

# 9/11 MEMORIAL

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UNIT: Heroes and Service

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GRADE LEVEL/S: K-2, 3-5

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TIME NEEDED: 2 sessions

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TEACHER: Victoria Curry

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LESSON TITLE:

## BRAVE INDIVIDUALS

### Common Core Standards

**W 2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

**W 7** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

**SL 1** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**SI 6** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

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### Key Questions/ Issues Addressed

- What is inner strength and courage?
- Who are 'everyday' heroes?
- What does bravery look like?
- How do we pay tribute to our heroes?

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### Lesson Goals/ Objectives

- Students will realize that during a crisis every person is able to help others and become a hero.
- Students will appreciate that many individuals acted heroically on 9/11 and during its aftermath.
- Students will know that children are able to pay tribute to the adults who help them.
- Students will understand that those who work to help others in times of crisis deserve thanks.

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### Key Terms

Bravery, Crisis, Hero, Permanent collection, Service, Tribute

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### Materials

- Jonell, Lynne. *Bravemole*. (Putnam Juvenile, 2002)
- The *Dear Hero Collection*: [www.911memorial.org/dear-hero-collection](http://www.911memorial.org/dear-hero-collection)
- Stationary and writing tools

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**Background  
for lesson  
(if necessary)**

Bravemole is a picture book written by Lynne Jonell. In this book we see the character, Bravemole, reflect upon his life and on the lives of other moles. Bravemole is a character that symbolizes courage, perseverance, and inner strength. He states, “Be strong, be brave, and be steady.” Students will learn that adults all transform into helpers in times of need and they take care of children. When bad things happen, brave people help. Activities focused on recognizing and acknowledging local heroes compliment this read aloud.

**Instructional  
Activity/  
Procedures**

1. Read Bravemole to the class.
2. Lead a discussion on service in the aftermath of 9/11. Students should think/pair/share about what they have learned through this picture book. The think/pair/share can be done orally or it can be expanded to include reflective writing.
3. Discuss with students who in their community and in their school building is an everyday hero. Keep a running chart. This will be referred to later in the lesson.
4. Part two of this lesson will explore the Dear Hero Collection, a collection of letters, objects, and artwork mailed by children to firehouses in the days and weeks after 9/11. The letters were compiled and are now part of the 9/11 Memorial Museum’s permanent collection. The students will view these letters as historical documentation of tributes made by children for American heroes. The teacher should model perusing two or three letters with the whole class, using language that places these documents into context and pointing out the many connections between the sentiments in the letters and in Bravemole.
5. Students should read the letters on the site to understand the feelings that everyday children had about everyday people turned into heroes. Students can also note the format of the letters, and the images and symbols that were used to convey meaning.
6. Revisit the list created earlier highlighting heroes in your community. Ask the students how they can show their appreciation, guiding answers to writing letters.
7. Have students write a letter to their local hero. As the Dear Hero letters are a centerpiece of the Memorial Museum’s Tribute collection, having students create their own letters connects them to this shared experience. Remind students that heroes also come in the form of friends, parents, teachers, and various members within the community.

Teachers should encourage that the sentiment within the letters is of the utmost importance and that these sentiments can be conveyed through drawings, poems, and writing.

**Evidence of  
Understanding**

Students will convey their understanding of bravery and heroism through their think/pair/share activity.

Students will convey their understanding of paying tribute to heroes of both the past and present by creating their own “Dear Hero” letters.

**Extension  
Activities**

- The class, groups, or individuals may have created letters that thank or support local heroes, or a fire station in New York City. The class can travel to hand deliver these letters. You may deliver them into the lunchroom, school office, or local fire station.
- A class trip to your local Post Office can be coupled with mailing these sentiments to a farther location.
- If the class is writing one letter within a shared-writing activity with the teacher, the class may want to have a group publishing moment by hanging the document in a busy area within the building.
- View the [Creating Memorials](#) lesson to continue exploring the [Dear Hero Collection](#).