



A Fireboat and Its Heroic Adventures

Grades 3-5

9/11 Lesson Plans

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A Fireboat and Its Heroic Adventures

Unit IV- 9/11 A Case Study in Contemporary Terrorism

Grade Level Range: 3-5

Time: 45-60 minutes

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As you prepare to teach this lesson, be sensitive to the topic and how it may affect students, at any age. Even if a student was very young or not born yet, they may know about the events of the day from their families.

1. Ask if any students or their family members know people who were directly or indirectly affected by the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.
2. Give students the option of observing or not participating at all, if they wish.
3. Allow students to talk about their personal connection to 9/11 if they want to.
4. Indicate to the entire class that talking about 9/11 and thinking about the events of that day may cause people to experience different kinds of emotions. This is not unusual.
5. Encourage students to tell their families about the lesson.
6. Remember to be aware of your own reactions or thoughts.

Objective

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand that greatness isn't only for famous people or famous deeds.
2. Realize that we are all able to make contributions and help others.
3. Understand the effects of our words and actions on others.
4. Demonstrate an understanding that everyone has the potential to be a hero.

Key Terms

- diesel engine
- control dial
- brass nozzle
- propeller

Materials

Fireboat: The Heroic Adventures of the John J. Harvey by Maira Kalman or video of the same name produced by Spoken Arts. Additional resources found at: <http://www.fireboat.org/index.asp>.
(see Extension Activities for additional web links)

Drawing paper, crayons or markers, easel, paper, poster boards, white t-shirts, Venn Diagram

Activities/Procedures

I. Introductory Activity:

- A. Ask students: What is a hero? Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5. Introduce a word association game and give the groups 3 minutes to write down as many words as they can to explain or describe the word 'hero.' Ask students to share their answers and put them on a class chart.
- B. Each student should select their own hero. Ask the students to list descriptions of their heroes. Ask students to identify their heroes. (If students name a celebrity hero, explore and discuss if these people are heroes because of their celebrity or because they did something heroic.)

- C. Have each group write down which of those traits they see in their friends and in themselves.
- D. Ask students to write an essay titled, "If I Were a Hero, I Would..."

II. Classroom Activity

- A. Teacher introduces story and asks students to listen to the story about a fireboat.
- B. Teacher reads the story to the class and shows pictures from the book. Discuss the explanation of September 11th.
- C. Have the groups discuss the following questions one at a time. Use easel note pad.
 - What happened in 1931? List achievements.
 - Describe the John J. Harvey fireboat when it was launched.
 - Who was the crew?
 - How was the fireboat brave? What did it do? Who did it save?
 - What happened in 1995 to John J. Harvey?
 - Why was the boat saved? What people saved John J. Henry?
 - What happened on September 11th?
 - Who were the heroes on September 11th?
 - What did John J. Harvey do to help the firefighters on that day?
 - Why was the fireboat a hero?
 - What award was given to the John J. Harvey?
- D. Students work in their groups to create a Venn diagram of the history of the John J. Harvey. Make the center of the Venn diagram the events of September 11th.

Evidence for Understanding

These three activities will enable students to identify the characteristics of a hero and complete a project that reflects that person. (They can use heroes from September 11th)

Divide the class into three groups to:

1. Write a slogan that honors a hero that has done something great in your community.
2. Design a poster explaining the slogan.
3. Use the slogan to create a T-shirt for the hero in our community. Invite them to class to give the t-shirts to these local community heroes.

Extension Activities: Taking Action and Giving Service

1. View documentary *Fireboat: The Heroic Adventures of the John J. Harvey*
2. Divide the class into groups to research the articles on the John J. Harvey website: <http://www.fireboat.org/index.asp>. Ask the groups to present different reports:
 - History of the John J. Harvey including pictures
 - About the role the fireboat played on September 11th
 - Explain the original project to restore the John J. Harvey
 - Where is the fireboat today? What is the John J. Harvey organization?
 - What can we do as volunteers?
3. Invite someone from the John J. Harvey organization to speak to your class.
4. Raise money as a class and purchase John J. Harvey T-Shirts to help your school.
5. Have a John J. Harvey Day at your school to honor the firefighters in your town.
 - Write letters to firefighters thanking them for the job they do.
 - Invite a firefighter and present him/her with thank you notes and T-shirts.
6. Create a stamp for the fireboat- The John J. Harvey. Send it to the U.S. Postal Services.

7. Other web sites and stories about the John J. Harvey Fireboat:

<http://newtownpentacle.com/2009/07/26/john-j-harvey-fireboat-trip-part-1-the-north-river/>

<http://newtownpentacle.com/2009/07/28/john-j-harvey-fireboat-trip-part-2/>

<http://www.workingonwater.org/vessel.php?id=33>

Other Resources about Heroes

John Henry: An American Legend by Ezra Jack Keats.

A Hero- New York's Bravest by Mary Pope Osborne

Video by Reading Rainbow called The Tin Forest

The students at P.S. 234 in the **Reading Rainbow** episode show how important it is to them to be back at their school after the events of September 11. Discuss what it means to have pride in one's school. Ask students what makes their school a great place to be. Write their ideas on the board or on a chart. Have students make an illustrated poster that tells something good about their school. Display the posters around the building.

http://pbskids.org/readingrainbow/books/episode_detail_142.html

Acknowledgments

This lesson plan was provided by The 4 Action Initiative, a joint project of Families of September 11, the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education and Liberty Science Center. The 4 Action Initiative curriculum includes seven units of lessons in multiple subject areas for grades K-12. In September 2010, the lesson plans will be released to New Jersey educators through the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education. The 4 Action Initiative will make the entire curriculum nationwide. For tips on how to approach the teaching of sensitive subjects, please visit us at

<https://sites.google.com/site/the4actioninitiative/>

