

Year 9 – Heroes – English Knowledge Organiser

Expectations and content

What is this unit about and why do we teach it?

Exploring 'Heroes' by Robert Cormier, gives students a chance to enter philosophical debates on ethics of war and religion. Alongside this, a focus on abusive and manipulative behaviour will help students understand the importance of compassion, forgiveness and justice. By the end of this unit, students will be able to analyse Cormier's choice of language effectively in GCSE style assessments.

Key Vocabulary taught:

Patriot
Grotesque
Frenetic
Surreal
Agitated
Visceral

Key terminology taught:

- Religious allusion
- ATEASE paragraphing
- Extended metaphor
- Symbolism
- Connotations
- Foreshadowing
- Pathetic fallacy

If your child needs support

Suggested activities to help:

- Put yourself into Francis' shoes. He has just returned from war with multiple serious injuries. How would he be feeling, find 10 challenging vocabulary you could use. Then find 3 synonyms for them.
- As we are reading the novel, make a note of any vocabulary you do not understand and look up their meanings.
- Research examples of symbolism and see if you can work out their meaning. Then, look at the examples of symbolism in Heroes. What do you think these could mean?
- You could watch 'Pearl Harbour', a movie about the attack on America which led to them joining the war. This would help put some context to the novel and might help you understand what Francis and the other characters are going through.

If your child needs extension

Questions to discuss with your child:

- Why might people have different definitions of a hero?
- 'War should be made a crime'. Do you agree? Why? / Why not?
- Is it ever ok to kill someone?
- Can you still be considered a good person, if you have done something bad?

Challenging activities to complete:

- Research into a hero, explain why (or why not) you think they are worthy of the title 'hero'. Here are some people you could look at: Malala Yousafzai, Martin Luther King, Alan Turing, Florence Nightingale.
- Think about Larry LaSalle. Near the end of the novel, we learn some new information about him. Knowing this, explain why he should, or should not be considered a hero.

Suggested further reading:

- *'The Book Thief'* by Markus Zusak. Death narrates this book as he follows a young girl who steals books in Nazi Germany.
- *'I am Malala'* by Malala Yousafzai. The girl who stood up for education and changed the world - read up on a real life hero.