

HEROES



Some people are remembered long after others are forgotten. What makes a hero different?

We admire those who have the courage to do what we can't.

Throughout history, many different societies, cultures, and people have held many different ideas of what a hero truly is. You'll explore those views and decide for yourself what it takes to be a hero in today's world.

People have a variety of ideas when it comes to what makes up a hero. This quarter, we'll be looking into those ideas, comparing some historical heroes to some from today.

Our major literary focus will be on *The Odyssey*, a story written in Greece several thousand years ago. You'll learn what people used to consider heroic, and we'll talk about whether those characteristics have changed over time.

Authors have been writing about heroes and heroines for thousands of years, and we'll look to them to help us discover what *really* makes someone a hero.

We'll start by reading portions of *The Odyssey*, a huge story about a man named Odysseus. You'll learn why people in his society thought he was the greatest hero of their time, and you'll see how other people in his life were expected to relate to him.

Next, we'll fast-forward to 1914 and read a true story about a shipwrecked crew of 27 men who had to survive the harsh winter of Antarctica to survive. The novel, titled *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World: The Extraordinary True Story of Shackleton and the Endurance*, will help us understand what it took to survive through that ordeal.

Later in the quarter, we'll move to a more modern tale of heroes and heroines: we'll watch *The Incredibles*. You'll have to decide if we expect different things from our heroes today than people did in the past.

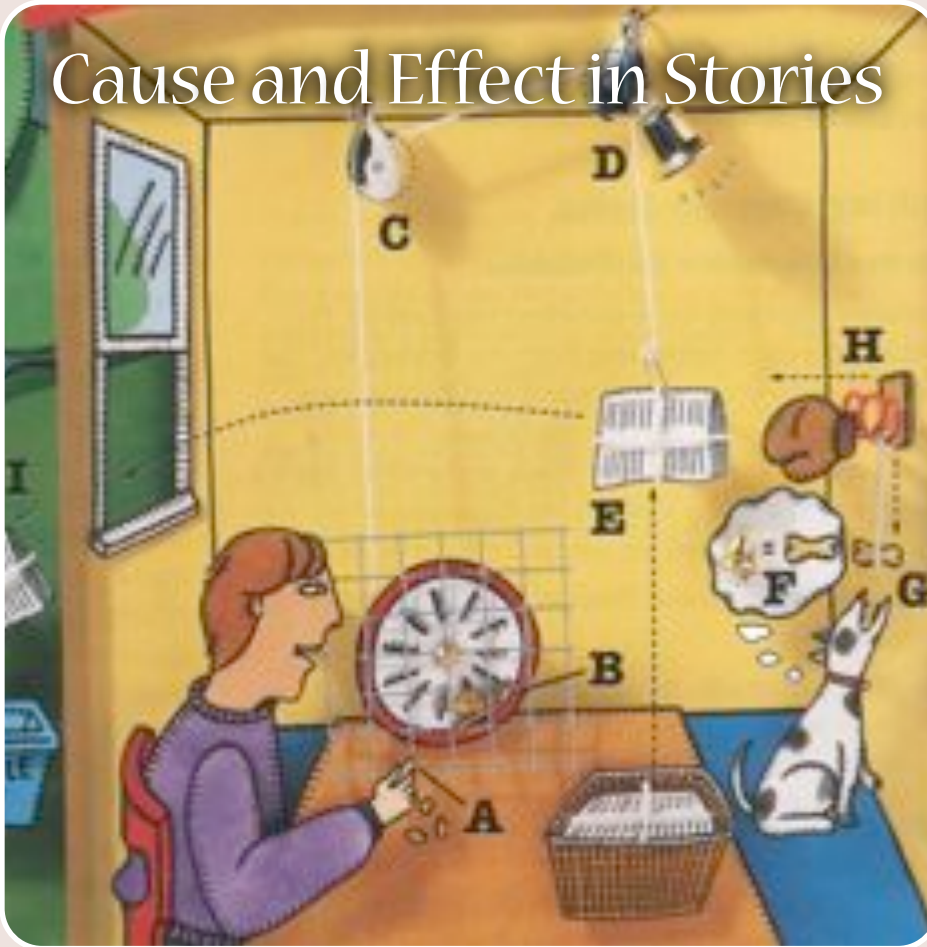
Through all of this, you'll need to decide what you think the role of a modern hero is in today's world. Are heroes today as great as they were before, or are they more average citizens doing extraordinary things? What does it take to become a true hero?



The Incredibles

Bob and Helen Parr, shown here as Mr. & Mrs. Incredible, face multiple views of what a hero really is.

Cause and Effect in Stories



Focus on Your Portfolio

As we move through the rBook and EOL book this quarter, be sure to remember your portfolio. The essays and paragraphs you write here can be strong, well organized, and tied directly into the reading we'll be doing. It's a great way to make a powerful impression.



This quarter's focus is on keeping events in order. With The Odyssey, that's tough.

The major story we're reading this quarter, *The Odyssey*, is larger than any story most people have ever read...adults included. One big problem we'll face is keeping the whole story together, so you can understand what's happening and how everything fits together.

We'll use our *rBooks* and EOL books to help us. Workshop 2 in the *rBook* works with sequence of events, showing how authors indicate to readers that events happen in a particular order. That way, readers don't get lost or confused. When we read *The Odyssey*, you'll need to keep those skills handy, because the story is told out of order, making the sequence unusually difficult to follow.


Then, to help us understand the point of the stories we read, we'll use Chapter 1 in the EOL book to help us better understand an *implied*

main idea—one that the author doesn't directly state. As we read, we'll find that the author of *The Odyssey* doesn't often get right to the point.

Instead, we'll have to look for what is implied to understand the intent of the story.

Finally, Workshop 7 in the *rBook* and Chapter 4 in the EOL book both deal with cause and effect, helping us see how events in *The Odyssey* directly lead to other events, and that everything happens in the story for a reason. We'll use the skills we gain from those two books to decide if Odysseus earned the struggles he dealt with, or if they happened to him by chance. With the novel we'll read, you'll have to determine what allowed the crew to survive: was it lucky chance, good planning, or was there something about the *people* that made them natural heroes?

Reading is easier with these skills

FROM YOUR BOOKS	WORKSHOP 2	CHAPTER 1	WORKSHOP 7	CHAPTER 4
	<p>Sequence of Events</p> <p>We'll start by looking at how authors show the order that events happen in.</p>	<p>Implied Main Idea</p> <p>Here, we'll see how authors sometimes hint at their point instead of stating it.</p>	<p>Cause & Effect</p> <p>This workshop will be an introduction to the way authors show that one event leads to another.</p>	<p>Cause & Effect</p> <p>In this chapter, we'll focus more on the cause-effect relationships, eventually writing an essay.</p>

Is it the journey that makes the man, or does the man make the journey? We'll watch three stories about characters becoming true heroes.

His name has been well-known for thousands of years, and his legend has inspired endless societies to re-tell his story. What is it about this man that made him so incredible? Why is Odysseus considered a hero? We'll look into his tale, his society, and his history to see how he became unforgettable. Then we'll look into other heroic stories to see how they compare.

To get a better idea of how Odysseus's tale begins, we'll start off the quarter by watching a made-for-television version of the story from Hallmark Entertainment. Since *The Odyssey* is such a large book, we'll focus on keeping track of when events occur. The ten-year war at the beginning of the movie actually takes place before the opening of the book, and the parts of the book are told out of order. Watching the film first will help put the pieces in their proper place, making the whole story easier to understand.

As Odysseus attempts to return home from battle, he gets lost...for ten years. His struggle to return home is what makes others call Odysseus a true hero. It will be up to you to decide if his actions are worth the credit.

Later in the quarter, we'll watch a movie that Disney and Pixar claimed was "an epic of miniature proportions." Instead of telling a huge story about a larger-than-life hero, the makers of *A Bug's Life* decided to produce a film about a little ant named Flik who tries to save his entire colony from an attack from a swarm of grasshoppers. It's a fun story about a very unexpected hero.

Another film from the same studio, *The Incredibles*, shows one man, Buddy Pine, who tries to become a super-hero like those he idolized as a child. He uses his technical knowledge and his determination to make brilliant plans for showing off his abilities. You will have to decide whether super-heroes earn their titles or are born with them. Syndrome asks why he can't be a super-hero, too. His enemies (and the entire movie) provide interesting answers.

Throughout the quarter, we'll study stories of heroism that make one person stand out from the rest of a society. We'll discover what heroes are made of and how they affect the people around them. You'll find out what it takes to truly make a difference.



Odysseus and his son, Telemachus, together at home

Heroes in Film



Movie Legends

Modern movies often follow the lives of a truly remarkable hero. Your job will be to decide what it is about each character that makes him stand out from the others.

For Odysseus, is it his battle skills at Troy? For Flik, is it his journey to the big city? For Syndrome, is it his intelligence and stubbornness?

What makes a man a hero?

Second-Quarter Projects

This nine weeks brings new challenges and projects. You'll think of heroes in a new light.

Following up on our decisions & consequences project, we'll be working with *The Odyssey* in some creative ways this quarter. You'll have the opportunity to be a news reporter from the time of Odysseus, and you might even write your own piece of the legend.

To wrap up the quarter, we'll begin our grammar unit. Yes, it involves diagramming sentences. But you'll see that once you understand the system behind the language, all the pieces start falling in place.

Newspaper Project

To emphasize the topics of sequence of events and cause and effect, you'll be writing a short newspaper that reports on the activities and adventures of Odysseus and crew. It will be written from the perspective of someone who is either on-board the ship with Odysseus or home in Greece, reporting on the stories heard from other sailors.

The events you report on will be up to you to choose. We'll have to read a large part of the book to provide enough material for you to work with, so as we go through the story, be sure to note which adventures seem the most interesting to you.

The trick to making the project interesting is to choose a variety of events and to have fun making the reports sound real and genuine. It's not every day you get to be reporting from 2,500 years ago while still using a computer to write the articles!

Color-Coded Project

Adding a new twist to the idea of class projects, the beginning of the quarter will bring the introduction of the "color-coded project". Different groups of students in class will be working on different assignments, all related to *The Odyssey*. The work you do will be designed to help you better understand the story and interact with the theme of heroes and heroines.

One group will be working on graphic organizers that help understand the structure of the stories we read and the language used to tell the tales. This group will be paying careful attention to keywords and organization, using skills from the *rBook* and EOL book to identify the "big picture" layout of each part of *The Odyssey*.

Another group will test their storytelling abilities by creating a brand-new chapter in the history of Odysseus. Using techniques and common phrases from the existing stories, this group will make new adventures for Odysseus. We'll even make the stories look like they belong in the book, and hopefully publish them online!

The last group will be working on documenting the characteristics of an epic, proving that *The Odyssey* is carefully written and quite deserving of the amount of respect it has earned over the centuries. (There's a reason we still study a 2,500-year-old book today. This group's job is to figure out what that reason is.)



Be a news reporter: tell Odysseus' story

Students interested in moving on to an honors-level class next year should take on the challenge of the last group, since it tests the analytical skills needed in those classes.

Grammar Unit

Near the end of the quarter, we'll begin our grammar unit. Often dreaded by students, this part of the class will help you analyze the way sentences are put together and see how different parts of the language work with one another.

You've studied the parts of speech before. Know what nouns, verbs, and adjectives are is only the beginning. This year, we'll put that knowledge to use by constructing visual diagrams of what a sentence "looks like". Don't worry...you'll learn how to do it.

For those who are interested in taking a foreign language next year, this unit will really help. Students who understand the basic principles of sentence construction and organization in this language can use those abilities to better and more easily learn another one.

Due Dates

Workshop 2 ¶ — Monday, Oct. 16
EOL Chapter 1 Essay — Friday, Oct. 20
Color-Coded Project — Friday, Nov. 3
Workshop 7 ¶ — Monday, Nov. 13
EOL Chapter 4 Essay — Friday, Nov. 17
Sentence Set 1 — Thursday, Nov. 30
Sentence Set 2 — Monday, Dec. 4
Newsletter Project — Thursday, Dec. 7

OHS Calendar

This handout distributed — Oct. 10
Thanksgiving Break — Nov. 22–26
Quarter Exams — Dec. 7–11
Semester Exams — Dec. 13–15
Winter Break — Dec. 16–Jan. 2

Note:

All dates are subject to changes when announced in class and on website.

Additional Info

Class Website:

<http://misterfriend.net>

Extra Help and Essay Revisions:

Mon/Tue after school (2:30–3:00)
Thu/Fri before school (6:45–7:15)

Second Quarter: Heroes & Heroines

RUBRICS

EOL Book Essays (approximately five ¶s each)

All EOL Book Essay prewriting should begin in your handout packets. Use the inside of the last page for peer review and improvement suggestions. Final drafts must be typed using the template available on the class website or on in-class computers, then printed in black ink on regular, unlined, letter-sized paper before the beginning of the class period in which it is due. Essays needing more than one page should be stapled together before they are turned in.

Use the rubrics below to be sure your essays meet all the requirements for the grade you want to earn. Use these guidelines to revise your essay if including it in your portfolio.

Chapter 4: A Cause-and-Effect Explanation (up to 4 points per column)

	INTRODUCTION	THESIS	SUPPORT	ORGANIZATION	CONCLUSION
4	First ¶ grabs reader attention and sets focus on importance of situation.	Final sentence of first ¶ clearly identifies topic and cause/effect relationship	Accurate evidence used to support cause/effect relationship(s)	Ideas and evidence presented in logical order; transitions used effectively	Final ¶ focuses on major point being discussed and revisits thesis ideas
2	First ¶ moderately gains attention; focus is vague.	Thesis statement present but misplaced, unclear, or not entirely complete	Evidence used occasionally or inconsistently	Information presented in order w/ minor exceptions; transitions are weak	Final ¶ revisits or restates major point; thesis statement is repeated
0	Intro makes no effort at evoking interest; no focus.	No thesis found; too unclear to be useful.	No evidence used; false cause/effect identified	No transitions used; no sense of order to details	Missing final ¶ or ideas not revisited

Chapter 1: A Personal Narrative (4 points each column)

	INTRODUCTION	DETAILS	THOUGHTS & FEELINGS	ORGANIZATION	CONCLUSION
4	Opening ¶ focuses on broad ideas and clearly identifies a dominant impression	Sensory, factual, and figurative details used to improve description	Focus of body ¶s is consistently on author's response to situation	All body ¶s use consistent spacial or order-of-importance organization	Final ¶ revisits broad idea from opening and comments on its importance
2	Opening ¶ touches on broad ideas and identifies a dominant impression	Descriptions of details include two of the three types discussed	Some body ¶s fail to show personal experience, but descriptions are effective	Occasional lapses occur, but overall method is easy to identify	Final ¶ summarizes event(s) but fails to make effective broad point
0	No broad ideas discussed or no dominant impression included	Descriptive details are all of the same type or insufficiently used	Identity/role of author unclear or missing; unrealistic descriptions	No clear organizational method used; inconsistent descriptions	Final ¶ repeats introduction or is ineffective

rBook Narrative Paragraphs

All rBook Narrative Paragraph rough drafts must be written in your rBook for peer review. Final drafts must be typed using the template available on the class website or on in-class computers, then printed in black ink on unlined, letter-sized paper before the beginning of the class period in which it is due.

Use the rubrics below to be sure your paragraphs meet all the requirements for the grade you want to earn.

Workshop 2: Killer Plague (up to 4 points per column)

	INTRO	DETAIL ORDER	TRANSITIONS	CONCLUSION
4	Event being discussed is clearly and thoroughly identified.	Details are presented in a logical order that helps explain event.	Each detail is clearly and logically connected to the others.	Final sentence wraps up author's feelings toward event.
2	Event is described, but author assumes reader familiarity.	Some details presented insufficiently or out of order.	Connections between details not always clearly stated.	Final sentence wraps up details but omits author's feelings.
0	Event is not introduced before details are presented.	Missing or nonsense details.	Details seem unrelated; no transitions used.	Paragraph ends with detail. No summary provided.

Workshop 7: Your Brain Exposed (up to 4 points per column)

	INTRO	DETAIL ORDER	TRANSITIONS	CONCLUSION
4	Event being discussed is clearly and thoroughly identified.	Details are presented in a logical order that helps explain event.	Each detail is clearly and logically connected to the others.	End of ¶ clearly explains why author thinks someone is a hero.
2	Event is described, but author assumes reader familiarity.	Some details presented insufficiently or out of order.	Connections between details not always clearly stated.	End of ¶ identifies a person as a hero but provides few reasons.
0	Event is not introduced before details are presented.	Missing or nonsense details.	Details seem unrelated; no transitions used.	No hero identified at end.

Quarter Wrap-Up (Final Essay) Writing Prompt

Respond to one of the questions below in a five-paragraph essay that states your answer in a clear, concise thesis statement and uses examples taken from the stories studied this quarter to support your views. Each body paragraph must have at least one quote, and you must use a variety of sources for your support. Be sure to use the template on the web or in class to formatting the essay correctly, and use the rubric below to make sure you earn the grade you want. See the orange "Heroes" handout for due dates and other information.

Do the attributes of a hero remain the same over time?

How do we identify a hero(ine), and what role(s) do they play in our culture?

	INTRODUCTION/THESIS	ORGANIZATION	SUPPORT	CLARITY	CONCLUSION
4	First ¶ focuses on broad ideas & ends w/ clear thesis	Body ¶s follow directly from thesis statement	Each body ¶ includes quotes; multiple texts used	Formatting, spelling, and grammar generally correct	Final ¶ clearly focuses on major ideas from prompt
2	Focuses on details; thesis unclear (no structure)	Body ¶s arranged logically but don't match thesis	Body ¶s use paraphrases or all quotes from one text	Occasional errors slightly distract from point	Final ¶ addresses prompt but remains detail-driven
0	No thesis present or thesis doesn't answer prompt	Essay ¶s arranged haphazardly; thesis not used	Not every body ¶ includes textual support	Errors in usage or formatting cause confusion	Final ¶ ineffective or missing; question not answered