

# Courage to be ME

This lesson about Courage 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.

**Courage Sub-Concepts**

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.

## Lesson Objective

Students will be able to:

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

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Courage starts with kindness. You cannot pour from an empty glass. This week, focus on your internal dialogue. Say something nice to yourself in the mirror at the beginning and end of each day. It takes courage to be kind.

**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

5-10 minutes

Play ‘Would you dare?’

Read each statement below and have students stand up if they would dare to do the activity. Have them sit back down after voting.

*Would you dare to...*

- Eat a new food while blindfolded
- Go on a roller coaster that goes upside down?
- Sing in a talent show?
- Show a new student around the school?
- Stand up to a bully?

It takes courage to try new things and speak up. Let’s learn more about courage today.



## Inspire

### What is Courage?

5-7 minutes

Explain that courage means that you are brave when facing new or difficult circumstances. Today we will focus on the Courage to be yourself.

- **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 yourself, 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 differently. You can use courage to stay true to your beliefs, even when you might not fit in.



## Empower

20 minutes

**Read Aloud:** "A Bad Case of the Stripes" by David Shannon

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

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. (Ex: *I love math speed tests, even though everyone hates them!*).



## Reflect

5-10 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!

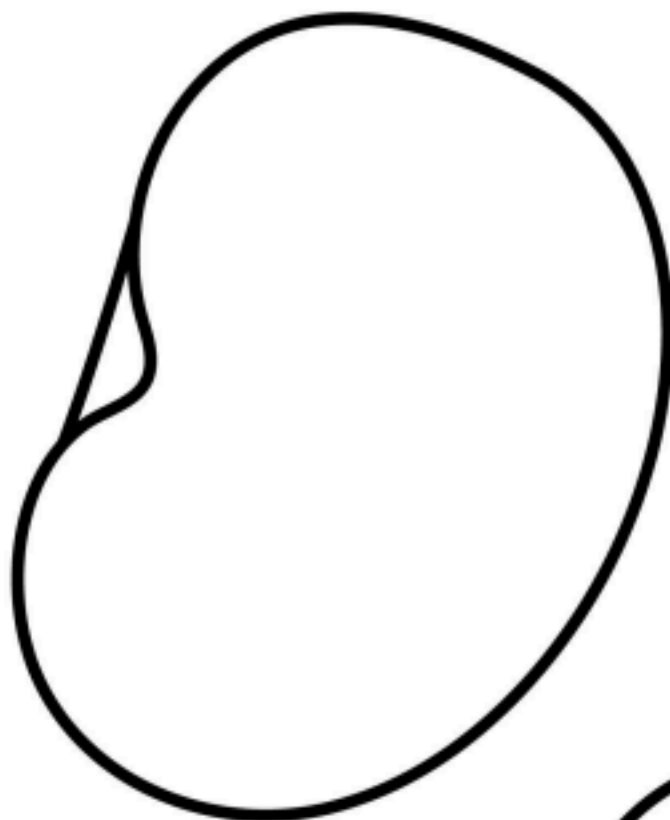


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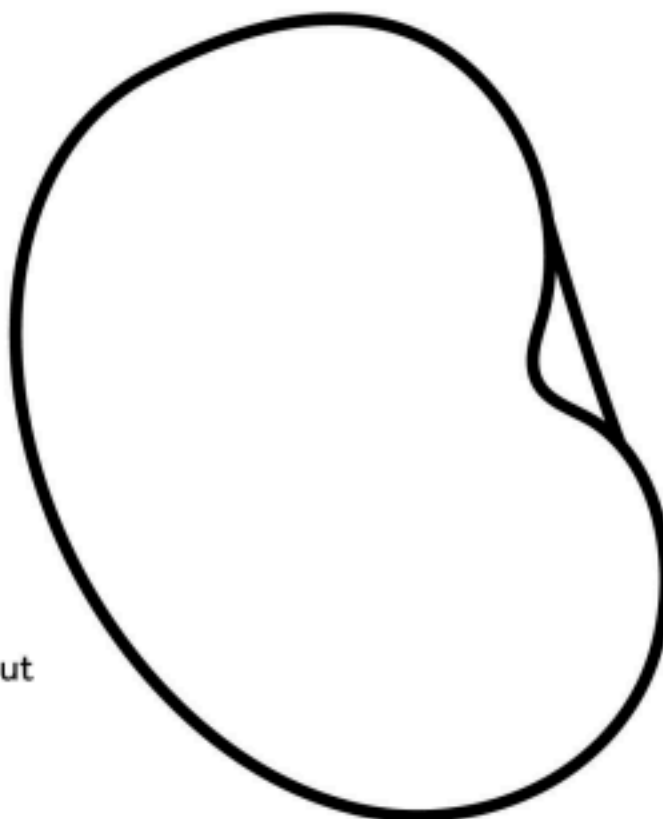
The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

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/>



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.