

Courage

Short Lessons

- Give students a list of situations. Have them decide which reactions are courageous and which are foolish. (Examples: Walking away from a fight vs. fighting, jumping off the roof vs. not jumping even if your friends call you “chicken,” making fun of someone vs. standing up for someone)
- Talk about courageous acts that are required during times of war. If possible, show video clips of battlefield heroism or persons hiding Jews during World War II. Have any of your students had a brush with death? Ask them to share how they felt.
- Bring in foods from a different culture to share with the class. As they are trying the foods, talk about how it takes courage to try something new that you’ve never eaten before.
- Tell the story of Joan of Arc and the Trojan Horse. What did Joan do that was so heroic?
- Videotape a clip from the news about a person in your community who showed courage. Show it to the class and talk about what caused that person to be courageous.
- Talk about the courage required by the early settlers, pioneers, and immigrants who founded our country. Does it take courage even today to move to a new place? How many of your students have lived in other states or even other countries?
- Ask students to share what they found out when interviewing someone from another country.
- Talk about the clothes that students wear. Does it take courage to dress differently from the crowd? What do they think of people who dress differently?
- Read stories from your students about times when they were courageous. Ask students to guess which student wrote the story. Throw in your own story of courage.
- Talk about when we feel afraid. Have any of your students had to walk home alone late at night? Been alone in the house on a dark night? Discuss ways to feel courageous.

- **Playing “Synonym Brainstorm”**

Write COURAGE on the board. Tell the students to think about the word and what they think it means. Discuss what a synonym is and ask the students to name words that mean the same as courage. Make a list on the board as words are named by the students. Write all responses without discussion.

After brainstorming is completed, discuss the word list and make sure all are appropriate. Eliminate any that are not.

- Interview someone in the school or in your neighborhood who moved here from another country. What differences have they noticed? Write a paragraph about how that person had the courage to start a new life in your area.
- Write a poem or short story about courage. Develop a character who has to make a choice that requires courage. Remember that there are many forms of courage.
- Watch your favorite TV program and notice whether the characters are displaying courage, fear, or foolishness.

- Post students' poems and stories about courage. Use the header, "There are many ways to be courageous."
- Imagine a world in which everything is different. (For example, maybe you got dropped onto an unknown planet from a Star Trek spaceship.) Write an essay about what you see. How do you feel? Imagine your courage as you explore this new world.