

Becoming Courageous

Contemplate: Lesson 2

Size of the Problem

Objective:

1. To introduce the concept that there are different “sizes” of problems, and that depending on the size of the problem, there is an appropriate and effective reaction.
2. That students can recognize the size of their problem, and react with an appropriate response.

Rationale:

1. Sometimes, we all overreact to small problems, or we ignore a problem that should be dealt with. In order that we learn to react in an expected way to a problem, it is important to learn to gauge the size of a problem. When we can figure out how big our problem is, we can figure out the best way to solve it.
2. We want students to be able to ignore the glitches, and to solve the small problems themselves. We also want them to ask for help when the problem is too big for them to solve on their own.

Alignment to the British Columbia Core Competencies:

Social Responsibility; Problem Solving in Peaceful Ways:

1. I can solve some problems myself and can identify when to ask for help.

Supporting Literature:

1. Social Thinking is a program developed by Michelle Garcia Winner. This program teaches self-regulation. The term, Size of the Problem, comes from Michelle Garcia Winner’s work. Here is a link to the [Social Thinking Website](#)

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. Smartboard, or projector and speakers (to show videos of the different sizes of problems). Links to the videos are in the lesson.
3. How BIG is Your Problem: Poster based on Michelle Garcia Winner’s work. Courageous Problem Solving Business Cards and Sheets.
4. Books: *Wild Ideas: Let Nature Inspire Your Thinking* by Elin Kelsey

Lesson (approx 1 hour)

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Introduction:

1. Organize students so they can see the smartboard.
2. Introduce the concept of Size of the Problem : sometimes, we all overreact to small problems, or we ignore a problem that should be dealt with. In order that we learn to react in an expected way to a problem, it is important to learn to gauge the size of a problem. When we can figure out how big our problem is, we can figure out the best way to solve it.

Main Activity:

1. Show the videos. After each video, a conversation will naturally begin.

What do you think?

Here is an example of a boy who acted in an unexpected way to his problem: [Boy Calls 911 to Avoid Bedtime](#)

We all know that phoning 911 is not an expected response when you don't like your bedtime!

How about this problem? Are the people reacting in an expected way? [Oreo Commercial](#)

Sizes of Problems:

How can you know the expected way to react to a problem? Let's start by looking at problems, from the littlest ones to the biggest ones.

Glitch:

The smallest type of problem is called a glitch. A glitch can be ignored. [Cat Ignores Pig](#). This cat is a champion at ignoring this pig!

Small Problem:

Next you have a small problem. You can solve a small problem yourself, or ask friend to help you.

Is the dog going to be able to solve this problem on her own? [Dog in Pool](#)

Watch how this brother helps his little sister. [Brother and Sister](#)

Medium Sized Problem

Then, there is a medium sized problem. You will need help from an adult to solve this problem, often from a parent or teacher. [Student and Teacher](#)

Large Problem

When you have a big problem, you need to get outside help from a professional. Its important to not ignore a big problem, or to think that you can solve it yourself, because it will only get bigger. [What Does a Cavity Look Like?](#)

Emergency

An emergency is the biggest type of problem. When you have an emergency, you need to call 911. [Emma Calls 999](#). (999 is the UK version of 911)

Becoming Courageous

Reflective Activity:

Think back to your own experience. Can you remember an example of a Glitch, Small, Medium and Large Problems? How did you solve those problems?

Extensions:

Courageous Problem Solving Business Cards and Sheets. These are a compliment to the *Size of the Problem* lesson and they are included in the lesson called *Courageous Problem Solving*. (Act; Lesson 5)

Creative Activity: Problem-O-Meter.

Supplies: Worksheets printed (preferable on card stock) Brads (split fasteners) and pencil crayons.

How big is your current problem? With the Problem-O-Meter, you can find out! Print off the Problem-O-Meter, preferably on card stock. Colour your meter with using green, blue, yellow, orange, red. Cut out the dial and attach it to your meter with a brad (split fastener). Now you can use your Problem-O-Meter whenever you want to express the type of problem you are encountering. Why is it called a “Problem-O-Meter”? Because it is no problem-o to solve a problem when you know what size it is!