

Lesson Title: *She is My Hero*

The lesson incorporates Linda Stein's art addressing issues of female heroism in our daily lives and during the time of the Holocaust.

Enduring Idea: Anyone can be a hero on an everyday basis.

Grade: Originally conducted with 9-year-olds, but the lesson can be intergenerational.

Time Allotment: Two hours

Art & Artist: [*Holocaust Heroes: Fierce Females — Tapestries*](#), [Linda Stein](#)

Lesson Summary: Discussion and collages inspired by Stein's tapestries

DESIRED OUTCOME

Objectives are:

- to have participants realize and recognize the female heroes in their lives.
- to have participants verbalize what qualities make a person a hero.
- to learn more about the time of the Holocaust, particularly the heroic women that history often overlooks.
- to learn about the different ways of being a hero.
- to learn about heroism and empathy.
- to have participants realize how they can be everyday heroes.
- to create art in honor of a chosen female hero.
- to create a display of all the collages.

Participants will:

- learn about stories of the ten women depicted in Linda Stein's [*Holocaust Heroes: Fierce Females — Tapestries*](#).
- choose a female hero that the student admires.
- create a three-dimensional collage of objects and images.
- draw from their own archive of memories and experiences or from historical and contemporary resources to portray their female hero of choice.
- look at the collages created by all the participants and share why they selected their heroes in the context of a discussion on what makes a hero (see discussion questions in this lesson plan).

Essential Questions:

- Why is it important to recognize female heroes?
- Who is usually depicted as a hero?
- How can we learn about heroes, both past and present, through art making?

STANDARDS:

- **National Core Arts Standards¹ Anchor Standard 11:** Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

MATERIALS:

- **Provided by Teacher**
12x18 paper
Collage-making materials (scissors, glue, markers, colored pencils, trinkets, etc.)
- **Brought in by Participants**
Pictures from online, family albums, newspapers
Trinkets related to a hero

ACTIVITY:

As an introduction, the teacher could lead conversation based on the tapestries from Linda Stein's *Holocaust Heroes: Fierce Females* series. Resources to do so are in the resource section at the end of this document. [Also, click here to see the art in this series:](https://www.lindastein.com/series/holocaust-heroes/heroic-tapestries/) <https://www.lindastein.com/series/holocaust-heroes/heroic-tapestries/>

Possible Discussion Topics:

- The time of the Holocaust in relation to the women depicted in the tapestries
- How might individual histories of the heroes have impacted their actions to be upstanders during the time of the Holocaust
- How each woman displayed bravery in the face of danger and discrimination
- Why did the artist include religious and pop culture icons (Storm, Lady Gaga, Wonder Woman, Princess Mononoke, Lisbeth Salander from *The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo*) in her tapestries? What makes them heroes?

Discussion Questions:

Teachers can then ask the participants to pick female heroes from their lives and introduce the collage project with the following questions:

- Who did you choose?
- What makes her a hero?
- What are the qualities of a hero?
- What words would you use to define hero?
- Have you ever been a hero? If yes, what happened? If no, what can you do that you haven't yet done in your daily life that could be heroic?
- Did the artwork and discussion give you new ideas to be heroic?

¹ <http://www.nationalartsstandards.org>

Themes

- The time of the Holocaust
- Bully
- Bullied
- Brave Upstander
- Bystander
- Kindness
- Heroism
- Collage construction

ASSESSMENT:

- **How will the teacher and participants know that they have learned what is intended in this lesson?** The teacher and participants will have gained both historical and personal perspectives on their understanding of heroes as evidenced in discussion and their audio-recorded or written statements about what they have learned.
- **What objects will count as evidence of a student learning the objectives for this lesson?** The collage and statements made by participants will be the physical evidence of their learning.
- **How will participants' achievements be measured?** Each participant will have their own unique experience with the project, but ideally participants will leave with a conscious recognition of female heroes and the motivation to be an everyday hero themselves.

REFLECTION:

Linda Stein reflects on her experience teaching this lesson in a [studio talk](#).

In addition to the comments made in this video, the discussion on heroism could perhaps be continued as the participants create the collages.

The tapestries could also be exhibited in a place that students and their parents could go back to visit more than once, to serve as a reminder of everyday-heroism for the community.

It may also be a good idea to add statements about the hero collage to further convey personal connections and/or appreciation of the hero.

This is a great chance for family members to have quality time together, and an opportunity for family dialogue about the meaning of Holocaust Heroes; and how we each person relates to the need to be an upstander to bullying, even on an everyday level.

RESOURCES:

Links to information about the women heroes in the tapestries:

- [Anne Frank](#) (1929-1945)
- [Ruth Gruber](#) (1911-2016)
- [Vitka Kempner](#) (1920-2012)
- [Noor Inayat Khan](#) (1914-1944)
- [Zivia Lubetkin](#) (1914-1976)
- [Gertrud Luckner](#) (1900-1995)
- [Nadezhda Popova](#) (1921-2013)
- [Hadassah Bimko Rosensaft](#) (1912-1997)
- [Hannah Senesh](#) (1921-1944)
- [Nancy Wake](#) (1912-2011)

Publications:

- Knight, W. B. (2017). Upstander for social justice. *Visual Culture & Gender*, 12, 48-57.
<http://vcg.emitto.net/index.php/vcg/article/view/110>
- Pérez de Miles, A., & Peck, S. (2017). Exhibition as curriculum: Creativity as a human right. *Art Education*, 70(4), 60-64.
- Social Justice Art Education with Linda Stein's Art.
<http://h2f2encounters.cyberhouse.emitto.net/>
- Stein, L. (Ed.). (2016). *Holocaust Heroes: Fierce Females—Tapestries and Sculpture by Linda Stein*. Philadelphia, PA: Old City Publishing.
- Stein, L. (2015). *Have Art Will Travel! Inc. For Gender Justice*.
<http://haveartwilltravel.org/events/holocaust-heroes/>
- Stein, L. (2012). Sculptor Linda Stein apologizes to the girl she bullied in childhood. *Hot Topics*. Retrieved from https://www.ontheissuesmagazine.com/hot_topics.php?id=57
- Stone, A. (2015). [Linda Stein: The making of an artist-activist, feminist Jew](#). *MA'AMT*, 18-23.

PHOTOS OF “SHE IS MY HERO” WORKSHOP at Santa Barbara, CA 2016



She Is My Hero Workshop, Part of the *Holocaust Heroes* Exhibition in Santa Barbara, CA, 2016.



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