

Courage

This is the first week of our Courage unit. Students will focus on courage and how it relates to being a unique individual among peers.

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



One of a Kind

Students will examine how their unique identity is a gift and explore how to use courage to embrace their uniqueness. (See page 2 for lesson details.)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups
15 minutes



In the Middle

Divide the class into groups of 6-8. Within each group provide a small ball (or anything to hold on to, such as a talking stick). Each person will share a struggle they have had in the past, a strength they have, and a favorite talent they have that others might not know of. Start with the teacher to reduce anxiety. After each person talks they pass the ball to the person on their left.

For Partners
15 minutes



Did You Know?

With your partner, share something about yourself that most people don't know about you. After all pairs have had a chance to share, invite them to share what they learned about their partner with another pair.

For Individuals
15 minutes



This is Me!

Create a thought cloud using words that describe you. Make sure you include all aspects: strengths, passions, struggles, favorites, etc. Remember it takes a certain level of vulnerability to really be courageous! See below for a sample thought cloud handout.

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



Online Vulnerability T-Chart

As a class, create a T-chart illustrating vulnerability on the internet. Identify 3-5 common misconceptions on the left side of the chart (for example, everyone is who they say they are, texts from my friend are always written by them, I can delete something and it goes away forever, etc.). On the right side of the chart, discuss the reality associated with each misconception: anything you post is there forever, etc. Note: you may wish to model an example to get the class started. This is a fairly new concept for many 6th graders.

One of a Kind

Students will examine how their unique identity is a gift and explore how to use courage to embrace their uniqueness.

Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

- Index cards
- 3-5 Ink pads
- Writing utensils
- 3-5 Magnifying glasses (optional)

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:

- Practice using courage to embrace differences among peers.
- Apply courageousness to a variety of situations in group and individual settings.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Take some time to reflect on your most courageous acts this year. Remember that courage includes kindness, vulnerability, leadership, and standing up for what you believe in. Was there something you fought for this year? Did you try a new teaching strategy that really worked? Did you try something that failed miserably that you had to own and learn from? What was something really kind you did for yourself this year? If you struggle to think of a courageous act, it isn't too late! Start today! Infuse courage into your next hour. Do something intentional and kind for yourself. Make a request of your principal for something you need next year. Bring up that strategy or idea or concern to your PLC group that you have been meaning to discuss all year. It isn't too late to be courageous; make today the day!



Share

4-6 minutes

Think about one positive thing that separates you from others in our class; maybe it's your family's background or culture, a hobby you enjoy, or even a talent you have. (Ask for several volunteers to share.)



Inspire

4-6 minutes

Last week we introduced the concept of courage and the idea that vulnerability plays into our ability to act courageous in a variety of settings. This week we will apply both of these concepts as we explore what makes each of us unique. Each of us is unique and different in our own way and that is the beauty of us as individuals! None of us are the same.



Empower

15 minutes

Explain that the class will now complete a science-based activity to illustrate and celebrate differences among all of us in class.

Students will use ink to create a personalized “I am unique!” card.

Using index cards, have each student complete the following:

- Fold the card in half.
- On the outside cover of the card, write the phrase, “I am unique!”
- On the back of the outside of the card, have them write one personal attribute about themselves relating to kindness.
- On the inside of the card, have them use ink to place a fingerprint of their right thumb. Allow 1-2 minutes for the fingerprint to dry.
- If time allows, collect the cards and place them on a table, with the fingerprints exposed. Allow students time to examine the fingerprints using magnifying glasses without seeing the back of each card.



Reflect

5-7 minutes

As a class, discuss the unique fingerprint each person has; no two people have the same fingerprint, not even twins!

How can you embrace your differences and special qualities? How does it take courage to be YOU all the time, even if others don't understand you?

Our fingerprints are only the beginning of what makes each of us unique. Right now fitting in and trying NOT to stand out can be extremely tempting. However, it takes courage to make sure that you stay true to you even when you are trying to find common ground with your friends.

