

Becoming Courageous

Lesson 1

Building Trust and Community

Objective:

1. To create an atmosphere of trust within the classroom so that students can express vulnerability.
2. To begin to create a *Community of Practice*.

Rationale:

1. It is one of the main objectives of this program to create an environment where students feel comfortable discussing challenging topics. In order to do this, students will make themselves vulnerable. If trust has been established, then students will be able to talk and write about topics that are often very personal. Building trust, is an ongoing process in a courageous classroom. The first lesson is dedicated to this topic, but always remember that the success of the year depends on trust being valued and deepened.
2. A Community of Practice is a group of people who are engaged in common learning. Throughout the year, students and teachers will support, challenge and celebrate with one another as they learn about courage.

Alignment to the British Columbia Core Competencies:

Social Responsibility; Building Relationships;

1. With some support, I can be part of a group,
2. I am kind to others.

Supporting Literature:

1. Brene Brown TED talk: [The Power of Vulnerability](#)
2. Article about creating community in a classroom: [Creating a Classroom Community](#)
3. Article explaining Communities of Practice: [What is a Community of Practice?](#)

Materials and Resources:

1. Courage Journals. I use exercise books, but you can use 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. A class set of clothespins (with a child's name written on each one)
3. Some sort of a container to hold clothes pins with names. (I use a giant Nutella jar)
4. "Get to know you" worksheets (attached at bottom of lesson)
5. Small, soft playground ball

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Lesson (aprox 1 hour)

Introduction:

1. Organize students in a circle. I like to have them sitting on chairs.
2. Welcome students and explain that the class will be meeting each week to learn about courage.
3. Go around the circle and welcome each student. Put their name in your jar.
4. As you put that student's name in the jar, ask that student to share one thing about themselves.

Main Activity:

1. Play the game, ***Change Seats if....*** (explanation at bottom of page)
2. Play the game, ***Ball Toss Game*** (scroll down to bottom of page)
3. Have students complete the "Getting to Know Me" sheet (if time permits)

Reflective Activity:

Introduce Courage Journals. Courage Journals will be used to think about and reflect on the learning we are doing in our Becoming Courageous class. Question for today: Write about someone that you got to know today, or someone that you got to know better. What did you learn about this person?

Extensions:

- [Community Building Games for Primary Students](#)
- [Community Building for Intermediate Students](#)

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Change Places If...

This drama game is great for getting to know your class, and depending on the nature of the questions asked, it can be used in any curricular area.

Setup: sitting on chairs in a circle, with one less chair than number of people.

Note: The purpose of this game is for students to share what they did in the summer, and also for students to see who in the class they can connect with. Some examples are: “change places if you have 3 or more siblings”, “change places if you went camping this summer” or “change places if you are new to this school”

How to Play:

1. The teacher stands in the middle of the circle of chairs, and calls out a question, “Change places if _____” If that question is true for the student, they leave their chair and try to find another one to sit in. There will always be one student left over.
2. The student standing in the middle gets to call out the next question. Again, all students who answer “yes” to that question, or have a positive response, get out of their chairs and try to sit in another chair. One person will be left standing in the middle, and the game continues this way.
3. Every once in a while (but not too often, or it tends to disrupt the game) the person in the middle can yell, “everyone change”. All students then change seats at once.

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Hints:

The students may need some coaching on the type of question to ask. The questions must have an answer of yes or no.

For example, the proper type of question would be: change places if you went swimming this summer. The game doesn't work if the question has multiple answers. (for example, what did you do this summer?)

Also, it works better if you make some restrictions on where the new seat can be. I found it works well if you tell students that they can't change to the seat that is directly beside them, and you also can't trade seats with anyone.

Here is a video of some ESL students playing this game:

[Change Places If..](#)

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Ball Toss Game

This game is great when you want your students to learn everyone's name. I am always amazed that some students do not know the names of their classmates!

Setup: sitting on chairs in a circle.

Equipment: one small playground (soft) ball

How to Play: the goal of the game is to get the ball back to the leader in the shortest amount of time.

1. The leader calls the name of someone in the circle, and makes a safe pass to that person.
2. This person calls the name of another person (who has NOT already touched the ball) and makes a safe pass to that person.
3. This continues around the circle, until all people have touched the ball. Only then can the ball be passed back to the leader.

You can play this game more than once. I like to time how long it takes for the ball to make a round. As the children learn each other's names, the time it takes for the ball to make a round gets less and less.

Video of the [Ball Toss Game](#)

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SOME THINGS ABOUT

Me

Name: _____

I would like to be called: _____

Birthday: _____

Last year I went to school: _____

Who lives in your home?

What do you like to do in your spare time? (hobbies, sports, clubs, etc)

I am hoping that
the teacher will:

My favourite thing to do at school is:

My least favourite thing about school is::

The bravest thing I have ever
done is:

I AM INTERESTED IN LEARNING ABOUT

One thing you should know about me:

Thanks for filling this out. I am looking forward
to our year together,