

Becoming Courageous

Act: Lesson 2

The Power of Words

Objective:

1. To show the children that the words they use have a lot of impact.
2. To encourage children to choose their words carefully.

Rationale:

1. Whereas the “Reframing Lesson” focuses on children paying attention to how they look at and think about things, this lesson teaches children that their choice of words influences how they think and act. There is a direct relationship between these two lessons, and you might want to teach them in sequence.
2. This lesson ties into a number of topics, including teasing, bullying and internet etiquette.

Alignment to the British Columbia Core Competencies:

Critical Thinking; Analyze and Critique:

1. I can reflect on and evaluate my thinking, products, and actions.
2. I can analyze my own assumptions and beliefs.

Supporting Literature:

1. Some thoughts on choosing your words carefully. [Watch Your Words: 8 ways to choose your words more carefully.](#)
2. TED talk The [Power of Words](#) by Coral Ortiz (this talk is meant for teachers, but could be appropriate for middle school/high school students)

Materials and Resources:

1. Courage Journals. Children use exercise books or any type of book or journal. Courage Journals are used to reflect on the content of the day’s lesson. Each child should have their own.
2. Smartboard, or projector and speakers. Links to the videos are in the lesson.
3. Videos: [The Power of Words](#) by Taylor Bertolini (meant for students to watch)
4. Books: *Just Kidding* by Trudy Ludwig; *The Word Collector* by Peter H Reynolds
The Word Collector by Peter H Reynolds
5. Thesarus for each pair or group. (For extension activity) You can also use an online thesaurus if you choose to do this activity as a class. [thesaurus.com](https://www.thesaurus.com)

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Lesson (approx 1 hour)

Introduction:

1. Organize students so they can see the smartboard.
2. Show the students [The Power of Words](#)
3. Facilitate a conversation with your students about the video. Ask the students if they have ever had their mood changed by hearing some kind words. On the flip side, have they ever felt bad because of something that was said to them.

Main Activity:

1. Read the book, *Just Kidding*. Afterwards, lead a discussion about how DJ is feeling at different parts of the story. There is a set of discussion questions at the back of the book.
2. Read the book, *The Word Collector*.
3. Choosing our words carefully does not mean that we don't experience big feelings, and it doesn't mean that we can't talk about them. The worksheet, "This is What I Can Say" is designed to make children aware of a better way to say things. The worksheet is below. Depending on the age of your students and their familiarity with this topic, you might want to do this as a group first on the Smartboard before you ask them to fill it out individually. *For those students who will need an ongoing reminder of which words to choose when experiencing big emotions, the worksheet can be cut up, laminated, and then put on a split ring. Students can keep this in their desk or in their pocket so that it is easily accessible when they need help choosing the right words to say in challenging situations.*
4. After the students have written their word choices in the "This is What I Can Say" worksheets, give them some time to practice. Role play is an effective way for them to do this. Start off by having the teacher give the whole class a situation, and the partners practicing using the phrases they have written on the worksheet. If the students are independent enough, they can then choose their own situations to role play. End the session with the students demonstrating situations for the class.

Reflective Activity:

What have you learned about the power of words today? How can you choose your words more carefully?

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Extensions:

1. Learning about the power of words ties nicely into talking about online etiquette. Here is a video from [Common Sense Media](#) that introduces the topic.
2. If you would like to talk about bullying behaviour with your class, there is a list of resources in the back of *Just Kidding*.
3. A great list of *Teasing Do's and Don'ts* is written on the last page of *Just Kidding*
4. Here is a link to [The Thesaurus Game](#)

Creative Activity: Word Art. Using words from the book, *The Word Collector*, students make a piece of art. The words and template for this activity can be found by clicking the “creative activity” button on the website.

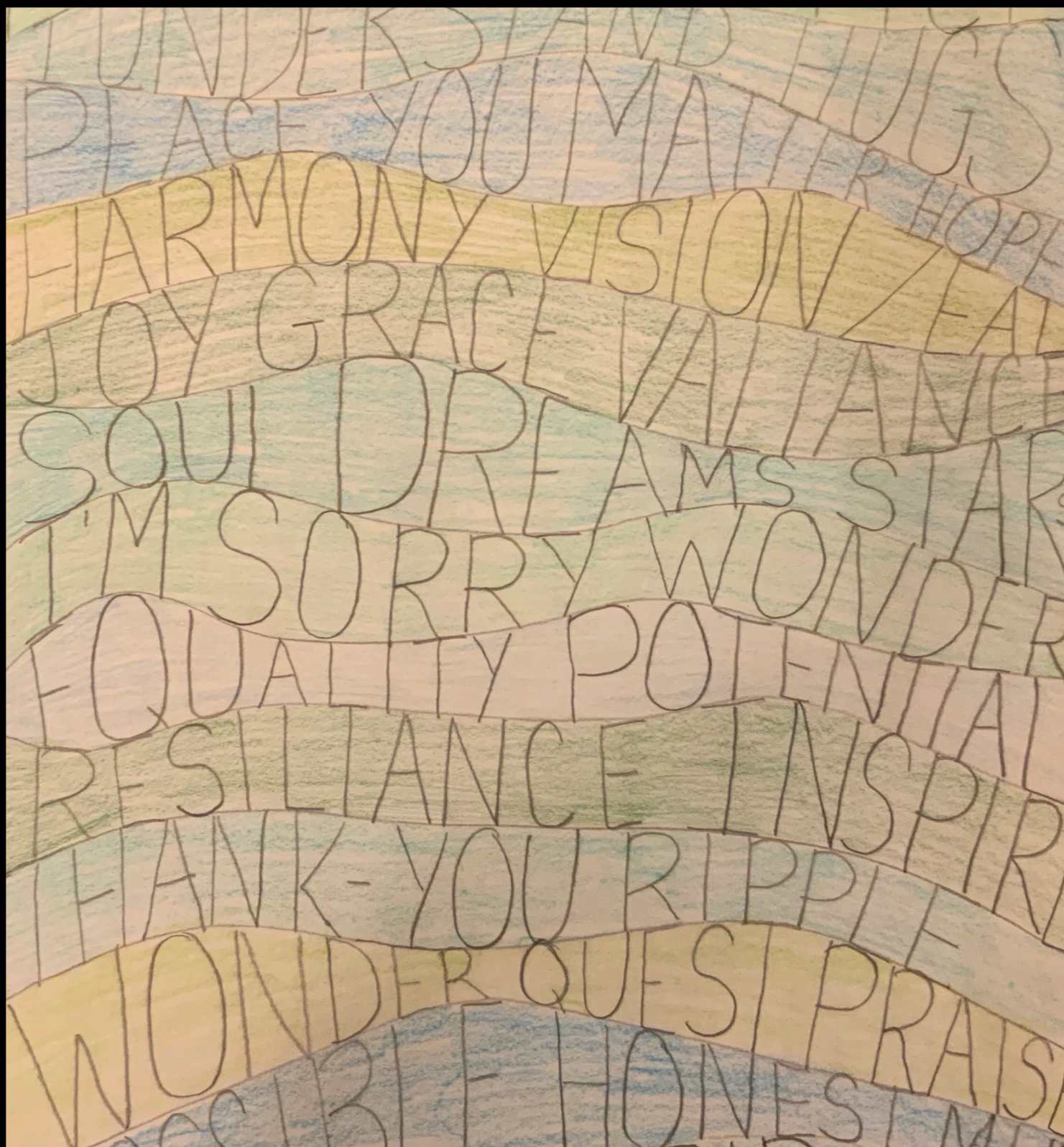
Students write (with pencil) the words of their choice in the spaces on the template. It looks best when the students use all upper case letters and when the letters fill the entire space. After the words are written in, students colour each line a different colour. It looks best when the students use either all cool or all warm colours.

Materials:

- Template and word choices, printed out
- Pencil
- Pencil Crayons

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Example:



Becoming Courageous

This is How I am Feeling	This is What I Can Say
Frustrated	
Angry	
Tired	
Embarrassed	
Hurt	

"Raise your
words, not your
voice.

It is rain that
grows flowers,
not thunder."

-Rumi

“Be careful of your thoughts, for your thoughts become your words. Be careful of your words, for your words become your actions. Be careful of your actions, for your actions become your habits. Be careful of your habits, for your habits become your character. Be careful of your character, for your character becomes your destiny.”

~Chinese Proverb