

Civil Air Patrol's ACE Program

The Great Uncle Wiggly Wings Grade 4 Character Lesson #4

Topic: caring/giving (language arts) science as a human endeavor (science/social studies)

Length of Lesson: 30 minutes (more time needed for enrichment activities)

Objectives:

- Students will learn the story of Col Gail Halvorsen.
- Students will define and identify examples of selfless giving.

National Academic Standards:

Next Generation Science Standards

- 4-PS3-1. Use evidence to construct an explanation relating the speed of an object to the energy of that object

Science

- Content Standard A: Science as Inquiry
 - Abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry
 - Understanding about scientific inquiry
- Content Standard G: History and Nature of Science
 - Science as a human endeavor



Social Studies

1. Culture
2. Time, Continuity, and Change
3. People, Places, and Environments
6. Power, Authority, and Governance
9. Global Connections
10. Civic Ideals and Practices

CCSS ELA Standards

- RL.4.7-Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.
- RL.4.6-Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.
- RL.4.3-Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
- RL.4.2-Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
- 4.1-Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.



Also follows [CAP's 'Character.org' 11 Principles of Character](https://www.civilairpatrol.org/11-principles-of-character)

Background Information: THE CANDY BOMBER STORY (Uncle Wiggly Wings)

At the end of WWII, a defeated Germany was divided amongst the victors, the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and France. The Soviet Union (USSR) took control of the Eastern half of Germany and the Western half was divided amongst the Allied forces of the USA, Great Britain, and France. The city of Berlin was sitting in the middle of the Eastern sector and a union of the four powers, called the Allied Control Council, governed it. The objective of this council was to control and rebuild the war-torn city of Berlin. Generally, traffic moved throughout the city and much-needed supplies for everyday living for the 2,008,943 Berliners came in without any difficulty. There were many disagreements on the Council as to how the city should be rebuilt. As a result, Joseph Stalin, the leader of the USSR, wanted the US, Great Britain and France out! On the morning of April 9th, 1948, Stalin ordered all American Military personnel maintaining communications equipment out of the Eastern Zone. On June 21st, a US military supply train was halted and it was moved back to the Western sector by a Soviet engine. On the 24th of June, 1948, all land and water access to West Berlin was cut off by the Soviets. There were to be no more supplies moved into Berlin. The Allies were certainly not going to stand for this. Diplomacy failed, ground invasions were planned and World War III was eminent. U.S. military commander, General Lucius Clay, had a plan by which an armed convoy through Soviet-controlled Berlin would break the blockade and this action would almost certainly create a war.

British Commander Sir Brian Robertson offered an alternative plan: supply the city by air. It was determined that the city's daily food ration would be 646 tons of flour and wheat; 125 tons of cereal; 64 tons of cooking fat; 109 tons of meat and fish; 180 tons of dehydrated potatoes, 180 tons of sugar; 11 tons of coffee; 19 tons of powdered milk; 5 tons of whole milk for children; 3 tons of fresh yeast for baking; 144 tons of dehydrated vegetables; 38 tons of salt; and 10 tons of cheese. In total, 1,534 tons would be needed daily to keep over 2 million people alive. These figures did not include other necessities, like coal and fuel.

Earlier, in 1945, an agreement was made between all of the powers including the Soviet Union, that three 20 mile-wide air corridors would be established providing access to Berlin. The pact was signed and agreed upon by all the allied powers including the USSR. When the blockade began, the Soviets thought that surely the U.S., Great Britain and France would leave. They were wrong and on June 26, the first American C-47 Skytrain cargo planes landed at Tempelhof Airport, foreshadowing the great operation that was to come. The great Berlin Airlift began.



[Click image to see more photos.](#)

This great undertaking was commanded by General William H. Tunner and he was known as the "transportation expert to end all transportation experts" by his commander, General Curtis LeMay.

Life for the people of Berlin was very difficult and had it not been for the Airlift, thousands would have died from starvation and disease. One of the most poignant stories to come out of the Berlin Airlift was that of 1st Lt. Gail

Halvorsen, a pilot for the US Air Force. Lt. Halvorsen had a hobby of making home movies and on one of his days off, he decided to visit the city he was saving. At Templehof, he noticed near the end of one of the main Airlift runways, a group of children watching the planes land. He went over to them and started a conversation. They were especially fascinated with him once they found out he was one of the pilots who was flying in their life-saving supplies. He noticed that they did not ask him for handouts of gum or chocolate. He reached into his pocket and found that he only had two sticks of Wrigley's Doublemint gum. He told them that if they didn't fight over it, he would drop some candy to them,



by parachute, the next day when he flew over. They were very courteous and distributed the pieces of gum equally amongst themselves. Before he left, one child asked him how they would know it was his plane. He said, "I'll wiggle my wings!" True to his word, the very next day, on approach to Berlin, he rocked the airplane and dropped some chocolate bars attached to a handkerchief parachute to the children waiting below. Every day, the number of children would increase and he made several drops. Soon there was a stack of mail at the Base Operations addressed to "Uncle Wiggly Wings" "The Chocolate Flyer," and "The Chocolate Uncle."

Eventually, he was "called on the carpet" (reprimanded) by his commander because some local newspaper reporter published a picture of Halvorsen's plane going by with tiny parachutes trailing it. His commander wasn't happy about it, but General Tunner thought it was just the kind of morale boost that the operation needed. It was eventually dubbed, "Operation Little Vittles!" The "Operation" continued and over three tons of candy was dropped over Berlin; some even landed in the Soviet Sector. For this simple, kindhearted gesture, Halvorsen became the most recognized pilot of the Berlin Airlift.

1st Lt Halvorsen became Col Halvorsen as he retired from military service. Throughout his life he continued to give back to others and share kindness. He leaves a legacy of selflessness and compassion for others to emulate. He turned the word HOPE into reality!



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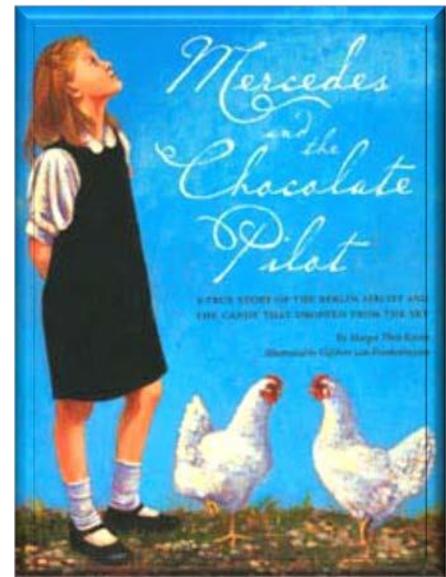
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Materials:

- background information (and, optional, other videos listed below, as desired)
- *Mercedes and the Chocolate Pilot* book by Margot Theis Raven (optional)
- student copies of CAP's Uncle Wiggly Wings booklet (optional) (can copied from CAP's member portal, [eServices/Aerospace Education/AE Downloads and Resources](#), or, obtained in print to copy from CAP via request to ae@capnhq.gov)
- supplies for making parachutes (optional - see related materials at additional activities section to follow)

Click on book cover to hear the story read aloud.



Check out the following links for additional video information about Col Halvorsen:

- [Operation Vittles: Little Vittles, part of the Berlin Airlift](#) (1 minute)
- [The Berlin Candy Bomber, Colonel Gail Halvorsen video](#) (1:45)
- [The Berlin Airlift Description and the Candy Bomber, Col Gail Halvorsen video](#) (5:38)
- [2014 Honoring Col Halvorsen](#) (3:42)
- [Celebrating the 70th Anniversary with Col Halvorsen 2019 "In His Words" video](#) (12:00)
- <http://wigglywings.weebly.com/>

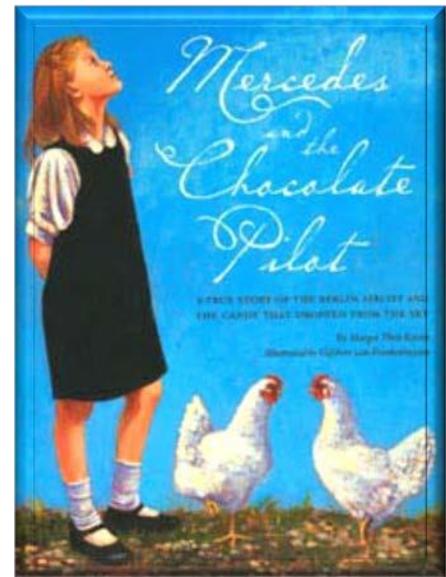
Lesson Presentation:

1. Share the story of Uncle Wiggly Wings from the background information. (And/or, the additional videos and books listed in materials section can be shared.)
2. Ask students to explain the example set by Col. Halvorsen. (caring, selfless giving)
3. Explain that selfless giving means giving without expecting anything in return.
4. Ask students to try to imagine themselves in the place of the young children described in the Uncle Wiggly Wings story. Ask how they would have felt about someone like Col. Halvorsen.
5. Ask students to share ways that they can be selfless givers.
6. Either allow students to complete some of the pages in CAP's Uncle Wiggly Wings booklet, or, select one or more activities from the additional enrichment/extension activities list, included below.

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Summarization:

Ask students to share something that they learned from this story. Ask them to recall two or three facts about Uncle Wiggly Wings. Ask: How did what he did made others feel? How did it make him feel? How would you describe Uncle Wiggly Wings?

Remind students that the story of Uncle Wiggly Wings describes the unselfish actions of a "true" American. Encourage students to look for ways to help others- in their homes, neighborhoods, and communities. Even doing something small can help make someone's day very joyful. Encourage them to think of ways they can work as a class or team to do something for others.

Assessment:

- student answers to class discussion questions
- (optional) students can draw a picture illustrating the story of Uncle Wiggly Wings checking their story sequencing

Click on image to see more letters!



Additional activity ideas to enrich and extend the primary lesson (optional):

Have students make parachutes in honor of Uncle Wiggly Wings and as a reminder to unselfishly give to others. [See Col Halvorsen toss parachutes to children.](#)

The following materials will be needed:

- square piece of light-weight plastic or fabric
- household string
- scissors
- masking or other type of tape
- small bar of candy (size of bar depends on size of parachute)



Decide what material you wish to use as the square-shaped parachute. You can use a plastic bag, a handkerchief, a bandanna, or other cloth or light-weight material you wish to use.

Depending upon the size of the parachute material you will use, measure four equal lengths of household string, at least as long as the parachute material, and cut.



One corner at a time, tie the end of a piece of string to the corner of the parachute material.

- 4) The four strings (in parachute terms, these are known as shroud lines) should be tied to the candy bar so that each one is an equal length from the attachment point. (A piece of tape can be used to hold the string to the candy bar when the parachute opens in descent after a drop.) The parachute is carefully folded with the candy bar on top.
- 5) Throw the parachute/candy up in the air, and the parachute should open and float gently to the ground. Or, if there is a tall stairwell and an adult is there to supervise, the parachutes can be dropped from a high level for best results.



For smaller parachutes:

- 1) Use a regular paper napkin (higher quality works best).
- 2) Unfold the napkin all the way.
- 3) Take four strings of equal length and four small stickers (or small pieces of tape). Attach a string to each corner of the open napkin with the stickers.
- 4) Pull the strings together and tie a knot in the end of the strings to keep them together.
- 5) Attach a miniature candy bar, like the Hershey miniatures, to the end of the strings. (You can use tape or a paper clip to attach the candy to the strings.)
- 6) Toss the parachute in the air and watch it float to the ground. You may choose to drop the parachute at the top of a stairway, but remember safety issues!



Allow students to experiment with variables while dropping their parachutes. Ask students to change something about their parachutes - like size of the parachute, type of material used for the parachute, weight of object attached to the parachute, etc. - and see what changes about the movement of the parachute.

[Watch how to make a wind resistant parachute!](#) (5:49)



- Try the "[The Chocolate Pilot Song](#)," sung by the Berlin Wee CARE Children's Choir.
- Allow groups of students to complete the *Lend a Hand* pages that follow. Divide students into groups of 3 or 4. Their task is to pretend that a nearby town experienced major damage from an event, such as a tornado, flood, or earthquake. (Any event that would be relevant to the area in which you live.) Each group will be placed in charge of helping someone in that community by the card each group will be given. Each group has \$100.00 to help the person. Using their resources (group members, newspaper, Internet, teacher, etc.), each group should devise a plan to help their person that involves spending the \$100, and, ideas that cost no money!



Click on photo, below, to see video.



Explore the [Gail Halvorsen Education Foundation site](#)

Civil Air Patrol www.gocivilairpatrol.com Contact ae@capnhq.gov for more information!

LEND A HAND CARING CARDS



Cut out and give one to each group.

Tell each group that they have \$100.00 to help the person on their card. Using their resources (group members, newspaper, Internet, teacher, etc.), explain that each group is to come up with a plan to help their person that involves spending the \$100, and, ideas that cost no money.

Name: Monica Smith

Age: 10

Grade: 4th Grade

Problem: Monica's school was damaged and so was her house. She is staying at a shelter right now. It will be a while before her parents can get any money.

About Monica: She is nice and works hard. She has a brother in first grade. She likes music.

Name: Jay Chavez

Age: 8

Grade: 2nd Grade

Problem: JC's school was damaged. He lost his dog. His home is okay, but there is no electricity at his house.

About JC: JC is nice and likes playing video games. He has a sister who is in fifth grade.

Name: Mrs. Jones

Age: 35

Career: Teacher

Problem: All of the supplies in Mrs. Jones's class were damaged. Mrs. Jones has no electricity at home, but her house is okay.

About Mrs. Jones: Mrs. Jones works very hard at school. She especially likes reading.

Name: Lakeesha Jordan

Age: 10

Grade: 4th Grade

Problem: Lakeesha has no electricity at her house. Her mom is a nurse, and her mom needs to work at the hospital. Lakeesha's lost all of her school supplies.

About Lakeesha: She wishes her mom could be home. She likes sports.

Name: Mr. Bradley

Age: 45

Career: Veterinarian

Problem: Mr. Bradley has many lost animals being brought to his office. There were also many animals that were hurt. Mr. Bradley also needs some time to work on his roof at home.

Name: Mr. Drake

Age: 78

Problem: Mr. Drake is in a nursing home. He misses seeing his family and friends. Many of his family and friends are trying to help themselves and others that need help.

About Mr. Drake: Mr. Drake likes playing cards and board games.

Civil Air Patrol's Aerospace Connections in Education (ACE) program

www.gocivilairpatrol.com/ae