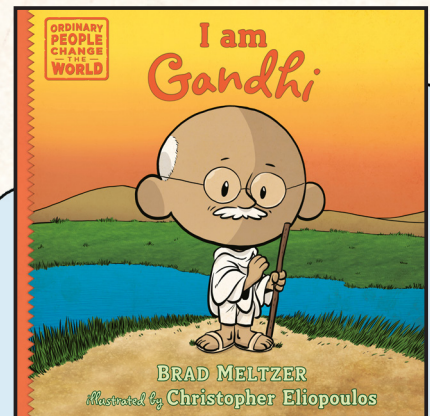
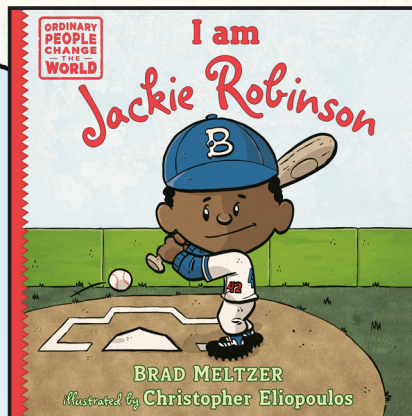
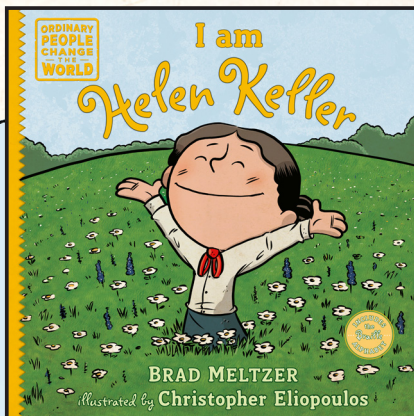
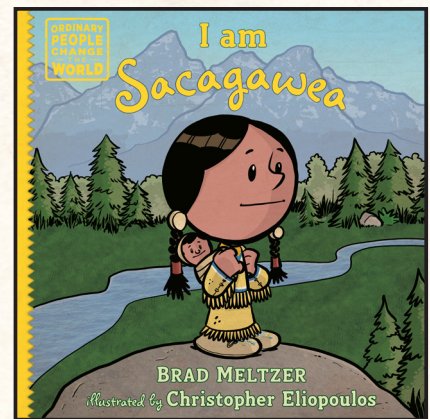
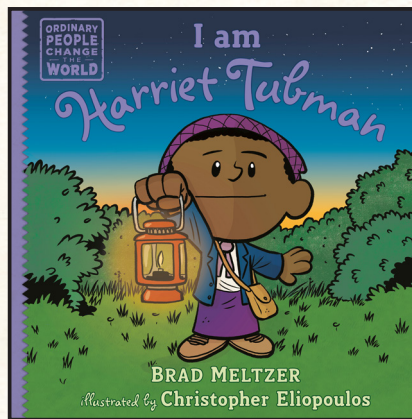
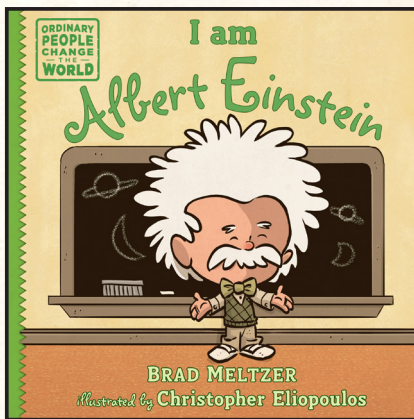




A TEACHER AND LIBRARIAN GUIDE TO THE SERIES

- Ideas for Classroom Integration • Ideal for Reader's Advisory
- Great for Character Development Units



ORDINARY PEOPLE CHANGE THE WORLD

Ideas for Classroom Integration

Dear Educator and Librarian,

Heroes are everywhere in our local communities. The Ordinary People Change the World series helps young children realize how their passions, hobbies, and interests can help shape their dreams, goals, and aspirations, and that they, too, can become heroes! Through extensive research, Brad Meltzer has woven important historical facts about each hero's life into his engaging text, supported beautifully by Christopher Eliopoulos's inviting illustrations. Each book in the series can be used as the foundational text to teach your readers about some of today's most famous and beloved heroes. At the end of each book, you'll find a comprehensive list of references that provide a platform for a deeper discussion about primary and secondary sources. The stories begin with the heroes as children and provide students with the opportunity to dream big, and to follow and eventually realize those dreams.

We have put together this curriculum guide to support classroom instruction and reader's advisory for these titles. The lessons focus on language arts, character, math, science, and social studies for young readers.

Throughout this guide, you'll find teachable content for the series that you can customize to your grade, class, small group, or individual student's needs. Choose the lessons, activities, and prompts that are right for your teaching style, and have fun bringing such a culturally important and inspiring series into your classroom and library!

We are thrilled to take this journey with you, and we hope you can instill in your students the drive to become a hero, whether to their family, their town, our nation, or our world.

—Penguin School & Library



 PenguinClassroom.com  @PenguinClass  @PenguinClassroom  /PenguinClassroom

Portions of this guide were written by Rose W. Truong, Ed.M. Rose has been an early childhood educator since 2006, and has taught internationally and in several states. She has an Ed.M. from the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Language & Literacy program and a B.S. in Elementary Education from Indiana University. The guide was updated by Andrea Burinescu, M.A.T. Andrea was most recently a teacher at an independent school in White Plains, New York. She previously worked as a third-grade teacher in an inclusion classroom in Needham, Massachusetts.



CHARACTER

Using Ordinary People Who Change the World to Reinforce Values, Virtues, and Character Traits

Character education is one of the most important aspects of development for young people. Whether it's building self-confidence or learning about resilience, bravery, or kindness, character is the foundation of creating the next generation of heroes to make the world a better place. Biographies are a fantastic way to introduce and reinforce character curriculum to young readers. The activities below are some ideas on how you can use the figures in the Ordinary People Change the World series for units around this.



Suggested Vocabulary

Kindness

Courage

Resilience

Empathy

Leadership

Inspiring

Fearless

Honesty

Determination

Patience

Creativity

Community

Character Discussion Questions

Use these discussion questions before or after reading as conversation starters with your young readers around what character development and traits are.

- What do you think about when you think about character?
- When looking at some of the vocabulary for character traits, values, and virtues, who are some people in your life that match these words?
- Who are some famous figures from sports, history, or other fields that you think of as having good character? Why?
- Is character something you have or something you can learn?
- What kind of character traits do you want to have?



CHARACTER

Using Ordinary People Who Change the World to Reinforce Values, Virtues, and Character Traits

Character Activities

BE A CLASS OF HEROES!: Ordinary people and kids can be heroes as emphasized in this biography series. Ask students what kind of character traits they want their class and classmates to have. You can write them all on a whiteboard/chalkboard and then create a word cloud to share/post in your classroom. After you have your word cloud, ask why they chose the words they did.

BIOGRAPHY CHARACTER FILL-IN-THE-BLANK: Have your young readers fill in the blank before and after reading about one of the figures in the series. For example:

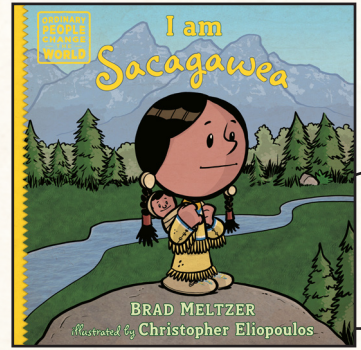
Jackie Robinson was strong (insert character trait).

Harriet Tubman was brave (insert character trait).

Helen Keller was curious (insert character trait).

After reading, ask students if their answer would change or if they'd add any other character traits. Ask why they chose each character trait and why they added to /changed their answers after reading.

ORDINARY PEOPLE CHARACTER MATCHING GAME: Use the vocabulary words from this unit and have the students match the words to the book cover/figure. There can be more than one trait per character. For example:

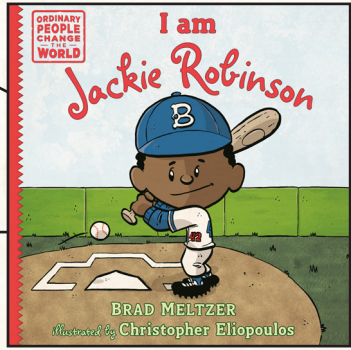


Courageous

Resilient

Inspiring

Leadership



After the students have made their matches, have them write why they chose each one. [Click HERE](#) for a printable version of this game.



LANGUAGE ARTS

Letter Writing

RL.2.3, RL.3.3 • RL.2.6 • W.2.1, W.3.1 • W.3.4 • L.2.1, L.3.1 • L.2.2, L.3.2 • L.2.3, L.3.3
RL.3.3 • RL.3.6 • W.2.2, W.3.2 • L.2.1, L.3.1 • L.2.2, L.3.2 • L.2.3, L.3.3

Teachers, ask students to write a letter AS the main character of a book in the series. Address the letter to someone who doubted the hero during his or her lifetime. What would the hero have said to explain his or her choices? For example:

- **Write a letter to the newspaper's sports editor as Billie Jean King** explaining why men and women should receive the same prize money at a tennis tournament
- **Write a "letter to the editor" as Amelia Earhart** in response to an article stating that women cannot fly.
- **Write a letter as Abraham Lincoln** explaining to a lawmaker why slavery should be abolished.

OR . . . Write a letter TO a character of a book in the series. For example:

- **Write a letter to the bus driver who got Rosa Parks arrested.** Explain how you think people should be treated.
- **Write a letter to your favorite hero in the series.** How has our world changed because of that person? What would you like to say to them if he or she were alive today?

YOUR Ordinary Hero

W.2.2, W.3.2 • W.2.8 • RI.2.5, RI.3.5 • RI.2.10, RI.3.10 • W.2.2, W.3.2 • W.2.7, W.3.7
L.2.1, L.3.1 • L.2.2, L.3.2 • L.2.3, L.3.3

Teachers, let your students act as the author! Ask them to:

- **Write a story about an "ordinary" person they know.** What has that person done that makes him or her heroic?
- **Ask students to think of someone who is alive today and considered a modern-day hero.** Research the person's accomplishments, and write about what makes him or her heroic. For example, a politician; a celebrity; someone who has founded a charity or organization; an activist, etc. (Parents or teachers may provide ideas and assistance with information.)





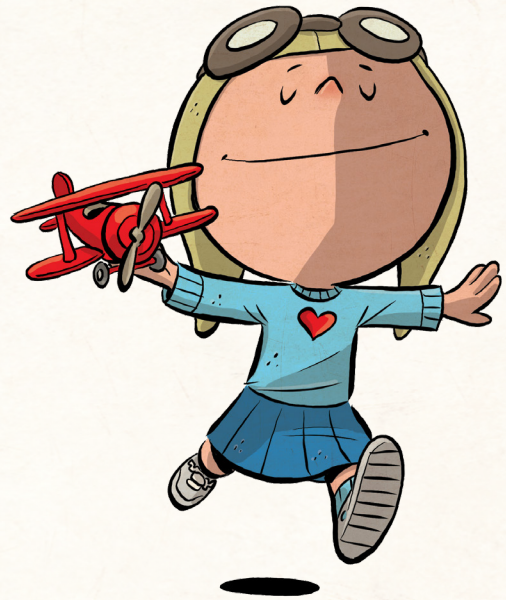
LANGUAGE ARTS

Vocabulary and/or Spelling

RI.2.4, RI.3.4 • L.2.4, L.3.4

Teachers, choose 3–5 vocabulary or spelling words from each book in the series. For example:

- **from *I am Amelia Earhart*:**
eventually, natural, altitude, bounds, record
- **from *I am Abraham Lincoln*:**
opponent, confident, character, equal, dedicate
- **from *I am Rosa Parks*:**
respect, doubt, refuse, ignite, segregation



Specific Activities

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.3, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1

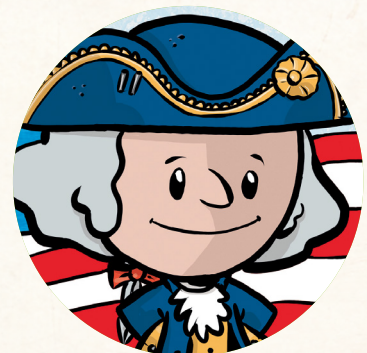


I HAVE A DREAM MOBILES for *I am Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Ask students to write down their own dream(s) for our country on white lined paper. On plain white paper, students will draw a self-portrait next to the words “I Have a Dream.” Mount both pages on red, white, or blue construction paper. Using string and a hole-punch, attach the “dream(s)” below the self-portraits and display them in the classroom as mobiles.

COURAGE BADGE for *I am George Washington*:

Students will think about a time they were courageous. In pairs, students will share their experiences with one another. Ask the children to create a badge or certificate of courage for their partner as a way to recognize their bravery.



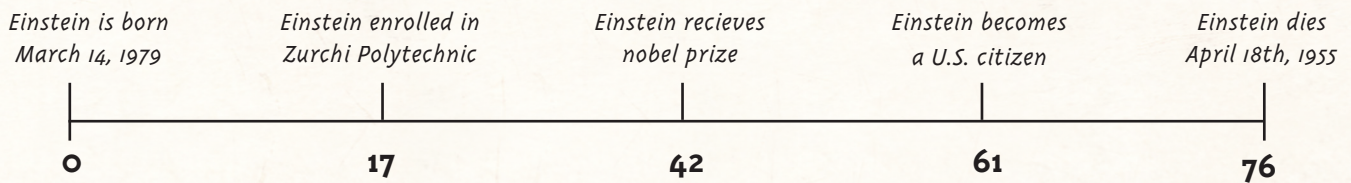


MATH & SCIENCE

Number Line/Timeline of Events

RI.2.3, RI.3.3 • 2.OA.A.1 • 2.MD.B.6

Teachers, ask students to write a number line. On the number line, with the numbers representing age, create a timeline of events that took place in one of the books in the series. Use the timelines in the back of the books as a reference.



How old would they be today?

2.OA.A.1 • 3.NBT.A.2

Teachers, ask students to find out what year a hero from the series was born. If s/he were alive today, how old would s/he be?

Unit Conversion

3.OA.A.3 • 3.OA.A.4 • 3.OA.D.8

Teachers, ask students to convert the measurements from a book into different units. For example:

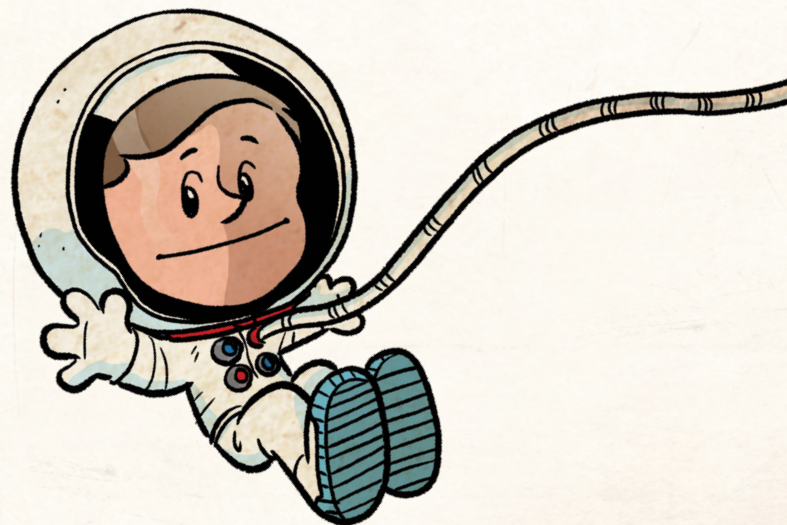
- **Amelia Earhart set a new women's altitude record by flying up to 14,000 feet.** How many miles is that? Yards? Inches? Choose a non-standard unit of measurement, and figure out how many of those units would equal 14,000 feet (e.g., the book's author chose the Empire State Building as a unit of measurement).
- **Abraham Lincoln walked six miles to get a book.** How many feet is that? Yards?
- **Rosa Parks inspired the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which lasted 381 days.** How many hours is that? Months?
- **Neil Armstrong's landing on the moon was watched by 1/5 of the world in 1969.** How many people was that then? Today?



MATH & SCIENCE

Exploration & Play

- for *I am Amelia Earhart*: Learn to fold and decorate a paper airplane. Practice flying your planes outside! Record how long your plane remains in the air.
- for *I am Abraham Lincoln*: Shine old or dirty pennies in a mixture of vinegar and salt (1 tsp salt for each $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of white vinegar). Record observations of the pennies before and after they are immersed in the mixture.
- for *I am Albert Einstein*:
 - **Explore the school or playground using a compass.** Which way is north from your classroom? Draw a map of the classroom or playground with the compass directions labeled.
 - **Experiment with gravity.** Measure how long it takes different objects to fall from a certain point. Test objects of different weights, shapes, and sizes. (Teachers can facilitate discussions of air resistance, weight, etc.)
- for *I am Neil Armstrong*: Imagine what it would be like for Neil Armstrong in space (without gravity).





SOCIAL STUDIES*

Kindness Web SL.2.1, SL.3.1

Teachers, explain to students that each of the heroes in this series met people who bullied them or said unkind words about their dreams. As a class, ask your students to sit in a circle and make a “Kindness Web” with a ball of yarn. Each student should hold on to their piece of yarn and pass the rest of the ball to a friend while saying something that they like about that person. That friend will go next, passing the ball to someone else, until everyone in the class is part of the Kindness Web.

How to Approach a Bully Without Fighting RI.2.1, RI.3.1 • RI.3.6 • SL.2.1, SL.3.1

Teachers, point out a scene in which one of the main characters encounters bullying. Brainstorm about ways to respond to a bully without using violence. Do you think the character handled the situation in the best way? Why or why not?

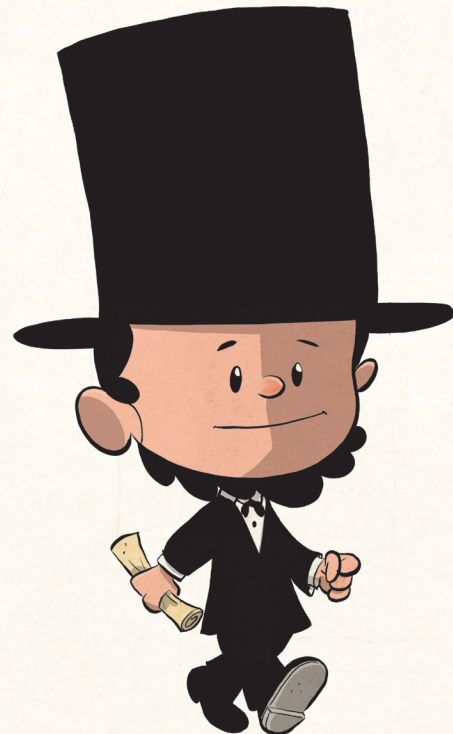
Research RI.2.5, RI.3.5 • RI.2.9, RI.3.9 • RI.2.10, RI.3.10 • W.2.7, W.3.7

Teachers, ask students to find three to five more resources about one of the main characters of the series (with instruction/assistance from librarian, teacher, and/or computer resource center).

Interview a Hero

W.2.7 • SL.2.2, SL.3.2 • SL.2.4, SL.3.4 • L.2.3, L.3.3

Teachers, put students in small groups. Ask them to script and tape (or perform) a talk show interview with one of the main characters of the series. Have each student ask about the hero’s childhood, hobbies, proudest achievements, etc.



**Most lessons related to this series should be considered part of the Social Studies curriculum, due to the historical content of the books.*



SOCIAL STUDIES*

Book-Specific Activities



WRITE A LETTER TO JANE GOODALL for *I am Jane Goodall*:

Jane Goodall continues to study and advocate for chimpanzees and their environment. Write a letter or email to Jane Goodall to find out more about her current endeavors and the work being done at the Jane Goodall Institute.

[Click HERE](#) to learn how to contact Jane Goodall.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.1, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.1, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.4,

MAP THE JOURNEY for *I am Sacajawea*: Provide students with a blank map of the United States in 1804. Instruct them to label and mark territories using different colored crayons. With teacher modeling as a guide, students will then draw a red line tracking the Lewis and Clark Expedition westward across the Pacific Northwest. Once the students' 1804 maps are completed, show them a present-day map of the United States. Discuss what changes they see as the result of westward expansion.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.7, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.7, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.7





EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



Obstacle Course

for *I am Helen Keller*: Create an obstacle course in a nearby learning space that students cannot see. Pair students and use a scarf or eye mask to blindfold one student. Ask the other student to guide the blindfolded student through the obstacle course without using spoken words. Once each student pair has had a turn navigating the course, students will reflect on the experience and how it enhanced their understanding of the challenges Helen Keller faced in order to accomplish everyday tasks.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.4, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.4



Put on a Puppet Show

for *I am Jim Henson*: In small groups, students will create sock puppets that represent the main characters in a student- or teacher-selected picture book. Students will use paper bags or socks along with art materials to create puppets based on these characters. Ask students to present a puppet show depicting an event in the story.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.5, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.5, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.5



Design a Baseball Card

for *I am Jackie Robinson*: Students will refer to the information they learned in *I am Jackie Robinson* to design his baseball card using [this website](#).

Vocabulary: spectators, bravery, athlete

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.7, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.8



EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



Lucille Ball Mad Libs

for *I am Lucille Ball*:

1. Using the answers to the prompts below, write a short summary describing Lucille Ball's life.

- Date and location of her birth
- Write a sentence or two about her early life.
- What were her accomplishments and claim to fame?
- Include one or two fun facts about Lucille Ball.
- Where and when she die?

2. Students will write or type out the summary.

3. Direct them to delete certain verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and nouns from the summary, labeling the part of speech that was deleted, to create a Mad Libs template for a peer to complete.



Create a Courtroom

for *I am Sonya Sotomayor*: Create a courtroom in the classroom! Decide on an issue and assign roles as judge, jury, defendant, prosecutor, recorder, police officer, and audience members. Create a scenario and decide on a case, and let the students roleplay. Discuss what they learned and how each role is important to the case.



The Main Event

LIVING WAX MUSEUM

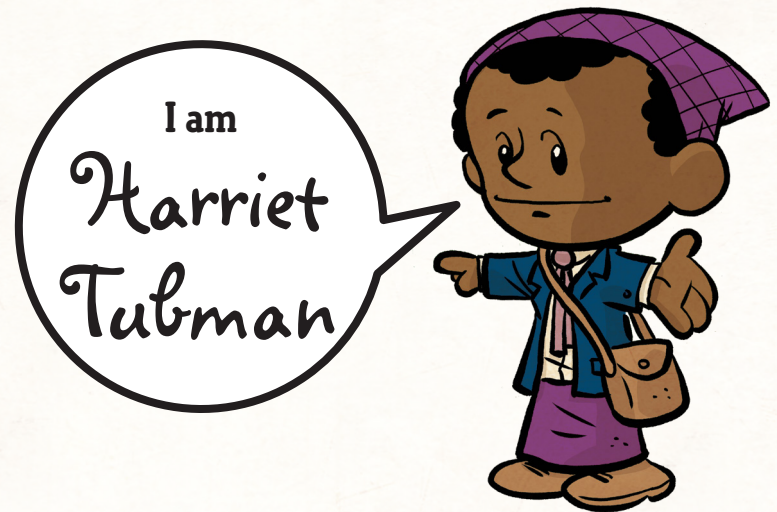
Plan a Living Wax Museum or People's Fair in your classroom! Students will research a specific person from the Ordinary People Change the World series and portray them at the Living Wax Museum, attended by parents, faculty, and other classes.

How it Works

Students will be dressed up as their famous person of study and will stand frozen in front of a display they've created. This visual presentation will incorporate other completed activities from this kit to further portray their famous person's achievements and important life events. Each student will create a button out of construction paper. Once a visitor presses the button, the student will "come to life," recite the speech on their summary card, and answer any follow-up questions from the first-person point of view.

Students will need

- "Hello My Name Is" stickers
- A costume
- A paper button
- Character summary cards
- First-person speech
- Other visual aids and props to accompany their presentation, perhaps displayed on poster board or arranged on their desks



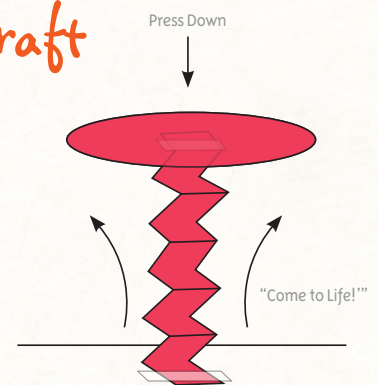
Paper Button Craft

Materials

- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Tape

Instructions

1. Ask students to cut out a small circle from construction paper.
2. Provide students with a thin strip of construction paper that is folded like an accordion.
3. Tape one end of the accordion strip to the center of the circle and the other end on the desk to create a pop-up button that visitors can press.





The Main Event

LIVING WAX MUSEUM

Living Wax Museum Summary Cards

Create a tented summary card for your famous person to be used as a reference during the Living Wax Museum.

Materials

- A piece of cardstock that has been folded in half to stand tented
- Glue sticks
- Lined paper
- Drawing paper
- Crayons

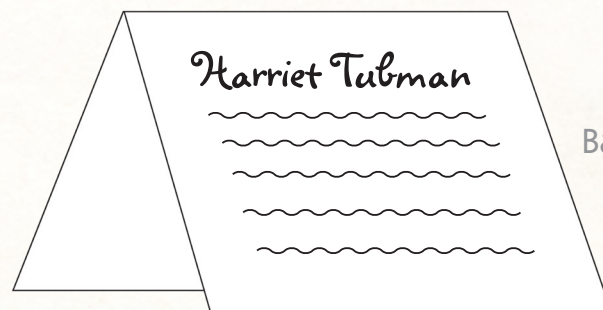
Instructions

1. Write a short summary describing your famous person. Include the information:
 - Person's name
 - Person's date and location of birth
 - A sentence or two about his/her early life
 - His/her accomplishments or claim to fame
 - One or two fun facts about your famous person
 - Where and when he or she died or what he/she is doing today
2. Cut and paste your summary to one side of the cardstock. On the other side, cut and paste a photograph or picture of your famous person.
3. Set up the summary card so that the text faces you and the picture faces your audience. This tented card will be used to help you present your famous person at the Living Wax Museum.

Front



Back





The Main Event

LIVING WAX MUSEUM

Teach with a Speech

The Ordinary People Change the World Series is written from the first-person point of view. Encourage students to imagine themselves as their famous person. What important lesson or message would their famous person want to share with the world? Ask students to write a short speech from the first-person point of view, using the information found in the Ordinary People Change the World Series.

Materials

- Cardstock
- Crayons
- Scissors
- Construction paper
- Lined paper

Instructions

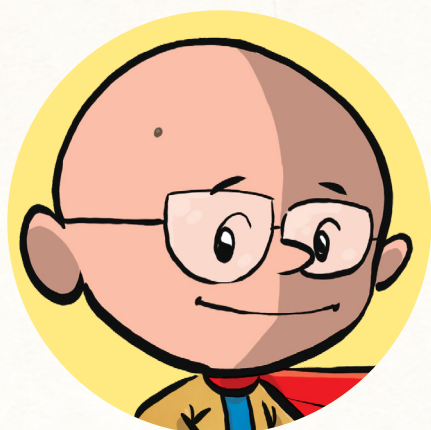
1. The speech can be organized in the following way:
 - Introduction
 - Early life/family life
 - Motivations/challenges
 - Claim to fame
 - Important message or lesson
2. Provide students with a large piece of cardstock and ask them to draw and cut out their famous person.
3. Students will use construction paper on the body to make two flaps that will open to reveal lined paper with the written speech inside (see the picture below.)
4. Students may choose to decorate the outside flap of the construction paper with famous quotes or interesting facts.





From the Author

BRAD MELTZER



Brad Meltzer is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Escape Artist* as well as *Heroes for My Son*, *Heroes for My Daughter*, and many more suspense novels. He also helped find the missing 9/11 flag with his History Channel TV series *Brad Meltzer's Lost History*. He lives in Florida with his wife and their three children.

Visit and learn more at www.bradmeltzer.com.

A Note from the Author:

There is a battle over history today—one that reminds us it's more vital than ever to teach kids that our history and our values are intertwined. This project began a decade ago when I wanted to give my kids better heroes to look up to. Heroes of kindness, perseverance, generosity, and resilience.

Most importantly, I wanted them to see real heroes—Amelia Earhart, Abraham Lincoln, and so many others—as real people, no different from themselves. For that reason, each book tells the story of a hero when **THEY** were a kid. We see them as children. So it's not just Amelia Earhart and Abraham Lincoln being famous—but them being just like us.

Today, Amelia Earhart is an icon, but her whole life was about taking chances, being brave, and finding the strength to do what everyone else said couldn't be done. Lincoln's life was just as powerful, especially when you see how many times he stood up for others. But what I love most is that we start with their childhoods. You see Amelia Earhart as a little girl, building a homemade roller coaster in her backyard; you see Lincoln as a boy, standing up to local bullies. For our kids and for us, these aren't just the stories of famous people. They're what we're all capable of on our very best days.

The end result is this line of children's nonfiction picture books that has truly changed my life. With our ten-year anniversary and with seven million

copies out there, we're giving kids of all ages a complex and beautiful view of history—and a real look at their own potential.

For me, this isn't just a book series. It's my dream for my daughter. My dream for my sons. My dream for all of us who need to see the power of an ordinary person . . . and the power—and potential—in each of us.

Sadly, there's a battle over history today. But the good news is there are heroes everywhere. Yes, well-known ones like Neil Armstrong and Jane Goodall, but also ones like Sesame Street creator Joan Ganz Cooney. There's also policemen like Frank Shankwitz, who helped a little boy with leukemia ride a toy motorcycle and then came up with the idea for the Make-A-Wish Foundation . . . and Dick and Rick Hoyt (known as "Team Hoyt"), a father and son duo who completed marathon after marathon with Dick pushing his son Rick in a wheelchair. And of course, teachers and librarians who change their students' lives every day. Look around. Heroes are far more local than you think.

If you like the books, please share them with your students. **This is our chance, together, to change the world.**

—Brad Meltzer



From the Illustrator

CHRISTOPHER ELIOPOULOS



Christopher Eliopoulos began his illustration career at Marvel Comics, and has worked on thousands of comics, including *Cow Boy* and *Franklin Richards: Son of a Genius*. He is the author and illustrator of the graphic novels *Cosmic Commandos* and *Monster Mayhem*. He lives in New Jersey with his wife and their identical twin sons.

Visit and learn more at www.chriseliopoulos.com

A Note from the Illustrator:

When I was very young, I was extremely shy. I would sit in my room and just draw. It was the way I expressed things. In fact, when I was upset by something, I would draw a little comic of what I was feeling. I'd fold it up into a paper airplane and express mail it down the steps. My mother would read it and then come up to talk to me. Drawing has always been a way for me to let others into my mind, my thoughts, my feelings.

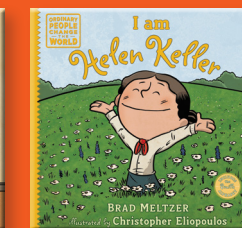
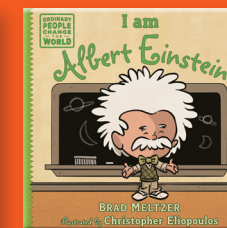
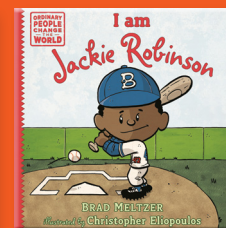
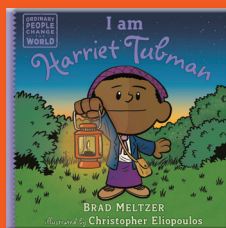
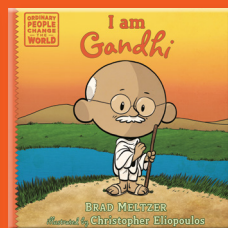
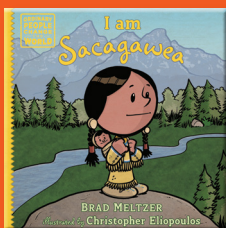
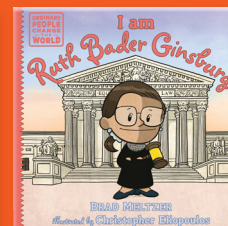
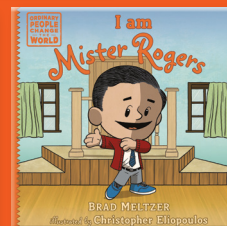
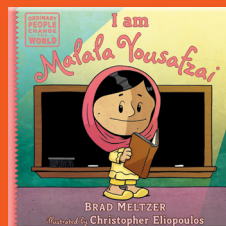
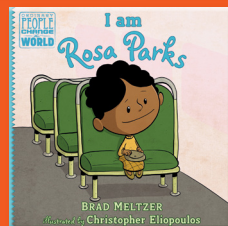
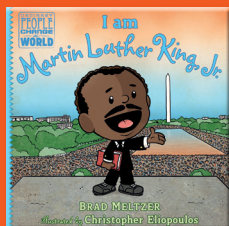
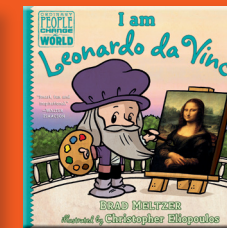
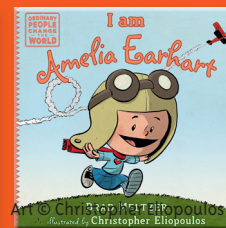
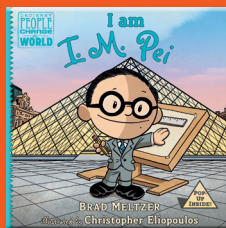
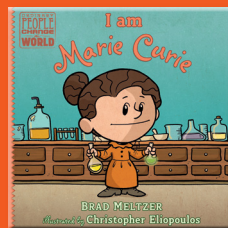
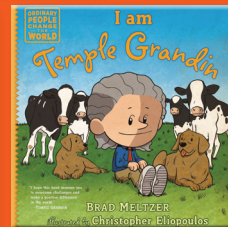
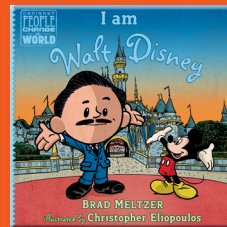
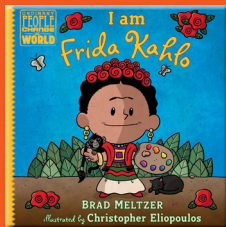
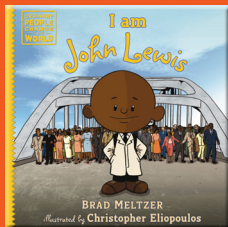
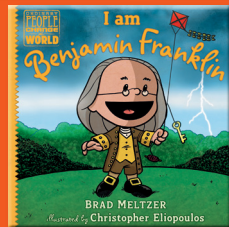
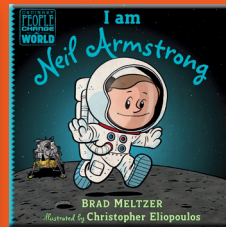
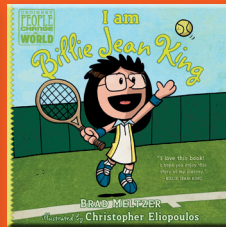
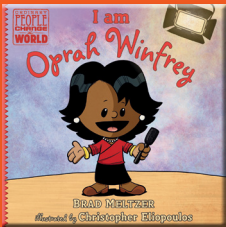
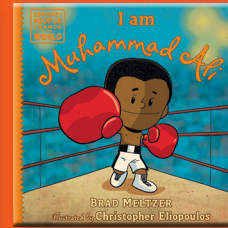
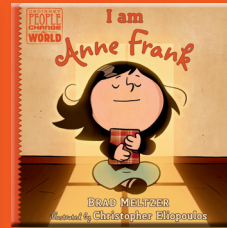
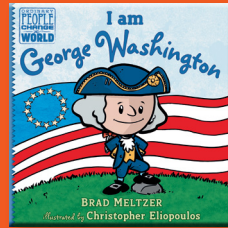
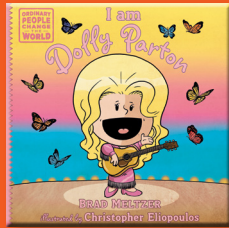
My family spent a lot of time traveling and visiting historic sites when I was a kid, and it was something that sparked my imagination—I became a history buff. As I grew older, that passion evolved into an interest in the actual people. So many figures have been turned into marble statues—gods, even. But if you look at them as humans, faults and all, they are much more interesting and impressive. The fact that these amazing figures were once like you and me—that's something I wish I'd known as a child. I try to help make these books as fun and exciting as I would have wanted them to be.

My parents were always heroes to me. My biggest creative hero was Charles Schulz, the author of the *Peanuts* comic strip. I would find every book I could on him to learn about the man behind the art. Another was the actor Michael J. Fox. I was a really short kid growing up, and seeing someone else who was on the smaller side become a star meant a lot to me. When he was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease, he became more of a hero in how he took a bold stance and didn't shrink away. He helped others realize they weren't alone.

The biggest thing I hope children get from this series is that they are no different than any of the heroes in these books. The qualities that these people had are also inside the readers. **With hard work, or faith in themselves, or compassion for others, they can be just like these heroes.**

—Christopher Eliopoulos

Collect all of the heroes!



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