# School Hero

## Years 3 to 6

National Australia Day Council
Teaching and learning resources

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Australia Day

# School hero

## Years: 3–6
## Inquiry Focus: Active citizenship

## At a glance

▶ What makes an Australian of the Year candidate?

▶ What do these people demonstrate about being an Australian citizen?

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### Inquiry overview

▶ Students investigate the qualities that characterise an award winner from any of the Australian of the Year Awards categories. They examine the criteria used to nominate and select the range of awards candidates and then consider how the criteria might apply to a 'hero' in their school community.

▶ Using the Australian of the Year Awards criteria as a basis, students collaboratively create a set of criteria and a selection process for a school-based award for a person who positively contributes to the life of the school community.

▶ Students create a video nomination for their hero or design a poster that lists their hero's qualities and achievements.

▶ Students work in small groups. Some groups collect evidence to support the nomination, including testimony from members of the community. They use the video story of the person to create an entry for consideration by the class or school. Other groups prepare certificates and design an award. Others prepare reports for the school website and newsletters.

▶ School hero awards could be delivered at a school assembly or in conjunction with the visiting Australian of the Year Tour of Honour program.

**Note:** The activities are written for a whole school award program, but could be easily adapted for a class hero.

# Links to the Australian Curriculum

## Year 3 History

| | Australian Curriculum version 7.5 | Australian Curriculum version 8 |
|---|---|---|
| **Knowledge and understanding** | The role that people of diverse backgrounds have played in the development and character of the local community (ACHHK062) | How the community has changed and remained the same over time and the role that people of diverse backgrounds have played in the development and character of the local community (ACHASSK063) |
| **Inquiry and skills** | Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies (ACHHS071) | Present ideas, findings and conclusions in texts and modes that incorporate digital and nondigital representations and discipline-specific terms (ACHASSI061) |

## Years 3–6 Civics and Citizenship

| | Australian Curriculum version 7.5 | Australian Curriculum version 8 |
|---|---|---|
| **Knowledge and understanding** | **Year 3**<br>Why people participate within communities and how students can actively participate and contribute (ACHCK003) | Why people participate within communities and how students can actively participate and contribute (ACHASSK072) |
| | **Year 5**<br>Why people work in groups to achieve their aims, and how they can express their shared beliefs and values and exercise influence (ACHCK027) | How people with shared beliefs and values work together to achieve a civic goal (ACHASSK118) |
| | **Year 6**<br>The obligations citizens may consider they have beyond their own national borders as active and informed global citizens (ACHCK039) | The obligations citizens may consider they have beyond their own national borders as active and informed global citizens (ACHASSK148) |

# Links to the Australian Curriculum

## Years 3–6 Civics and Citizenship

| | Australian Curriculum version 7.5 | Australian Curriculum version 8 |
|---|---|---|
| **Inquiry and skills** | **Year 5**<br>▶ Develop questions and gather a range of information to investigate the society in which they live (ACHCS028)<br>▶ Interact with others with respect, identify different points of view and share personal perspectives and opinions (ACHCS031)<br>▶ Work in groups to identify issues and develop possible solutions and a plan for action using decision making processes (ACHCS032)<br>▶ Present civics and citizenship ideas and viewpoints for a particular purpose using civics and citizenship terms and concepts (ACHCS033)<br>▶ Reflect on personal roles and actions as a citizen in the school and community (ACHCS034)<br><br>**Year 6**<br>▶ Develop questions and gather a range of information to investigate the society in which they live (ACHCS040)<br>▶ Interact with others with respect, identify different points of view and share personal perspectives and opinions (ACHCS043)<br>▶ Work in groups to identify issues and develop possible solutions and a plan for action using decision making processes (ACHCS044)<br>▶ Present civics and citizenship ideas and viewpoints for a particular purpose using civics and citizenship terms and concepts (ACHCS045)<br>▶ Reflect on personal roles and actions as a citizen in the school and community (ACHCS046) | **Year 5**<br>▶ Develop appropriate questions to guide an inquiry about people, events, developments, places, systems and challenges (ACHASSI094)<br>▶ Work in groups to generate responses to issues and challenges (ACHASSI102)<br>▶ Present ideas, findings, viewpoints and conclusions in a range of texts and modes that incorporate source materials, digital and nondigital representations and discipline-specific terms and conventions (ACHASSI105)<br>▶ Reflect on learning to propose personal and/ or collective action in response to an issue or challenge, and predict the probable effects (ACHASSI104)<br><br>**Year 6**<br>▶ Develop appropriate questions to guide an inquiry about people, events, developments, places, systems and challenges (ACHASSI122)<br>▶ Work in groups to generate responses to issues and challenges (ACHASSI130)<br>▶ Present ideas, findings, viewpoints and conclusions in a range of texts and modes that incorporate source materials, digital and nondigital representations and discipline-specific terms and conventions (ACHASSI133)<br>▶ Reflect on learning to propose personal and/ or collective action in response to an issue or challenge, and predict the probable effects(ACHASSI132) |
| **General capabilities** | Critical and creative thinking, Ethical understanding, Information and communication technology capability, Literacy, Personal and social capability | |

# At a glance

The following 'Getting started' activities provide a lead-in to the main themes of this inquiry sequence – the qualities displayed by winners of the Australian of the Year Awards and the process used to decide Australian of the Year Awards winners. Students begin the unit by focusing on the qualities that make a person a hero as a way to reflect on how ordinary people can be heroes, or do extraordinary things.

## Who is your hero?

1. Ask students to think of a person who they consider to be a hero and their reasons for selecting them

   Students might select someone in their own family, or from their school or local community. The person might be a celebrity or television personality, someone from the past or someone from overseas.

2. In pairs, students discuss their hero and explain why they have chosen them. Alternatively, students could create an annotated drawing of their hero to share with a partner.

   Some students may choose someone whose hero status is largely based on physical beauty. Encourage students to focus on positive character traits, achievements or values that their hero personifies to them rather than physical attributes or fame. Similarly, some students may choose animated characters or characters from fiction. Use professional judgement to decide whether these examples are appropriate.

3. Students share their nominees, focusing on the personal qualities that they identified as being important. They discuss the reasons why they chose a particular person as their hero, considering:

   ▶ the qualities of their hero

   ▶ different types of heroes, including personal heroes (such as a parent), group heroes (such as a sporting team) or public heroes (such as a community leader)

   ▶ the actions or achievements of a hero: what matters?

4. Prepare a table on the board that lists the students' heroes and the qualities that they showed. Encourage students to provide examples of what their hero did or has achieved.

For example:

| Hero | Achievements | Qualities |
|------|-------------|-----------|
| **My Grandmother** | She looks after us after school every day and doesn't get paid. She makes us nice biscuits when we get home from school and listens to our stories. | Generosity, kindness, thoughtfulness |
| **The canteen manager** | She always has our lunches ready and smiles at us when we go to the canteen. Sometimes she gives us our lunch if we forget to bring our lunch money. | Generosity, kindness, thoughtfulness |

Some students may also consider those who have achieved international recognition.

| Hero | Achievements | Qualities |
|---|---|---|
| **Malala Yousafzai** | Fought for girls' right to an education in Pakistan; received the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize | Strength, determination, bravery, tenacity, justice, fairness, equality |
| **Matildas: Australian women's soccer team** | Won many games in the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup | Strength, tenacity, athletic skill, teamwork |

5. Students discuss what the class table indicates.

   ▶ What words are commonly used to describe these heroes?

   ▶ To what extent are there similarities between the characteristics of each of the heroes? Have they helped others? Do they have a strong belief in a cause or issue? Have they done things without expecting a reward or anyone to notice? Have they done something for the community? Have they been selfless, brave, inventive? Do they see a better way to live or to do things? Do they have special skills or abilities?

   ▶ The class then decides on an appropriate definition of a hero.

6. People can display heroic qualities in everyday life. Invite students to identify some of the heroic qualities that their classmates demonstrate. Consider the people listed on the board, and how different qualities are important to different people. Why? If you had to select one person from the list as the most outstanding, who would it be? Break into groups and discuss.

   This discussion is designed to arouse passions. Encourage a range of opinions so that students are made aware of the difficulty of making a unanimous decision.

# Process

## Australian of the Year Awards

1. Introduce the Australian of the Year Awards.

   ▶ Ask students to consider ways that the community recognises outstanding people. Introduce the notion of awards and ask students to name some awards they know. If not named, introduce the Australian of the Year Awards to the class and ask students to share their knowledge of the event and any award winners they know.

   ▶ Invite students to brainstorm how they think Australians of the Year are selected. Have them reflect on what was learned in the previous section about the qualities of a hero and the difficulty of selecting just one from the list.

   ▶ Explain how the selection process takes place and the criteria for selecting nominees for the Australian of the Year Awards.

2. Display the Australian of the Year Awards website (*www.australianoftheyear.org.au/the-awards*) and discuss the various categories listed.

3. Go to the following sections of the website to learn more.

   ▶ **Award categories:** A brief overview of the four major Award categories and links to current and past award winners

   ▶ **Key dates:** An overview of the key phases of the selection process

   ▶ **Criteria:** The major selection criteria and considerations used by the selection panels

   ▶ **Selection:** A brief overview of the process from state and territory selection to the national selection panel

## Are there heroes at school?

1. Students discuss whether there are heroes at school. Who would they be? How would the school decide?

   ▶ Explain that the class will be selecting a school hero just like the Australian of the Year Awards do.

   ▶ Divide the class into two groups. Using the Australian of the Year Awards website have one group responsible for the criteria or qualities needed to win the school hero award and the other group responsible for the process to decide the winner. Alternatively, undertake these tasks as a collaborative whole-class activity in two stages.

   Encourage students to use the Australian of the Year information with purpose and as a potential model for deciding their own school hero.

| Group | Responsibility |
|---|---|
| **Group 1: Criteria for deciding school hero** | **Students investigate the criteria for deciding the Australian of the Year Awards. They look at:**<br>▶ *www.australianoftheyear.org.au/the-awards/criteria*<br>▶ *www.australianoftheyear.org.au/the-awards/awards-history/choosing-the-winners*<br><br>**They will find that a hero:**<br>▶ demonstrates excellence in their field<br>▶ makes a significant contribution to the Australian community<br>▶ is an inspirational role model for the Australian community.<br><br>**Students:**<br>▶ discuss the meaning of key terms used in the criteria (eg excellence, significant contribution, inspirational, role model)<br>▶ investigate one Australian of the Year Awards winner to describe the qualities they demonstrated and why they were awarded the title (eg Rosie Batty *www.australianoftheyear.org.au/honour-roll*)<br><br>**In pairs, students discuss:**<br>▶ what qualities a school hero demonstrates<br>▶ whether they can use the same criteria for the Australian of the Year Award as for the school hero award<br>▶ what changes they need to make.<br><br>Group 1 decides the criteria to be used and, as the 'experts' on criteria, they present their decision to the rest of the class.<br><br>In this situation, it is preferable to have a few criteria (eg the contribution to the school in a range of fields and the ways the person inspires us). |

| Group | Responsibility |
|---|---|
| **Group 2: Process – nomination, application, decision** | **Using the following links, students make a flowchart of the process used to decide the Australian of the Year Awards:**<br>▶ *www.australianoftheyear.org.au/nominate/tips-for-nominating*<br>▶ *www.australianoftheyear.org.au/nominate/example*<br>▶ *www.australianoftheyear.org.au/the-awards/selection*<br>▶ *www.australianoftheyear.org.au/the-awards/awards-history/choosing-the-winners*<br><br>**In pairs, students discuss:**<br>▶ whether to use the same process for the school hero<br>▶ if not, how the process will be different, and why?<br><br>The emphasis is on the decision-making process (eg one person, one vote? A panel? Who should be on the panel?)<br><br>After discussion among Group 2 students, consensus is reached to decide on the response.<br><br>As the 'experts' on this part of the Australian of the Year Awards selection process, Group 2's decision is presented to the whole group. |

2. Once criteria and a selection process have been agreed to, students engage in the process of supporting their candidate, reporting on the outcome, designing the award or being part of the judging panel.

## Decide on a school hero

1. 1. Divide the class into six groups, each with responsibility for one part of the school hero project. It is recommended that no more than three heroes be nominated and that the time allocated to this segment of the unit be clearly indicated. The Australian of the Year honour roll (*www.australianoftheyear.org.au/honour-roll*) should provide sources for ideas and encourage discussion.

| Group | Responsibility |
|---|---|
| **Group 1: Hero team 1**<br><br>**Group 2: Hero team 2**<br><br>**Group 3: Hero team 3** | **Each 'hero team' group is responsible for nominating one candidate. After deciding who will be nominated, each hero team prepares:**<br>▶ a nomination form using their own criteria<br>▶ testimonies from reliable sources (ie why this person should win the hero award)<br>▶ a video speech to support the nomination.<br><br>The teams can find ideas on the nomination page of the Australian of the Year Awards website (*www.australianoftheyear.org.au/nominate*). |
| **Group 4: Judging panel** | This group assesses all applications, prepares questions for the candidates and views their videos. They will decide who wins the award of school hero. Members of this group might also assist the reporters or the design team prior to the judging process.<br><br>They may find useful information on the criteria page (*www.australianoftheyear.org.au/the-awards/criteria*). |
| **Group 5: Promotion team** | This group plans the awards ceremony. They also write an article on the awards process, the nominees and the winner, and provide photos of the event for the school website or newsletter. As part of their responsibilities, this group also prepares invitations for parents, other classes, the principal, school council representatives and other community representatives as appropriate. They may contact the local council, local newspapers or community news websites about the event.<br><br>The official announcement is a significant part of Australia Day Eve, but it wasn't always so. Share some of the background of the Australian of the Year Awards with students and encourage them to consider ways to make the school announcement memorable.<br><br>The announcement page may be useful (*www.australianoftheyear.org.au/the-awards/awards-history/the-official-announcement*). |
| **Group 6: Design team** | Award winners receive special trophies and certificates to mark their award. Designing these awards is a considered process as it is important that the trophy is a symbol of the school and the community. This group is responsible for the design and production of the trophy and certificate for the winner.<br><br>**The following pages may be useful, but there should be an emphasis on images from the school and local community:**<br>▶ *www.australianoftheyear.org.au/the-awards/awards-history/medallions-and-trophies* |

2. Using the process decided on previously, the class elects or selects their school hero.

3. Make an 'event' out of the announcement. The event should recognise all the nominees and their achievements as well as the winner. Schools might use a school assembly as a way not only to recognise the 'hero,' but also to acknowledge the learning that all the students who participated in the investigation have achieved.

4. Further discussion about the values embodied by the school hero – and the Australian of the Year Awards winners – could be a source of ongoing discussion about the qualities and achievements that we value.

> **Note:** As part of your school hero celebrations, you could invite the current Australian of the Year or state finalist to visit the school or community as part of the Tour of Honour program.

## Action options

1. Students discuss whether the school hero award should be an annual event.
   - ▶ What will we need to do to make this happen?
   - ▶ What changes might we make if we were to have a school award again?

2. As a class, students consider a member of the local community who they believe to be a local hero. Collaboratively prepare a case using the criteria and tips on the Australian of the Year Awards website. As a school, via the school representative council, through the school council or principal, complete the nomination form. Dates for nominations are available on the Australian of the Year Awards website (*www.australianoftheyear.org.au/nominate*).

3. The Australian of the Year Awards winners are also recognised on the Australian of the Year Walk in Canberra, a series of bollards that represent each year's winners. Invite student groups to design a permanent marker for the school that has the capacity to be added to each year in the same manner as the Australian of the Year Walk. The design could incorporate human-made or natural elements such as plants.
   - ▶ *www.australianoftheyear.org.au/the-awards/awards-history/australian-of-the-year-walk/*

## Looking back, looking forward

1. After engaging with this inquiry sequence, students return to original activities regarding their own heroes. Do students still have the same heroes who inspired them at the start of this inquiry? Do they need to add to the class list of a hero's attributes? Why is it important to have heroes? In what ways can their actions inspire us?

2. Students discuss:
   - ▶ Why is it important that we have these awards in our school or in Australia?
   - ▶ Can I be a hero? What do I need to do to make that happen?

# Assessment

There are many informal opportunities to assess student achievement in this investigation, especially in areas such as cooperation, collaboration, participation and informed decision-making.

The major small group task can provide a more targeted opportunity for students to learn about the Australian of the Year Awards, use research and ICT skills and to positively interact with others.

## Assessment task: Reflective piece

▶ What did I learn about making decisions, the Australian of the Year Awards and the importance of heroes from the school hero investigation?

▶ What should we do differently next time?

## Suggested assessment criteria

| Extent to which the reflective piece demonstrates … | Low | Medium | High |
|---|---|---|---|
| a comprehensive description of learning | | | |
| an understanding of the purpose of the Australian of the Year Awards | | | |
| an understanding of the process used to determine the Australian of the Year Awards winners | | | |
| appropriate use of key terms and concepts (eg criteria, nomination) | | | |
| used appropriate research strategies for their group project (eg internet searches, use of the Australian of the Year Awards website, contact with local councils, interviewing) to find information | | | |
| an ability to reflect on what has been learned | | | |
| an ability to use the experience and to articulate what this means for future learning | | | |
| other (teacher or students to insert) | | | |

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Writer: Geraldine Ditchburn

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