

Lesson Plan: Courage

Key Concepts:

Courage
Resistance

Materials:

- White board, chalkboard, overhead projector or easel with chart paper
- Downloadable testimony clips:
Testimony - Courage
- TV and DVD player and/or a computer with a broadband connection is recommended for viewing directly from the online resource *Creating Character*
- Index Cards
- Student Handouts:
Web of Courage
Viewing Guide – Courage
Independent Practice – Courage
(Possible alternative: use a transparency of the above student handouts in lieu of individual copies.)

Time Required:

1-2 Class Periods

Objectives:

- Students will explore and develop an understanding of the concept of courage.
- Students will identify their own attitudes and beliefs about courage.
- Students will isolate examples of courage in current events and in their own lives.
- Students will evaluate examples of courage in the context in which they occurred.
- Students will work with visual history testimony.
- Students will use visual history testimony to examine the courageous actions and deeds of others during the Holocaust.

Procedures:

1. Distribute the Student Handout: *Web of Courage* to each student. Ask students to individually think about the idea of courage and to complete as much of the web as possible.

*ALTERNATIVE: You may want to display a transparency of the Student Handout: **Web of Courage** using an overhead projector and allow students to create their own replicas.*

2. Allow a few minutes for students to record their responses. Divide the class into pairs. Students should compare their responses and assist one another in completing their individual webs.
3. Conduct a large class discussion using some or all of the following questions as a guide:
 - In what ways do people demonstrate courage in the stories you have heard or read?
 - In what ways do people you know demonstrate courage?
 - In what ways are these demonstrations of courage similar or different?
 - How have you demonstrated courage in the past?
 - How do these examples compare to examples of courage in stories discussed above?
 - Is courage demonstrated in large heroic efforts?
Is courage demonstrated in small ways? Explain.
4. Inform students that they are about to watch testimony clips taken from testimonies given by Holocaust survivors and witnesses. Explain to students that the following clips are brief excerpts from longer interviews.

*NOTE: Some background knowledge of the Holocaust is necessary for students to understand the context of the visual history testimony clips. Some general resources are available on the USC Shoah Foundation Institute website at www.usc.edu/vhi or in the bibliography listed in the Additional Resources section. In addition, comprehensive classroom lessons that provide historical context on the Holocaust are included in **Echoes and Reflections – a multimedia curriculum on the Holocaust**, available at www.echoesandreflections.org.*

Lesson Plan: Courage

5. Distribute copies of the Student Handout: *Viewing Guide - Courage*.

*ALTERNATIVE: You may want to display a transparency of the **Viewing Guide** using the overhead projector and allow students to create their own replicas.*

6. Play testimony clips: *Testimony - Courage*.

7. Inform students that as they are watching the video, they should look for actions that each survivor describes regarding courage. Students should write these actions in the “actions” column.

NOTE: For clarification, you may want to pause the video after playing each testimony clip, or play the clips more than once.

8. After viewing the three testimony clips, students should write why they believe the action described by the interviewee is an example of courage. Students should record their answers in the “explanation” column.

9. Divide the class into pairs. Allow a brief opportunity for student pairs to share their responses written on the Student Handout: *Viewing Guide*.

10. Conduct a large class discussion using some or all of the following questions as a guide:

- What were some of the examples of courage identified in the testimony clips?
- In your opinion, were the people who performed these acts of courage ordinary people or extraordinary people? Explain.
- What is the relationship between courage and fear? Can you be afraid and still be courageous? Can you be courageous without fear?
- Why do you believe that Joseph Lipshutz agreed to join the underground group even though he knew he might be killed?
- Luisa Haberfeld talks about the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising as a demonstration of dignity and courage. Do you agree or disagree with her description? Explain your reasoning. In what other ways might you characterize this event?
- Gys Jansen van Beek describes the loading of people onto train cars for transport to a concentration camp. Gys was a young person who chose to help a young boy escape from the train. In what ways was that decision a courageous one? Why do you think he chose to help?

Lesson Plan: Courage

11. Distribute one index card to each student. Tell them that the information that they write on the cards is going to be read out loud by another student, so they should make sure they write clearly and anonymously. On one side of the index card only, tell students to respond to the following question:

In your opinion, what was the most courageous act described in the testimony?

12. On the other side of the index card, have students write about an example of courage from their own lives. Remind them that it should be written anonymously and that the content should be appropriate for class discussion.
13. Collect the index cards from the students, shuffle the cards and redistribute them to the class. Have each student read the card they received out loud to the class. (Re-collect the cards when finished.)
14. As a large group, lead a class discussion, using some or all of the following questions as a guide:
- Which responses impacted you the most? Explain?
 - Were there differences in the types of comments posted on the cards, or did everyone have similar thoughts and feelings?
 - What were the common responses or comments you found?
 - Can you make a general statement or conclusion about the class's reaction to the activity? If so, what might that statement be?

15. For homework or independent practice, assign one or more of the following activities:

ALTERNATIVE: Have students choose the activity they would like to do for homework.

- Distribute the Student Handout: *Independent Practice - Courage*. Respond to each question by writing a few sentences that explain why you agree or disagree with each of the given statements.
- Write a journal entry or reflection on the following prompt:
In the first clip, Joseph Lipshutz recounts that he was approached and asked if he was interested in doing something that was very dangerous but that could possibly save their lives. Imagine you were given the same proposition: How do you think you would respond? Why do you think you would respond this way? What are the risks involved in participating? What are the possible benefits?

Lesson Plan: Courage

- Choose one of the following quotes and write a response to its author that explains why you either agree or disagree with the quote. In your response, reference your own experiences, the experiences exemplified in the testimony clips viewed, and/or the outcomes and insights garnered from class activities and class discussions of courage.
 - **Courage is doing what you're afraid to do.**
There can be no courage unless you're scared.
— *Eddie Rickenbacker (Fighter Pilot)*
 - **Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear.**
— *Mark Twain*
 - **The only real prison is fear, and the only real freedom is freedom from fear.**
— *Aung San Suu Kyi (Democratically elected leader of Burma)*

Extension Activities:

1. Write a children's book about courage. Use images as well as text. Images can include pictures drawn by hand, or clipped from magazines, Internet sites, or periodicals. As a class activity, donate this "Courage Library" to a local preschool or elementary school classroom.
2. Find a poem about courage and then write your own. Creatively display both poems. Publish a class anthology of poems and then hold a poetry reading event to promote the anthology.
3. Create a classroom wall of courage and have each student create a plaque honoring a person he or she believes exemplifies courage. Information on the plaque should include, but would not be limited to, the following:
 - Picture or photo of the individual
 - Summary of the individual's accomplishments
 - Explanation as to why this person exemplifies courage

Web of Courage

Name _____

Complete as many of the boxes as you can.

A story or book about courage:	Fictional characters who display courage:	Real people who display courage:
Synonyms for courage:	Define courage:	Antonyms for courage:
A time that I had courage was...		A time when I wish I had more courage was...

Viewing Guide: Courage

Name _____

As the testimony clips for *Courage* are viewed, complete the two columns below:

Interviewee

Action

Explanation

Joseph Lipshutz

Luisa Haberfeld

Gys Jansen van Beek

Viewing Guide: Courage

Teacher's Answer Key

Name _____

As the testimony clips for *Courage* are viewed, complete the two columns below:

Interviewee

Joseph Lipshutz

Action

Joseph joined an underground group (in the concentration camp) to gain weapons in order to protect and save themselves.

He would go to a secret location to get written instructions from the group.

Explanation

Students' answers will vary.

Luisa Haberfeld

Luisa's father told her to do the opposite of whatever the Germans told her to do.

Jewish youth in the Warsaw Ghetto started an uprising. They fought and resisted the German army against all odds.

A newborn baby was killed because its constant crying was risking the lives of the many people who were hiding from the Germans.

Students' answers will vary.

Gys Jansen van Beek

Gys helped a Jewish boy who was being herded onto a deportation train. He escaped by riding away with the boy on his bike.

Students' answers will vary.

Independent Practice: Courage

Name _____

Respond to each statement by writing a few sentences that explain why you agree or disagree.

1. Everyone is capable of courage.

I agree/disagree because:

2. Courage means doing the right thing even when it is the difficult thing.

I agree/disagree because:

3. Courage is something that only extraordinary people can demonstrate.

I agree/disagree because: