



Class Lessons - The Heroes Club Virtues-Focused Character Education Class

Purpose:

This class will provide students with a better understanding of virtues by introducing the concepts in connection with real-life heroes, their lives, their challenges, and their accomplishments.

Duration:

The class covers all 25 virtues. There is one introduction class and one conclusion class. The number of classes in between depends on how many virtues you plan to cover and how many virtues you will cover per week. The following table indicates possible class durations.

Virtues per week	$\frac{1}{27}$	$\frac{2^*}{14}$	$\frac{3^*}{10}$	$\frac{4^*}{8}$	$\frac{5}{7}$
Weeks, total					

* last week covers 1 extra virtue

Objective:

- The students will understand the concept of a virtue.
- The students will be able to define each of the 25 virtues included in this course and will be able to explain the virtue in the context of a real-life situation.
- The students will learn how real men and women in our country have used these virtues to make incredible accomplishment and to have positive impact on others
- The students will be able to express how they can apply one or more virtues in their own lives.

Materials:

- The Heroes Club Trading Cards – Real American Heroes
- The Heroes Club Workbook
- Book: 50 American Heroes Every Kid Should Meet
- Larger-than-life Trading Card Visual Aids (*optional*)
- Using Trading Cards In Class Work

Additional Instructions / Recommendations

- List of Virtues

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- Fictitious Situations – Virtue Opportunities
- List of Heroes or List of Heroes & Virtues

Instructional Procedures:

General comments

- You may modify any portion of this class lesson to meet your students and education needs as long as you follow the examples given on the trading cards.
- You can expand the discussions to include other virtues and heroes but should only do so after the core 25 are fully explored.
- You may have greater interest if you can discuss the virtues and the identified accomplishments of the heroes in relation to current events and local stories. This class is about bringing the practices into each person's life.
- Each class session, below, is described with a review portion, a new instruction portion, and an assignment portion.
- Having an assignment is highly recommended as a way to deepen the learning, to involve the parents, and to build responsibility in each student for "earning" the recognitions (cards) available.

First Class Session (Introduction)

Review - none

New Instruction

- Introduce the class and the lessons, the homework, the trading cards, and the recognition style that you will use.
- Give the students their notebooks and go over the contents and uses.
- Give the students the 2 "extra cards" for their notebook and talk to them about the opportunity to nominate someone as a hero.
- Introduce what a virtue is and how it relates to our choices, actions, and behaviors. Explore other words we use for virtue.

Virtue – definition:

- 1) Moral excellence and righteousness, goodness
- 2) A particularly good or beneficial quality
- 3) An effective force or power

Virtue – synonyms: Value, Moral, Goodness

- Read the list of 25 virtues
- Choose the virtue, Honesty, and discuss what it means

Honesty – definition:

- 1) Truthfulness, sincerity, and frankness
- 2) Freedom from deceit and fraud

Notice the term "freedom from..." you may discuss how telling a lie makes you captive to that lie.

Honesty – opposites: Dishonesty, lying

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You may want to ask for examples of how it feels to tell a lie and how it feels when you are lied to.

- Discuss that these virtues helped some real men and women achieve some great results - explaining how and what is the core lesson of the class. Discuss that heroic actions and accomplishments are sometimes seen as coming with hard work yet heroes are “ordinary people who do extraordinary things.”

Assignment

- Identify which virtues will be covered in the next class. If they don't have them already, distribute the worksheets for those virtues. Clarify the assignments.

Note - if you are covering more than one virtue per week, you may allow the students to choose only one to do as homework or require them to complete them all

Middle Class Sessions (Learning the Virtues)

Review

- If the worksheets from the assignment were to be filled out, collect them.
- Review the answers on the worksheets. Remember, the answers are interpretations, neither right nor wrong as long as the student understands the virtue's concept.
- Ask someone to share if they had an experience practicing a virtue on this class session's list.
- Recognize the students for their work - give the trading cards for each assigned value to the students that achieved their goals (ask them to put the cards aside during the class session)
- Mark the progress chart for who has received which cards.

New Instruction

- Write the new virtues for this class session on the board.
- Chose one of these virtues, and...
 - Review what that virtue is (definition).
 - Identify who the hero is.
 - Read the story of the hero from 50 American Heroes Every Kid Should Meet.
 - Read the information on the trading card, including the definition of the virtue on the card but not the Call To Action (in blue box)
 - Discuss the situation and how the virtue applied
 - Read the Call To Action – and discuss. If the students want, talk about other actions that come from this virtue (aka choose your own Call To Action and discuss it)
 - Discuss a real-world experience that could benefit from that virtue (or present a fictitious but possible situation that the students might face)

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- Repeat for all the virtues for this class session.

Assignment

- Identify which virtues will be covered in the next class. If they don't have them already, distribute the worksheets for those virtues. Clarify the assignments.

Last Class Session (Conclusion and Recognition)

Review

- Complete the collection/review of the homework and the recognition as done in prior class sessions

New Instruction

- Open the discussion for any experience with virtues over the span of the classes
- Make sure there is a list of virtues visible for the students. Ask the students to identify the virtue they could apply to the following statements:
 1. We are in this together; we are a team. – *loyalty*
 2. I can wait until you are ready. – *patience*
 3. I could not have done this without you. – *humility*
 4. I want to find out all about that. – *curiosity*
 5. It may be difficult at times, but I won't stop. – *perseverance*
 6. You can have some of mine. – *generosity*
 7. You can count on me. – *reliability*
 8. I really, really care about you. – *love*
 9. Yes, I did it. I can't tell a lie. – *honesty*
 10. How does that work? – *wonder*
 11. I'm going to stick with this project. – *commitment*
 12. I am glad we know each other. – *friendship*
 13. I promised I would be on time; I am. – *integrity*
 14. We can get this done; I am certain. – *determination*
 15. I have always believed in that. – *steadfastness*
 16. If we do this today, perhaps we won't have the problem tomorrow. – *foresight*
 17. Let's trade when we are done. – *cooperation*
 18. Let me lend you a hand with that. – *helpfulness*
 19. I'm not scared; I can do this. – *courage*
 20. May I carry that for you? – *kindness*
 21. What if we tried it like this? It might work. – *creativity*
 22. It is my fault. I did that. – *responsibility*
 23. I feel very sorry that you are sick. – *compassion*
 24. Let's help the seniors on Saturday. – *service*
 25. I know I can solve this problem. – *confidence*
- Review what a virtue is and who/when we can apply them

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- Ask if anyone can name some other virtues. If not, mention some of the other virtues and ask if the students have heard of them.

(A sample list is below, with Real American Heroes virtues in **bold**)

Acceptance	Foresight	Patience
Altruism	Forgiveness	Peacefulness
Appreciation	Fortitude	Perfection
Assertiveness	Freedom	Perseverance
Autonomy	Free Will	Piety
Awareness	Friendship	Potential
Balance	Generosity	Prudence
Benevolence	Happiness	Purity
Charity	Helpfulness	Purposefulness
Chastity	Honesty	Reliability
Cleanliness	Honor	Respectfulness
Commitment	Hopefulness	Responsibility
Compassion	Hospitality	Restraint
Confidence	Humility	Sacrifice
Consciousness	Humor	Self-awareness
Consideration	Idealism	Self-discipline
Continence	Imagination	Self-esteem
Co-operation	Impartiality	Self-reliance
Courage	Independence	Self-respect
Courteousness	Innocence	Sensitivity
Creativity	Integrity	Service
Critical Thinking	Intuition	Sharing
Cunning	Inventiveness	Sincerity
Curiosity	Joy	Spirituality
Dependability	Justice	Steadfastness
Detachment	Kindness	Sympathy
Determination	Love	Tactfulness
Diligence	Loyalty	Temperance
Discipline	Mercy	Thankfulness
Empathy	Moderation	Tolerance
Endurance	Manners	Trustworthiness
Enthusiasm	Modesty	Truth
Excellence	Morality	Truthfulness
Fairness	Nonviolence	Understanding
Faith	Nurturing	Unselfishness
Fidelity	Obedience	Wisdom
Flexibility	Openness	Wonder
Focus	Optimism	

- Ask the students if anyone has someone they know who they would call a hero, what that person has done, what virtue they applied.

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- Remind the students that they are heroes when they act with virtue
- Give the students their The Heroes Club certificate or display them for others to see.

Assessment:

The students are assessed in each class with the homework assignments, possibly including the completion of the worksheets and/or additional work. The students may be assessed on class participation. The students are not directly challenged to exhibit the specific virtues but should be able to describe each one by definition or example. The students should also be able to describe how a heroic act and accomplishment is related to the application of one or more virtues. This class is not intended to be a memorization of hero names and their associated virtues.

Bibliographic References:

- 50 American Heroes Every Kid Should Meet, by Dr. Dennis Denenberg and Lorraine Roscoe
- The Heroes Club website: <http://www.TheHeroesClub.org>