

Courage to be ME!

This initial lesson in the Courage unit sets the focus on kindness as the ultimate form of courage. This lesson begins by highlighting the courage needed to be ourselves even when we are alone in our preferred activities. Students will identify one unique quality/preference they have that they have been shy or reluctant to share with others.

Kindness Concept(s)

Courage, Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

Required Materials

- Lima bean template (see below)
- A Bad Case of the Stripes* by David Shannon
- Writing supplies

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.



DESIGNATED BY CASEL
AS A RECOMMENDED PROGRAM
FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.
See last page for details.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Identify unique qualities and interests about themselves.
- Use courage to be themselves, even when they are alone in their preferences.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Many people associate the term “courage” with being strong, standing up to oppression, and fighting for what is right. While all of these definitions do in fact refer back to various types of courage, there is yet another focus that is equally valuable: the courage to respond with kindness. This unit will focus on kindness as a form of courageous action. Your ability to infuse kindness into your daily life is the most courageous thing you can do for yourself. When your thoughts change, your behaviors change which ultimately leads to a positive change in those around you as well. This kindness chain reaction starts with you! This week, write out one specifically kind thought about yourself and post it on your bathroom mirror. Repeat it to yourself aloud every single time you read it. At first this may feel awkward and unnecessary. However, the more you hear kind words out loud, the more likely you are to internalize them. How can you be kind to yourself today?

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Allow students to draw a picture of their unique quality or interest.
- Pair students up during the activity to share their answers on a smaller level before the whole class shares.



Share

3-5 minutes

During our last unit, we focused on responsibility. Let's review what responsibility looks like in different situations.

How can we be responsible...

- In the kitchen?
- In our bedrooms?
- On the bus?
- On the playground?
- In the cafeteria?

When we make responsible choices, we are showing kindness to others and our space!



Inspire

What is Courage?

5-7 minutes

Explain that courage means that you are brave when facing new or difficult circumstances. This unit will focus on the courage needed within ourselves, with others, and as it relates to our community. We will end with the ultimate type of courage: kindness! When we use courage to be kind, we feel better about ourselves and help others to feel better too!

- **Courage to be yourself:** It might sound silly, but it takes courage to be yourself. Most of us don't think about how we treat ourselves, but kindness actually starts with the things you say and do to yourself first! If you can't be kind to you, how can you expect to be kind to others? So how does this connect to courage? It takes courage to be YOU at all times! Sometimes others won't like what you like or might make fun of you because you look or act different. You can use courage to stay true to your beliefs, even when you might not fit in.



Empower

20 minutes

Courage Story: A Bad Case of the Stripes by David Shannon

Read Aloud link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=cKaQXmRvpwv>

This story is about a girl named Camilla that desperately wants to fit in and be like everybody else. In her quest to be like them, she loses what makes her uniquely special! In the end, she uses courage to be herself by admitting a unique preference she has that others in her class despise: lima beans! After reading the story, use the following questions to guide a discussion:

- How did Camilla feel about the first day of school? What do you worry about when you start a new grade?
- What was Camilla's main focus for her first day of school?
- What happened to her?
- What caused her "case of the stripes"?
- How was she able to "cure" her case of the stripes?

Now that we have read this story, let's think about times in our lives that we too have had a "bad case of the stripes". If there is time, provide a personal experience that relates back to yourself either growing up or as a teacher. Here is an example: "When I first started teaching, I wanted to be the very best teacher of all. I saw many of the other teachers using hand motions to help students remember new concepts. I decided that must be the only way to be the "cool" teacher, so I tried it out. Guess what? I was TERRIBLE! My students were always confused and my hand motions made them upset because I didn't know what I was doing. I had a "bad case of the stripes" because I was trying to be like all the other teachers in my grade! I finally realized that my special talent, and one that I was pretty shy about at first, was to make little songs to help us all remember. My "lima bean" was my songs! Once I stopped and used my singing talent, I was able to be the best teacher I could be. It took courage to be myself, even though it was different from all the other teachers.

Provide each student with a blank lima bean. On one side, have them write or draw a time when they had a "bad case of the stripes" by following the crowd and doing what everyone else wanted, instead of what they personally wanted. On the other side, write or draw something unique about yourself; something you enjoy or that excites you, but might make you stand out from your friends. (I love math speed tests, even though everyone hates them!).



Reflect

5 minutes

After completing the lima beans, collect them and read them aloud to the class. If time allows, have the class guess which unique quality belongs to each student.

- Provide positive feedback for students as they self identify.
- Remind them that just the act of sharing a personal quality takes courage!

As we get older, it can be harder and harder to be ourselves. It takes courage to be yourself, even in the face of peer pressure from our friends. However, it's those unique qualities that make each of us special! Show kindness to yourself this week by using courage to stand up for what you believe in. It's okay to be different!



Extension Ideas

- Create a “Courage to Be Me” bulletin board with a giant picture of the cover of the story in the center. Add all of the lima beans to the bulletin board to highlight unique qualities found within your classroom.
- Using a bag of bean soup mix, highlight how many different types of beans make up this yummy soup. Take time to identify all of the beans using pictures and books and then if possible, cook the soup!

RAK Notebook Prompt (See RAK Notebook Project in the Respect unit for more details):

- Draw a square in the center of your notebook. Make sure it is very large so you can write inside.
- On the top of the square write COURAGE.
- Divide your square into 3-5 stripes.
- Color each stripe a different color.
- Write a unique personal quality about yourself on each stripe.



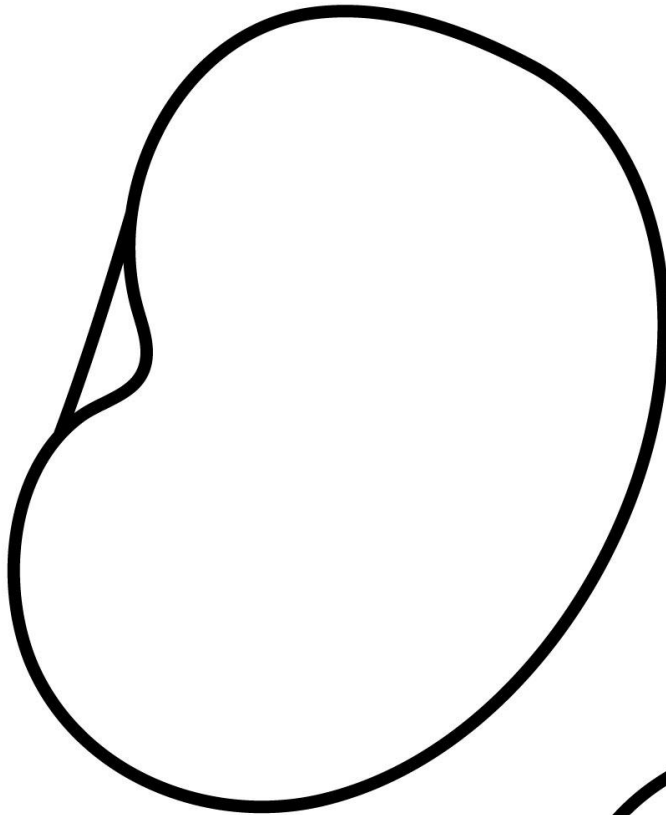
DESIGNATED BY CASEL
AS A RECOMMENDED
PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL
AND EMOTIONAL
LEARNING.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASSEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

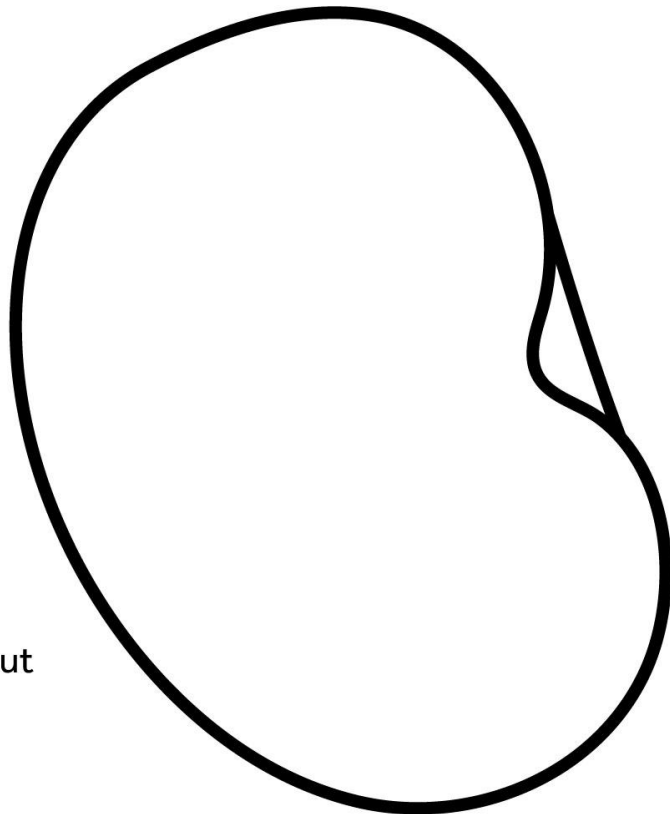
Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS
FOUNDATION®



Write or draw a time when you had a bad case of the 'stripes' by following the crowd and doing what everyone else wanted, instead of what you personally wanted.



On this side, write or draw something unique about yourself—something you enjoy or that excites you, but might make you stand out from your friends.