

# Kids Celebrate Legendary Heroes



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Heroes

It is the dead of winter and many students learn and celebrate legendary heroes in daily curriculum assignments. Key themes may focus on Black History Month, presidents' birthdays, and women's contributions to history. Three primary grade classes partnered together to learn more about a specific leader's contributions during a Black History Month project.

Researching, Reading, Writing, and Discussing Legendary Leaders

Summarized below are the various activities students completed on this two-day project:

Students read and discussed each assigned hero's contributions to history with classmates in a group setting.

They then researched biographical information about the leader in published books and through teacher

generated online articles and wrote reports about their assigned leader.

Third grade students researched added information about their assigned hero by using online AI search applications that linked to originally published online articles.

After 2 hours of reading, writing, and researching, small groups of students met together to complete a biographical information template on the same assigned leader.

Academically challenged students worked in a teacher led small group to complete their project.

The teacher then presented a sample completed biographical template on each assigned legendary leader to the small groups for checking the accuracy of their gathered information.

After completing the written report and the biographical information sheet, students met as a class to share what they learned about each assigned leader. Second-grade students completed research on five leaders. Third grade students completed a comprehensive study on three legendary leaders.

After further discussion, students assembled their reports and created a poster with a significant fact or quote about their assigned legendary leader. They would use these posters about their assigned hero for a gallery walk with three classes on 8 legendary leaders the next week of school.

## The Gallery Walk

On the assigned day, 73 students met in the cafeteria to learn about two different legendary historical leaders.

We also wanted to support students in their collaborations through cooperative participation. We clustered and set up chairs for each assigned legendary leader. The reporting second grade students stood by a chair of their assigned leader cluster. The observing third grade students walked around and approached one group of reporting students. Each reporting student held up their sign to educate the observing student. Then the reporting student helped the observing student complete a simplified notetaking form about their assigned leader. After 15 minutes, the third-grade students left the first cluster and approached a second cluster of second grade students of a legendary leader. This process was repeated two more times with the third-grade students acting as reporters and the second-grade students acting as observers.

### What We Learned

We must limit the size of the group to only two classes at a time with one class reporting and the other observing and taking notes. This will allow more time for pairing and sharing with a designated leader. It is also suggested that second grade students teach first grade students and third grade students teach second grade students. The younger students learn so much more when interviewing their older peers. We also need to give students more time and guidance to complete their posters of facts and quotes. Some posters were redundant and others could not be read. The poster activity was valued as an incredible learning tool when thoughtfully completed. At the end of the day, the students were thrilled with their leadership and contributions in this

project-based learning activity. They were proud of their work as many of these projects were featured in the school's hallways.