

9/11 MEMORIAL

UNIT: Individuals and 9/11

GRADE LEVEL/S: 6-8

TIME NEEDED: 1 session

TEACHER: Karen H. Levine

LESSON TITLE: KATHY MAZZA – A STORY OF HEROISM

Common Core Standards

RH 1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

RH 2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

W 1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

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.

Key Questions/ Issues Addressed

Why are symbols an important part of the process of remembering and/or memorializing a person, a group, an event, etc.?

Why are heroes important to groups, whether a small community or a nation? How does a community's heroes reflect that community's values?

How do we honor heroes in the United States?

Lesson Goals/ Objectives

Students will be able to discuss and define the term "hero."

Students will be able to define the term "symbol" and analyze the symbolism of Kathy Mazza's keys.

Key Terms

Cardiothoracic defibrillator: A machine that uses electric shock to restore the rhythm of an irregular heart

Hero

Port Authority of New York and New Jersey: A bi-state agency that oversees the transportation infrastructure in and around the Port of New York and New Jersey. The Port Authority manages the bridges and tunnels connecting the states, the three major airports in the metropolitan area, and the World Trade Center.

Symbol/symbolism

Materials

Story of Kathy Mazza (See [Appendix A](#))

Image of Kathy Mazza's keys (See [Appendix B](#))

**Background
for lesson**

Students should have an understanding of the events of 9/11.

**Instructional
Activity/
Procedures**

1. Discuss the terms symbol and symbolism. *What do they mean?* Ask students to provide examples of symbols.
Note: Answers should focus on something that stands for/suggests something else.
2. Show the image of Kathy Mazza's keys (See [Appendix B](#)). Ask students about the possible symbolism of keys.
Possible answers include: Opening or closing parts of your life, although students might have other suggestions.
3. Prior to reading the story of Kathy Mazza discuss what makes someone a hero and how students define a hero or acts of heroism.
4. Ask students to read the story of Kathy Mazza (See [Appendix A](#)) and answer the following questions:
 - Who was Kathy Mazza? What jobs had she held?
She was the first female commanding officer at the Port Authority Police Academy. She also was a trained nurse.
 - Why didn't Eugene Fasano go into the towers?
Fasano, Mazza and Robert Cirri had found someone with a broken leg. Mazza gave her keys to Fasano to get a first aid kit from her car. This delayed him from entering the building with Cirri and Mazza.
 - What about the keys reminded Fassano of Kathy?
She had a hair band looped around the keys and kept them in a case to keep them from making noise.
 - Why do you think Eugene Fassano kept her keys? What do you think they symbolized to him?
 - Would you have kept the keys? Why or why not? Describe some items that you have kept to remind you of someone or something.
 - What are some positive and negative connotations you associate with keys?
 - What adjectives describe Kathy Mazza? Was she a hero? Explain the reasons for your response.
5. As a final activity, have students pick one of the following activities for their final project:
 - Design a memorial to Kathy Mazza. What symbols would you use? What aspect of her story would you focus on? Either journal your response or work in a small group to create one.
 - There is a park named in Kathy Mazza's honor. Research it and create a photo essay depicting this memorial.
 - Kathy Mazza received the Woman of Distinction award. Write a short speech that explains why she was a worthy recipient.

Evidence of Understanding

Students' reading comprehension answers and final project will highlight their understanding of the lesson's goals.

Extension Activities

Research other women recognized for their response to others during the 9/11 attacks and in the recovery that followed. Create a presentation or compile a chart listing the names of each of the women, the site of her involvement, a brief description of her actions, and the award that was given in honor of her actions.

Design an award recognizing the heroic actions and contributions of women on September 11, 2001, and other critical times in the history of the United States. The award may be in the form of a statue, a special certificate, a scholarship to be given in her honor, etc. Identify five critical times, in addition to 9/11, and a woman or a group of women who should be recognized for her/their actions during those times. Write a brief paragraph for each woman or group explaining her/their selection for the award.

APPENDIX A**The Story of Kathy Mazza**

Kathy Mazza grew up on Long Island, the only girl of four children. She was described by her classmates as confident, strong, fun loving, and someone who always wanted to make a difference.

Mazza dedicated her life to helping others. She was trained as a nurse and had experience working with doctors in cardiothoracic surgery. Kathy joined the Port Authority Police Department (PAPD) in 1987. In 1999, she started a program to install defibrillators, a machine that uses electric shock to restore the rhythm of an irregular heart, in airports. Kathy was honored as New York City's Basic Life Support Provider of the Year for this program. In April 2000, she became one of only two PAPD female captains. By 2001, she was the first female commander at the PAPD academy.

When Mazza learned that the Twin Towers had been struck on 9/11, she left the Port Authority Police Academy with Eugene Fasano and Robert Cirri, two fellow officers, and headed for the site. As the team approached the North Tower, they saw an injured civilian. Captain Mazza directed Fasano to return to her vehicle, where she traditionally carried a first aid kit. Handing him her keys, Mazza and Cirri continued towards the tower. When he reached the car, there was no first aid kit to be found and he rushed back to re-join his team. He yelled out for them, but the chaotic scene prevented them from hearing his calls.

Mazza and Cirri rushed into the building to help those that were trapped and injured inside. Because of a bottleneck of many evacuees escaping, Mazza used her gun to shoot out the lobby windows, enabling many people to escape. In the course of helping others, both officers were killed in the collapse of the North Tower at 10:28 am.

Hours later, Officer Fasano found Mazza's keys in his pocket. When he realized she had been killed, he held onto them. There were personal details that reminded him of her; her blue and purple hair band was looped into the key band and there was a leather case to silence the noise of the jangling keys. He kept the keys as a personal memorial to his friend and colleague.

APPENDIX B



Keys belonging to first responder, PAPD Captain Kathy N. Mazza
Collection 9/11 Memorial Museum. Gift of Eugene Fasano