

# Courage

This is the third week of our Courage unit. Students will focus on courage and how to use it to show humility in situations that often inspire pride and arrogance.

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



### The “HumbleBrag”

Students will work together to brainstorm ways to share accomplishments without being a “HumbleBrag”. (See page 2 for lesson details.)

## Mini Lessons

**For Small Groups**  
15 minutes



### Exhibiting Humility

Divide the class into groups of 4-6 and have small group discussion regarding: How can we exhibit humility as a team/club etc. even when we are obviously better than our opponents?

**For Partners**  
15 minutes



### What Does Humility Look Like?

With your partner, share a person in your life that is a great example of humility despite all of their accomplishments. If you don't know anyone personally, think about famous people that share this attribute as well!

**For Individuals**  
15 minutes



### Increasing in Humility

Journal about the following question: How can you increase your humility in situations that tempt you to be boastful and brag? How can you share your accomplishments without overtly bragging and making others feel bad?

**Technology-Focused**  
15 minutes



### Creating a Humble Post

Create a mock post announcing a recent accomplishment. Remember what we learned about the “HumbleBrag”. Try your best to avoid when creating your post. Share it with a partner to have them double check for HumbleBrag red flags!

# The “HumbleBrag”

Students will work together to brainstorm ways to share their accomplishments without being a “HumbleBrag”.

## Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

## Required Materials

- Paper
- Pencils

## 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:

- Gain a deeper understanding of the kindness and courage required to embrace humility in a variety of situations.
- Practice using courage and humility at school and at home.

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Sometimes there is a misconception that teachers must be experts in all things. Do you feel pressure to never make a mistake, to always have the answers, to be “in control” at all times? If so, forget all that. Right now. Just toss it. You don’t have to be all things to all people; you can’t be. It actually takes more courage to admit when we don’t know it all, when we aren’t in total control, and when we need help. Remember that you are human and that your job as a teacher is actually to lead, inspire, facilitate, ignite, and serve. Today, think about how you lead and have led this entire year through service: service to your students, to the school, to your colleagues, and to yourself. There are few things more courageous than that.



## Share

3-5 minutes

So far we have explored the concept of courage and how it connects with vulnerability. We’ve also explored the concept of leaders and how each of us is a leader in our own right. As we round the halfway point in our courage unit, we shift our focus to a concept that many people do not connect with courage, that of humility.

What does the word humble mean to you? (Invite student responses.)  
 What comes to mind when you think of the word humility? (Invite student responses.)



## Inspire

4-6 minutes

The concept of humility is frequently confused with the word humiliation. Humiliation is negative and often causes embarrassment and sometimes even shame. An example of this might be feeling humiliated when an adult reprimands you in front of your friends or when someone publicly makes fun of you.

Humility is NOT negative. It is a choice we make in how we interact with others and the world around us. For this unit it is defined as being modest about our own abilities and being willing to put the good of others before our own desires. This conscious decision actually requires a great deal of courage and kindness. You are making a decision to elevate others and their wants/needs/preferences before yourself. This does not mean you are devaluing your own accomplishments, ideas, or desires. You are in control of these decisions and can find a balance between placing yourself and your wants and needs first and the importance of using humility with others when the opportunity arises.

This can be extremely hard when you are proud of an accomplishment. Perhaps you studied extra hard and received 100% on the most recent math test. Maybe you kicked the winning goal for your team's final game. These are amazing accomplishments and you want to share them with the world! However, we have to be careful about something called the "HumbleBrag". The "HumbleBrag" is when you announce your accomplishment in a way that is humble at first, but finished with a subtle "brag". One example is: "Ugh, icing my foot! Tough to score the winning goal and then go straight to the ER!" Many people try to downplay their accomplishments this way in an effort to be more humble. However, this often has the opposite effect! This type of humility feels fake and actually draws even more attention to yourself, which is what you were trying to avoid in the first place! So how can we avoid a "HumbleBrag"?

- Balance how much you talk about yourself and your accomplishments with your inquiries to others and how they are doing. Do you talk about yourself a lot? Do you share your accomplishments frequently? If so, the temptation to HumbleBrag is even higher. Try to focus on others FIRST. When something happens that you are extremely proud of, feel free to share it, but don't go over the top, shining the spotlight so brightly on you and how grand you are! Share your accomplishments and then look for the accomplishments of others.
- Highlight your actions instead of yourself specifically. Saying, "I'm so glad I have these new cleats so I could score that winning goal!" is very different from, "I'm glad all that extra practice with the goalie paid off! I felt ready to score that goal!"
- Read the body language of others. Are people rolling their eyes as you share? Do they seem to ignore you? This is a clear indication that you typically spend a great deal of time talking about yourself and sharing all the things you are accomplishing.



## Empower

15 minutes

Explain that the class will now sift through statements to decide if they are in fact a “HumbleBrag” or if they are genuinely announcing an accomplishment. Those that receive a HumbleBrag will rewrite the statement to show true humility and courage. The focus is on your accomplishments and those of others, not on building yourself up from the statement itself. The goal is to feel proud of yourself simply from the accomplishment. Sharing your accomplishment is merely “icing on the cake”.

Divide the class up into small groups. Give each group one of the following statements. Have them decide why it is a HumbleBrag and brainstorm alternate ways to share the accomplishment in a more straightforward and humble way.

- “So glad my rockstar hair stayed out of my face as I crossed the finish line first this weekend at the cross country meet!”
- “Happy to finally be able to rest after beating the other debate team single-handed! #wordsaremylife”
- “Never knew I was so good at math until I got my 5th perfect test in a row. #mathmadeeasy”
- “Watching people falling all over my science project, but I still don’t understand why I won!”
- “Why did I win the roll in the school play exactly? I’ve never even acted before!”



## Reflect

5-7 minutes

Guide the class in a discussion about humility.

What makes this concept so difficult?

How can you share your accomplishments while avoiding the dreaded “HumbleBrag”?

How does it take courage to lead with humility?

If this concept feels extremely difficult, you are right! Many, many adults struggle with this concept and you may even encounter others in your life that place little, if any positive value on this trait. However, being humble and kind rather than prideful and arrogant can help those around you feel better about themselves and increase the overall mood of your group, school, and even community! This week use courage to practice humility in at least one situation in which you want to share an accomplishment. Think about HOW you share things. How can you use humility to be proud of yourself without bragging?