*Courage & Helen’s Big World*

Teacher’s Guide



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# About the Book: Courage by Bernard Waber

*Courage* is a story about finding courage from the things we do every day to the kind of courage we use to make awesome things happen. From taking that jump off the high dive for the first time to standing up for someone else to being a police officer or firefighter. This story will help students explore the many ways in which we use courage in our lives.

# About the Book: Helen’s Big World by Doreen Rappaport

*Helen’s Big World* is a picture book biography of the life of Helen Keller. Included in the story are actual quotes from Helen’s autobiography *The Story of My Life.* Watch Helen as she experiences childhood, a devastating and unknown illness leading to her lifelong condition, and her courage and fortitude to not accept things as they are. See how her courage helped to inspired progress for us here in America.

# Warm Up Activity

* Ask students to think of a time they were courageous and share with a partner
* Have students work in partner pairs to create their own list of courageous people, have students compare/contrast 2 two of their choices using a Venn Diagram.

Alternative Activities

Begin by placing the word courage as large as you can on a blank piece of chart paper. Ask students to think about what courage means. Turn and talk for 1 minute to your partner. Have students share what courage means aloud. Write their answers around the word courage on the paper. Using another color marker, now ask students to give you examples of people who have or show courage. Write those names on the chart paper as well. Add to the list (if it is not already there) the name Ruby Bridges. Tell students we are going to learn what one little girl did that is a wonderful example of courage. Show students the Flocabulary video on Ruby. <https://www.flocabulary.com/unit/ruby-bridges/video/>

After the video, ask students to work with their partner to discuss what Ruby did that shows us examples of courage. Revisit the discussion as a class in about 1 minute to share.

# *Overview*

Tell students you are going to read to them a wonderful book about courage and a second book about a woman who is a prime example of courage like we saw in the video about Ruby Bridges. We will be reading these books together because they are connected in lots of interesting ways.

We will take a look at what kinds of connections we can make from these two texts

# Discussion Questions

 *Courage Helen’s Big World*

* What is courage?
* What helps you have courage?
* Can you give courage to someone else?
* What are some ways you think people get courage?
* What does it feel like when you have courage? Describe what you’ve felt.
* What are some other possible courageous actions the author could have included in this book?
* What happened to cause Helen to lose her sight and hearing?
* How does Helen learn to read & communicate if she cannot see?
* There were not many books in braille for Helen to read, why do you think that was?
* How did Helen Keller influence the lives of others, including many people today?
* Would you say that Helen Keller is courageous? Find examples in the text to tell why.

 *Compare & Contrast Questions*

* How is courage shown in the book *Courage* and the story *Helen’s Big World*?
* What do these two books tell us about courage and the people who exhibit it?
* Helen went to college but needed the help of Annie, after reading both books do you think that courage can be had even when needing help from others?
* Compare and Contrast the two books. How are they alike? How are they different. Use a Venn Diagram to explain your answer.
* In the both books we have seen courage on display, what are some ways you can use your courage to help others like Helen and all the characters from the *Courage* book?

# Language Arts/Research & Library Connections & Ideas

* 2.3 Oral Communication Skills
* Allow students to explore other courageous people and research their idea in the school library. Give the librarian your students list of courageous people ahead of time and ask the librarian to bookmark websites, pull books from shelves and find some articles or videos that students can use to find information about their chosen person. Students then give a 3-5 minute presentation on their person and what they have learned about them
* Have students take notes as each other presents and write a brief paragraph or two about what they learned
* 2.12 Writing
* Students can create their own "Courage" book using examples from their life and experiences.
* Create your own personal alphabet. Write out a sentence and ask a partner to decode. Discuss how learning a new way of reading was challenging or not.

# Social Studies Connections & Ideas

* 2.4e Helen Keller
* Create a timeline of events from Helen’s life
* Show Helen Keller video on [Brainpopjr.com](https://jr.brainpop.com/socialstudies/biographies/helenkeller/)
* Students try spelling short words into each other’s hand to see if they can read one way Helen did.
* 2.11 Civics (responsibilities of a citizen)
* Create an anchor chart as a class describing what a good citizen looks like
* Define rights and responsibilities, work in small groups to create a class chart of what our rights and responsibilities are right in our own classroom.
* Watch a video on good citizenship <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bwfo9aD5A8>

# Art Connections & Ideas

* 2.4 Visual Communications and Productions
* Read the story [*The Dot*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5mGeR4AQdM)discuss the courage the main character finds and what it leads to.
* Give students blank paper and encourage them to draw what comes to mind. Encourage them to have courage, and begin with a (dot) if need be.

# Bulletin Board Ideas

Courage Tree

Create a large tree to display on your bulletin board. Give students apple cut-outs to write courageous actions or behaviors from their everyday lives. Post the apples on or around the tree. You could even create a basket to put similar apples in. (idea modified from WITS program)

Video (digital bulletin board)

Create a class powtoons video to share with your school on courage.

# Websites to Check Out

<http://www.bernardwaber.com/> Author Brenard Waber’s official webpage

<http://doreenrappaport.com/> Author Doreen Rappaport official webpage

[Brainpopjr.com](https://jr.brainpop.com/socialstudies/biographies/helenkeller/) Brainpop junior – the story of Helen Keller

<https://www.flocabulary.com/unit/ruby-bridges/video/> Flocabulary video of Ruby Bridges

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5mGeR4AQdM> The Dot read aloud

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bwfo9aD5A8> Good citizenship video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgF1Enrgo2g> Kid president heroes video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6glK-eXlDE> Other children’s definitions of courage video and music

# Author’s Information

**Bernard Waber**- (September 27, 1921-May 16, 2013)

Mr. Waber is best known for his *Lyle the Crocodile* series. Mr. Waber drew his inspiration for his writing from his three children. He mostly writes about animals but has exceptions; *Courage* and his famous *Ira* books. Mr. Waber was a beloved Children’s author whose books will be enjoyed for years to come.

 Ferral, Donna. "HOME | Bernard Waber." *HOME | Bernard Waber*. Bernard Waber Intellectual Property Trust, 2015. Web. 21 July 2016.

**Doreen Rappaport**-

Ms. Rappaport is an award-winning children's book writer. She is best known for writing books that represent the lives of many American heroes like John F. Kennedy, Helen Keller, and Martin Luther King Jr. Ms. Rappaport began her career as a teacher before becoming a writer and public speaker.

"About Doreen." *Doreen Rappaport*. Doreen Rappaport, 2012. Web. 21 July 2016.

# Other Books to Check Out

**Books about Adversity/Courage:**

*Rosa* by Nikki Giovanni

*The Name Jar by* Yangsook Choi

*How Many Days to America: A Thanksgiving* Story by Eve Bunting

**More Books by Bernard Waber:**

Nobody is Perfick

Ask Me

**More Books by Doreen Rappaport:**

Freedom River

Martin’s Big Words; The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Citations

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*Rappaport, D. (2001). Martin's big words: The life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Illus. Bryan Collier. New York: Hyperion Books for Children. Unp.*