

Cesar Chavez: Daily Launch Day 13

Do Now: Independent Project Check

During the last instructional cycle, you began to work on your independent project. How is it going? What are your next steps? Please fill this out to help yourself stay on track in the coming days.



My Hero:

My Project: How will you present your hero to the class?

What do you still need to learn about your hero? How will you find this out?

Do you need any other materials or help from your teacher?

What next steps will you work on this week?



Cesar Chavez: Daily Launch Day 14

Do Now: Design a Student Organization Flag

In 1962 César Chavez asked his cousin, Manuel, to design a flag for the United Farmworker’s Union. After many tries, Manuel made an eagle that had squares on the wings so that other farmworkers could easily draw and make their own flags.

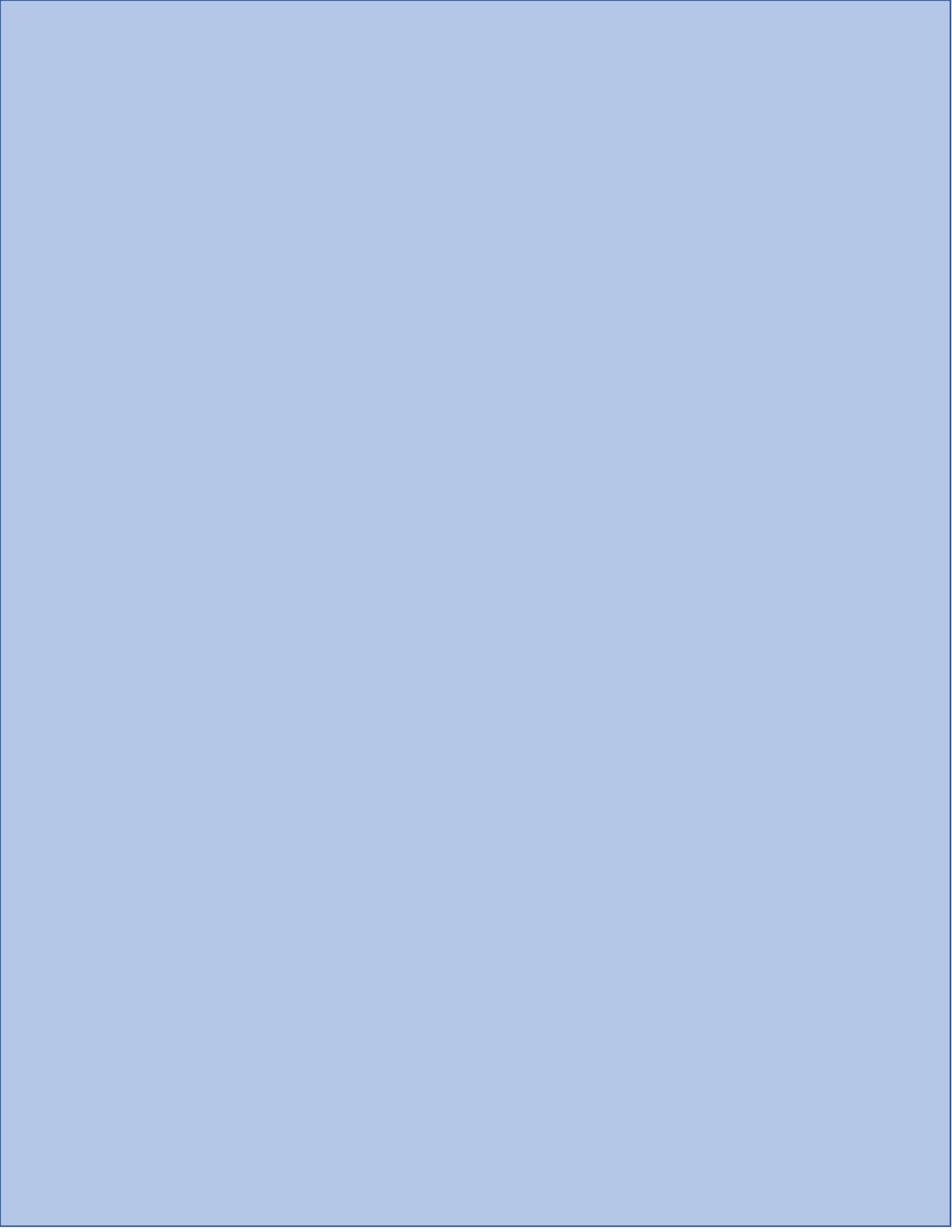


Manuel believed that the symbol of the eagle would give courage to the farm workers.

Chavez said, “A symbol is an important thing; that is why we chose an Aztec eagle. It gives pride... When people see it they know it means dignity.”

Take 8 minutes to sketch out a design for a flag for a student union or organization of students at your school.

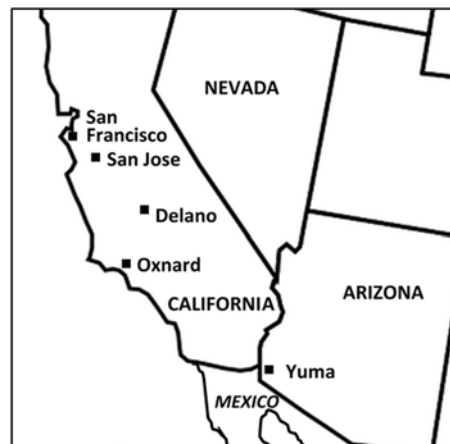
Make sure it’s easy to draw and has a symbol that people understand.



Cesar Chavez: Bringing Farm Workers Together

Cesar Chavez was born near Yuma, Arizona, in 1927, on the farm his Mexican grandparents had built up. The family was poor, but they could raise the food they needed. Cesar and his four brothers and sisters worked hard helping their parents with chores, but they also had time to play and explore. Cesar's younger brother Richard and his cousin Manuel were his best friends and loyal supporters throughout his life.

Cesar's mother Juana was loving but strict. She made sure the children shared everything and taught them traditional Mexican proverbs. She insisted they solve their problems peacefully and told them, "It takes two to make a fight." The family was Catholic, but with no church nearby, Juana taught the children stories about the heroes of their faith. Cesar went to school with his older sister, Rita.



Important places in Cesar Chavez' life



Mexican field worker housing in California in the 1930s. Photo: Dorothea Lange, NY Public Library. <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/febbed70-83c1-0136-f6ae-53831f864e31>

By 1938, when Cesar was twelve, the Chavez family ran out of money. His father Librado went to California to find work, but the pay was bad and he could not earn enough to help the family take care of the farm. Soon the family joined him to work together as migrant workers, moving from one California town to another to eke out a living.

Moving to California changed Cesar's life. His family had no permanent home: they lived in someone's garage, a shack, even a tent. Migrant workers faced wretched conditions, working bent over for long hours in the hot sun tending plants and harvesting vegetables. Cesar and his brothers and sisters worked in the fields, too, on Saturdays

and during vacation. The family became experts at finding ways to work harder and faster just to earn a little extra money.

School was different, too. Most of Cesar's classmates in Arizona had been Mexican Americans. But many in the California schools were white. They made fun of Cesar's brown skin and the shirt that he wore every day—because it was the only one he had. The family moved around so many times that Cesar attended thirty different schools in just three years. Through these hardships, Cesar developed leadership skills that would one day make him a hero to millions of farm workers.



Mexican American children helping their parents in the fields (1937). Photo: Dorothea Lange, NY Public Library. <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/97c9b2b0-8843-0136-77d4-7de99b31c5cb>

When Cesar finished the eighth grade, he was tired of school, He went to work full-time to help support the family, but his meager earnings as a farm worker did not help much. In 1946, when Cesar was 17, he enlisted in the Navy. Now he could travel the world and send money home.

Cesar Chavez returned from the Navy after two years. He married his sweetheart, Helen Fabela, and they began a family. Cesar began sorting wood at a box factory. It wasn't a great job, but it was better than field work. But Cesar's life soon changed again.

In 1952, Cesar met Fred Ross, who worked with the Chicago-based Community Service Organization to end racism against Mexican Americans. He also worked with Don McDonnell, a Catholic priest who wanted to help Mexican American farm workers organize to improve their lives. The two men met with families in their homes to share their ideas.

Chavez volunteered at the CSO community center and helped Mexican Americans register to vote. Soon he began working full-time with the CSO as a community organizer. It was better than working at the box factory, and it put Chavez' organizing skills to work. He traveled from one town to another helping people form local CSO groups.

Chavez helped Ross and McDonnell learn how to work in the Mexican American community, and they admired his drive and hard work. McDonnell shared books with Chavez about justice, fairness, and non-violent activism, and Fred Ross taught him about labor organizing. Most important, Chavez constantly learned from experience. Some projects worked well, and others were a flop. But whatever happened, Chavez took notes, learning from both his successes and his failures. In 1959, he became the national director of the CSO.

Farm workers in California still faced many problems. The growers paid them poorly and their living conditions were dismal. There were more than 300,000 workers in the state, so if a worker complained about conditions, the grower just gave the job to someone else. Chavez realized the growers would only treat workers decently if they united and used negotiations to demand better pay and benefits. In 1962, Chavez told Helena that he wanted to quit his job with the CSO to create a farm workers' union.

It was a hard decision: the couple had eight children, and hardly any savings. Helen began working in the fields again; she scrimped and saved to feed the family. Chavez sometimes



California pea pickers, 1938. Photo: Dorothea Lange, NY Public Library. <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/03a46df0-9d7e-0136-00da-6565b8bc66b9>

helped his brother Richard, a builder. But mostly, he traveled around the state, trying to build momentum so the farm workers would join the union. Many were afraid they would lose their jobs if they joined, so Chavez kept the meetings a secret. He explained that the union would use peaceful means to get the workers the rights and respect they deserved.



Chavez' new union was called the Farm Workers Association (FWA). Finally, in 1965, when the FWA had 1000 members, Cesar decided it was time to act. Another union of mostly Filipino workers organized a strike against the grape growers near the city of Delano and invited the FWA to join the strike. Beginning on September 20, 1965, none of the workers from either of the unions went to work in the fields. Instead, they held demonstrations outside the fields to persuade other workers to join them. They chanted the word *Huelgo* (WAIL-go)—“strike” in Spanish—loudly and carried pickets.



Cesar Chavez. *US News & World Report Coll.*, Library of Congress. www.loc.gov/item/2016646413/

The growers were outraged. The grapes would spoil if there were not enough workers to pick them. They did not hesitate to use violent tactics to punish the striking union members and discourage other workers from joining them. They turned dogs on them and sent guards out to beat them. They even sprayed picket lines with dangerous pesticides. The police did not help much; in fact, they often harassed the striking workers too. Of course, the striking workers were not being paid.

When winter came, there was no more field work. Chavez did not want the union members or the public to lose interest in the struggle, so he organized a march of seventy people from Delano to San Francisco—about 300 miles. As he hoped, the news media were there to report on the event.

As the months went on, Chavez decided that the growers needed to feel pressure from another side as well: their customers. He called for a public boycott of California grapes. He even sent people across the country to New York to picket grocery stores and tell people not to buy California grapes. When they were successful, they moved on to other cities. Soon there was a widespread grape boycott.



Chavez talking with boycott leaders. *US News & World Report Coll.*, Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2019633527/>



Cesar and Helen Chavez and three of their daughters (1969). Reuther Library, Wayne State University. <http://reuther.wayne.edu/node/150>

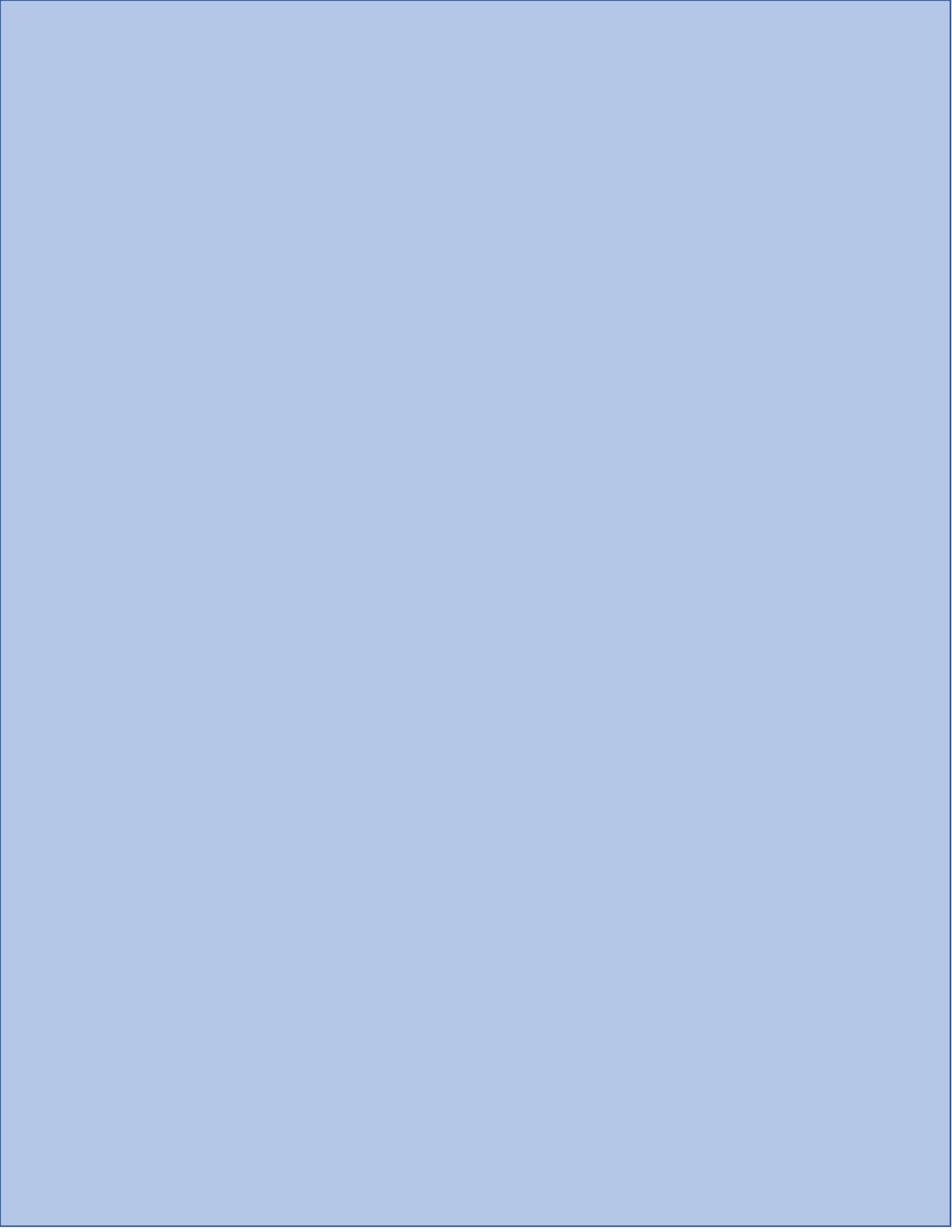
Still, it was very hard on the workers and their families. Many had to sell their homes or their cars—whatever they owned—just to pay their bills. Some workers became desperate and angry. They wanted to attack the growers and make them suffer too. But Chavez refused. If the workers used violence against the growers, they would lose the support of the public. He had never forgotten his mother's teaching about solving problems peacefully. When the angry workers threatened to get out of hand, Chavez went on a hunger strike. He stopped eating for 25 days in 1968 to show his followers how important this was. After this, the union members were more united than ever before, and more committed to reaching their goals peacefully.

But Chavez' fast also made him famous. People all over the country became aware of the grape workers' hard lives. The boycott spread to many cities and the growers lost a lot of money. Some of them even had to sell their land. Finally, in 1970, twenty-nine growers met with the union representatives. They were ready to negotiate new contracts! Workers would receive a minimum wage of \$1.80 an hour, health care, protection from pesticides, and other benefits.

The Great Delano Grape Strike lasted five years, but it showed the country that poor people deserved the same rights as other Americans, and that they could organize to fight for those rights. However, Cesar Chavez did not stop there. Other farm workers were still facing the same struggles. It would take more years of struggle, strikes, boycotts, and negotiations to win the same rights for the men, women, and children who harvested lettuce, broccoli, tomatoes, strawberries, and other vegetables. Chavez still had work to do, but he knew that success was possible. Under Chavez' leadership, the farm workers had learned to believe in a better life, work together, and make sacrifices to achieve their dreams.

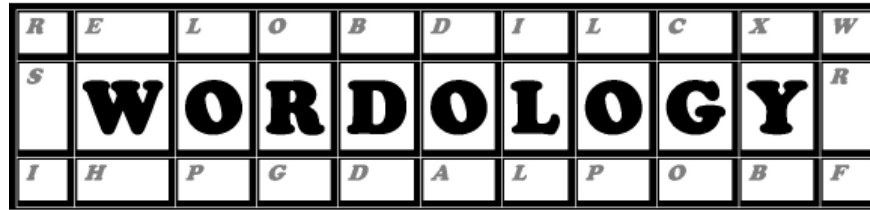


A migrant worker harvesting tomatoes today.
Bob Nichols, USDA 20130828-OC-RBN-3526
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/usdagov/9619281693/in/photolist-fE2kjin>



Name _____ Date _____

Heroes Days 13 and 14



Wordology Activity #1: Word Search

In the puzzle below, find the words from "Cesar Chavez" listed in the box below. Words may go up, down, across (forwards or backwards), or diagonally.

N Z E Y R C B R S V S G L F R E X C I U
 N H K L G O U T E C B F S Q E S O P N B
 B W M R P T D Q R L M G H K T A A O G H
 Z P D X M A A I V M C J P P I L L Z L
 U S I I F P M Z H I I Y C T A E G V Y L
 N W P W E P M M C G H Z B O R B N N M F
 Y L Y O E E U D E R V N C D I M I E C T
 D N D D W T Y B E A E H G T I R T A Z H
 Z E I B N Q D P L N S R E K E X S T I Z
 G M S E O M R O X T P E R M A N E N T S
 V N M U X H M I P V G G F T Z E V F J G
 D O A G E W L C W C D A H O U E R O N Q
 M L L S F Y Z R B A H E F X T Q A L W I
 S X C M I H E I F D N M X T Y W H P S A
 H Z S X Y T V K T J L V J V I E I J C L
 I I T J C O D Q P T Q D G P M A L E O H
 Q R W H K M R G X M D X T J D U I Z Y C
 V R E U O C G S N O I T A I T O G E N T
 L D M D Z H H N H S I R V E W O L J F A
 X U Z Q C H T I S B W Q J P K O Y C V T

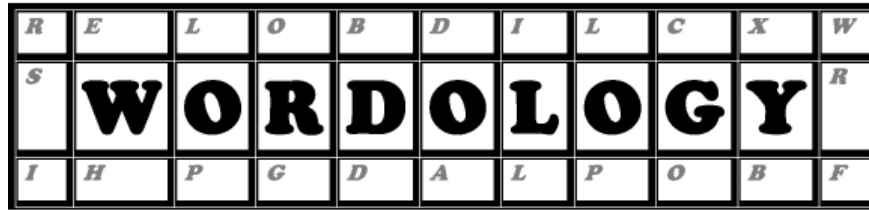
Word Bank:

eke permanent migrant meager harvesting
 dismal negotiations momentum wretched scrimped



Name _____ Date _____

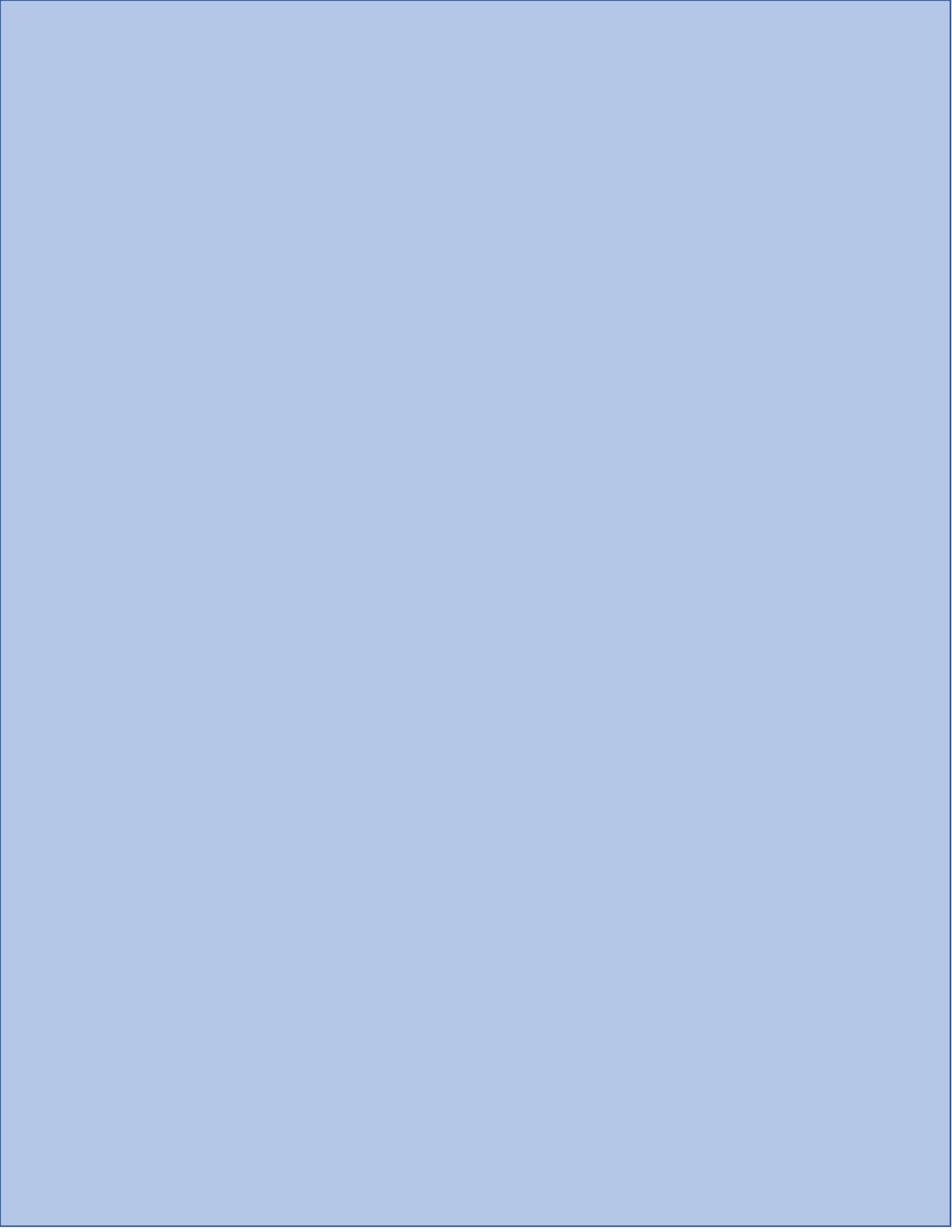
Heroes Days 13 and 14



Wordology Activity #2: Using Vocabulary Words

Do this activity **after** you have begun reading “Cesar Chavez.” Write an answer to each question below. Use facts from “Cesar Chavez” in your answer. Also use the two vocabulary words listed below the question in your answer. Underline the vocabulary words.

| QUESTIONS and WORDS | YOUR ANSWER USING VOCABULARY WORDS |
|--|------------------------------------|
| What work did the Chavez family do to make a living? harvesting migrant | |
| What was life like for the Chavez family when they began working on farms? meager dismal | |
| Why did Chavez decide he had to do more to help migrant farm workers? wretched permanent | |
| How did Chavez hope to make the farm workers’ union successful? negotiations momentum | |
| How did Chavez support his family after their savings ran out? eke scrimped | |





Name _____ Date _____

Heroes Days 13 and 14

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|
| R | E | L | O | B | D | I | L | C | X | W |
| S | W | O | R | D | O | L | O | G | Y | R |
| I | H | P | G | D | A | L | P | O | B | F |

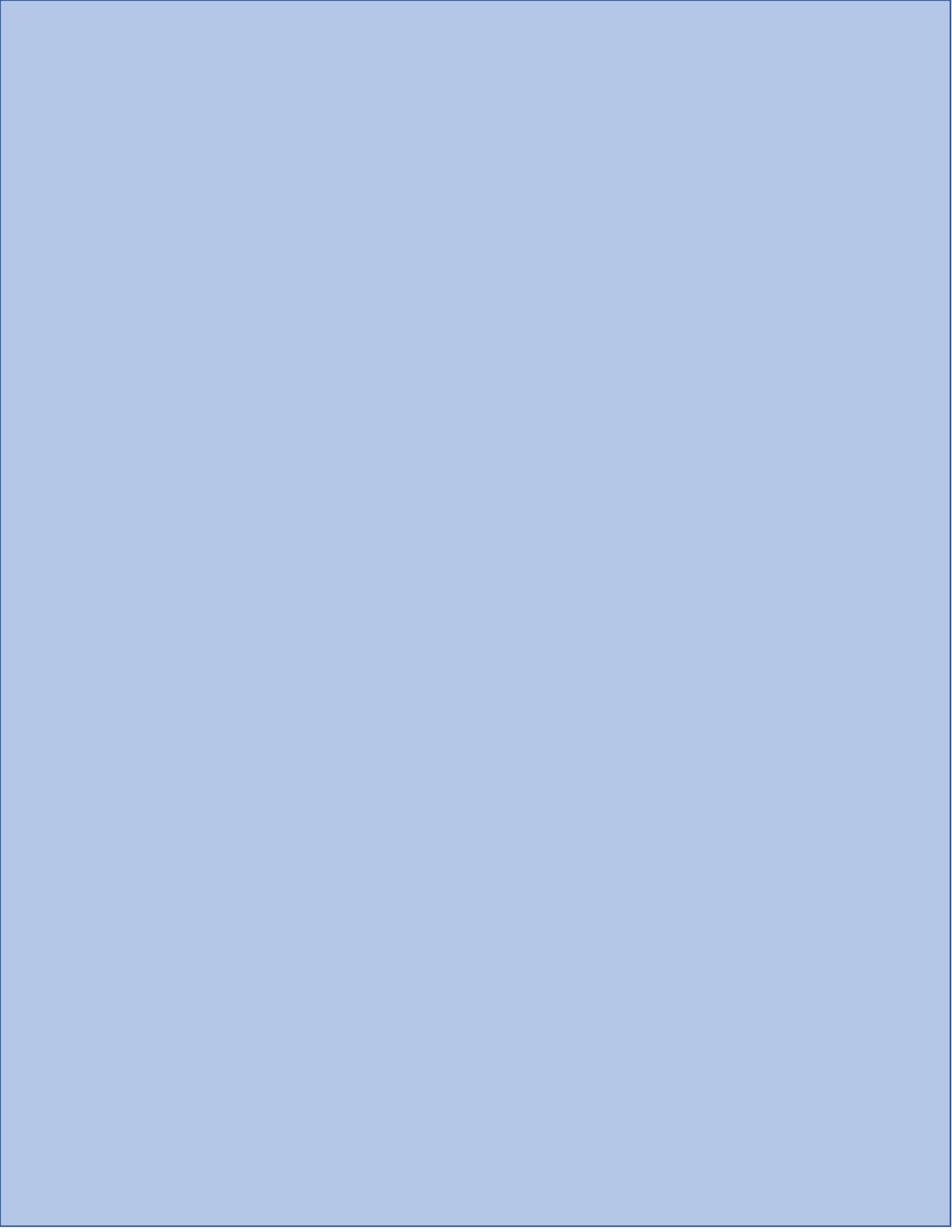
Composing Meaningful Sentences

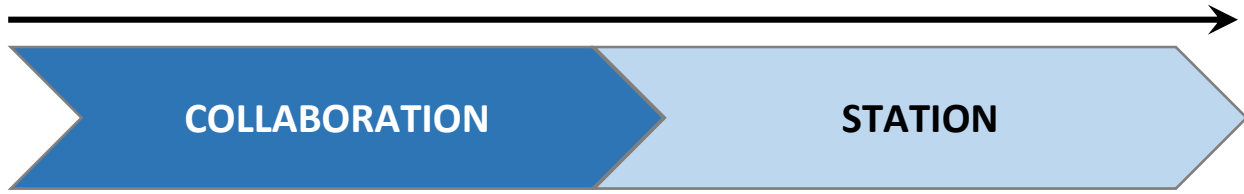
If you complete your chosen Wordology activity, take the remaining time at this station to write Meaningful Sentences using the vocabulary words listed below. (Remember, a Meaningful Sentence is a sentence that shows that you know what the word means!) Read and discuss your sentences with your teammates.

Word Bank:

| | | | | |
|--------|--------------|----------|----------|------------|
| eke | permanent | migrant | meager | harvesting |
| dismal | negotiations | momentum | wretched | scrimped |







Collaboration Station Activity: Cause and Effect—Cesar’s Childhood

Strategic readers search for **causes** and **effects** to help them understand what they are reading. With your team, read the **first page** of “Cesar Chavez” (through the paragraph that ends “... a hero to millions of farm workers”). Discuss with your team how to fill in causes and effects in the graphic organizer below. Then, fill in the answers on your own.

| CAUSE | EFFECT | EFFECT |
|---|---|--------|
| The Chavez family went broke in 1938. | | |
| CAUSE | EFFECT | EFFECT |
| | Young Cesar Chavez learned how hard life as a migrant farmer was. | |
| CAUSE | EFFECT | EFFECT |
| Cesar had to change schools a lot because of his family’s work. | | |





Media Madness

Media Madness
Cesar Chavez – American Civil Rights Activist

Instructions: Watch the video at the link below on your device (tablet or laptop, depending on your teacher’s instructions). As you watch the video, answer the questions below. (You can watch the video more than once if you need to!)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ns5NMHTk-yY>

Three facts I learned about Cesar Chavez’s Life

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Based on the images you saw in the video, what was life like for migrant farmers?

List three heroic qualities that Cesar Chavez had.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

