Thematic Unit: Heroes

Introduction:
English II (Sophomore) This activity will be part of a semester long focus on identity and self-awareness.

Behavioral Objectives:
Students will be able to write a traditional five paragraph essay about someone they consider a hero. They will be able to read about 16 other heroes and use these ideas to formulate their own discussion about an individual hero. Students will be able to read content-stories about heroes-on the Internet and take notes on this material.

Anticipatory Set:
"Jose, you are my hero." Wait for response/questions. Ask class, "What does it mean if someone says you are his/her hero?" "Do any of you have someone you consider your hero? What makes that person special or a hero?" List names of heroes as well as qualities on board in two columns. "Are their any qualities that they all have in common?" Circle any that class mentions or add more characteristics they think are necessary to be a hero. Play the recording of the song "Wind Beneath My Wings" by Bette Midler. "What does the song say about heroes?"

Teacher Input: Everybody needs to find a partner. Pass out one worksheet per pair. "We are going to write an essay about someone who is your hero. But before we do that, you are going to go to the website http://mvhero.com. There are many different categories of heroes, with lots of people in each group. Your assignment, with your partner, is to read one story from each section. Write the name of the person and take brief notes on the worksheet I have given you. You need to tell me why this person is a hero and a little bit about him/her. Let's take the next thirty minutes to work on this. At that point we'll see how far along you are and have each group orally share information about one of the people you have read about."

Modeling the Behavior: Teacher will go around to each computer and make sure that everyone is accessing website and the proper area. Will check with each group periodically to keep everyone on task, provide answers to questions about the people they are reading about, etc.

Check for Comprehension: After thirty minutes, call the class to turn around at their computers to see how everyone is doing. Establish how much progress has been made (most should be nearly finished with the assignment). Ask for a pair to volunteer to tell about one of the heroes they have discovered. Get as many groups to share before calling on others. Make sure each group has contributed information about one person
they have learned about. As necessary, allow for ten more minutes to complete the assignment or get to a stopping place before coming back together as a group.

**Guided Practice:** Have a five-paragraph essay format listed on the board (intro, three body paragraphs, conclusion). "Each student is going to write an essay about a person that is a hero to you. This could be a person you know or someone you have never met. What kind of information will you need in your introduction paragraph? Make sure you state who your hero is and why this person warrants hero status. What will the next three paragraphs of the essay talk about? Three ways that this person is our hero. What will the final paragraph of the essay be? A conclusion, summarizing the three reasons we have talked about in our paper." I will write the name of my hero on the board: Tupac Shakur. Ask, "What could I write as my thesis statement, telling the three reasons he is my hero?" Students should be able to come up with reasons since they all like this musician. List their responses and add three of my own if necessary: (e.g., he tells it like it is in the hood, he has good rhymes, and he tries to get justice for his brothers). Fashion an introductory paragraph with students incorporating an interesting opening sentence and a thesis using three of the ideas we came up with. List the three body paragraphs according to the order of topics in the thesis statement. "What will we say in the paragraph about his music?" Have students brainstorm information that can be used to support the opinions expressed. Write a conclusion sentence together, modeling how to restate the thesis in different words.

**Closure:** "How many paragraphs will your essay contain? What is your essay about? Does it have to be about someone famous? Why not? OK, so what is a hero? Do we all have the same heroes? Why not?"

**Independent Practice:** Students will write a five-paragraph essay about someone they consider to be their hero. This assignment will be due at the end of the week and they will have a chance to perfect it after initially turning it in.

**Assessment:** Student success will be gauged by their completion of [www.myhero.com](http://www.myhero.com) website worksheet and participation in the discussion about the heroes they read about. Their essays will be exhibited and critique by faculty and peers.

**Materials:** Worksheet Attached: [www.myhero.com](http://www.myhero.com)

**Modifications:** Students will have the chance write the essay according to the modifications laid our in their IEPs, such as giving it orally and having someone else type it up. Students with ADD or other problems will be given teacher attention to help them stay on task during computer work and not get distracted. Additional time to complete internet work will be allotted, such as after school, with the teacher, or it can be taken home.

**Technology:** Students will research and read on the Internet, improving their computer skills. Their essays with be written and revised on a word processing program in the classroom as well.
Heroes

Go to the following website: [www.myhero.com](http://www.myhero.com). Click on 'directory.' Read about one hero from each of the categories listed and take notes here. Be sure to include the name of the hero, some information from the story, and why he/she is considered a hero.

1. angels
2. animals
3. artists
4. business
5. earthkeepers
6. explorers
7. family
8. freedom
9. hero's hero
10. lifesavers
11. literary
12. peacemakers
13. scientists
14. sports
15. teachers
16. writers