

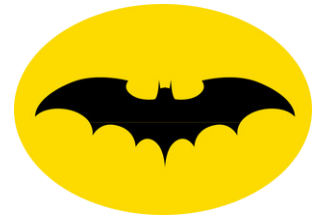


Myths & Legends

Local Heroes

Get kids thinking

- Talk with kids about a kind of story that we call a [legend](#). Legends are stories about a real place and time in the past. They may have been based in truth, but have changed over time and become a mix of truth and fiction. They often feature a main character who is known for acts of bravery and heroism.
- Tell the kids that the [heroes](#) in legends are human (not gods and goddesses) but they often have adventures that are larger-than-life. Ask the kids if they can think of any legendary characters in stories they've read or heard or seen in the movies.
- Ask the kids, have you ever heard of Robin Hood? What makes him a hero? Robin Hood became a popular folk hero because of his generosity to the poor. He represents the common man standing up against injustice.
- Batman is another heroic figure, a legendary comic book super hero and the defender of fictional Gotham City. Batman doesn't have any superpowers and yet he has the courage to face all kinds of villains.



Writing activity

For this activity, kids will write a personal letter to a local hero.

Individual: each child chooses a person they consider to be a hero and works independently.

Small groups: pairs of kids choose one person they consider to be a hero and work collaboratively.



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Supplies

- Pencils, pens, or other writing tool of choice
 - 8-1/2 x 11 paper, letter-sized envelopes, first-class stamps
 - Access to the Internet
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Let's get started

Gather the kids together in a circle to talk about their community and the strengths of the people that live there. Ask the kids if they can think of people who they think are heroes for standing up for what's right and helping their communities. This can be a friend, a family member, a spiritual community leader, a teacher ... it could also be someone well-known like an [elected official](#) or an [activist](#) or children's author who has had a positive impact on you and others.

Here are some things to think about:

- What kind of work does your hero do?
- What qualities or strengths does your hero have?
- How does your hero help make the community (or the country or the world) a better place?
- How has your hero affected your life?
- What would you like to say to your hero?
- Do you have a question you'd like to ask your hero?
- Do you want to share an example of something you've done to make your community stronger?
- How can you express thanks to your hero?



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Suggest to the kids that they write out a draft of their letter and share it with you. Adults can provide gentle feedback, but the letter should really be an expression of what the child at that age wants and needs to say.

Younger kids who aren't yet writing can dictate their stories to an adult.

Next, give kids time to write out a final copy of their letters. Show them an example of how to format an informal letter.

Using the Internet, adults can help find the correct addresses for each hero letter. After kids have shared their letters with the group, show them how to fold their letters, insert in the envelopes, address the envelopes (adults may need to help), and add the stamp.

Take a little walking "field trip" to your local mailbox or post office to mail the letters!

Your full address here
on 3 lines

Today's date here

Dear _____

All the best,
Your signature here

Sharing our work

Once the letters are finished, gather everyone together in a circle to read their letters out loud and give their friends a chance to ask any questions about their heroes.

Try this!

Record It: Using a smartphone camera, make a video of each child reading their hero letter out loud to share with family, friends, and the local community.

For more reading, writing, and learning resources, visit www.StartWithABook.org

