

Courage

This is the first week of our Courage unit. Students will focus on courage and how it connects to the sub-concept of vulnerability when we take risks.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

Main Lesson

Whole Class Lesson
30 minutes



Have You Ever?

Students will be introduced to the concepts of courage and vulnerability and explore how their past acts of courage also included a level of vulnerability. (See page 2 for lesson details.)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups
15 minutes



Courage To Me

Divide the class into groups of 4-6. Have each student bring in something that represents courage to them personally. Each student will share what they brought and explain why they chose it.

For Partners
15 minutes



Celebrate Courageous Moments

Divide into pairs. What is the most courageous thing you've ever done? Share one courageous moment with your partner! Why was it so hard? How did you press through?

For Individuals
15 minutes



Overcoming Fears

Choose something that scares you...what's the first step towards overcoming it? Write your fearless goal on one side of an index card and the first step towards overcoming it on the back. Read it aloud daily this week!

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



Cyberbullying Red Flags

Explain the concept of cyberbullying to the class and how it takes courage to stand up to bullies, even in an online setting. Divide the class into pairs and have them identify 5-10 red flags that indicate cyberbullying might be occurring. Share the lists with the group as time allows. Brainstorm ways to combat cyberbullying when it's suspected. (Stop, block, report to an adult, etc.)

Have You Ever?

Students will be introduced to the concepts of courage and vulnerability and explore how their past acts of courage also included a level of vulnerability.

Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

- ❑ Projector or Smart Board to show pictures to class (can also print them out if utilizing technology is not possible)

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, International Society for Technology in Education Standards, when applicable, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Explore the connection between courage and vulnerability.
- Examine what courage looks like within their own lives and how to incorporate a variety of courageous moments moving forward.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Welcome to the Courage Unit, the last unit of the year! Great job working through this curriculum with your students! Think about everything they have learned and all of the ways you have seen them demonstrate respect, caring, inclusiveness, integrity, and responsibility throughout the year. Now you get to show them what courage and kindness look like. What a powerful combination! We might not naturally think about courage and kindness together, but in reality, kindness is the ultimate form of courage. It is the courage to be kind to ourselves and to others (especially if we don't feel like it). Do you need a shot of courage at this point in the year? Is it getting harder to be kind and patient?

Do you have added pressure to get everything finished by year's end? Would it be easier to simply coast through May and into June? Maybe. But, be strong and have courage; you will make it and so will your students. Walk bravely into the final weeks; pour an extra measure of kindness out to your students, especially the ones who have really hung in there all year long. They need your strength now more than ever. Be extra kind to yourself, too. You made it. You are doing it. Another year is nearly in the books and you are so much better for it. Think about all you have done, learned, and experienced. Take note of how it has changed your teaching approaches and mindset. How are you a better teacher today than you were at the start of the year? There is no one more courageous in your classroom than you. Embrace it and move bravely, kindly onward!



Share

3-4 minutes

We have arrived at our final unit of the year, Courage! What comes to mind when you think of this word? (Invite student responses.)



Inspire

4-6 minutes

We often think of courage in terms of strength, bravery, and fearlessness. Being brave and standing up for what you believe in definitely shows courage. But there are other ways we can be courageous. Courage is being willing to try new things, to stand up for yourself and for others, and to do the right thing even if others pressure you to do the wrong thing. Sometimes this also means we must be the “odd man out”, allowing ourselves to be vulnerable by being different.

Vulnerability is showing the world as who you are and trying something even if the outcome is uncertain. This means that you are willing to take the risk that others might react negatively based on your decisions, but that you are courageous enough to stick to your choice regardless.

Think about a time when you tried something new or were the first person in the group to volunteer before you knew all the details. How did that make you feel? You allowed yourself to be vulnerable. Most courageous acts require a certain level of vulnerability.



Empower

15 minutes

“Have You Ever?” is the name of a game we are about to play in an effort to explore the variety of ways courage and vulnerability have been experienced by each person in the class.

Directions:

- Explain that you will share a series of pictures depicting different examples of courage and vulnerability. If the student has experienced the scenario pictured, they will stand up. If they have not, they will sit down.
- Have students sit back down between each picture.
- Repeat until you have gone through all the pictures.
- Guide a discussion about the different types of courage and levels of vulnerability needed to complete each activity pictured. Example: Climbing a mountain can be very scary because you are vulnerable to the dangers present in the rocky terrain. Speaking in front of a large group of people can also be very scary because you are vulnerable to possible negative reactions from the audience. Both situations require courage and vulnerability, but in very different ways!



Reflect

5-7 minutes

As a class, review the different ways we can show courage in our daily lives. Emphasize the importance of vulnerability as a sub-concept or “partner” with courage. Whether you are the first to try something, a volunteer for something unknown, or the person to stand up for injustice, you allow yourself to be vulnerable. Celebrate this! Without vulnerability, true courage would be impossible!

This week challenge yourself to step out of your comfort zone in one area of your life. Take a risk, and use courage to make yourself a little vulnerable when you stand up for something, try something new, or volunteer in a new area. Each act of courage empowers you to move forward and continue overcoming fears and challenging injustice.



Climbed a Mountain?



Broken Up a Fight?



Tried an exotic or unknown food?



Spoke in front of a large group of people (25+)?



Tried out for a new sport?



Competed in an academic competition like the science fair or 4-H?



Stood up to a bully?



Introduced yourself to a new student at school?