The Hero’s Journey Toward Justice: Using Literature and Comprehension Techniques to Foster Discussions of Justice Grades 2-6

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Quotes on heroes

• “I believe it is the nature of people to be heroes, given the chance.” - James A. Autry

• “Nurture your minds with great thoughts. To believe in the heroic makes heroes.” - Benjamin Disreali

• “A hero is simply someone who rises above his own human weaknesses, for an hour, a day, a year, to do something stirring.” - Betty Deramus
Quotes on Justice

• “Justice denied anywhere, diminishes justice everywhere.”- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

• “Peace and justice are two sides of the same coin.”- Dwight D. Eisenhower
Rationale

- The Cheating Culture by David Callahan
- Heroes teach values of honesty, loyalty, kindness and justice
- Counteract adverse societal influences
- Foster these ideals in different ways
How do schools respond?

- Mission Statements
- Diversity Statements
- Civility Statements
- Honor Codes
- Ethics Classes
- Community Service
- Scholarship
- After-school Programs
Brain Power in Adolescents

Teens process information differently than adults

Frontal lobe (associated with executive function) not fully matured until young adulthood

www.neuroskills.com/tbi/#255CFB
Comprehension Strategies

• Bloom’s Taxonomy
• Question Answer Response – Taffy Raphael
• Differentiated Learning – Carol Tomlinson
• Questioning the Author – Isabel Beck
• Revisit, Reflect, Retell – Linda Hoyt
What is the goal of these classes?

- Stimulate discussion
- Raise consciousness
- Enhance decision-making skills
- See different points of view
- Learn from mistakes
- Cause and effect
- Develop executive function
- Foster empathy
Application by Subject

• Literacy/Language Arts
• Social Studies
• Science
• Physical Education
• Health
• Math
• Foreign Languages
Units for Each Grade

- Grade 2  Fables and Fairy Tales
- Grade 3  Biographies
- Grade 4  Research on World Cultures
- Grade 5  Leadership and Stereotypes
- Grade 6  Heroes and Super Heroes
Conclusions

- *Story* helps retain message.
- Books and *discussions* foster empathy.
- Knowing appropriate developmental levels aid teacher in planning.
- Teacher serves as facilitator for dialogue and discussion.
- Hero is an ordinary person who does extraordinary things.
- We are all called to be heroes.
A more detailed power point presentation will be distributed at the conference along with handouts and a bibliography.