

When a Superhero Needs a Hero

(Year 3 - Ages 8-9):

Lesson 7 of 9

Name: _____ Class: _____

Teacher Preparation

Introduction for Teachers

This lesson is the first to gently and directly introduce the concept of organ failure and transplantation to Year 3 students, using the safe and empowering metaphor of a "Hero Story." The goal is to help children understand that sometimes an organ superhero can become tired or unwell and that the kindest, most heroic act is when a hero from another person's team is shared to help. The lesson uses the familiar Donate Buddies characters to tell this story in a fictional, positive, and hopeful way.

The core objective is to build an understanding of transplantation as a solution focused on heroism and kindness. By framing the narrative as "heroes helping heroes," the lesson avoids fear and focuses on the incredible generosity of the donor and the positive, healthy outcome for the recipient.



Key Concepts & Language for Teachers

- **The "Hero Story" Metaphor:** This is the central theme. Frame the entire lesson as telling an exciting and hopeful superhero story.
 - **Say:** "Today, we are going to hear a very special kind of story. It's a 'Hero Story.' It's about what happens when one of our organ superheroes gets tired and needs help, and how another amazing hero comes to the rescue."
- **Defining "A Tired Hero" (Organ Failure):** Use gentle, non-clinical language to describe the problem.
 - **Say:** "Sometimes, even with the best 'Superhero Fuel' and lots of 'Superhero Check-Ins,' a hero can get very tired. It's nobody's fault. Their superpower just starts to fade, and they can't do their important job for the team anymore. For example, Harriet the Heart's pumping power might get weaker."
- **Connecting to the Solution (Transplantation):** Frame the solution as a heroic act of sharing.
 - **Say:** "When a hero gets too tired, the only way to save the team is with help from another hero. This is where the most amazing act of kindness happens. Sometimes, when a person's life has ended, their family makes the brave and loving choice to share their healthy organ superheroes so they can join another person's team and be a hero for them."
- **Connecting to the Bigger Idea:** Frame the gift of donation as the ultimate heroic sacrifice and a new beginning.
 - **Say with a sense of awe and respect:** "This is the ultimate hero story. The family of the person who has passed away makes a kind promise to let their loved one's healthy Harriet the Heart go on a new mission. That hero then joins the team of someone who is very sick, making their team strong and whole again. The person who receives the new hero gets a second chance to live a healthy, happy life, all because of the kindness of another hero."



Safety and Sensitivity Considerations

- **Keep the Story Fictional and Simple:** The teacher-created story should be very simple, focusing on the characters (e.g., Harriet the Heart) and the positive outcome. Avoid any real-world medical details or complex scenarios.
- **Focus on the "Helping" Aspect:** The emotional core of the lesson is empathy and altruism. Continually reinforce that this is a story about helping. The donor is a hero, the family are heroes, and the doctors are heroes.
- **Use Gentle Language for Death:** When mentioning the donor, use gentle and respectful language like "after their life had ended" or "when they couldn't live anymore." Immediately follow this by focusing on the positive, life-giving choice the family makes.
- **Be Aware of Personal Stories:** This is the most sensitive lesson in the unit. Be mindful that students may have experiences with illness or loss. Reassure them that the story is about hope and kindness, and allow them to participate at their own comfort level.

Teacher Resources

- The official Donate Buddies character cards.
- A simple, teacher-created, illustrated storybook (e.g., "When Harriet the Heart Needed a Hero").
- A "Hero Story" comic strip worksheet for each student.
- Markers, crayons, and coloured pencils.
- Optional: "Helping Hero" award certificates to give out at the end of the lesson.



Magical Body Facts for Year 3 (Ages 8–9)

- Your heart pumps around 7,500 litres of blood through your body every day! ❤️
- If all your blood vessels were stretched end-to-end, they could go around the Earth two and a half times! 🌍
- Your brain sends messages to your body at speeds of up to 430 km/h – faster than a Formula 1 car! 🏎️
- Your stomach gets a new layer of mucus every few days so the acid inside doesn't eat through it. 🤢
- The strongest muscle in your body (for its size) is your jaw muscle – perfect for biting into an apple! 🍏
- You blink around 15–20 times every minute, which means over 10 million blinks a year! 👁️
- Earwax isn't "yuck" – it's a special waxy shield that protects your ears from dust, germs, and water. 🧠🛡️
- Your bones are constantly being broken down and rebuilt – every 10 years you have a brand-new skeleton! 💀✨
- The acids in your stomach are strong enough to dissolve metal – but don't worry, your body is built to handle it! 🧪
- Your fingerprints are completely unique – no one else in the world has the same ones as you, not even identical twins! 🔍

