



Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca
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Liceo Musicale Facsimile di prova a saldo debito di Inglese per la classe 3

'Heroes'

The idea of a hero or heroine has changed dramatically throughout history. At the time of the Ancient Greeks, for example, a hero was a demigod. Stories of heroism served as moral examples and hero cults that venerated deified heroes such as Heracles, Perseus and Achilles played an important role in Ancient Greek religion. The word 'hero' in fact comes from the Greek word meaning 'hero, warrior', literally 'protector' or 'defender'. The word came to refer to characters who, in the face of danger and adversity or from a position of weakness, display courage and the will for self-sacrifice – that is, heroism – for some greater good of all humanity. This definition originally referred to martial courage or excellence but has been extended to more general moral excellence.

In Anglo-Saxon Britain a hero was definitely seen as a defender. In times of uncertainty and invasion, a physical hero was needed, capable of defending his people from enemies and demons. The ability to fight and warrior skills were the most important attributes. As times changed and there was less fear of foreign invasion, heroes were rebels against authority, men, like Robin Hood, who defended the poor against the cruel misuse of power by those in authority. Heroes and heroines were those who believed in a cause and were willing to fight and suffer or risk death to achieve what they believed to be right. Christopher Columbus was a hero, Garibaldi too and all the many who ventured into the unknown in search of new conquests.

What about modern heroes? The modern hero is less of a physical warrior. In an age of sophisticated weapons, physical powers are somehow less convincing. We now have two distinctive types of hero: the superhero and the ordinary or 'accidental' hero. The superhero is a type of conventional character, possessing 'extraordinary or superhuman powers', dedicated to protecting the public. Since the debut of the prototypical superhero Superman in 1938, stories of superheroes – ranging from brief episodic adventures to continuing years-long sagas – have dominated comic books and crossed over into other media, especially films.

Traditionally, a superhero will regularly engage in physical and strategic combat with a collection of recurring eccentric and iconic villains. Superheroes combat threats against humanity, such as aliens and supernatural or mythological entities, or threats posed by supervillains. All the computer-generated graphics and the 3-D possibilities of cinema make the superhero a real must for modern film genres.

Ordinary or 'accidental' heroes are ordinary people who find themselves in extraordinary circumstances and act with courage and skill against great odds, often saving the lives of others. An example of this kind of hero is the American pilot who landed his stricken plane on the Hudson River when all the engines failed, saving the lives of 165 passengers.

Maybe this is the kind of hero we identify with most. An act of breathtaking bravery that brings a lump to your throat. We like to think we are all capable of acting heroically if and when the need arises. If there is a moral element involved – then even better –, we want to be on the side of good as opposed to all the forces of evil. (532 words)



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- 1 For the Ancient Greeks heroes were
 - A an important moral lesson.
 - B a religion.
 - C a type of god.
 - D religious leaders.
 - 2 What were the most important characteristics of an Anglo-Saxon hero, according to the text?
 - A Supernatural abilities.
 - B Self-sacrifice.
 - C Religious beliefs.
 - D Physical strength and fighting skills.
 - 3 The author gives 'Robin Hood' as an example of which kind of hero?
 - A One who protects the rights of the vulnerable.
 - B One who fights against authority.
 - C One who has warrior skills.
 - D One who conquers the unknown.
 - 4 What is meant by 'computer-generated' in paragraph 4?
 - A Actors created with the help of computers.
 - B Films made especially for the computer.
 - C Special effects in films created by the use of computers.
 - D Actions in films highlighted by computers.
 - 5 What example does the author give of an ordinary hero?
 - A An American passenger who is fighting terrorism.
 - B A man who saved the Hudson River.
 - C An American airline that saved 165 passengers.
 - D An American pilot making an emergency landing on water.
 - 6 Which definition is closest to the author's idea of modern heroism?
 - A Everyone is a hero.
 - B Everyone can be a hero.
 - C Everyone likes to think they might be a hero in the right circumstances.
 - D **Only truly exceptional people can be heroes.**
- 2 Complete the questions and short answers using the correct form of the passive.
- 1 _____ the play _____ (perform) at the new theatre now?
Yes, it _____.
 - 2 _____ this song _____ (play) by U2 last year?
No, it _____.



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- 3 _____ the crime _____ (solve) by the police yet?
No, it _____.
- 4 _____ Dad _____ (promote) next year, do you think?
Yes, he _____.
- 5 _____ Laura often _____ (mistake) for a film star?
Yes, she _____.

Make an affirmative sentence, negative sentence or question using 'used to + infinitive':

- 1) I / live in a flat when I was a child.
[.]
- 2) We / go to the beach every summer?
[.]
- 3) She / love eating chocolate, but now she hates it

Put the verbs into the correct tense (Simple Past or Past Perfect).

1. My friend (eat) up all the biscuit we (bake) .
2. The teacher (correct) the tests we (write) .

Complete the sentences in reported speech. Note whether the sentence is a request, a statement or a question.

1. He said, "I like this song."
→ He said
2. "Where is your sister?" she asked me.
→ She asked me
3. "I don't speak Italian," she said.
→ She said



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Choose the correct word:

- 1 Sarah has a *afraid/fear* of heights. She won't even climb up a ladder!
- 2 She never gets *anger/angry*. She always solves problems in a calm manner.

Complete the sentences with the correct abstract noun form of the words given.

- 1 (*lonely*) is something I'm afraid of. I need to be around other people.
- 2 He is well-known for his (*leader*) skills. Everybody does what he says!
- 3 In many countries, people are still fighting for their (*free*).

Literature

- 1 What was the predominant view of society in the Middle Ages?

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- 2 Why is Chaucer's masterpiece called *The Canterbury Tales*?

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