

F.I.C.—Close Reading of an article on “Being a Hero”

Pre-reading: What does the word Heroic mean? What would you consider Heroic?

(1) What is a hero? What action does one take to become a hero? Who are these heroes that you hear everyone talk about, but never see? The word hero is passed around too much these days. A hero is not a football player that scores the game-winning touchdown or the goaltender who saves his team from a loss. A hero is usually an ordinary person that did extraordinary things. A true hero is really never a hero at all; at least not in their own mind.

(2) When one reads Senator John McCain’s novel *Why Courage Matters*, McCain tells the story of Master Sergeant Roy P. Benavidez. Sergeant Benavidez went on a rescue mission to save wounded brothers; he was the only man to go. Carrying only a knife and a medic bag, he ran to his wounded buddies, sustaining gunshot wounds to his leg, face and head. A helicopter landed to rescue all of the men that were stranded. Benavidez got them all on board the helicopter only for the pilot to be fatally wounded, causing the chopper to crash.

(3) He rescued all of the men from the crash and fought off the Vietnamese Army for six hours with the help of air strikes, circling gun ships, and his own fortitude. A second chopper landed and he boarded his wounded comrades, then he got on and then collapsed. Everyone thought he was dead, placing him in a body bag. While the doctor was zipping up the bag, Benavidez spat in his face to signal he was alive. They flew him to Saigon for surgery, treating him for seven severe gunshot wounds, twenty-eight shrapnel wounds, and bayonet wounds in both arms.

(4) When he was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Ronald Reagan, Benavidez said “I don’t like to be called a hero. The real heroes are the ones who gave their lives for their country.” Such humility and modesty from Sergeant Benavidez is really representative of heroes because they never want the credit.

(5) Heroes are not born heroes. People that fantasize of doing heroic things are never going to be heroes. True heroes are the people that do not think about being a hero; they just do what is instinctive to them and then do not bask in the glory of their actions. It surely was not Roy Benavidez’s plan to go into that combat zone to get shot; he just wanted to save his friends. He just rose to the occasion and did what he thought was right.

(6) What truly makes a hero is the courage to say that it is not oneself that is the hero, it is someone else. In this case, Benavidez says that it was not he that was the hero; it was the faceless men who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

(7) The word hero is always heard these days. One hears the term applied to people where it is not really necessary. Does toughness and fortitude on the field of sports really constitute toughness and fortitude on the field of battle? No, it does not. A man who throws his body on a grenade so that the guys to his left and right can go home and see their children is a hero. A firefighter who disregards his own life for another’s is a hero. True heroes are the people that you do not usually hear about. They are always in the shadows and never in the spotlight and they would not have it any other way.

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Directions: Do not try to do this all at once! Do not jump ahead. Follow the directions carefully. We are going to do a close reading of this article going over it 3 times. 1) Read silently and only circle words you are unsure about to put on the second page in the first box then write what your 1st impression was of the article above in the next box. 2) Reread and mark up the text for info to answer the three questions from the Hero PowerPoint in the “2nd read box.” Include the number of the paragraph in your answers. 3) Skim the text in order to answer the last 2 questions from the Hero PowerPoint in the last box.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

1st read - Copy down the words you circled and leave space to define them:

1st read - First Impressions:

2nd read - Find the Evidence (Read, mark the text with information that answers questions):

3rd read - Central Idea / Purpose (Answer 2 questions and prepare to share this with the class):