

# Heroes Among Us Reading Activity

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Looking to find an inspiring hero? You can always find a hero in a good book! Within its captivating pages, read about the life of someone who overcame obstacles, or fought for their rights, or had the integrity to do the right thing even though they may be the odd one out. Consider some of these stories or suggest some of your favorites in the comments below.

## Suggested stories or books on “heroes” may include:

For all ages

- *The Mighty Sequoia*, a poem by Jaime Koo
- *Brave Girl: Clara and the Shirtwaist Maker’s Strike of 1909*
  - *Tasty Baby Belly Buttons*
  - *More Than Anything Else*

For Grades K-3

- *Abe's Honest Words*
- *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez*
- *Superhero School*
- *I Dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsberg Makes Her Mark*

For Grades 4 and Up

- *12 Rounds to Glory: The Story of Muhammad Ali*
- *I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World (Youth)*
- *Wonder*

After reading the poem or any of the books listed above, you can answer the comprehension questions and submit a comment to GenParenting.com comments.

## The Mighty Sequoia

By Jaime Koo

Come, my daughter. Come and hear.

Your mother's mother, the mighty sequoia

Has a story of grandeur supremely clear.

Winds howled, rain poured, lightning struck severe.

Against all odds and likelihood of survival, she flourished.

Her will to grow and to give life, nature would never interfere.

Come, my Son. come, my dear.

Your father's father, the mighty sequoia  
Has a story of gentleness most sincere.

Broken spirits found strength in his listening ear.  
Under his bountiful branches, he bestowed solace and shelter.  
His compassionate, comfortable breeze wiped away each tear.

Come, my child, come never fear.

You are the mighty sequoia  
A hero with the grit to persevere.

Now and again, the trial of a great fire will come near.  
Smoke will blur your vision, flames will threaten to devour.  
Stand tall. You are much stronger than you appear.

Come, my child, come never fear.

In the face of adversity,  
In the spirit of the people,  
In the fury of the fire,  
You are the legacy of the mighty sequoia,  
A hero with the grit to persevere.

## **Ask your children the following questions after reading the poem or another selected book:**

- Did you enjoy this story? Why or why not?
- What was the difficulty that the main character was facing? How would you have reacted in that situation?
- Imagine how this story might be different if it were set in a different culture or time?
- Do you know anyone in real life who reminds you of a character in this story?
- What are some character traits that you like about the main character in the story? What did they do to demonstrate that trait?
- What are some things you can do this week to help others?
- Does this story remind you of any other stories you've read? What is similar?

## **Listed below are relevant California Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy that support elementary school learners:**

- Kindergarten – With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.
- Grade 1 – Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
- Grade 2 – Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

- Grade 3 – Describe characters in a story (e.g. their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
- Grade 4 – Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- Grade 5 – Compare and contrast stories in the same genre on their approaches to similar themes and topics.