

White Bird: *The Courage of Kindness*



Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Evaluate the complexity of the themes of kindness, courage, and resilience.
- Reflect on personal experiences with kindness, courage, and resilience.
- Consider the importance of sharing stories to promote kindness, courage, and resilience.

Pre-VFT Activity

In preparation for the *White Bird: The Courage Of Kindness Virtual Field Trip*, students will explore the themes of kindness, courage, and resilience. Students will begin by independently reflecting on their experience with these major themes. Next, students will work through a whole-group creative-thinking exercise to explore kindness, courage, and resilience at greater depth, and conclude by reflecting on the power of stories and how the courage to share our stories can cultivate kindness and inspire resilience in others.

Target Audience

Grades 6-12

Procedure

- Begin class sharing with students that today they will be learning about the themes of courage, kindness, and resilience, and how stories of others can have a significant impact on how we show kindness, act with courage, and foster resilience through our interactions with others.
- Next, prepare students for the Virtual Field Trip by sharing that they will explore others' stories by viewing film clips that include the testimonies of Holocaust survivors. If students have not previously viewed testimony from the Teaching with Testimony webpage, explain that a testimony is a kind of story in which someone reflects on a life experience and shares what that experience means to them, and that these first-hand accounts can help students connect with this Virtual Field Trip's themes of courage, kindness, resilience, and the power of story.
- To introduce students to the power of story and its relationship to the themes of courage, kindness, and resilience, begin by showing the testimony of [Esther Bem](#) (5:31) from IWitness. Provide each student with a copy of the Modified Testimony as a Primary Source Handout and

Materials

- Testimony as a Primary Source Handout
- Examples Capture Sheet Handout (back of Testimony as a Primary Source Handout)
- VFT Theme Note Catcher

encourage each student to individually reflect using the handout's reflection prompts as they view Esther's testimony.

- As the testimony concludes, provide students with a few moments to individually respond to the reflection prompts in the Modified Testimony as a Primary Source Handout. Once students have completed their reflection prompts, host a brief whole-class question and answer session. Use the following reflection prompts as a guide to provide a foundation for the themes of this Virtual Field Trip:
 - How did this person demonstrate courage throughout the experience they describe? What role did fear play in this person's courageousness?
 - What role did kindness play in this person's story? How did this person show kindness, and how did others show kindness to this person? How did that kindness require courage?
 - How did this person's decision to share their story require courage? Why is it important that they chose to share their story with others?
- Next, transition to the Examples Capture Sheet Activity where students will share examples of each topic from their own knowledge and experiences. Begin the Examples Explosion Activity by having students flip to the back of their Testimony as a Primary Source Handout to reveal the Examples Capture Sheet Handout.
- Next, write or display each topic on the board—kindness, courage, and resilience—leaving plenty of space around the terms to brainstorm and write ideas as students participate in the Examples Capture Sheet. Your board/display will likely look like this:



- These examples will be used to foster creative thinking and help explore “hidden” options that add complexity to each of the three themes that each student may not have necessarily considered during their testimony as a primary source reflection. Starting with “kindness,” ask the class to brainstorm and share as many examples of each topic as possible.

If students are struggling to generate examples, the following prompts may help as a guide as you complete the activity.

- What does kindness, courage, or resilience mean to you?
 - Why is kindness important? How have you experienced or shared kindness in your life?
 - Is courage a choice? Do you consider yourself courageous? When have you been courageous?
 - Do we need courage to show kindness?
 - What is the relationship between fear and courage? Can we show courage without experiencing fear? Why or why not?
 - Does resilience require courage?
 - What is a bystander? What causes someone to be a bystander? Which of the traits (kindness, courage, resilience) might inspire a bystander to take action?
 - What is empathy? How does empathy relate to kindness, courage, or resilience?
- As students share their thinking during the activity, record as many student ideas as possible on the board for the entire class to see. Once a detailed list of examples or ideas for each theme has been created, have students record those examples on their Examples Capture Sheet Handout.
 - After students have recorded their notes, pose the following debrief questions to the whole class. Provide students with time to independently reflect and write their answers to each on the bottom of their Examples Explosion Handout and provide turn-and-talk or think-pair-share opportunities to allow students to gather additional information or promote discussion as needed:
 - When completing the Testimony as a Primary Source and Examples Capture Sheet Activity, how many times were you thinking about personal stories or experiences to help you consider additional perspectives, ideas, or examples?
 - What might this communicate about the relationship between stories to kindness, courage, and resilience?
 - Social-Emotional Learning Skill Reflection
Self-Awareness: How can the stories of others—like the testimony of Esther Bem and others that will be shared in the Virtual Field Trip today—highlight the importance of using your own story to promote kindness, courage, and resilience in your community?
 - Conclude the discussion by sharing that students are about to experience the power of story and its relationship to kindness, courage, and resilience through the *White Bird: The Courage Of Kindness Virtual Field Trip*. To help the students make sense of some of the important themes, provide students with their own copy of the VFT Theme Note Catcher Handout, and instruct the students to use the note catcher to reflect on how they feel, what questions they have, and connections they may notice as they participate.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Analyze the complexity of courage, kindness, and resilience.
- Explain how sharing their story can build kindness and empathy between individuals.
- Identify opportunities to show kindness in their communities.

Post-VFT Activity

Following the *White Bird: The Courage Of Kindness Virtual Field Trip*, students will collaborate with small groups of their peers to debrief the VFT experience and make connections to their own lives and communities. Students will participate in an independent reflection activity to identify opportunities they may have to show kindness, exhibit courage, and inspire resilience in their communities, and will share these ideas with their peers through a whole-class discussion. Students will conclude by revisiting their critical thinking complexity scale activity to reflect on how their knowledge of kindness, courage, resilience, and the power of stories has changed through participation in this Virtual Field Trip.

Procedure

- Provide students with a few minutes to individually complete their VFT Theme Note Catcher and complete the reflection prompt. During this time, students should be considering the connections between the themes and the power of stories, and they should be making connections between the themes of kindness, courage, and resilience to their own lives.
- Next, set up a quick small-group discussion opportunity where students work together in groups of three to five to consider their thoughts, questions, and emotions after viewing the VFT. During this time, students will be preparing to participate in a whole-group debrief discussion.
- After students have had a few minutes to gather their thoughts in their small group, transition to a whole-group debrief discussion to help students make sense of the major themes from the Virtual Field Trip. The following prompts may help you facilitate the whole-group debrief discussion:
 - What testimony or stories continue to resonate with you and stick out in your mind?
 - What role did kindness, courage, and resilience play in the stories and testimonies you heard?
 - How can listening to the stories of others encourage you to act with kindness and courage?

Materials

- Opportunities for Kindness Handout
- Complexity Scale Handout

- As this whole-group debrief concludes, distribute copies of the Opportunities for Kindness Handout to each student. During the Opportunities for Kindness Activity, provide students with time to independently reflect and record opportunities that they may have to show kindness, courage, or resilience in their communities using the prompts provided in the handout.
- Once students have completed their Opportunities for Kindness Handout individually, invite them to share a few of the reflections they had for each prompt. As students share their responses, encourage them to think critically about the opportunities, big and small, that they have to share their story and how their stories can be used to show kindness and inspire courage and resilience in themselves and others.
- To conclude, deliver a copy of the Complexity Scale Handout, and ask students to reflect on their thoughts regarding kindness, courage, and resilience, and generate ratings based on the experiences shared through the Virtual Field Trip and the Opportunities for Kindness discussion. Ask students to complete the Complexity Scale Handout and prepare for a debrief discussion where they will have an opportunity to share how participation in the Virtual Field Trip has influenced their understanding of what it means to be kind, courageous, and resilient.
- After students have concluded their Complexity Scale Handout, hold a quick debrief discussion to help students make sense of the takeaways from today's themes. The following prompts may help as you facilitate this debrief discussion:
 - How did your knowledge of the complexity of the themes of kindness, courage, and resilience change through participation in this activity?
 - How are stories related to these themes?
 - Why are stories important? How can sharing our stories create opportunities for kindness?
 - How can sharing stories help us empathize with others and take action? How is empathy important to kindness, courage, and resilience?

National Standards and Frameworks

C3 Framework

- D2.Civ.10.6-8: Explain the relevance of personal interests and perspectives, civic virtues, and democratic principles when people address issues and problems in government and civil society.
- D.4.7.6-8: Assess their individual and collective capabilities to take action to address local, regional, and global problems, taking into account a range of possible levers of power, strategies, and potential outcomes.
- D2.Civ.14.6-8: Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good.
- D2.Civ.10.9-12: Analyze the impact and the appropriate roles of personal interest and perspectives on the application of civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights.
- D2.Civ.14.9-12: Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.
- D4.7.9-12: Assess options for individual and collective action to address local, regional and global problems by engaging in self-reflection, strategy, identification, and complex causal reasoning.

Common Core ELA

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CASEL Competencies

- Self-Awareness concentrates on understanding your emotions and thoughts and how they influence your behavior. Skills include self-perception, self-confidence, and self-efficacy.
- Social Awareness focuses on your ability to empathize with others. Skills include empathy, appreciating differences, and respect.
- Relationship Skills revolve around your ability to relate well to others. Skills include communicating clearly, listening, cooperation, resisting negative pressure, resolving conflicts, and supporting one another.

Modified Testimony as a Primary Source



STUDENT HANDOUT

Interviewee Name: _____ Experience Group: _____

Birth Date and Place: _____

Additional Relevant Info: _____

Directions: As you watch the clip of testimony, write facts that are presented in the left column. Use the right column to note emotions the interviewee demonstrates.

Facts: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How List the topic, dates, event details, location (city, region, country), and names/groups as they are described by the speaker.	Emotions: What emotions did you notice? Notice facial and body expressions, tone of voice, pauses, and word choice.
Reflection Prompts (After viewing the testimony clip)	
What event is this person recalling? How do they feel about the event?	
How did this person demonstrate courage throughout the experience they describe? What role did fear play in this person's courageousness?	
What role did kindness play in this person's story? How did this person show kindness, and how did others show kindness to this person? Did that kindness require courage?	
How did this person's decision to share their story require courage? Why is it important that they chose to share their story with others?	

Examples Capture Sheet



STUDENT HANDOUT

Directions: Use the following chart to brainstorm as many examples of each topic as possible. For example, consider “what does kindness (or courage, or resilience) look like in action?” and write down examples in the chart below.

Topic	Kindness	Courage	Resilience
Examples/Reflections			

Examples Capture Sheet Reflection Prompts

Directions: Complete the following reflection prompts once instructed to do so by your teacher.

1. When completing the Complexity Scale and Examples Capture Sheet Activity, how many times were you thinking about personal stories or experiences to help you consider additional perspectives, ideas, or examples?
2. What might this communicate about the relationship between stories to kindness, courage, and resilience?
3. Social-Emotional Learning Skill Reflection Self-Awareness: How can the stories of others, like the testimonies that will be shared in the Virtual Field Trip today, highlight the importance of using your own story to promote kindness, courage, and resilience in your community?

VFT Theme Note Catcher



STUDENT HANDOUT

The stories and testimonies of others can help us better understand our shared human experience and build empathy for others. As you participate in the Virtual Field Trip, use this note catcher to capture your own reflections about each of the major themes below. Consider how each story you hear makes you feel, what questions you have about the individual's story, and the experiences others have shared or that you may share with others.

<p>Kindness</p> <p>Emotions</p> <p>Questions</p> <p>Connections</p>	
<p>Courage</p> <p>Emotions</p> <p>Questions</p> <p>Connections</p>	
<p>Resilience</p> <p>Emotions</p> <p>Questions</p> <p>Connections</p>	
<p>How does the power of stories and the way stories help us build empathy for others relate to the three themes above?</p>	

Opportunities for Kindness



STUDENT HANDOUT

Directions: After completing the Virtual Field Trip, reflect on your own opportunities to show kindness, courage, resilience, or to share your own story, through the reflection prompts below. Be prepared to share your reflection prompts with your peers.

1. What opportunities do I have to show kindness, courage, or resilience to others in my community?

2. How will taking advantage of these opportunities require courage from me?

3. What is my story? How might sharing this story take courage?

4. What opportunities might I have to share my story?

5. How might sharing my own story inspire kindness, courage, or resilience in others?

The Complexity Scale



STUDENT HANDOUT

Directions: After completing the Virtual Field Trip and Opportunities for Kindness activity, provide a rating on the complexity scale for each of the three topics. Once you have rated each topic, provide a brief explanation of your rating through the prompt provided.

Topic 1: Kindness

Circle the location on the complexity scale to show your rating.

Simple ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Complex

Reflect: Explain your rating—why did you choose to rate kindness as a more simple or more complex topic? How has your understanding of kindness developed as a result of this Virtual Field Trip?

Topic 2: Courage

Circle the location on the complexity scale to show your rating.

Simple ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Complex

Reflect: Explain your rating—why did you choose to rate courage as a more simple or more complex topic? How has your understanding of courage developed as a result of this Virtual Field Trip?

Topic 3: Resilience

Circle the location on the complexity scale to show your rating.

Simple ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Complex

Reflect: Explain your rating—why did you choose to rate resilience as a more simple or more complex topic? How has your understanding of resilience developed as a result of this Virtual Field Trip?