

# World Changers

This lesson explores the concept of courage by reading about kids, like themselves, who have done something courageous to promote kindness, respect, fairness, etc., in their communities. Students work in small groups or independently to read and evaluate the stories of these kids and to connect what they read back to the key kindness concepts and ultimately to courage.

## Kindness Sub-Concept(s)

Vulnerability, Humility

## Lesson Timeframe

30-40 minutes

## Required Materials

- ❑ These 30 Incredible Kids Really Changed the World:

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/inspirational-stories/g5188/kids-who-changed-the-world/?slide=1>

## 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:

- Identify the characteristics of people who change the world for the better.
- Evaluate how courage inspires people to be active in their community for good causes.

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

The end of the year can be hard- try a kindness tune up to keep spirits up. Start each school day with one specific gratitude for class. Open the floor for others to pipe in as well.

### Tips for Diverse Learners

- If you have very independent learners, there are 30 kids featured in the Good Housekeeping (below) web article; you could have students each take one kid to read about and present on. This will take more time, but may work well for independent learners.
- Determine if you want all students to take notes or if you want them to elect a note-taker. Determine, too, how to instruct students on the presentations. Ideally students will self-direct here, but if your students struggle with that, you may want to preassign or set up specific presentation criteria and expectations.



## Share

5-7 minutes

*Do a think, pair, share and tell the person beside you about someone you admire and why.*

Let both people have a turn. Define “admire” if you need to.



## Inspire

5-7 minutes

*Throughout history, there have been leaders who did not like the fact that others were treated unfairly, and decided to do something about it. For example, Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, and other leaders worked hard so that African Americans could have equal rights in the United States. Cesar Chavez fought for the rights of Hispanic farm workers who were treated unfairly. Can anyone think of another person who has courageously fought to make their community a kinder, fairer place?*

Invite student responses.

*We are going to spend some time researching a person from history who changed the lives of other people. The goal is to understand how they used courage to make a difference in their communities. Before we do this, though, let's review the key ideas we have been learning about all year and talk about how each quality helps us also have courage to do the right thing for others and for our communities.*

Examine the key words and their definitions. You can write them on the board, speak them, or project them on the smartboard. Ask students what they think these qualities have to do with people who change their communities for the better.

- **Courage:** Being brave when facing new or difficult circumstances.
- **Compassion:** Being aware when others are sick, sad, or hurt and wanting to help.
- **Respect:** Treating people, places, and things with kindness.
- **Helpfulness:** Assisting or serving in a kind way.
- **Responsibility:** Being reliable to do the things that are expected or required in your life, home, community, and environment.
- **Perseverance:** Keep trying even when something is difficult; not giving up.
- **Fairness:** Treating people in a way that does not favor some over others.



## Empower

15-20 minutes

Put students into small groups of 3-4 and print out the information about the “World Changer” kids from the Good Housekeeping article, found here: <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/inspirational-stories/g5188/kids-who-changed-the-world/?slide=1>

Or, if possible, let students use computers or tablets to read about the kids and complete the following questions. You can either assign groups to particular kids who are featured on the sign or you can let the groups look through all of the kids and pick one to analyze. If two groups pick the same kid, that is okay; it will be interesting to see how they differ or are the same in their analysis.

Read the paragraph that explains what your person has done to change his or her community (or the world!) and highlight (if reading from a print source) or take notes about what the person did that was important or courageous. Then answer the questions below. Each person in the group can take notes or you can elect one note taker for everyone. After reading, discussing, and taking notes, you will present your answers to the rest of the class in a 1-2 minute group presentation.

### Ask the following questions:

- What did this person do to change his or her community?
- Out of all key unit topics we’ve been talking about (compassion, respect, helpfulness, responsibility, perseverance, and fairness), which one (or ones) do you feel best describes the person you read about? Why?
- How did this person show courage? Explain.



## Reflect

5-7 minutes

Give groups a few minutes each to briefly share their person and explain what he/she did to change his/her community and discuss which attributes the person has and how they showed courage. These presentations should be short and informal; this is a low-stakes presentation opportunity yet one that can generate good conversation about how courage can take many forms yet end in positive change.



## Extension Ideas

- If you need an ELA lesson around reading comprehension or writing about a work of nonfiction, have students identify the main idea, point of view, conflict, and resolution.
- Invite students to go home and ask their parent/guardian if they can think of a family member who worked hard to make life better for their family or for their community.



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AS A RECOMMENDED  
PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL  
AND EMOTIONAL  
LEARNING.

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/>