picture of a tall tale character and then have them discuss in think-pair-share groups why they admire these characters.
- Tall tale heroes were ordinary folks about whom extraordinary stories were told. Write tall tales about contemporary, everyday people: firefighters, teachers, nurses, students, police officers, housewives, truck drivers, mechanics, plumbers, waitresses, computer operators, etc.

Extension Activities: Taking Action and Giving Service:

- Have a Mose Humphreys Day at your school to honor the firefighters in your town. Write letters to firefighters thanking them for the job they do. Decorate your room to look like a firehouse. Invite a firefighter and present him/her with the letters.
- Encourage your students to be good citizens in the spirit of Mose Humphreys. Create a Mose Humphreys Good Deed Award. Every month give out the award to a student who does something “above and beyond.”
- Rewrite the story of Mose Humphreys in play form. The students can add new characters and new extraordinary feats that he did. Make hand puppets of the characters and perform it in a puppet theater.
- Davy Crockett and John Henry have songs written about them. Have the students write a song about Mose, New York’s bravest firefighter, using a familiar song.

