

Courage

Vs. Fearfulness

I WILL:

- not be afraid to speak the truth
- keep a clear conscience
- support others when they are right
- be willing to stand alone
- speak with humility

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Overcoming fear by saying and doing what is right

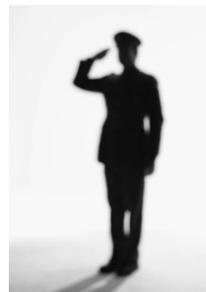
Courage is perhaps the most important character quality as it provides a foundation for the others. It takes courage to do the right thing. It is essential to the learning process. We need to let go of our comfort zones and reach out to experience new things whether it is long division or playing the

guitar. Courage allows us to take those first faltering steps.

Alfred Hitchcock admitted, "I turn my fears into movies." Like movies, we replay our fears over and over in our minds. Fear robs us of our happiness. Our fears can paralyze our

potential and jeopardize our success. With courage, we can take the risks and be confident that the ultimate outcome will be for our best since our conscience is clear.

This month, what can you do to be more courageous?



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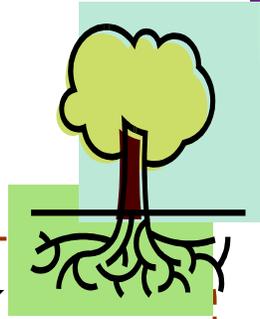
No Matter How You Say It

Temor vs. Valentia

"Enfrentando el miedo y derrota para alcanzar lo mejor".



↻ ↻ Go to the Root ↻ ↻



The root of the word courage is *cor*—the Latin word for heart. In one of its earliest forms, the word courage had a very different definition than it does today. Courage originally meant “To speak one’s mind by telling all one’s heart.”

(for more visit <http://www.pbs.org/parents/experts/archive/2010/11/courage-is-a-heart-word-and-a.html>)

Sign Language

Check out the following website for the American Sign Language interpretation of the words

Courage <https://www.handspeak.com/word/search/index.php?id=493>

Fear <https://www.handspeak.com/word/search/index.php?id=762>

Can you see how these visual signs describe the qualities?

勇氣

Kanji characters for Courage

For more visit

<http://www.japanesewordswriting.com/image-of-japanese-kanji-for-courage-720/>

“ People will accept your idea much more readily if you tell them Benjamin Franklin said it first.” -David H. Comins

Character Quotables

"Let's have faith that right makes might; and in that faith let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it."

~Abraham Lincoln

"A bold man is better in all things."

~Homer's Odyssey

"Freedom is the sure possession of those alone who have the courage to defend it."

~Pericles

"The greatest test of courage is to bear defeat without losing heart."

~Robert G. Ingersoll

"Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear ~ not the absence of fear."

~Mark Twain

"In difficult and hopeless situations, the boldest plans are safest."

~Titus Livy

"Courage is being scared to death...and saddling up anyway."

~John Wayne

"To bear failure with courage is the best proof of character that anyone can give."

~W. Somerset Maugham

"Courage conquers all things."

~Ovid

"Courage is fear holding on a minute longer."

~George S. Patton

"There is nothing with which every man is so afraid as getting to know how enormously much he is capable of doing and becoming."

~Soren Kierkegaard

"An essential aspect of creativity is not being afraid to fail."

~Edwin Land

"Deliberate with caution, but act with decision. Yield with graciousness, or oppose with firmness."

~Charles Caleb Colton

"We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light."

~Plato

"The great virtue in life is real courage that knows how to face facts and live beyond them."

~D. H. Lawrence

"Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage."

~Anaïs Nin

"The bravest are surely those who have the clearest vision of what is before them, glory and danger alike, and yet notwithstanding, go out and meet it."

~Pericles

Curriculum Connection Language Arts

Profiles in Courage is a 1955 Pulitzer Prize-winning biography describing acts of bravery and integrity by eight United States Senators throughout the Senate's history. The book profiles senators who crossed party lines and/or defied the public opinion of their constituents to do what they felt was right and suffered severe criticism and losses in popularity because of their actions. A teaching guide for this book may be found at :

<https://www.jfklibrary.org/Education/Profile-in-Courage-Essay-Contest/Curriculum-Ideas/Curriculum-Lesson-2.aspx>

For younger students, find age appropriate biographies of the individuals in the book and others like them.

Pee Wee Reese, Hero of Courage

There is a statue of Pee Wee Reese with Jackie Robinson outside of a Brooklyn ball field, KeySpan Park, where the Mets' Class A Cyclones play. It commemorates a courageous moment in both men's lives. Robinson was breaking the long-held racial barrier in the major leagues and Reese was the team captain.

The details are hazy and no photograph captured the gesture. Robinson had been receiving death threats and heckling and taunts from the crowd before a game (thought to be at Cincinnati's Crosley

Field). Reese, who earlier had refused to sign a petition about refusing to play if Robinson did, walked over to his teammate and made a gesture of friendship. It is unclear whether he put his arm around him or simply touched his arm. Whatever he did it told the crowd that Robinson had his support. The crowd quieted. The message was clear and much remembered.

It took courage to listen to his heart and do the right thing. His courage allowed him to face down the crowd and support his teammate.



information

www.nytimes.com/2005/11/02/sports/baseball/02robinson.html

For more visit

Team~Building Activity

Building a culture of good character requires building the class into a community. Here is this month's teambuilding activity:



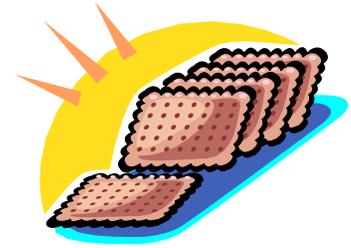
Shamrock Shuffle Arrange the students in chairs in a circle with one less chair than students. Larger classes may need multiple circles. Have the student without a chair stand in the middle. They are to call out a sentence that describes him or herself. Examples: Students wearing a red sweatshirt. Students with blonde hair. Students that play an instrument. Any student that also fits that description must stand up and switch chairs with other students who fit that description. The student standing in the middle must also try to sit in a vacant chair. There will be one student left. They now call out a sentence that is self-descriptive but that also would apply to other students so that a chair becomes vacant for them. At any point, you can call out "Shamrock Shuffle" and everyone must change places. Let them continue to rotate through the middle for as long as time allows. When they have finished playing ask them if they learned anything new about any of their classmates? Were they surprised to find out how many students were like themselves?

Note: The 'everyone move' command can be named anything appropriate to the season or the environment.

Crush Your Fears!

You will need plastic bags, crackers and markers or paint for this activity. Distribute the crackers (matza crackers work well). Instruct the students to write or paint a symbol of something where fear holds them back from doing the right thing. You can use a single large plastic bag like a freezer bag that you can write on or each student can have their own bag. Have the students make suggestions of things

that can help you conquer fears i.e think positively; picture success; do something small towards your goal; practice in private; find someone who agrees with you; don't hang around the people who feed your fear, etc. They can write these on their bags or you can write them on the single bag. After you have discussed these strategies place the crackers with the fears on them inside of the bag and seal it. Now the students can crush the crackers representing their fears. Each student can crush their own or you can pass around the bag for all them to crush. An alternate activity would be to take the crackers outside and let the students crush them with their hands or stamp them with their feet. (If you do it outside, be sure to clean up the mess so birds won't eat the markers or paint.) Ask the students if they feel more courageous now that they have named a fear and crushed it.



The Courageous Egg

For this demonstration you will need a wide mouth clear jar, uncooked rice and an egg. Place the egg at the bottom of the jar and fill the jar with rice. Tell some age-appropriate stories about students being courageous such as sticking up for someone who is being bullied, not helping someone else cheat, not repeat a rumor, admitting something wrong that they did etc. Each time you tell a story, try to use the word courage as often as you can. Each time you mention courage or doing the right thing, tap on the rim of the jar. The egg will begin to rise to the top of jar each time you tap on the jar. Tell enough stories until the egg has risen all the way to the top. Moral of the story: A courageous person will rise to the top and stand out from the rest!



Backbone

Show the class a piece of paper and a paper back book. Stand the paper on it's edge and challenge the class to make the paper hold up the book. See if they can come up with a way to make this happen. The trick is to tightly roll the paper into a tube about an inch or so in diameter. Now the paper will have no problem holding up the book. Sometimes we don't think we have what it takes to be courageous and do the right thing. But just like the paper, we can turn our weaknesses into strengths if we work on it and create the backbone needed to hold up under pressure.

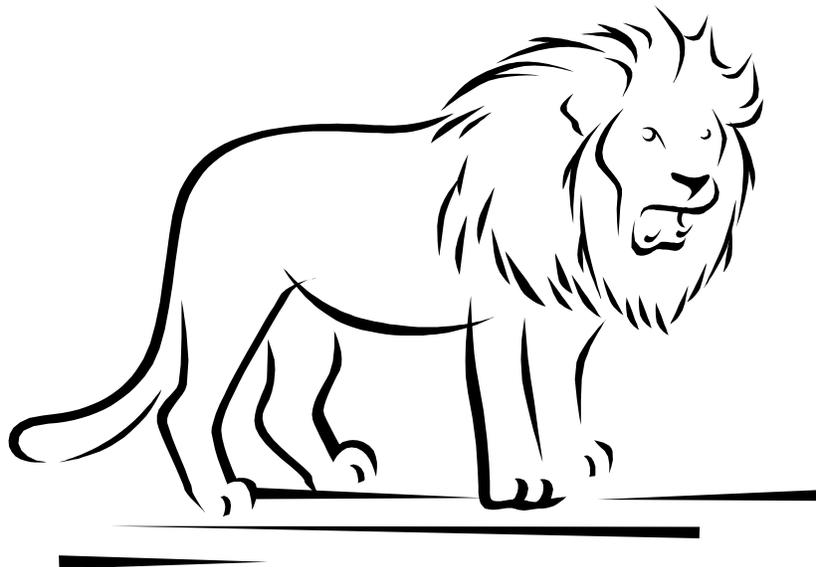


The Cowardly Lion

“It’s sad believe me, missy,
When you’re born to be a sissy
Without the vim and verve...”

The Cowardly Lion from “The Wizard of Oz” sang these words when he met Dorothy in the forest. In the end, we find that the Lion had courage all along, he just didn’t recognize it. Perhaps, being a “sissy” takes courage, if it means not following the crowd if they are doing something wrong.

For this activity, make copies of the Lion below. Make it large enough to write in the Lion’s body if your students are older or large enough to draw in if your students are younger. Instruct the students to record a time when they felt courageous. When they have finished ask if any want to share their experience. Ask the students to think back on what motivated them to be courageous. Perhaps they can make that work again for them in the future.



Courage or Foolishness

Sometimes, a foolhardy stunt is mistaken for bravery or courage. In order to show the difference between these two, have the students select articles from the newspaper or internet that demonstrate bravery and foolishness. Make a bulletin board that can show both sides.



What If...

What if the Boston Tea Party never happened or Rosa Parks gave up her seat on the bus? What if the courageous people whose actions shaped this nation had given into their fears? Make a list of historical people who were courageous (some are listed below). For older classes they may be able to help in constructing the list. Let each student do research about a person and tell what things could be like now if that person hadn't been courageous. An alternate lesson would be to lead a discussion on what would be different.

Rosa Parks
 Harriet Tubman
 Daniel Boone
 Paul Revere
 The Tuskegee Airmen
 George Washington
 The Wright Brothers
 Clara Barton
 Nathan Hale
 Lewis and Clark
 Christopher Columbus
 Martin Luther King, Jr.
 Susan B. Anthony



Croskey's Corner

Courage works at my school. So does Cowardice, but that person is not who I want to write about. Courage is a great teacher, who tries new ideas when the old ones don't seem to be working. Courage is afraid of change; but Courage knows that change is part of life. So, while Courage may not embrace change, Courage bravely takes it on as something to try to make the best of.

The other day, Courage had parent-teacher conferences. One parent was angry and aggressive because Courage had been working to teach the parent's son to be more responsible in completing his school work. The parent began the conference with accusations about Courage being too lenient and not having high standards. Courage did not give in or give up. Courage just kept listening and then helped the parent to see the half-truths the child was telling and the way he was misrepresenting what Courage was saying and doing in class. The parent left the conference with a new respect for Courage.

Courage has only been teaching at my school for a short time. The other day, the district leadership announced a Reduction in Force. This RIF means that a number of teachers will be laid off. Unfortunately, Courage is one with low seniority. But you have got to give Courage credit. Instead of taking the lazy way out and putting little effort into a job that will disappear in June, Courage continues to write exemplary lesson plans and to teach each day with passion and energy.

Courage is a mother of a one year-old. The child never sleeps through the night. Consequently, Courage only gets about 4 hours of sleep per night, on a GOOD night. But does that stop Courage? Nope. That teacher is at school every day, on time, and ready to inspire the students. That is Courage!

Courage has a student who is part of a family that has experienced generational poverty. This student has a coat, but it is dirty and torn. Courage knows that the coats that were available after the December Coat Drive are all gone. Courage did not know where to turn. But instead of quitting, Courage went shopping and got this student a great new coat! The student really liked it! That's Courage!

Our district has an operating levy which will be on the next ballot. Teachers have been asked to volunteer to help with the Levy Campaign. Courage is already too busy with the regular responsibilities of the job. But Courage knows that there is no better model of what is good about our District than a dedicated teacher. So, Courage volunteered to pass out education materials which can help to inform the voters. Courage also made a personal donation of \$25 to the Levy Campaign Treasury. Courage is determined to do everything possible to win this election. Thank you, Courage.

Courage has been diagnosed with diabetes. It is controllable, but it is also scary and full of foreboding. What to expect? How bad with the discomfort be? What will I eat? All these questions are going through Courage's mind. It is tempting to stay home and to "hide" from the disease. But Courage has not followed that path. Courage comes every day, despite the uncertainty and medical difficulties. Courage fights through!

Courage is afraid every day, but still shows up. Courage wants to quit, but doesn't. Courage wants a break and wants to be impatient. But Courage has self-discipline enough to be patient when that doesn't seem worth doing. Courage also has enough Faith to know that acting "as if" something were true, when every indication is that it is NOT, can, nevertheless, MAKE it come true through sheer will and belief. Courage continues, then, because of Hope, but also out of Love. Courage has devoted students because they see the power Courage has to make the impossible happen.

Say, you look familiar. Aren't YOU Courage? You work here, too, don't you?

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With appreciation, to Tom Romano, at Miami University, and J. Ruth Gendler.



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Character...It Starts With Me!

Character in the Classroom *Continuously*

There are many ways that you can teach the Character Quality of Month. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Ask students to make posters to hang in the classroom or around the school.
- Challenge students to find quotes, news stories, current (or classic) songs or movies that portray the character quality of the month. Be sure to share these with the class and “archive” these to use in future years.
- Add the character trait of the month to the spelling word list. (Even if it is posted in the classroom to copy!)
- Offer for students to make a video or write a rap that demonstrates the Character Quality of the Month.
- If you teach younger students, see if you can “borrow” some older students to lead your students in an activity or switch the roles and have the younger students “teach” a rhyme to the older students.
- If you teach older students, you can be the initiator in the previous activities.
- Invite local business leaders or small business owners to talk about the importance of a character trait. If you teach older students, aim to get a representative from a business that typically hires teens so that they can relate the importance of good character when applying for and *keeping* a job.
- Men and women in uniform usually make impressive guest speakers. Police departments, fire departments and military recruiting offices are usually willing to come into a classroom. Do not be afraid to give them specific requests or guidelines for speaking so that it is pertinent to the lessons of the month.
- Always have a generic character activity planned and ready to go that you can use as filler when you have time to kill or that a substitute teacher can use in your absence.