

5. COURAGE – How can I stand up for myself?

GROUND RULES

Share Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: 'You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously' and remind the children of the ground rules:

- We have the right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously.
- Thumbs up if you want to speak.
- One person talks at a time.
- Everyone is valued.
- Respect each other's responses.

GETTING SET

Ask the children to sit in a circle and then to make a choice between having breakfast with a gorilla or tea with a tiger. Give them time to think about their choice as a reason will be required! Explain that there is no right or wrong answer but what is important is the reason for their choice. In turn ask the children the question:

- *Would you rather have breakfast with a gorilla or tea with a tiger?*

Children respond with such answers as, *"I would rather have tea with a tiger because my mum doesn't like gorillas."*

INTRODUCTION

Explain to the children that today they are going to be exploring what it means to be courageous in our world.

Ask them for their responses to such questions as:

- *What does the word 'courageous' mean?*
- *Can you think of a time when you were courageous?*
- *How did it make you feel?*
- *What did you have to overcome?*
- *What made it worthwhile?*

Encourage the children to air their thoughts and make a list of common words that they share, for example: challenge, persevere, and so on. [Make a record of these for the next activity.]

ACTIVITY

Share the story of 'Brave Irene' by William Steig: a story about a little girl who had to deliver a dress to a duchess in a snowstorm e.g., from <http://www.storylineonline.net/brave-irene/> [Alternatives include, 'The Dandelion Seed', 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and 'Max the Brave'.]

While reading the story ask the children to think of times when Irene had to be brave and courageous. Remind them of their list of words made from their experiences of being courageous.

Ask: **Are they the same for Irene?**

Point out that she had to overcome any challenges along the way but was rewarded in the end.

Invite the children to raise their own questions about this story, particularly about the risks that she took. Point out that it would be silly to try to save someone who was drowning if you are not a good swimmer yourself! Invite them then to vote for a question that they think the class could discuss. [Encourage the children to close their eyes when voting so they are not influenced by their peers' votes.]

Once a question has been voted for, invite the children to share some initial answers. Clarify the question where needed and help them to build their understanding – agreeing and disagreeing with the ideas they are airing. Encourage them to listen carefully to each other so that they can appreciate other points of view and learn more about what they need to know to answer the question. After everyone has had an opportunity to participate, thank the children for their contributions.

ACTIVITY

Ask the children to write a list of words and phrases that would help someone to be courageous in any situation. Scribe the children's ideas, which might include:

- Persevere – keep going;
- Overcome fears and challenges;
- Focus on the goal;
- Don't let others stand in your way.

CONCLUSION

Offer some reflections on the session on the importance of being courageous in our world (without taking silly risks!) and encourage the children to think of the top tips list for being courageous next time they face a challenge.