

## COURAGE

By Bernard Waber

What is courage? There are everyday kinds of courage that ordinary people show all the time. There are “awesome kinds” of courage and “everyday kinds” of courage. This book celebrates the moments, big and small, that bring out the hero in each of us from “being the first to make up after an argument,” or “going to bed without a nightlight.”



**WITS Connection:** Walk away, Ignore, Talk if out, Seek help

**WITS LEADS:** Act, Seek help

## Questions and Activities



### PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

- Ask students to consider the meaning of courage. Brainstorm on chart paper possible definitions of courage. Courage may be described as:
  - Being strong when you are afraid.
  - Thinking things through even though you may be in a scary situation.
  - Trying your best despite unexpected challenges.
- Discuss this quote, “There can be no courage unless you’re scared” by Eddie Rickenbacker, a fighter pilot. To clarify the meaning of courage discuss the opposite of courage - fear or being afraid. Ask students to describe a time when they experienced fear and when they had courage despite feeling fear.

*The word courage comes from the French root word, “coeur” which means heart. To have courage may be defined as “strength of heart.”*



### PRE-READING QUESTIONS

- Is courage something you are born with or is it something you learn and develop?
- What does courage look like? What does courage sound like?
- Do you need courage every day or just once in awhile?
- Discuss with a partner the following experiences:
  - A time when I had courage was...
  - A time when I wish I had more courage was...



### QUESTIONS DURING THE READING

While reading the book ask students to consider the context of courage described throughout the story. Stop periodically to discuss the types of courage described:

- During activities like sports such as like swimming or skating.
- During social experiences - keeping a secret, being jealous, telling the truth, standing up for a friend.
- Trying out new experiences - new foods, new friends, new dreams, new adventures.
- During frustrating or uncomfortable experiences such as car trips or starting a project again.
- As part of your job, such as a firefighter or a police officer.



## POST-READING QUESTIONS

1. Review the first two pre-reading questions again.
  - a. Is courage something you are born with or is it something you can learn and develop? *Courage is something that everyone can practise. You know you have it when you use it.*
  - b. Do you need courage every day or just once in awhile? *The book shows that there are "everyday kinds" of courage (page 6).*
2. Is everyone capable of having courage? *Yes, the book shows that everyone can show courage.*
3. Can you get courage from someone else? *The book says, "Courage is what we give to each other."*
4. How can you give someone else your courage? *Stand up for them, help them with something that is difficult to do.*
5. Is courage the same for everyone? *No, because we are all different we have different kinds of courage.*
6. What helps you have courage? *Support and encouragement from others, experiencing success.*



### WITS Connection:

7. Ask students to identify WITS strategies used by the characters in the book
  - a. *Page 11 Nobody better pick on your brother (Seek help)*
  - b. *Page 14: Being the new kid on the block (Talk it out)*
  - c. *Page 15: Being the first to make up after an argument (Talk it out)*
  - d. *Page 23: Explaining the rip in your brand-new pants (Talk it out)*
  - e. *Page 30: Being a firefighter or police officer (Seek help)*
  - f. *Page 31: What we give each other (Seek help)*
8. Distribute the It Takes Courage To Use Your WITS handout. Ask student to draw and describe an example of when it takes courage to, Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out and Seek help.



## POST-READING ACTIVITIES

- On a Roll

Show the class a piece of 8 ½ x 11 paper. Ask them, "Is there any way the paper can hold up the book, using only one hand to hold the paper? You can ask for several volunteers to try; soon they will realize there is no way. Now take the paper and roll it tightly into a tube, the diameter of about 1 to 1/2 inches. Hold the tube in one hand and carefully place the book on top of the open end of the tube. It should support the book.

- Relate this to the ability we all have to turn our weaknesses into strengths and show courage. The paper at first seems flimsy, weak and easy to crush. This might be compared to some people who are faced with a problem or obstacle, they may lack the courage to confront the problem or stand up to the opposition. But, with determination we can turn our weaknesses into strengths. Just as the paper can be rolled into a sturdy tube, we can practise courage despite our doubts if we have the courage to try. Ask the students to give examples of how someone turns a weakness into strength. (*10-Minute Life Lessons*, Jaime Miller)

- Tug-of-Help

The description for the tug-of-help can be found at <http://www.witsprogram.ca/community/tug-of-help/> This activity shows that sometimes problems seem insurmountable when you face them alone but finding support and help makes it easier to deal with challenges. While completing this activity with your students emphasize that sometimes it is not easy to seek help and it takes courage to share concerns with others in order to find support.

- Many Kinds of Courage

Brainstorm with students the many kinds of courage we need in different situations. Organize the brainstorming session into categories as seen in the chart below.

<u>Courage with Friends</u>	<u>Courage in New Situations</u>	<u>Courage When You Are Hurt</u>
<u>Courage to Seek Help</u>	<u>Courage When You Are Learning.</u>	<u>Courage to Help Someone Else</u>

Distribute the Many Kinds of Courage handout to students.

- Ask students to draw one example of courage that is most meaningful to them.
- Students write their definition of courage based on what they have learned from the story and discussions.
- Students describe why they have chosen their specific example of courage.

#### Courage Tree

- Create a courage tree with your students. Cut a large tree shape from brown or green craft paper. Distribute the apple shape handout to students. Ask students to write one characteristic of courage on an apple such as "trying new things," "doing what is right," and "standing up for your friend" and then cut out the apple shapes. Collect the apples from the students. When students demonstrate courageous behaviours described on an apple then the apple is tacked or glued onto the tree.

#### Trait of the week

- Make courage the "character trait of the day or week" and have the class work together to make a Courage Crate (a box with a slot on the top). Students brainstorm a list of all the ways they can demonstrate courage and keep this list posted for everyone to see. When students see an act of courage they write it on a piece of paper and put it in the Courage Crate.

#### Profiles in Courage

- Have the students, either individually or in groups, identify acts of courage by people in the news or by people in your school or community. Then have each individual or group make a poster or presentation. What do these courageous people have in common? What are their differences? What can the students learn about themselves from these people?

#### Courage Song

- Teach the song, *Courage* to the class. Students may present the song at a school assembly in person or as a video presentation.

# Walk Away

It takes courage to walk away when

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# Ignore

It takes courage to ignore when

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# Talk it Out

It takes courage to talk it out when

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# Seek Help

It takes courage to seek help when

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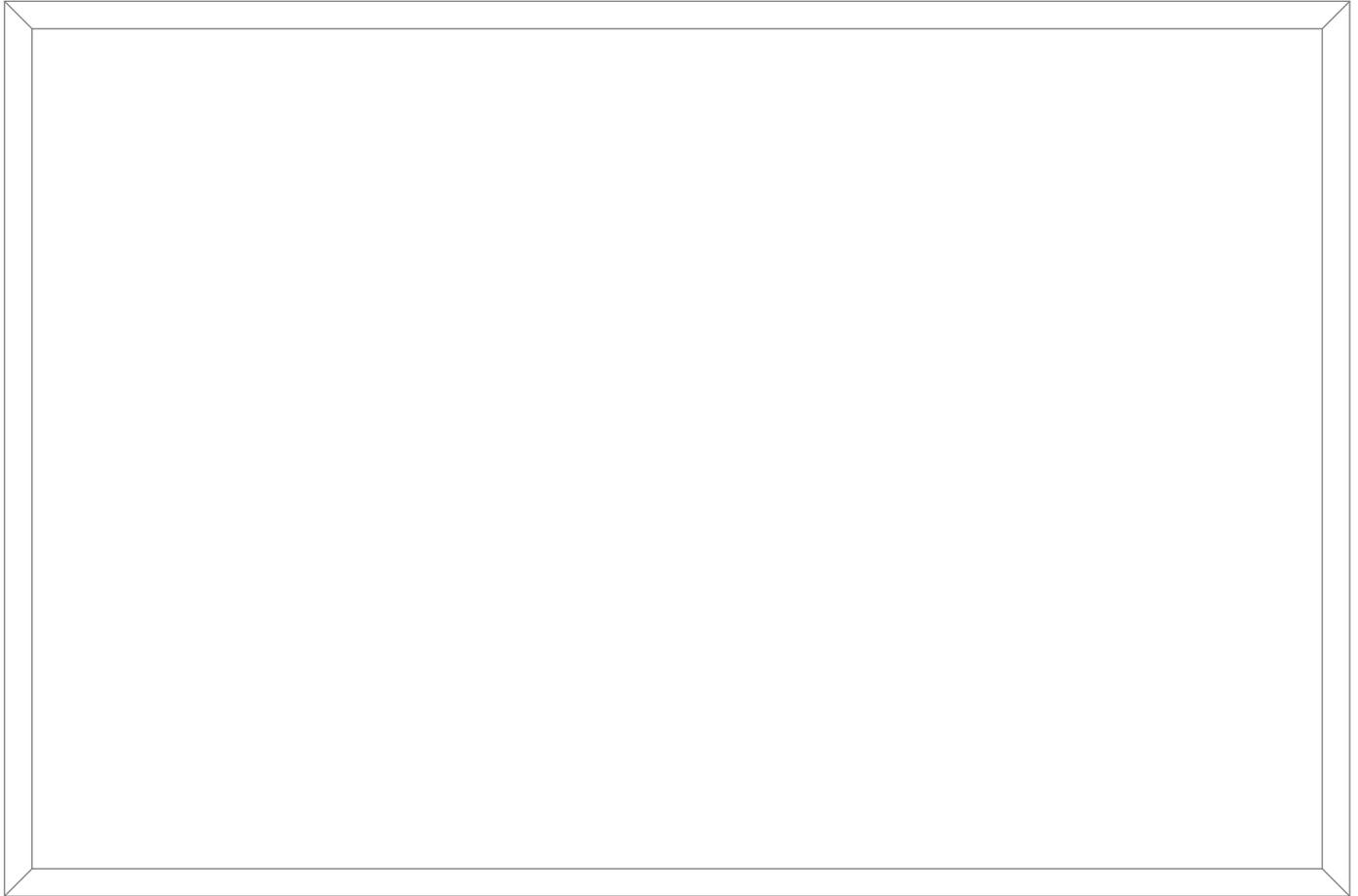
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

## **Courage: Many Kinds of Courage**

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“There are many kinds of courage.  
Awesome kinds.  
And everyday kinds.  
Still, courage is courage —  
Whatever kind.”



What is your example of courage? Courage is .....

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Why is this your example of courage? I chose this example because .....

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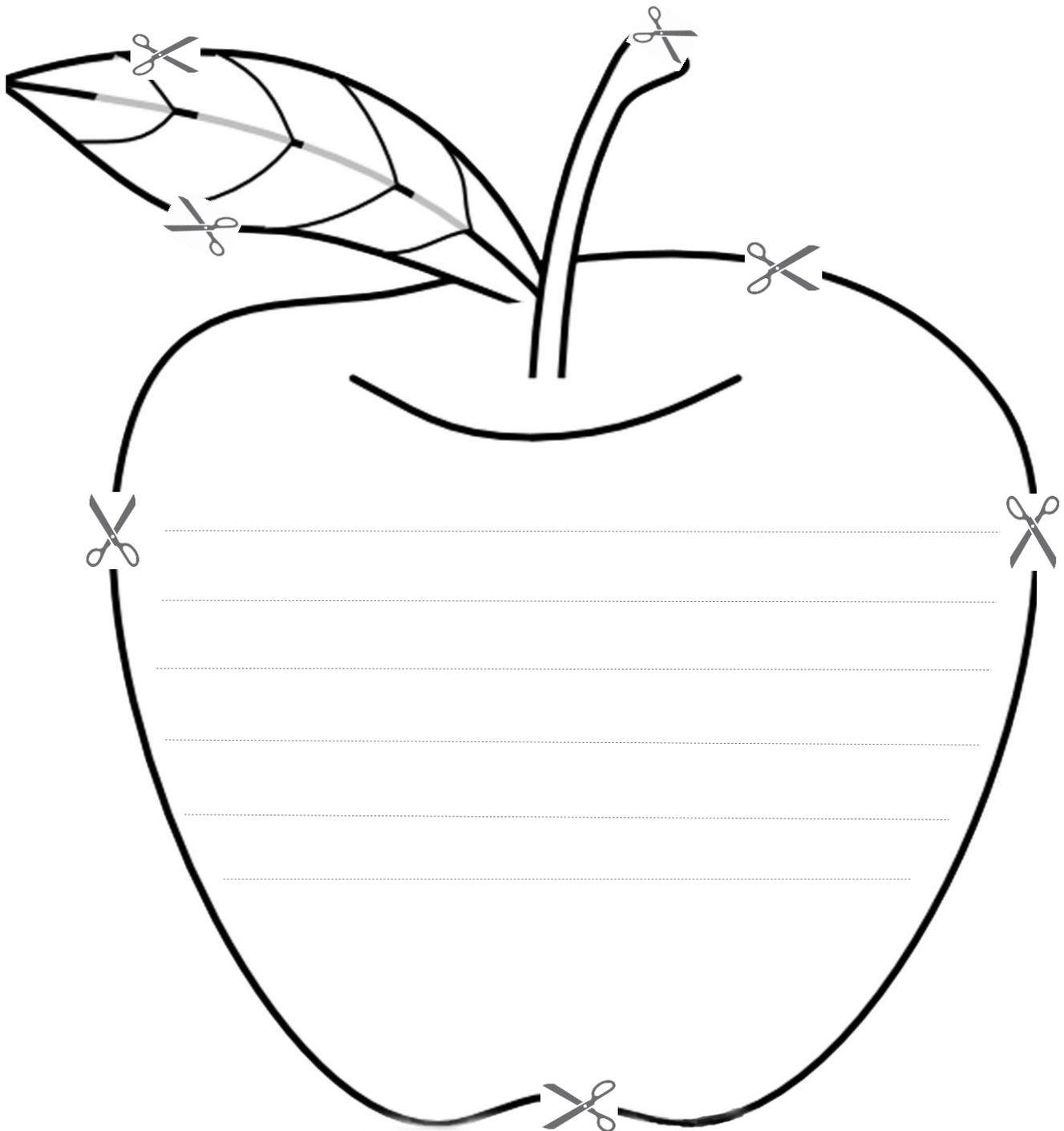
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## The Courage Tree

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Write an example of courage on the lines in the apple below. Remember some acts of courage can be very simple. When you are done writing your example cut out the apple.



## Courage

**I show that I'm courageous  
In everything I do  
I don't give up  
I never quit  
I want to see it through**

**I show that I'm courageous  
In everything I do  
I  
Want  
To see it through**

**I show that I'm courageous  
In choosing what I say  
Words are sometimes hard to find  
But kind words find a way**

**I show that I'm courageous  
In choosing what I say  
Kind  
Words  
Will find a way!**

**I show that I'm courageous  
That I am brave  
I'm fighting fear  
And speaking truth  
Cause courage is in here (*point to heart*)**

**I show that I'm courageous  
That I am brave  
My  
Courage  
Is right in here! (*point to heart*)**

*Sing to the tune of Baby Bumblebee*