



HEROES WANTED!

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| Time | 45–90 minutes |
| Level | pre-intermediate |
| Skills | reading, speaking |
| Knowledge goal | raising awareness of the importance of actions for making the world a better place |
| Materials | Ss' worksheet: p. S1 – Main activity: "How to select a hero" (one copy per student) p. S2 – Follow-up: "Heroes" (1–3) p. S3 – Follow-up: "Heroes" (4–6) |

1 Lead-in

- Before the lesson: write all the letters of the alphabet on separate sheets of papers. To be friendly to the environment, write on each sheet three or four letters in alphabetical order, e.g. ABC, DEF. The letters should be as large as possible.
- Put all the papers on the floor all around the classroom so that the letters can be easily seen.
- Ask Ss to stand up. Tell them that the today topic is Heroes and that in the first activity, they have to answer your questions by stepping on the first letter of their answers. Show an example: "What's your favourite colour?" and stand on the sheet with the letter B if it is "blue". Then ask them the following questions:
 1. *When I say the word "hero", what film or film character do you first think of?*
 2. *The heroes you have just mentioned are heroes because they are..... (Ss finish the sentence)*
 3. *Name one real hero or heroine.*
 4. *Say one job in which you can often find heroes/heroines.*

2 Main activity

- Ss make small groups and write their definitions of heroes. *Heroes are people who...*
- Ss read their definitions. Write key characteristics as a single list on the left side of the board: leave them there for the next activity.
- Tell Ss that now they will read a text about how difficult it was for the editors of one particular website to select heroes. Distribute or display the text. Ss read it and then respond to the true/false statements below the text.
- Check the task and add to the list of characteristics if necessary.

3 Follow-up

- Ss will read about six people who are trying to make the world a better place. Using their list of characteristics, they will help the editors. Hand out the texts on p. S2 and S3 so that every student has only one of them. Have them skim the texts to find a maximum of five words that they would like to look up in their dictionaries, which they then do.
- The students form groups based on each of the six people. Each group makes a poster representing their person based on the criteria and characteristics left on the board. They should then present it to the rest of the class who awards points for each characteristic. At the end, total the points and declare the winning "hero".
- Ask Ss further questions:

What are the six people doing to make the world a better place?

How difficult or easy is it?

Which one of them do you consider the greatest hero? Why?

Can everybody be a hero? Why (not)?

4 Ideas for Homework

- A. Ss do research on people who their family, friends or other people consider heroes and why. They will present the results next lesson.
- B. Choose one of the six people and write ten questions you would ask them in an interview.

KEY

Exercise 1:

1. F, 2. T, 3. F, 4. F, 5. T, 6. T





How to select a hero

(according to the editors of <http://library.thinkquest.org/>)

First, we talked about Hercules, Batman and the other traditional comic book heroes. We had a long debate about who will be in our list and who will not. The hero always depends on personal preferences. Finally, we decided that the real heroes in this world are the people who do something to make the world a better place. Some heroes are rich and famous, some have died poor and unknown. For the selection, we used the three basic categories of human rights:

1. Civil and political rights – e.g. the rights to life, freedom of opinion, expression and religion.
2. Economic and social rights – e.g. the rights to work, education, food, shelter, health care.
3. Environmental and cultural rights – e.g. the right to live in a clean environment.

Then we agreed on one more category of heroes:

4. Trailblazers – the people who are doing very well in their field. For example, the great writers, artists, scientists, sportsmen and explorers whose country is proud of them.

We applaud people who use their talent and hard work to make the world a better place. Even a small change can make a big difference to the lives of other people.

Adapted from: <http://library.thinkquest.org/C001515/heroism/>

1 According to the text, are these statements TRUE or FALSE?

1. It was easy to choose the heroes.
2. A hero is a person who makes the world a better place.
3. Heroes are always rich and famous.
4. There are six basic categories of human rights.
5. Great painters can be trailblazers.
6. Even a person who makes a small change can be a hero.



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Peter Garrett

Peter Garrett was born in Australia in 1953. In 1977 he became part of the famous rock band Midnight Oil. Through music, this band attracted listeners' ears and eyes to both global and Australian problems, e.g. to the environmental problems or to the rights of Aborigines. They often made political statements. For example, at the closing ceremony of the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, they played before the Prime Minister and hundreds of millions people. They were wearing black shirts with the word SORRY because shortly before that, the Prime Minister had said he didn't want to apologize to the Aborigines for the past.



In 1989 Peter Garrett became the President of the Australian Conservation Foundation. Here he continued his work on environmental issues. He stayed there until 2003. From 1993–95 he worked as an advisor for Greenpeace.

He received the Australian Humanitarian Foundation Award (environment category) in 2000.

In 2004 he became a member of the House of Representatives and three years later, he was appointed Minister for the Environment in Australia. Now he can continue his work more effectively. "Politics is not a perfect game... and yet it is the best game we have to making the country work better," he says.

Wangari Maathai

(pronounced Wan-GAH-ree Mah-DHEYE)

Wangari Maathai was born in Kenya in 1940. She is a leader and founder of the international "Green Belt" organization which started in 1977. In Kenya, the Green Belt has planted 30 million trees.



Today the organization helps people to protect the environment they live in. They help people understand the connection between the problems with the environment and other problems, such as hunger and poverty.

The "Green Belt" program is run primarily by women, who are paid for planting the trees which means they can care better for their children and their children's future.

Wangari Maathai was the first female student to get a doctoral degree in East and Central Africa. In 2001, Wangari won a seat in Parliament. She is a strong advocate for women's rights in Kenya and all over the world.

In 2004, she got the Nobel Peace Prize because she is "an example and a source of inspiration for everyone in Africa fighting for sustainable development, democracy and peace". She is the first African woman to win this prize.



Bill Gates

Bill Gates was born in the USA in 1955. He has created the world's largest company and he has been the world's richest man.

In 2000 Bill Gates and his wife created the "Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation" because they believe that every life has the same value. Since the beginning they have given \$16.5 billion in grants.



One of the priorities for them is global health because millions of people die each year in developing countries from diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis. The Foundation makes it easier for people in poor countries to get existing vaccines and drugs.

In 2008, Bill Gates during his speech in the World Economic Forum in Davos, talked about "creative capitalism". He asked the international business and government leaders to do business in such a way that more people can make a profit or do work that makes the world a better place for everybody.



Sara Slavikova

Sara Slavikova was born in 1979 in the Czech Republic. She studied Human Environmentalism.

In 2001 she went to South Africa and Mozambique. There she worked for 5 months on a project which informed people about the danger of HIV/AIDS.

After her return home, she and her friends founded an organization "The Society for Fair Trade and Development Education" in Brno, the second biggest city in the Czech Republic.

This organization informs people about the concept of Fair Trade and about the situation in poor countries. For example, they work with media, with students at schools, and go to seminars and conferences.

Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect. It helps small farmers in Africa, Asia and America to live a better life because they get a fair price for their coffee, cocoa beans, tea, bananas or other commodities.

Ishmael Beah

Ishmael Beah was born in Sierra Leone in 1980 and is a former child soldier.

In 1991, a civil war started in Sierra Leone. Ishmael, at the age of 13, became a child soldier. Using children as soldiers is illegal but it is popular during conflicts in poor countries. Child soldiers are usually given drugs and then it is easy for them to kill other people. With the help of drugs, Ishmael stayed in the army and killed many people. Then in 1996 the international organization UNICEF rescued him.



In 1998, he left Sierra Leone and travelled to New York. Moving to the "civilized" world was very difficult for him. He finished secondary school there and then graduated from university.

In 2007, he wrote a book about his life "A Long Way Gone". He wants everybody to know about the problem of conflicts and child soldiers. He now travels the world talking about his experiences as a child soldier. He has also spoken on CNN and the BBC and met Bill Clinton and Nelson Mandela.

He cooperates with the United Nations.



Corinne Dufka

Corinne Dufka was born in the USA.

Before becoming a photojournalist, Corinne Dufka spent ten years as a social worker. Her interest in photojournalism began when she was working in El Salvador for a humanitarian organization. She says that a photo is very powerful medium to show what is happening in the world and show other people's lives.

In 1989, she worked as a war photographer in El Salvador for Reuters agency and later went to Bosnia and then to Africa. She has documented 17 conflicts. She also took pictures of the Rwandan genocide. In 1997 she won IWMF Courage in Journalism Award.

She left Reuters in 1999 because she felt that she had lost her sense of humanity. Then she started to work for "Human Rights Watch". She monitored the conflicts interviewing people in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

In 2002, she worked as a criminal investigator for the United Nations Special Court for Sierra Leone.

