

Hmong History & Cultural Studies Model Curriculum
California Department of Education
Hmong Women Public Figures - Choua Thao
Grade(s): 2nd

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Area of Study: Hmong Histories

Compelling Question: How do displacement and war shape Hmong histories and migration?

Lesson Questions (Supporting Questions):

- What makes someone a hero?
- What qualities does a hero possess?
- How is/was Choua Thao a Hmong hero?

Lesson Materials:

- **Supplies:**
 - Access to laptop device
 - Photo of Choua Thao (available on Hmong Museum website)
 - Whiteboard for note-taking
 - Additional materials will vary depending on students' final assessment product: Video format, Artwork, Written product, Oral product
- **Reading:**
 - Biography of Choua Thao (available on Hmong Museum website)
- **Video:**
 - *Hmong Story 40 Interview with Choua Thao* on YouTube

Lesson Objective: Students will learn and discover characteristic traits that a hero can have. Students will examine Choua Thao, a Hmong nurse during the Vietnam War, as an example of a Hmong hero to explore other possible traits of a woman hero.

Standards Addressed:

HSS-2.5 Students understand the importance of individual action and character and explain how heroes from long ago and the recent past have made a difference in others' lives (e.g., from biographies of Abraham Lincoln, Louis Pasteur, Sitting Bull, George Washington Carver, Marie

Curie, Albert Einstein, Golda Meir, Jackie Robinson, Sally Ride).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.6 Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.8 Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.5 Create audio recordings of stories or poems; add drawings or other visual displays to stories or recounts of experiences when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

Lesson Assessment:

Students will reflect on ideal characteristics of a hero and choose from one of the following options to share:

- Student Reflection - This can be a written reflection in the form of a poem or song.
- Draw a photo of your hero and their characteristics - This should be hand colored, drawn, and labeled. Students can follow a similar 'hand, heads, and heart' format from the lesson.
- Present/share a story about your hero - This can be in the form of an artifact presentation of the hero, a video, or slide deck presentation.

Suggested Amount of Time: 45–60 minutes

Lesson Background: The goal of this lesson is to highlight the contribution of women in history, which is not shared enough. Students will learn about Choua Thao, who was a nurse during the Vietnam War, and describe her character and qualities that are heroic.

Note. This lesson would be great to use during Women's History Month in March, alongside all other women who had and/or are still creating movements.

Lesson Procedures:

Engage:

- Write 'Hero' in the center of the board and circle it (create a brainstorm web).
- To start the lesson, ask students if they know what the term 'hero' is. Solicit student responses and add ideas to the brainstorm web.
 - Formal definition: a person admired or idealized for his/her courage, outstanding achievements, or noble qualities

- Then have them share a hero they look up to. This can be someone in their community as well.
 - Add a list of heroes to the brainstorm web.
- Then ask them why these individuals are heroes.
 - Add a list of reasons to the brainstorm web.

Explore:

- Show a photo of Choua Thao
(<https://hmongmuseummn.org/collection/hmong-women-pioneers/choua-thao/>)
 - Write her name on the board.
 - Say her name and have students repeat it.
 - Ask students to make a guess why she is a hero?
- Read aloud her bio from the Hmong Museum website:
 - Use link
<https://hmongmuseummn.org/collection/hmong-women-pioneers/choua-thao/>
 - Periodically pause to help students reflect on their new learning:
 - On the board draw a head, hands, and heart to help students connect what Choua Thao knew, did, and possibly felt based on information gathered from the above source.

Explain:

- After reading aloud her bio:
 - Create a brainstorm web with her name in the center. It would be helpful for students to create their own notes, as the teacher does it on the board.
 - Ask students to describe Choua Thao.
 - For example: nurse, saved lives, top student, trainer
 - From those descriptions, have students attach adjectives and/or verbs to them.
 - For example: nurse - caring, helpful, kind, attentive

Elaborate:

- Show Choua's interview with Hmong Story 40
 - Preview a segment of the clip below to ready students for observing body language. Ask students to share examples of how they communicate with friends and family without using words.
 - Hmong Story 40 - Interview with Choua Thao (3:15 minutes), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OK8T8621ouw>
 - Let students know that some footage is in Hmong, however, have students attend to her body and facial language to draw conclusions of how she is feeling.
- After watching the interview:
 - Ask students if they want to add anymore descriptive words to the brainstorm web.
 - Reference the heroes brainstorm web and Choua's brainstorm web
 - Are there any similarities? What are they?
 - Are there any differences? What are they?
- Give time for students to come up with their definition of what a hero is/does and have them write it down in two to three sentences.
- Give time for them to share.

Evaluate:

- Ask students, "Why was Choua Thao a hero?"
- Student Reflection - Ask students to consider: How can they be a hero to those around them? Or, think of the ideal hero.
 - They can share at least three ways. They can submit reflections in:
 - Student Reflection - This can be a written or recorded reflection in the form of a poem or song.

- Draw a photo of your hero and their characteristics - This should be hand colored, drawn, and labeled. Students can follow a similar ‘hand, heads, and heart’ format from the lesson.
 - Present/share a story about your hero - This can be in the form of an artifact presentation of the hero, a video, or slide deck presentation.
- Be sure to provide opportunities for students to share their final products with peers. Here are some suggestions: Table Exhibits, Gallery Walk, Give One/Get One, etc.

Scaffolding:

- **Engagement:** Consider the following method to support with lesson engagement:
 - Engage learners in assessment discussions of what constitutes excellence and generate relevant examples that connect to their cultural background and interests
- **Representation:** Consider the following method to support with multiple means of representation:
 - Use advanced organizers (e.g., KWL methods, concept maps)
 - Use multiple examples and non-examples to emphasize critical features
- **Action and Expression:** Consider the following method to support in presenting their learning in multiple ways:
 - Embed prompts to ‘stop and think’ before acting as well as adequate space
 - Embed prompts to ‘show and explain your work’ (e.g., portfolio review, art critiques)

For additional ideas to support your students, check out the UDL Guidelines at CAST (2018) <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>.

Multilingual Learner Supports:

- **Emerging:** Consider the following method to support with emerging students:
 - Speaking: Elicit choral responses
 - After reading a shared text, students work with teacher guidance, to retell a familiar story using props and visuals. Teacher encourages the use of transition words as the story retelling progresses. Teacher solicits student responses.
- **Expanding:** Consider the following method to support with expanding students:
 - Speaking: Repeat and expand student responses in a collaborative dialogue

- In partner and group discussions, students use conversation moves to extend academic talk. Conversation moves help students add to or challenge what a partner says, question, clarify, paraphrase, support thinking with examples, synthesize conversation points, etc.
 - Ground rules or guidelines for conversations are used as the basis for constructive academic talk. Teacher provides judicious corrective feedback during student talk.
- **Bridging:** Consider the following method to support with bridging students:
 - Speaking: Require the use of academic language
 - In response to a prompt, the teacher offers a sentence frame orally and/or in writing to support expression of student thinking. Frames are adjusted based upon specific grammatical structure, key vocabulary, content learning, and language proficiency level descriptors, etc. Frames are a temporary scaffold that require modification.
 - Apply domain-specific vocabulary and general academic vocabulary in open sentence frames to perform functions, like describing or explaining, that target specific grammatical structures.

For additional guidance around scaffolding for multilingual learners, please consult the following resources:

- *English Learner Toolkit of Strategies*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/ujkdc2xp1dqjzrlq55czph50c3sq1ngu>
- *Providing Appropriate Scaffolding*
<https://www.sdcoe.net/educators/multilingual-education-and-global-achievement/oracy-toolkit/providing-appropriate-scaffolding#scaffolding>
- *Strategies for ELD*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/dcp15ymah51uwizpmmt2vys5zr2r5reu>
- *ELA / ELD Framework*
<https://www.caeducatorstogether.org/resources/6537/ela-eld-framework>
- *California ELD Standards*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/vqn43cd632z22p8mfzn2h7pntc71kb02>

Enrichment Opportunities:

1. Sample Writing Prompts:
 - Who is a hero in your life and why are they?
 - Write about a time in your life that you helped someone, how did that make you feel and how did it make them feel.

2. The class can explore the gendered dynamic of hero through complicating dominant assumptions that heroic individuals can only be men. Have students talk about unsung heroes or everyday heroes.

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Choua Thao

Refugee, activist, and former Special Guerrilla Unit nurse

Choua Thao was born in Ban Phoukabaht, Xieng Khouang Province on October 8, 1943. At age 11, she was the only Hmong girl to attend school in Ban Phoukabaht while other Hmong girls were helping their families on the farm. She excelled in her studies to become one of the top 5 students.

In 1965, at the age of 13, Thao was recruited for nurse training with the International Volunteer Services (IVS). By the age of 22, she was on her way to be the Head Administrator of Sam Thong Hospital in Laos, which was run by the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) during the Vietnam War. As the administrator of the hospital, she traveled to many countries to recruit young girls to attend nursing school, where she would train them to help care for the wounded.

Thao shares that her role was both rewarding and stressful. She spoke six languages and, as head of administration, oversaw 14 departments in three hospitals. She managed 360 medics and staff. For over seven years she also was the nurse instructor and trainer. All of this at a hospital that treated over 500 patients per day, which mostly included wounded soldiers.

Lee continued to be a Hmong women pioneer in the United States founding the first Hmong women organization: Women Association of the Hmong and Lao. She was invited by President Reagan to Washington D.C. to represent Asian Americans where she advocated for the poor. Lee has received several medals and awards for her work and achievements.