



# Resilience Cafe

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# SECTION I.

## Project Overview

### Subjects

English Language Arts, Social Studies

### Time Required

15 hours of class time

### Grade Level

6-8

### Project Idea

Many students who struggle the most in the classroom are often forced to be resilient in their lives outside of the classroom. In the past, the struggles that they faced and overcame outside the walls of the classroom often remained separate and unrecognized. The *Resilience Café* project brings those struggles from the outside into the classroom to be recognized and celebrated for the impact they have on students and the strength they build. The project seeks to connect stories of resilience from history with stories of resilience from our communities and our personal lives.

During *Resilience Café*, students learn about resilient heroes from the past and present, focusing on African-American history from the Civil War through the Civil Rights Movement. Students explore together what it means to be resilient and the music, art, literature, and work that can be born out of resilience. They identify specific attributes to celebrate and communicate. Students connect a resilient historical figure, a resilient community member and their own personal story of resilience through writing and spoken word poetry. They honor their resilient community members by inviting them to a night of celebration through spoken word performances.

### Content and Standards

*Resilience Café* teaches students about the following major concepts and content.

- 👉 Attributes of resilience
- 👉 African-American history, from the Civil War to the Civil Rights Movement
- 👉 How students and members of the community today show resilience

## Common Core Standards Addressed

*Resilience Café* addresses the following Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts. For more information see [corestandards.org](http://corestandards.org).

STANDARD #	STATE STANDARD
6-8.RH.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text
6-8.WHST.1.b	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and data
6-8.WHST.1.d	Establish and maintain a formal style
6-8.WHST.2.a	Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow
6-8.WHST.2.b	Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions and concrete details
6-8.WHST.2.d	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic
6-8.WHST.5	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting or trying a new approach
6-8.WHST.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing
6-8.WHST.8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources
6-8.WHST.9	Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research
8.L.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading and listening
8.L.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings
8.L.5.a	Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context
8.L.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases
8.RI.3	Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas or events
8.RL.10	Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems
8.RL.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings

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## SECTION II. Essential Elements of PBL

### 1. Significant Content

Resilience Cafe is focused on teaching students how to identify important characteristics in historical figures, community members and themselves, and how to draw relevant connections between these traits. Students create original poetry based on professional examples and perform it in a real-world context. This project addresses Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for reading, research, writing, speaking and listening and gives students the opportunity to apply English in an authentic, real-world context (see the complete list of CCSS on page 3 above).

### 2. 21st Century Skills

This project builds students' skills in critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration, and communication, and requires creativity. Students must think critically as they choose and examine historical figures and community members for resilient traits, because they must draw connections between historical figures, community members and themselves. Students work in teams to draft, critique and revise their original poetry, which is based on their research into historical figures and community members. Each student develops important leadership skills in the daily team-based activities and in the final performance, which requires students to perform original poetry in an authentic public event, attended by family and the community members that were the focus of their research.

### 3. In-Depth Inquiry

This project is not meant to be a quick, "fun" way for students to learn basic research skills or poetry terminology. It is, however, intended for students to pursue deep questions about themselves, their communities, and the historical figures that inspire them. Students can only complete this project upon transforming multiple layers of research into various forms of writing, including creative, original poetry.

### 4. Driving Question

The Driving Question for this project may be crafted by the students and teacher working together after the Entry Event, but it will be based on the question, "What can we learn from other people's inspiring stories of resilience that we might be able to use in our own lives?" The question frames the students' research and writing, and is open-ended. While there is no single "right answer," the question lends itself to many unique interpretations that students will use to develop deep, research-based writing, and personal lessons that extend beyond the walls of the classroom.

### 5. Need to Know

As students discover relevant historical figures and community members, as well as hear and see stories of resilience first hand, they have a compelling reason to learn the content and skills inherent in this project. Furthermore, the public performance of the final pieces of poetry drives students to become invested in learning a range of English language arts content and skills.

## 6. Voice & Choice

This project culminates with a spoken word performance of original student poetry—the students share their personal, creative work using their voices. Leading up to this event, students decide which historical figures to study and which community members to interview based on their connections through stories of personal resilience.

## 7. Revision & Reflection

At several checkpoints during the project, students receive feedback from the teacher and from their peers regarding the effectiveness of their research and the progression of their original poetry. Students are asked to revisit work based on successes and perceived areas for growth. As students reflect on their work, they are also required to continue to better define their concept of the type of poetry they are creating. Ultimately this leads to rubric for assessment that is partly created by the individual students.

## 8. Public Audience

This project culminates with a public performance at the Resilience Café, where students perform their spoken word poetry for peers, family members and for the community members that the students chose to study. Midway through the project, students write personal letters to the community members that they studied, inviting them to the final presentation of their work.



# SECTION III.

## Teaching Resilience Cafe

Students complete *Resilience Café* by following a set of activities in a prescribed order. An overview of the project process can be found below. This sequence is logical, but changes may be made to meet time constraints, address the needs of specific student populations, or include additional instructional materials and learning opportunities.

We encourage teachers to adhere to the sequence of activities at least during the first time *Resilience Café* is taught. Each step is discussed in more detail in the following section, the *Step-by-Step Teaching Guide*.



## Sequence of the Project

### Preparing for the Project

- 0 Teacher prepares for successful project implementation.

### Launching the Project

- 1 Students participate in an Entry Event designed to share stories of resilience from history.
- 2 Students share reflections and personal stories of resilience.
- 3 Teacher explains project and students and the teacher develop a Driving Question for the project.
- 4 Students generate a Need to Know list with the teacher.

### Scaffolding and Managing the Project

- 5 Students read and discuss Resilient Attributes document.
- 6 In pairs, students create and present a poster about their assigned resilient attribute.
- 7 In pairs, students research a resilient historical figure.
- 8 Students reflect on resilient attributes they embody and admire.
- 9 Teacher shares a story of a resilient community member who inspires him/her and assigns students the task of interviewing a community member about his/her story of resilience.
- 10 Students work in teams to share their community members' stories of resilience and connect those stories with resilient historical figures.
- 11 Students begin writing *Resilience Cafe* invitation letters to community members.

- 12** Students peer critique and revise their letters.
- 13** Students begin to create spoken word poetry performance pieces.
- 14** Teacher presents spoken word examples to the class to help students understand what spoken word is and is not.
- 15** Students begin creating spoken word pieces with an “Open Mic Day” to help them find their voice.
- 16** Students work on performances pieces in teams, with multiple rounds of critique and practice.

### **Assessing and Showcasing Student Work**

- 17** Students and teacher develop a rubric for final performances through the rehearsal process.
- 18** Students and teacher plan Resilience Café presentation night.
- 19** Students and teacher host the Resilience Café presentation night.
- 20** Students and teacher reflect on the Resilience Café presentations and the project.



# Step-by-Step Teaching Guide

Each of the above instructional activities is discussed in more depth below, with tips for successful classroom implementation.

## Preparing for the Project

**0** Teacher prepares for successful project implementation.

A successful project requires that teachers prepare, plan and communicate before the project begins. For the purposes of this project, *we recommend doing the project in its entirety before starting the project with students*. Although it takes time, doing this will make the project much more meaningful for you and your students, and provides you with first-hand knowledge of potential hurdles and opportunities for success.

To learn how to implement a project, take classes at **PBLU.org**, and earn certification as a PBL Teacher if you try this project with students!

Doing the project yourself includes these steps:

-  Identifying a resilient community member who is significant in your life and connecting them with a resilient figure from history. During this step, make notes so you can show students how to make connections between a community member and a historical figure from history. You may choose to make and share a mind-map, idea web, or other visual to show however you naturally organize your ideas. This may take some time and research to form meaningful connections with shared characteristics.
-  Writing a letter of invitation to a resilient community member who is significant in your life and inviting them to the Resilience Café presentation night—or to share your poetry piece in another format that you can talk about with your students. During this process, you will have a real audience that you care about, as the students will. You can use this experience to explain how you changed your own letter to speak directly to the person you care about. Remember to take notes as you write your letter so that you can narrate your process for your students as they begin their letters.
-  Writing and performing a spoken word piece that celebrates your community member's resilience and his/her connection to a resilient person from history. (Along with sharing this piece with your resilient community member, it should also be shown or performed for your students to show that you see the importance and meaning in the work you are assigning.) While the research and letter writing may be completed in a couple of hours, the spoken word poetry piece will probably take more time (for example, over a few days or a weekend). Ideally, you will find a poet's example or a few examples that inspire your piece. You can share the inspiration with your students and direct them towards resources that will provide them with examples of spoken word pieces that might help them get started, also. You should include in your piece what you most want your students to include in theirs. For example, if symbolism is important, you should use references and/or descriptions that symbolize resilient attributes and connections between your resilient community member and the historical figure.

## Additional Planning Tips:

- If you plan to conduct the Resilience café presentation in a venue other than your classroom, reserve it in advance if need be.
- Communicate with parents about the project and let them know the date and time of the Resilience Café presentation.
- Be sure you have assembled the readings, handouts, and other materials students will need for the project.

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# Launching the Project

- 1 Students participate in an Entry Event designed to share stories of resilience from history.

To begin to engage students in the topic of resilience, use one of the following Entry Events.

## Field Trip

- 👉 If possible, take students on a field trip to a museum where they can learn about people in history who showed resilience in the face of hardship. Suitable museums might be about immigration (such as Ellis Island in New York) or the Holocaust (such as the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles or the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C.). Local and regional museums with exhibits about pioneers and early settlers to a state or region, Native Americans, or historic disasters such as fires, floods or hurricanes might also be appropriate.
- 👉 Spend time before the field trip to teach students about the history behind the exhibits and prepare them for what to look for. During the field trip, have students take notes and photographs to help them remember stories of resilience to share the next day.

## Guest Speaker

- 👉 Invite a guest speaker to tell a story of resilience that students can understand and use as a shared reference as they search for their own resilient community member and resilient historical figure. The guest speaker could be someone who experienced a natural disaster, an inspiring athlete who has persevered through physical challenges, a community member who overcame personal struggles and perhaps created a program for others who struggle in similar ways, or a survivor of a life-threatening illness.

## Video or Website

- 👉 Find powerful stories of resilience, like the examples above for a guest speaker, on video or film. Students could also visit websites as “virtual museums” to read about and see images of stories of resilience.

During or immediately after the Entry Event, have students take notes on questions such as the following:

### Guiding Questions for Entry Event:

- What struck you about the stories of resilience you saw or heard about?
- What challenge did the people/person face and how did they overcome this challenge?

- How did overcoming this struggle help make the people/person stronger?
  - What characteristics helped make the people/person resilient?
- 

**2** Students share reflections and personal stories of resilience to make connections between each other, before they connect with the community.

After the Entry Event, have students sit in a circle and make connections with the stories of resilience they have heard or seen. Invite students to share their own personal stories or stories from their community. To create a physical symbol of resilience as students share, you could have them pass around a ball of yarn to connect with each other and build a “web of resilience.” Cut the yarn into sections at the end of the activity and have students tie the yarn around their wrists to remind themselves about the resilient connections they have made.

Here are some possible prompts for discussion and reflection on the Entry Event experience:

- Phase 1: What struck you about \_\_\_\_\_ (field trip, speaker, video, etc.)?
  - Phase 2: Share a personal story of resilience.
  - Phase 3: Share a story of resilience that affected or inspired you.
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**3** Teacher explains project and students and the teacher develop a Driving Question for the project.

Explain the upcoming project to the class. Lead students in a discussion about what might be an appropriate Driving Question for them to answer in the upcoming project about resilience. Write it together as a class.

**Sample Driving Question:**

*What can we learn from other people's inspiring stories of resilience that we might be able to use in our own lives?*

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**4** Students generate a Need to Know list with the teacher.

Ask students to think of what they would “need to know” in order to successfully answer the Driving Question and complete the project. Have them start writing their questions in small teams before conducting a whole-class discussion. Because the project is wide in scope, break the Need to Know list into five parts.

A Need to Know list for classes that choose to look through a broad, thematic historical lens for examples of resilient historical figures may look like this:

## Example of Initial Need to Know List

### What do we need to know?

#### **Part A: Understanding historical and cultural contexts**

- How do people make it through a disaster or a hard journey?
- How does music help people become resilient?
- How did African Americans show resilience?
- What are some of the stories of resilience from the Holocaust, slavery, or the Civil Rights movement?

#### **Part B: Understanding Resilient Attributes**

- What are some characteristics that help someone become resilient?
- What are some resilient qualities that we have?

#### **Part C: Presentation of a Resilient Historical Figure**

- Who were some people in history who showed resilience?
- Where are some of the resilient qualities of people in history?
- What events pushed him/her to be resilient?

#### **Part D: A Letter of Invitation to Your Chosen Resilient Community Member**

- Who inspires me with his/her resilience?
- Who should we invite to our presentation? Why?
- What should I write in a letter of invitation?

#### **Part E: Writing and Performing a Spoken Word Tribute to Your Community Member's Resilience**

- What is spoken word and where did it come from?
- How can we use spoken word to celebrate resilience?



## Scaffolding and Managing the Project

- 5** Students read and discuss Definition & Attributes of Resilience document.

Distribute copies of Definition & Attributes of Resilience and have students read it. Facilitate a discussion about where they may have seen these attributes in their lives and communities.

The **Definition & Attributes of Resilience** handout may be found in Section IV: Student Handouts.

**6** In pairs, students create and present a poster about their assigned resilient attribute.

Ask students to work in pairs to create a poster about one of the attributes of resilience. The poster should include the following (you may wish to use this as a checklist for assessment or critique purposes):

- Title/Resilient Attribute: Include the terms with a brief definition in your own words.
- A drawing (with captions or self-explanatory) that illustrates the meaning of the attribute or an example of someone showcasing this attribute.

Ask each pair to present their Resilient Attribute posters. The posters stay up in the classroom for the duration of the project to help students remember the definitions and possible applications of each attribute.

**Note:** For more background information to help you discuss the topic of resilience with students during the project, see **Tips to Improve Your Resilience** in Section V, Teacher Materials.

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**7** In pairs, students research a resilient historical figure.

Place students in different pairs, and explain that their task is to research a resilient historical figure and identify at least three resilient attributes he or she embodied.

These resilient historical figures become the pool of people students can choose from to connect with community members and their personal stories of resilience.

The Resilient Historical Figures handout scaffolds the research and writing assignment for the partnership and also provides a list of historical figures to choose from. (For a quick reference guide to each historical figure, see the **Resilient Historical Figures KEY** in Section V, Teacher Materials.)

The **Resilient Historical Figures** handout may be found in Section IV: Student Handouts.

To facilitate student research, consider the use of a “Resilience Reader” that features articles, poetry, short stories or other writings from, about or by resilient historical individuals. The following list is a good place to start for your Resilience Reader:

- *To Kill a Mockingbird* (or other selected Resilient Book Club choices)
- “Still I Rise” by Maya Angelou; “Daybreak in Alabama”
- “I, too” by Langston Hughes
- “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” by Frederick Douglass
- “The Emancipation Proclamation” & “The Gettysburg Address” by Abraham Lincoln
- The Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments
- The Civil Rights Act of 1875; the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Brown vs. the Board of Education
- Jackie Robinson’s Letter to the President
- “A Letter from a Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King, Jr.

As the project progresses, you may wish to require students to contribute selections to the Resilience Reader, either of their own writing, or of good sources they find through their research.

**8** Students reflect on resilient attributes they embody and admire.

Give students the Quick Write prompt below and five to ten minutes to write. This Quick Write is meant to help students reflect on resilient attributes and connect them to their own lives while choosing historical figures and resilient community members:

- Describe a time in your life when you had to be resilient. Circle any resilient attributes you may have drawn on during this experience.

Have students share in pairs and then invite them to share their personal stories of resilience or their partner's story with his/her approval.

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**9** Teacher shares a story of a resilient community member who inspires him/her and assigns students the task of interviewing a community member about his/her story of resilience.

Explain to students that they each need to find a member of the community who inspires him/her by showing resilience. They will interview, write about, and invite this person to the Resilience Café presentation night. As an example, tell the class about someone you know who you think is resilient.

Have students use the Interview Guide to help them through the pre-interview process and in writing questions for the interview and reflections/connections after the interview.

The **Interview Guide** may be found in Section IV: Student Handouts.

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**10** Students work in teams to share their community members' stories of resilience and connect those stories with resilient historical figures.

Form small teams of students to share what they learned from interviewing a community member and decide how this relates to a person in history. The Connecting Community Member, History, and Yourself handout takes the students step-by-step through the process of connecting the community member and the historical figure, then reflecting on themselves.

The **Connecting Community Member, History, and Yourself** handout may be found in Section IV: Student Handouts.

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**11** Students begin writing *Resilience Cafe* invitation letters to community members.

To teach students about the structure and content of a letter inviting community members to the Resilience Café, conduct a shared reading of your letter to the community member whose story you told. Discuss the structure and qualities of a good letter of invitation.

Students should draft letters in class and may use your letter as an example, and draw from their previous work on historical figures as points of inspiration. For students who need the scaffolding you may want to create a template for them to follow, while others may choose to write a more personal letter in their own style.

## 12 Students peer critique and revise their letters.

The letters of invitation should go through more than one round of critique. Students will learn more about the letter writing process by reading each other's letters and discussing the formatting and content of the teacher example. Since the writing is being delivered to a real-world, significant audience, emphasize that the final letters should be free of any errors in grammar and spelling, and should communicate the admiration and sincere respect that students feel towards their community member. Adults or a team of advanced editors in the class should do the final grammar critique. Guide the feedback throughout the writing process with Ron Berger-style "Kind, Helpful and Specific" critique.

Set a clear deadline for mailing all letters. Have your class print and sign the final copies before sealing them in the envelopes and putting them in the mail as a group.

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## 13 Students begin to create spoken word poetry performance pieces.

Use the handout titled Getting Started with Spoken Word to help students begin creating their spoken word piece about their resilient community member.

***Getting Started with Spoken Word*** may be found in Section IV: Student Handouts

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## 14 Teacher presents spoken word examples to the class to help students understand what spoken word is and is not.

At the heart of spoken word is the need to say something. Emphasize that there should be passion in what the students write and how they honor their resilient community member. Their connection to the community member and his/her story should be strong.

To show students what spoken word looks and sounds like, find examples on YouTube or elsewhere on the web. Or, if you can arrange it, invite a local spoken word artist to visit and perform live for the students and explain what spoken word means to him or her. Below is a link to a Prezi.com presentation with YouTube examples of spoken word performances:

- <http://prezi.com/9ur2ydy3ra6s/spoken-word-examples/>

After showing students examples of spoken word pieces, facilitate a class-wide discussion to create a three-column list of what spoken word is "Always," "Sometimes," and "Never." This list can change throughout the project and should stay posted in the room. An example is started below:

### Spoken Word Is...

#### Always

- Passionate
- Full of Voice
- Rhythmic

#### Sometimes

- Rhyming
- Metaphorical

#### Never

- Boring or Dull
- a 5-paragraph essay

**15** Students begin creating spoken word pieces with an “Open Mic Day” to help them find their voice.

Use the prompt below to get students thinking about what they care about before they begin their spoken word piece for *Resilience Cafe*. Have an “open mic” activity the next day in which each student has to go to the mic (using a real microphone is best) and say at least one line of an original spoken word piece they wrote about an issue they care about.

### **Say what you want to say.**

-  What/who makes you mad? What do you want to say to it/them?
-  What/who makes you happy? What do you want to say to it/them?
-  What do you really want to change? How can you change it?

Remember... spoken word came out of the decade of VOICE. Tell your students: use your voice and be heard!

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**16** Students work on performances pieces in teams, with multiple rounds of critique and practice.

Facilitate discussions in which students consider how they would like to revise the three-column lists of what spoken work always, sometimes and never is. Encourage students to consider different elements from peer performances and professional examples as they search for their own style.

This is the stage where students start to focus in on interesting facts they have learned about their resilient community member and their chosen historical figure through the interview process and research.

Form student teams of four to go through multiple rounds of critique to draft and revise their poetry for performance. You may choose to create teams in a variety of ways, but consider students’ working relationships, leadership experiences, and comfort levels with the various aspects of oral performances of poetry.

Use three student handouts for at least two rounds of Spoken Word Critique: Spoken Word Critique Round 1, Spoken Word Critique Round 2, and Critique Reflection.

***Spoken Word Critique Round 1, Spoken Word Critique Round 2,***  
***and Critique Reflection*** may be found in Section IV: Student Handouts.

After each round of critique, bring the class back together to celebrate great lines, which should be recorded and posted around the room throughout the project. Students will learn from each other’s successes and struggles.

Full participation in critiques present useful opportunities for progress checks or other forms of assessment. Students should earn full credit by arriving to class fully prepared, completing all of the steps in a critique and responding thoughtfully to their peers.

As the date of the presentation becomes closer, have students practice on a microphone to prepare for their actual performances during *Resilience Cafe*.



# Assessing and Showcasing Student Work

- 17** Students and teacher develop a rubric for final performances through the rehearsal process.

Work with students to craft a rubric for assessing the spoken word pieces based on the evolving definition the class is creating about what makes a great spoken word piece. Lead a discussion in which the class brainstorms a list of characteristics of high-quality spoken word performance. Below is an example of such a list:

## What makes a strong spoken word performance?

- eye contact
- loud, clear voice (enunciate/no mumbling)
- good grammar (or intentional grammatical choices)
- said with emotion
- intentional hand gestures
- move around on the stage (proximity)
- try not to fidget
- try not to say 'like,' 'um,' 'so,' or other filler words

Use the list of characteristics as the basis for writing a rubric with your class. Consider leaving a blank spot on the rubric for each individual student to create a unique category that relates specifically to his or her poetry. One student might choose to evaluate his or her use of a literary device while another may wish to evaluate his or her effective use of class critiques.

You may use the rubric to evaluate student performances at the final performance, or you may leave that to the students or the audience, depending on the circumstances in your school and community.

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- 18** Students and teacher plan Resilience Café presentation night.

Include students in planning this night of celebration and performance. Use the following prompt to have students write and envision their “dream event” to begin planning how to showcase their work:

*Imagine yourself taking the stage on presentation night, about to perform your piece for Resilience Café. Imagine your whole performance going beautifully! Answer the following questions with what you would most like the answers to be:*

- What does the stage look like?
- What room are you performing it?
- What decorations do you see around the room?
- What is the lighting like?
- What are you wearing?
- Who are you honoring?
- What/Whom do you see in the audience?
- Who are you performing with/ before/ or after?

You could show examples of spoken word performances that are commonly done by performers wearing black and white and performing alone on a simple stage with one microphone.

For a venue for the Resilience Café, you and your students could find a place at school, or consider community spaces such as coffee shops or libraries that may be open to a hosting the event. Regardless of the venue you choose, be sure to make the necessary arrangements to secure the space for the presentation night, allowing time to set up and break down equipment and materials such as a stage, public address system or microphone, seats, refreshments, etc.

As your class plans the Resilience Café presentation, you may wish to create small teams to focus on specific aspects of the event. Each team should have a specific task with easy-to-identify deliverables. For example, you may form teams such as the following:

-  **Publicity:** Create and hang posters promoting the Resilience Café.
-  **Audio:** Set up and test the PA system and microphones, and troubleshoot them throughout the night.
-  **Hospitality:** Set up a welcome area and refreshments for the audience.
-  **Venue Management:** Set up chairs and organize the physical space of the Resilience Café venue.
-  **Display Team:** Print and hang one copy of each student's poetry in a gallery style.
-  **Invitations:** Ensure that every student's letter was received and assist any students whose letter did not generate a response. Invite other teachers, families, community members, etc.
-  **Program Team:** Create a program for the evening with a list of all poets and poetry in the order of the performance.
-  **Production Management:** Communicate with all of the teams to ensure every team accomplishes all of their goals.

Set specific deadlines for each team, and double check that everything is created, printed and turned in before the Resilience Café event. This is another good opportunity for a progress check or other form of assessment.

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## 19 Students and teacher host the Resilience Café presentation night.

The presentation of the students' spoken word poetry at their Resilience Café is a celebration of their personal and intellectual growth. Encourage community members, parents, school staff, and the audience as a whole to listen to their students, take a copy of the program home, and to read the poetry as it is displayed in the exhibition venue.

Remind your audience that some students may reveal sensitive material through their spoken word performance and that you wish for everyone to maintain a supportive environment as every student performs.

**20** Students and teacher reflect on the Resilience Café presentations and the project.

Since the spoken word performance was meant for the invited community member, ask students to reflect and write about how they think and hope they made their invited audience member feel. Use a prompt like the following:

### Reflection on the *Resilience Cafe*

-  Describe how you felt performing your spoken word or music piece on the stage at *Resilience Cafe*. Use sensory details to describe what you saw, felt, heard (even smelled or tasted). Bring the moment back to life on your page.
-  Describe your resilient community member's reaction to your performance. What did he/she say afterwards? How do you think you made him/her feel? Was he/she honored by your piece? Explain why.

Lastly, have students complete the *Resilience Cafe* Spoken Word Reflection sheet, to which you will add your own comments as feedback on their work throughout the project.

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The *Resilience Cafe Spoken Word Reflection* sheet may be found in Section IV: Student Handouts.

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## Extensions to the Project

-  *Resilience Cafe* would be a great project to integrate with an art teacher. In art class, students could create an art piece full of symbolic representations and connections between the resilient community member and resilient historical figure. The art piece could then be given as a gift to the resilient community member who comes to *Resilience Cafe*.
-  The marketing and exhibition of the spoken word poetry offers additional opportunities for art-related project extensions. Your classes may wish to create a logo, a series of posters or fliers, or even custom-printed t-shirts celebrating their work.
-  You may wish to collect the students' poetry and publish it through an online, on-demand printer. Numerous options are available online for low-cost printing—consider this as a natural extension of the poetry performances, especially for those who would like to apply literary analysis techniques to the poetic works.
-  If your school has a recording studio or other audio recording capabilities, consider recording and producing a CD or playlist of students' spoken word pieces. While this may serve as a great supplementary product to share at the presentation, audio recordings also help students critique their own performances and better prepare for the live show.
-  To further develop the students' concepts of resilience, you may wish to bring in lyrics to blues and blues-related music that exhibits concepts of resilience. Consider resources such as the Library of Congress recordings for sources of field hollers and archetypal examples of the Blues, Rhythm and Blues, Rap, Hip-Hop, Rock and Spoken Word.



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# Definition & Attributes of Resilience

**Definition of “resilient”:** Strong, resistant, quick to recover, spirited, determined or flexible.

**Definition of “attribute”:** Quality, characteristic or trait.

## What is Resilience?

- Resilience is the ability to adapt to adversity, to roll with the punches and cope with life’s misfortunes and setbacks.
- Resilience will help you survive challenges and even thrive in the midst of hardship. It can help you endure loss, chronic stress, traumatic events and other challenges both big and small.
- Resilience won’t make your problems go away, but resilience can give you the ability to see past them, find enjoyment in life and handle stress better.
- Resilience is developing “Internal Resources” (skills and coping mechanisms to improve your mental well-being) that you can draw on throughout life’s ups and downs.
- Becoming more resilient takes time, practice, experience and often guidance from others.
- Resilience doesn’t mean you ignore your feelings. When adversity strikes, you still experience anger, grief or pain, but you’re able to go on and remain generally optimistic and go on with your life.
- Being resilient also doesn’t have to mean going it alone. In fact, being able to reach out to others for support is a key component of being resilient.

## 17 Attributes of Resilience

The following attributes describe resilient people. Keep in mind that you – like most people – may show some, but not all, of these attributes/strengths when faced with difficult situations and challenges. You don’t need to show all of these attributes in to be considered resilient.

- 1. Sense of Humor** — Resilient people don’t take themselves too seriously; this does not mean they cannot be serious at times but they have a sense of humor about life’s challenges. Humor is the ability to find something funny (especially yourself!) in a situation, even when things seem really bad. Humor often gives you the perspective needed to relieve tension and make a situation better.
- 2. Optimistic** — Resilient people look at the bright side of a situation. They believe in their own strength and their ability to address and overcome any problem. They see something negative as an opportunity to do something better or get something better. They consider adversity a challenge not a threat.
- 3. Faith** — Resilient people have a spiritual practice or belief (this does not necessarily mean a religious belief). They have faith in themselves and the universe to overcome anything.
- 4. Curious** — Resilient people are childlike in their interest in the world. They are curious about situations. They experiment and wonder about things and laugh. They are not caught up in the past and they focus on new possibilities.
- 5. Morals** — Resilient people are connected to what is most important to them in life (their values). They know the difference between right and wrong and are willing to choose and stand up for what they believe.
- 6. Acceptance** — Resilient people understand that setbacks are part of life and that the future can sometimes be uncertain. They focus on the important things in life and know what they can and cannot control. They save their energy to fight the battles that are necessary.

- 7. Flexible** — Resilient people accept that the future can be uncertain. They are able and willing to adapt to adversity and change.
- 8. Physical Well-being** — Resilient people take responsibility for their physical well-being. They eat healthy food, exercise and get enough rest. This helps protect them from life's physical and emotional stresses. Resilient people know the importance of taking time for themselves, they know how to relax and appreciate all the big and small things in life.
- 9. Problem Solvers** — Resilient individuals are able to be calm and rational when faced with a problem. They are aware of important details, take advantage of opportunities and can envision a successful solution.
- 10. Creativity and Resourcefulness** — Resilient people use creativity, imagination or resourcefulness to make something happen or express feelings, thoughts and plans in some unique way.
- 11. Strong Social Support System** — Resilient people surround themselves with supportive friends and family. They build healthy connections and maintain relationships that continue to grow. Whenever they are faced with a problem they know the importance of having people around who can offer support. Being able to talk about challenges can be an excellent way to gain perspective, look for new solutions or simply express emotions. While being resourceful is an important part of resilience, it is also essential to know when to ask for help.
- 12. Independence** — Resilient people show independence by keeping a healthy distance between themselves and other people so they can think things through and do what is best for them. They know how to step away from people who seem to cause trouble or make things worse by their words or actions.
- 13. Survivor** — Resilient people see themselves as a survivor, not a victim.
- 14. Personal Responsibility** — Resilient people perceive themselves as having control over their own life. They do not blame outside sources for failures and problems. They have what psychologists call an "Internal Locus of Control." They believe that the action they take will affect the outcome of an event. Of course, some factors are simply outside of our personal control, such as natural disasters. While we may be able to put some blame on external causes, it is important to feel as if we have the power to make choices that will affect our situation, our ability to cope and our future.
- 15. Insightful** — Resilient people have insight and ask themselves questions even when the questions are difficult (Why did I do that? How could I have managed that situation better?). They answer honestly and therefore they are able to learn and move forward from mistakes. Having insight helps us understand a problem and analyze a situation from many perspectives in order to make the best decision.
- 16. Initiative** — Resilient people take control of a problem and work to solve it. They see a problem and ask questions of themselves and others. They often become the leader in activities and work well within a team.
- 17. Purpose** — Resilient people have focus and set goals. They see meaning and purpose in life and what they do. They are self motivated and determined.

(Adapted from "Project Resilience" by Steven and Sybil Wolin (<http://projectresilience.com/index.htm>), "Resiliency in Action" by Nan Henderson ([www.resiliency.com](http://www.resiliency.com)) and MayoClinic.com (<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/resilience/MH00078/NSECTIONGROUP=2>).

This handout was created with information from the above resources by Isla Kerr.

# Resilient Historical Figures

1. Amelia Earhart	15. Cesar Chavez	29. Malcolm X
2. Sacagawea	16. Abraham Lincoln	30. Elie Wiesel
3. Frida Kahlo	17. Frederick Douglass	31. Robert Kennedy
4. Tina Turner	18. Maya Angelou	32. John Wooden
5. Alice Walker	19. Babe Ruth	33. David Faber
6. Gloria Marie Steinem	20. Jackie Robinson	34. Greg Mortenson
7. Elizabeth Blackwell	21. Sojourner Truth	35. Erin Gruwell
8. Martin Luther King, Jr.	22. Harriet Tubman	36. Francisco Jimenez
9. Dr. Temple Grandin	23. Franklin D. Roosevelt	37. George Dawson
10. Ray Charles	24. Hiawatha	38. Melba Patillo Beals
11. Stevie Wonder	25. Dr. Feng Shan Ho	39. Benjamin Ajak, Benson Deng and Alephonsian Deng
12. Wright Brothers	26. Helen Keller	40. Lance Armstrong
13. David Peltzer	27. Stephen Hawking	41. Susan G. Komen
14. Anne Frank	28. Christopher Reeves	

Choose a historical figure from the list above (or propose your own, original idea of a resilient, historical figure). Create a one-page reference sheet about this historical figure, including a **picture** and the answers to the questions below. Please see the back of this paper for an example.

- **WHO** is the resilient historical figure you chose?
- **WHAT** did he/she do or overcome that makes him/her resilient?
- **WHERE** and **WHEN** did he/she show this resilience?
- **WHY** did you choose this particular person to honor along with your resilient community member?
- List the **RESILIENT ATTRIBUTES** (from the list of 17) that apply to this person:

## Completed Student-Written Example of a Resilient Historical Figure: HIAWATHA

- **WHO:** Hiawatha was a peaceful, unifying Native American leader and the founder of the Iroquois Nation.
- **WHAT:** Hiawatha helped the five separate, often warring, nations of the Iroquois people to unify as the Five Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy, which enjoyed much more power and peace together as they had apart. He unified these nations with the vision of the Great Peacemaker, and he experienced a lot of resistance from the tribes before he was able to unify them.
- **WHERE** and **WHEN:** Hiawatha lived in what is now upper New York state. He is said to have lived from 1525 – 1595.
- **WHY:** Hiawatha believed in peace and unity above all. He was a great leader and even when met with resistance and sometimes, even violence, he helped unify his people with a vision of peace. He has served a role model for many great leaders and many of his teachings have helped shape the unifying of the United States of America, as our nation the way it is, today. I chose my Amma as my resilient community member, and she led my family with a unifying, peaceful vision. Even in tough times, she could bring us together as one – like Hiawatha.
- List the **RESILIENT ATTRIBUTES** (from the list of 17) that apply to this person:  
*Optimistic, faith, physical well-being, problem solver, creativity and resourcefulness, strong social support system, purpose and initiative*

# Interview Guide

Your task is to write a one- to two-page typewritten paper about your chosen resilient community member. It is important that in the paper you include the **WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY** of your resilient person's story.

Below are some guiding questions to ask yourself and your resilient community member in preparation for writing your paper.

## Before the Interview...

Name of community member: \_\_\_\_\_

Age (if you think it's relevant): \_\_\_\_\_

What is your relationship to this person? \_\_\_\_\_

What makes this person resilient?

What do you admire about this person?

## Interview Questions

Write the details of your interviewee's story of resilience.

What helped him/her be resilient and make it through the challenges in his/her life?

What advice does he/she have for other people facing similar challenges?

Look through the list of resilient characteristics and ask the person you are talking to which characteristics they can relate to most.

## After the Interview...

How can you relate to this person's story of resilience?

What resilient characteristics do you share with this person? Explain.

# Connecting Community Member, History, and Yourself

## Resilient Community Member

1. Who is your resilient community member? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Briefly summarize his/her story of resilience:

3. Circle the resilient attributes that apply to your resilient community member:

- |                         |            |            |               |                       |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| sense of humor          | optimism   | faith      | curious       | morals                |
| physical well-being     | flexible   | acceptance | creative      | problem solver        |
| independence            | insightful | initiative | courage       | strong social support |
| personal responsibility | survivor   | purpose    | determination |                       |

## Research on Your Historical Figure

List the sources where you found your information (required: at least two):

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Where and when did this person live? \_\_\_\_\_

What was going on in history surrounding this person's life?

Write down as many interesting facts about this historical figure that you can find (preferably that you can connect with your resilient community member):

Fact: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Where it came from: \_\_\_\_\_

Fact: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Where it came from: \_\_\_\_\_

Fact: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Where it came from: \_\_\_\_\_

Fact: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Where it came from: \_\_\_\_\_

Fact: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Where it came from: \_\_\_\_\_

## Connection to Yourself

Briefly describe a time in your life when you had to be resilient:

How do you connect with your resilient community member?

How do you connect with your chosen resilient historical figure?

# Getting Started with Spoken Word

How will you connect your two resilient people to each other and to yourself through your spoken word piece?

Define the following literary devices before you begin writing your spoken word piece. Think about how many of these devices can you use in your piece.

Alliteration: \_\_\_\_\_

Allusion: \_\_\_\_\_

Euphemism: \_\_\_\_\_

Hyperbole: \_\_\_\_\_

Imagery: \_\_\_\_\_

Metaphor: \_\_\_\_\_

Paradox: \_\_\_\_\_

Personification: \_\_\_\_\_

Repetition: \_\_\_\_\_

Simile: \_\_\_\_\_

SLAM!: \_\_\_\_\_

What is **Spoken Word**? How is it different from other poetry?

What hand gestures, changes in volume and/or other presentation techniques will you use to engage your audience?

Which spoken word pieces that you have read or watched in class inspired you most? **More importantly, WHY and HOW?**

# Spoken Word Critique: Round 1

Peer Editors: 1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you like most about my spoken word piece?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is it spoken word?

1.  yes       no

explain why or why not:

2.  yes       no

explain why or why not:

3.  yes       no

explain why or why not:

Please, share an idea with me about how I could make this even better (the more specific, the better!):

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Spoken Word Critique: Round 2

Things I'm proud of in my Spoken Word piece:

Two questions I want feedback on are:

<b>Question 1:</b>	<b>Question 2:</b>

General Comments:

# Critique Reflection

1. What did you notice about someone else's work that you liked?
2. What are some strengths of your Spoken Word piece?
3. What do you think is the most powerful line of your Spoken Word piece?
4. What are you going to change for Draft 3?
5. What questions still remain for you about your Spoken Word?

# Resilience Cafe Spoken Word Reflection

How many drafts I completed of my Spoken Word piece: \_\_\_\_\_

Did I take critique and feedback to make my spoken word piece even stronger?	Explain how:
Did I connect my community member with myself and my historical figure?	Explain how:
Did I include specific details about my community member and his/her story of resilience?	Explain how:
Did I include characteristics of spoken word?	Which ones:
Did I practice my spoken word piece and use presentation techniques for my performance?	Describe techniques you used in your performance:

What am I proud about in my Spoken Word piece?



# SECTION V. Teacher Materials

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-  Resilient Historical Figures KEY..... 39

# Tips to Improve Your Resilience

Source: [www.mayoclinic.com/health/resilience/](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/resilience/)

Working on your mental well-being is just as important as working on your physical health. If you want to strengthen your resilience, try these tips:

- **Get connected.** Build strong, positive relationships with family and friends, who provide support and acceptance. Volunteer, get involved in your community or join a group and take on a new interest, activity or hobby.
- **Find meaning.** Develop a sense of purpose for your life. Having something meaningful to focus on can help you share emotions, feel gratitude and experience an enhanced sense of well-being.
- **Start laughing.** Finding humor in stressful situations doesn't mean you're in denial. Humor is a helpful coping mechanism. If you can't find any humor in a situation, turn to other sources for a laugh, such as a funny book or movie.
- **Learn from experience.** Think back on how you've coped with hardships in the past. Build on skills and strategies that helped you through the rough times, and don't repeat those that didn't help.
- **Remain hopeful.** You can't change what's happened in the past, but you can always look toward the future. Find something in each day that signals a change for the better. Expect good results.
- **Take care of yourself.** Tend to your own needs and feelings, both physically and emotionally. This includes participating in activities and hobbies you enjoy, exercising regularly, getting plenty of sleep and eating well.
- **Keep a journal.** Write about your experiences, thoughts and feelings. Journaling can help you experience strong emotions you may otherwise be afraid to unleash. It also can help you see situations in a new way and help you identify patterns in your behavior and reactions.
- **Accept and anticipate change.** Expecting changes to occur makes it easier to adapt to them, tolerate them and even welcome them. With practice, you can learn to be more flexible and not view change with as much anxiety.
- **Work toward a goal.** Do something every day that gives you a sense of accomplishment. Even small, everyday goals are important. Having goals helps you look toward the future.
- **Take action.** Don't just wish your problems would go away or try to ignore them. Instead, figure out what needs to be done, make a plan and take action.
- **Maintain perspective.** Look at your situation in the larger context of your own life and of the world. Keep a long-term perspective and know that your situation can improve if you actively work at it.
- **Practice stress management and relaxation techniques.** Restore an inner sense of peace and calm by practicing such stress-management and relaxation techniques as yoga, meditation, deep breathing, visualization, imagery, prayer or muscle relaxation.

# Resilient Historical Figures KEY

RESILIENT PERSON	KNOWN FOR/LIFE CHALLENGES
Amelia Earhart	First Female pilot to fly over Atlantic
Sacagawea	Native American Guide helped American explorers
Frida Kahlo	Artist
Tina Turner	Singer
Gloria Marie Steinem	Women's Rights Activist
Elizabeth Blackwell	First Female Doctor
Martin Luther King, Jr.	Civil Rights Leader
Dr. Temple Grandin	Autistic woman who helped others with autism
Ray Charles	Singer
Stevie Wonder	Singer
Wright Brothers	Invented airplane
David Peltzer	Wrote about child abuse
Anne Frank	Wrote about the Holocaust
Oprah Winfrey	TV talk show host
Margaret Bourke White	First woman official US war correspondent
Cesar Chavez	Farm Worker, Labor Worker, Civil Rights Leader
Abraham Lincoln	American President
Frederick Douglass	Escaped Slave and Abolitionist Leader
Maya Angelou	Poet, Author and Civil Rights Activist
Babe Ruth	Baseball Player
Jackie Robinson	Baseball Player
Sojourner Truth	Escaped Slave, Abolitionist and Women's Rights Leader
Harriet Tubman	Led the Underground Railroad
Franklin D. Roosevelt	American President
Hiawatha	Native American
Dr. Feng Shan Ho	"China's Schindler" doctor in the Holocaust
Helen Keller	Deaf, Blind and Mute & Activist

Stephen Hawking	Scientist
Christopher Reeves	Paralyzed Actor
Albert Einstein	Scientist
Malcolm X	Civil Rights Activist
Elie Wiesel	Holocaust Survivor and Nobel Peace Prize Winner
Robert Kennedy	Politician
John Wooden	UCLA Basketball Coach
David Faber	Holocaust Survivor
Greg Mortenson	Three Cups of Tea author (schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan)
Erin Gruwell	Teacher from Freedom Writers
Francisco Jimenez	Migrant Worker to College Professor
George Dawson	Learned to Read in His 90s
Melba Patillo Beals	Journalist and Member of Little Rock Nine
Benjamin Ajak, Benson Deng and Alephonsian Deng	The Lost Boys from the Sudan
Lance Armstrong	Cyclist – Cancer Survivor
Susan G. Komen/ Nancy G. Brinker	Nancy started the Susan G. Komen Foundation in her sister's memory
David "TC" Ellis	Founder of HRSA (High School for the Recording Arts)/ Hip Hop High
Sacagawea	Native American Guide for Lewis and Clark Expedition
Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel	Women's Fashion Designer – Childhood Adversity
Julia Child	Television Chef and American Spy
Gloria Marie Steinem	Leader of Women's Liberation Movement