

PBL UNIT PLANNING FORM



Project Title

PBL Unit Name | Subject | Grade

Heroes Among Us | ELA & Social Studies | 1st Grade

PBL Unit Designers

Magnify Learning

Duration of PBL Unit | Timeline for Implementation

4-5 Weeks

Plan with the End in Mind

Statement of Real World Problem

What authentic, real-world problem(school, local, or global) will the students' work attend to?

Many people in our community work hard to help others, but their efforts often go unnoticed. How can we help our school and neighborhood recognize and appreciate these everyday heroes?

Project Overview

Describe the project your students will embark upon.

Students will become media professionals and work in teams to identify and learn about everyday heroes in their community (e.g., custodians, nurses, bus drivers, volunteers). They will interview these individuals and create thank-you tributes such as posters, short videos, digital slideshows, or presentations. The project will culminate in a "Heroes Celebration Day," where students present their work to the school and/or community.

Community Partners

What partnerships does the project offer, suggest, necessitate? When in the project do they best serve students. *Consider the launch, as a part of Scaffolding, at a Benchmark, as well as during Project Culmination.*

School Staff (Custodians, Cafeteria Workers, Bus Drivers)
Local News Outlets or Community Centers
Parents/Guardians

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Standards

Copy and paste the standards below.

English/Language Arts (ELA)

Reading Informational Text

- **1.RI.1:** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- **1.RI.7:** Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.

Writing

- **1.W.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- **1.W.7:** Participate in shared research and writing projects.

Speaking and Listening

- **1.SL.1:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts.
- **1.SL.6:** Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation.

Social Studies

Civics

- **1.C.CP.1:** Explain the purpose of local government.
- **1.C.RR.1:** Identify roles and responsibilities of self and others at home, in school, and neighborhood settings. [Kentucky Department of Education+1Kentucky Department of Education+1Kentucky Department of Education](#)

Inquiry Practices

- **1.I.Q.1:** Ask compelling questions about communities in Kentucky.
- **1.I.Q.2:** Identify sources to answer compelling questions.
- **1.I.CC.1:** Use evidence to develop claims about communities in Kentucky.
- **1.I.CC.2:** Communicate conclusions about communities in Kentucky.

Driving Question

What real-world **role and performance** does the problem enable?

ROLE (what role will your student assume, e.g., who does this work professionally)

How can we, as media professionals, celebrate everyday heroes, so that we are informing and inspiring others by recognizing the contributions of often-unseen community helpers?

TASK (what will your students create/do/make?)

PURPOSE (why do experts do the work?)

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Create the Bookends: Launch and Assessment

Entry Event

A document, video clip, guest speaker, or other experience that sets the stage for the student task and outlines the product or problem for students. It engages students, compels them to complete the project, and generates Knows/Need to Knows.

Guest Presenter (Mayor/City Council Member/Community Leader): Invite the mayor or a community leader to visit the class and talk about the importance of recognizing unsung heroes. They could present a real-world challenge to the students: *"How can we, as a community, ensure that unsung heroes in our town are recognized and celebrated?"*

Discussion: After the presentation, students discuss what they know about unsung heroes and brainstorm what they'd like to learn or explore further. They can then identify specific groups of unsung heroes (e.g., local healthcare workers, sanitation staff, community volunteers) to research.

End Products (Authentic Task that addresses the Driving Question)

Each project ends in the creation of a student-centered product that requires demonstration of mastery of the content and skills in an authentic way.

Student-created hero tributes (posters, videos, thank-you letters, presentations)

A "Heroes Celebration" showcase for the community

Optional: Media pieces shared via school website/newsletter

Rubrics and Assessment

A tool used to measure an end product/task against a set of defined standards. Rubrics are used to communicate a teacher's expectations for a given assignment.

Communication skills (speaking, listening, questioning)

Writing or drawing clearly

Collaboration with peers

Creativity and respect shown in final product

Employability Skills

What skills will the students need to succeed in all phases of the project, including those which make them employable(i.e. collaboration, critical thinking, agency, etc.).

Teamwork and Collaboration

Empathy

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Anticipate Knows/Needs to Know

As you create the student-facing work, make sure you are anticipating what your students Know and what they will Need to Know. You will build on their assets and design learning opportunities to address their needs.

Knows:

- What a hero is
- Basic writing and drawing skills
- How to ask questions

Needs to Know:

- How to interview someone
- How to work as a team
- How to present ideas to others
- How to celebrate someone respectfully

Create the Learning Plan

Project Launch	Scaffolding	Benchmark #1	Scaffolding	Benchmark #2
Entry Event Invite a real-life hero to speak Generate Knows/Need to Knows as a class K/NTK Process	What is a Hero? Explore the concept of heroes (real-life vs. fictional, community vs. global). Read-alouds: books like <i>"Brave Irene"</i> , <i>"Wilma Unlimited"</i> , or <i>"Thank You, Mr. Falker"</i> . Anchor chart: "What Makes Someone a Hero?"	Identify a Hero Deliverable ☒ Individual Drawing/writing about who they chose and why ☐ Team Feedback Plan Teacher + peer conference	What Is an Interview? Introduce the idea of an interview as "asking someone questions to learn more about them." Model a short, simple interview with a puppet or another teacher.	Prepare and Conduct Interview Deliverable Interview notes Feedback Plan Role play and peer practice Reflection What went well? Exit Ticket
	Everyday Heroes in Our Lives Learn about community helpers (nurse, firefighter, teacher, etc.). Discuss family members or	Reflection Share in morning meeting	Parts of a Good Question Teach open vs. closed questions: Open: "What do you do to help others?" Closed: "Do you help	

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	school staff who help others.		people?" Anchor chart: "A Good Interview Question Starts With..."	
	Feelings and Empathy SEL lessons on noticing others' needs and kind actions. Practice recognizing heroic traits (bravery, kindness, selflessness)		Listening Like a Learner Practice active listening: eye contact, nodding, not interrupting. Use visuals/icons to remind students how to "show listening."	
	Telling Stories with Words and Pictures Lessons on drawing people with emotion/action. Writing workshop mini-lessons: "adding detail," "writing with voice," "labeling pictures.		Question-Building Workshop Sentence stems: "Can you tell me about..." "What do you like about..." "Why did you..." Use pictures of different heroes and ask the class what they <i>wish</i> they could ask that person.	
	Hero Walk Downtown Fieldtrip Take a walk around the school or neighborhood with a "hero lens." Notice who helps others or keeps things safe and clean.		Note-Taking for First Graders Teach sketch-noting or simple "draw and label" method. Offer a half-page template with boxes: "What I asked" and "What they said/did."	
Scaffolding	Benchmark #3	Scaffolding	Benchmark#4	Project Culmination
What Is a Tribute? Define a tribute as "a way to say thank you and show someone how much we appreciate them."	Create Tribute Deliverable ☐ Team create posters, thank-you letters, or digital slides	Practice speaking and presenting	Presentation Rehearsal Deliverable Final presentation or media piece	End Product <i>What will students be creating? Is your end product going to be completed individually or by groups? How will you assess your</i>

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Share examples: cards, posters, murals, videos. Read-aloud: <i>Last Stop on Market Street</i> (talk about how appreciation can be expressed simply but meaningfully).	Feedback Plan Gallery walk with sticky notes Reflection What are we proud of?		Feedback Plan Practice with another class or parent volunteers with checklist Reflection What did we learn? Partner Share	<i>end product?</i> Hero Celebration Day with presentations Project Reflection & Debrief Share learnings and feelings about recognizing community heroes Celebration of Learning Invite families and the community to a special event where students present their work and thank their heroes in person.
How Do We Show Gratitude? Discuss what “thank you” can look like in words, actions, and pictures. Anchor chart: “Ways to Say Thank You Without Just Saying Thank You.”		What Is a Presentation? Define it simply: “Sharing something you made or learned with others.” Watch a short video of another child giving a simple presentation (e.g., on Seesaw or Flipgrid). Anchor chart: “What Good Presenters Do”		
Working Together as a Team Teach how to share materials, ideas, and responsibilities. Mini-lesson on turn-taking, listening to group members, and combining ideas		Recording & Watching Themselves If tech is available, record practice presentations. Watch them together and notice what went well.		
Model Tribute Creation Show a teacher-made example tribute for a custodian, nurse, or class pet. Talk aloud while making it: “I chose to draw her helping kids because...”				

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PBL Toolbox Learning Strategies

Workshop Template	
Learner Centered Experiences w Content	
Learner with Peers	
Community Building Tools	
Feedback, Reflection, Assessment, and Revision Tools How will you establish a reflective culture early in the project? How will you embed reflection throughout the project? How will you use reflection at the end of the project?	

Group Contracts & Grouping

What group contract will you use? Why will your students work in groups? What is the purpose of the group? How long will the group work together? How will you group students? How will you grow their collaboration skills?

Protocols and Learning Structures

Protocols are a tool for bringing organization and direction to conversations so that all voices have an opportunity to be heard.
What protocols will you use to bring structure to your class conversations and activities?