

WEAR THE CAPE™

for all kidkind

Objectives/Standards:

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Students will be able to:

- Identify the characteristics of a hero
- Apply key characteristics to their everyday interactions with peers
- Create mission statements for applying kindness and character-development strategies into their everyday lives

CCCS:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1c Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1d Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.
- 6.1.P.D.4 Learn about and respect other cultures within the classroom and community.

Materials:

- Frame paper
- Graphic organizer
- Stick-on notes
- Chart paper
- Mini-capes
- Large capes
- Bulletin board letters

Day 1

Prior to Lesson: Students draw a HERO on a sheet of frame paper.

Advanced Preparation: Create a HERO art gallery of students' drawings in your classroom.

Do Now: Walk through our art gallery. Review your classmates' HERO drawings. Note what makes them similar or different.

Team Activity: Instruct students to record similarities among the drawings on a pink stick-on note and record differences among the drawings on a yellow stick-on note. Teams add stick-on notes to a piece of chart paper with a T-chart drawn on it, labeled with the headings *Similarities* and *Differences*.

Full Class Activity: Draw a cape on the board (you can even put one on yourself). Explain to students that a cape is often used as a symbol for a hero. Pose the question: What characteristics might the HEROES in our art gallery, and all HEROES, have? As students share ideas, teacher records them inside the cape drawing on the board (ex: strength, loyalty, bravery).

Team Activity: Pose the question: How can we "Wear the Cape" (a.k.a. be a hero) every day in our lives at home, at school, and in our community? Provide students with a graphic organizer (free and downloadable as part of this lesson) to record their ideas, complete with a sample item for each category.

Home: Your little sister/brother is struggling with a homework assignment while your parent is making dinner. Wear the Cape, put down your cell phone, and spend a few minutes helping your sibling work out that difficult math problem.

School: When you see someone sitting alone at lunch, Wear the Cape and sit beside him or her.

Community: Your neighbor is carrying heavy groceries from her car. Wear the Cape and help her get them to the door.

Assign each team one category (home/school/community) on which to focus.

Full Class Activity: Call the class back together. Ask each team to share one idea. Later, create a chart of the students' ideas for each category (home/school/community).

Closure: Tell students: Wearing the Cape is something that you can and should do every day. Tonight, talk to your parent(s) about what you need to do to make sure that you always Wear the Cape. Write your ideas down on a sheet of lined paper.

Day 2

Do Now: Last night you talked with your parents about what you need to do to make sure you Wear the Cape every day. Read over your list and be prepared to discuss.

Team Activity: Instruct students to gather in the groups with which they worked the previous day and talk with a partner about their Wear the Cape Goals. Remind students to take note of ideas they share in common during the discussion.

Full Class Activity: Call the class back together to explain that “Wearing the Cape” is something that you can and should do EVERY day – it defines your character. Tell students that they can remind themselves and others that they are BETTER THAN THAT when actions don’t reflect good character. Invite students to share suggestions from their groups. Explain to students that they are going to set goals and turn them into their personal mission statements for the year. Make clear that the goals must be realistic. Show the students that they will write their missions on the back of the mini-cape (in case they want them to be private). The student’s name will be displayed on the front and every time the student supports his/her mission statement, the teacher will add a star sticker to the cape.

Examples:

- I promise to start each day with a positive attitude.
- I promise to speak kind words.
- I promise to use my best manners.
- I promise to encourage my peers to do their best.
- I promise to show empathy to others by trying to understand their perspective.

Closure: After each person has filled out a goal on his/her cape, call him/her up to the bulletin board that says, “I promise to Wear my Cape every day and strive to be BETTER THAN THAT!” Post the capes around the board.

Other recommendations for supporting Wear the Cape in your classroom:

- 1) Find teachable moments while reading something that may be related to kindness, character, empathy, leadership, compassion, helpfulness, etc. (see our website for suggestions).
 - Example: How was "so and so" wearing his/her cape in this situation?
- 2) Highlight students in your classroom who wear the cape.
 - Use the large capes to write blurbs about students wearing the cape in your classroom.
- 3) Start each day/week with a quote or song lyric that can guide you into a small discussion focusing on kindness, character, empathy, leadership, compassion, helpfulness, etc.
- 4) Aside from your classroom rules, make a set of BETTER THAN THAT rules. Guide the students to develop rules that support good character (e.g., showing respect for others), rather than just good behavior as a student (e.g., quietly paying attention in class).

We, the students of Room 219, promise every day to Wear the Cape and be BETTER THAN THAT by:

- Showing kindness inside and outside of our classroom.
- Being responsible for our words and actions.
- Celebrating diversity.



This lesson plan was created in coordination with two seasoned teachers that are certified in the state of New Jersey with degrees in Elementary Education.