

Overview

The lessons and materials of this educational program use narrative and storytelling to provide students with opportunities to strengthen literacy skills, discover and apply the values of rescue, rehabilitation and humane conservation, practice kindness and compassion for living beings, and become a new generation of advocates for animal care and protection.

This program features inspiring, real-life stories of animal rescue, rehabilitation and conservation found in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Humane Heroes Vol. II*, along with resources, and classroom activities to achieve the following goals:

- Discover the ways in which Humane Heroes, or animal caregivers, have an important, global impact on the survival of the world's species
- Increase awareness of local, national and global animal conservation, rescue, and rehabilitation efforts at zoos and aquariums
- Improve students' literacy in reading and comprehending narrative text, speaking and listening, writing in response to reading, and writing explanatory and persuasive texts

Instructional Design

The six lessons for middle school students in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Humane Heroes* support a variety of humane themes and objectives while also reinforcing a specific English Language Arts standard. Each lesson is based on a 3-5 page narrative found in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Humane Heroes Vol. II* and develops one or two student learning objectives inspired by the text. The lessons are designed to stand alone or be taught as a unit and may be delivered in any sequence. Lessons may also include supplemental materials such as graphic organizers, handouts, and background resources, including links to photos, videos, and relevant websites and articles.

The general format and sequence of each lesson follows:

Step	Design	Example Activities
Introduction <i>5-10 minutes</i>	Students engage with the topic and access prior knowledge and experience.	Students respond to a question and share their answers with someone sitting next to them. Then the class listens to a few responses.
Read and Analyze <i>15-20 minutes</i>	Students read a narrative, make connections, respond to discussion questions posed by the teacher, and participate in collaborative group activities.	Students complete a question sheet that identifies interactions and outcomes in a narrative, or practice finding the central idea and then summarize for each other.

Guided Practice <i>15-20 minutes</i>	Students apply learning in a new context centered on humane themes and objectives. For example, students engage in peer-to-peer activities, role-play, create scenarios, and design media campaigns.	Students collaborate in groups to develop a poster collage about the importance of animals in our lives, or role play with each other as animal rescuers and supporters.
Closing activity <i>5 minutes</i>	Provides opportunities for students to self-assess and reflect on new learning and how they might apply their new knowledge and skills in their everyday lives.	Students participate in a gallery walk or compose a written reflection as an exit slip.

Student-Centered Approach

The principles of student-centered learning found in this program include the following:

- Students take responsibility for their own learning when their unique needs and interests are taken into account.
- Students construct knowledge when the learning connects to prior experience and is relevant to their lives.
- Students learn best in a positive environment with strong personal relationships and rich interpersonal interactions.
- Students are naturally curious and want to learn about themselves and the world around them.

Students are meant to take an active role in leading discussion throughout each lesson. Teachers build on students' interests and encourage students to investigate topics and concepts, generating questions and exploring for answers throughout the lessons. Discussion questions and activities are primarily student-centered, with scaffolding from the teacher that guides students through a process of constructive learning.

The lessons use a variety of student-centered creative learning strategies such as the following:

- Scenarios and role-play that help students take ownership of their own learning
- Peer-sharing, collaboration, and peer feedback that strengthen peer-to-peer learning connections
- Real-world applications that engage students in community-based learning
- Discussion questions and activities that connect students with current community issues
- Self-awareness activities that make content relevant and prompt students to reflect through personal narrative writing

Implementation

Chicken Soup for the Soul: Humane Heroes can be implemented easily by a classroom teacher, substitute teacher, counselor, or an extracurricular instructor. The lessons were developed for flexible implementation in a variety of instructional settings including the following:

- Core content (e.g., English language arts, social studies, science)
- Elective classes (e.g., school leadership, health and wellness, ecology, creative arts and self-expression)

- Advisory period, homeroom, or independent study
- After-school programs

Given the strong integration with English Language Arts objectives, middle school teachers may find it most convenient to implement the lessons during an uninterrupted literacy block.

Instructional Time

Each lesson is designed for 45-minute periods. Teachers may collapse or extend the duration of the lessons as they see fit. Lesson activities can be easily modified to allow for more instructional time or to decrease the lesson time based on the daily schedule. In some cases, activities are labeled as optional to extend the learning.

Lesson Preparation

To prepare for a lesson, the teacher should read the Chicken Soup for the Soul: Humane Heroes narrative that is featured in each lesson. Next the teacher should carefully read the lesson, review the activities, and note any additional preparation needed to deliver the lesson. Most lesson activities can be delivered using materials readily available in the classroom. Graphic organizers or handouts should be printed before class. However, if materials are not readily available, all lessons can be modified. In many cases, suggestions for alternative materials and activities are included in the lesson plans.

Modifications

Teachers should make appropriate modifications to lessons for diverse learners:

- Students learning English as a second language may need assistance with vocabulary. Provide ample tools to scaffold vocabulary development including the following:
 - Context clues
 - Dictionaries
 - Prefixes, suffixes, and word roots
 - Word webs
 - Concept maps
 - Word-learning strategies
- Students with learning disabilities may need alternative ways to read the text such as:
 - Shared reading – the teacher and students read the text aloud together
 - Choral reading – students read together out loud
 - Echo reading – the teacher reads a text selection and the students repeat (echo) the same text
 - Chunk the text – the teacher breaks down difficult text selections into smaller parts to better understand the meaning
 - Audio recording or text read directly to the student
- Students with special needs may need assistance performing physical tasks. When available, assistive technology (e.g., amplification devices, voice recognition software, screen readers, eye-tracking technologies) should be used. Other modifications may include the use of large-print text or closed captioning for videos.
- Diverse learners need sufficient time to process questions. Wait between 5 and 15 seconds before calling on students. After asking questions that require deep analysis or synthesis of concepts, encourage students to journal, reflect silently, or discuss their thoughts with a partner.

- Instructors may need to take additional steps to ensure diverse learners successfully complete group projects including the following:
 - Collaborate with an inclusion or resource specialist to differentiate project requirements
 - Integrate IEP goals through differentiated project pathways
 - Reinforce social and emotional skills such as self-awareness, self-management, relationship building, communication, self-advocacy, and decision-making

Access to Text

The narratives used in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Humane Heroes Vol. II* are integral to each lesson. The book and lessons are available at no cost and can be accessed online at www.chickensoupforthesoul.com/ah.

In classrooms where students have access to their own digital devices (e.g., laptop, tablet, or e-reader), teachers may direct students to use a device to read the text. In cases where students do not have access to a digital device, teachers may wish to print and distribute the text to students. Alternatively, teachers may wish to project the narrative on an overhead display.

Each lesson includes additional electronic resources to provide opportunities to extend and enrich student learning. For example, students may be asked to watch a video found on the American Humane website (www.americanhumane.org) and respond to discussion questions in a small group. Check with a school network administrator if you can't access these resources through the school network.

Chicken Soup for the Soul: Humane Heroes Vol. II contains additional narratives that can be used to create activities based on texts that are not included in this series.

Schoolwide Implementation Strategies

Chicken Soup for the Soul: Humane Heroes lends itself to a school-wide thematic approach to the critical work being done by leading zoological institutions to protect and care for the remarkable and endangered creatures with whom we share the earth. Given the importance of humane conservation, and its impact on the future of our world, it is important for students to learn about this and share their learning with large groups of people and communities. As students engage growing numbers of people in such conversations, they practice critical 21st century skills with complex, real-world challenges that affect their future.

Although the program has a strong literacy foundation, the various strategies, activities, and content introduced in each lesson can be applied across multiple content areas. The concepts of animal care, protection and conservation can be easily integrated with science, social studies, and math skills and strategies. For example, students can explore various geographic regions noted in the stories and create a map with labels of the animals saved by their humane heroes. This can be displayed in the main lobby of the school. In addition, teachers in all subject areas can emphasize a broader animal conservation theme in their planning and daily instruction, thereby expanding the concept to include other aspects of ecosystem conservation. Math teachers may wish to use information, facts, or statistics about endangered and threatened animals in word problems or to create visually engaging charts and graphs.

To further promote a school-wide focus on animal care, protection and conservation, students can prepare interesting facts to share during morning announcements. Public service announcements and

videos that explore the many aspects of animal care, protection and conservation, and the roles and responsibilities of humane heroes—and their impact on endangered animals—can be shown during indoor lunch or at other times throughout the day. A school-wide poster competition can bring attention to endangered animals, the roles and responsibilities associated with zoological professions, or other aspects of animal protection and humane conservation efforts.

About

American Humane

American Humane is the country's first national humane organization. Founded in 1877, American Humane has consistently been first to serve in the protection of animals, and is the largest certifier of animal welfare in the world. The organization's life-changing, life-saving programs positively impact some one billion animals each year, helping rescue animals caught in natural disasters and cruelty cases, helping retired military animals and veterans coping with the invisible wounds of war, and helping ensure the welfare and humane treatment of hundreds of millions of animals on farms and ranches, in the world's zoos and aquariums, and in filmed entertainment through their iconic "No Animals Were Harmed®" certification program. For more information, please visit www.AmericanHumane.org. To find a list of Humane Certified zoological facilities, go to www.humaneconservation.org.

Chicken Soup for the Soul

Chicken Soup for the Soul, the world's favorite and most recognized storyteller, publishes the famous Chicken Soup for the Soul book series. With over 100 million books sold to date in the U.S. and Canada alone, more than 250 titles, and translations into more than 40 languages, "chicken soup for the soul" is one of the world's best-known phrases and is regularly referenced in pop culture. Today, 22 years after it first began sharing happiness, inspiration and wellness through its books, this socially conscious company continues to publish new titles, but has also evolved beyond the bookstore, as it continues "changing the world one story at a time®."

Resources for Learning

This program was developed by Resources for Learning, LLC (RFL). RFL is a leading education consulting firm that partners with organizations that provide innovative strategies to improve learning opportunities for all students, especially for those who are traditionally underserved by K-12 schools. In addition to curriculum development, RFL also creates customized professional learning programs for educators, designs performance-based assessments, builds multimedia tools for education, and conducts evaluations of school and district programs.