

Courage

What is courage?

Courage isn't the absence of fear—and being courageous isn't being fearless.

Having courage means recognizing your fears and having the strength and the will to confront them.



Building Courage

Becoming more courageous is something you can work on every day in small ways. Here's how.

Expand your comfort zone.

Make an effort to do things you don't normally do. Join a club, try out for a team, or expand your social circle. Learning that you can do uncomfortable things and still come out okay, or even better, is a great way to build courage.

Figure out what you want, and go for it.

Setting goals and making concrete plans for achieving those goals is an excellent way to build courage. Plan out small ways you can work toward your goals every day.

Use positive self-talk.

We all have a voice inside our head, and that voice can sometimes be negative and critical, particularly when we're faced with a new or challenging situation. You can help yourself be more courageous by using positive "self-talk." Instead of *"I can't do this,"* think, *"I am strong. I can do this."*

Think about it

Write about a time you wish you could have been more courageous. What do you think was holding you back?

What in your life do you need courage for?

What are two things you can do to be more courageous?

Remember, sometimes the most courageous thing you can do is ask for help when you need it. If you're feeling afraid, stressed, or overwhelmed, reach out for help from someone you trust.

Confidence

We all wish we could have more confidence. But for most, being confident is easier said than done. So, how can someone become more confident? Here are some ideas.

Recognize and develop your skills and abilities.

Being able to do something well gives you confidence. Think about what you like to do and are good at, and work to develop those skills. The better developed your skills and abilities are, the more confident you will feel.

What are three skills or abilities that you have?

Think about what gives you confidence.

Are you most confident when you're surrounded by friends? Or when doing something you enjoy, like a sport or a favorite activity?

When do you feel most confident?

Think about how you can take these feelings of confidence and apply them in other situations.

Visualize.

Visualization is a skill used by students, athletes, and leaders around the world. Close your eyes and visualize a situation that you'd like to feel more confident in. Then visualize yourself in that situation as a more capable, confident person.

What did your more confident self do differently?

Select an area to improve.

Confidence might seem like a thing you either have or you don't, but confidence tends to vary depending on the situation.

Perhaps you feel confident talking with family and friends, but you'd like to feel more confident speaking up in class.

In which area(s) do you want to build confidence?

Whenever you're feeling unsure, shy, or awkward, remember that those feelings are temporary. As you learn and grow, you will feel stronger and gain confidence. We are all works in progress!

Name _____

Improving Your Reading Comprehension

Improving your reading comprehension means better grades—and less time spent having to reread the same paragraph because you had a hard time absorbing the information.

Read the passage below.

The concert was a resounding success, with a full house of enthusiastic fans cheering on the talented musicians. The singer's soulful voice filled the auditorium with emotion, while the drummer's rhythmic beats kept the crowd on their feet. Even the lighting and sound effects were perfectly synchronized to create an unforgettable experience.

Visualizing can help you better understand and remember information in a given passage. You can do this by creating an image in your mind as you read. Reread the above passage using visualization. **In the space below, draw or describe what you visualized.**

Summarizing means explaining what you know or read in your own words. One way to practice summarizing is to discuss what you're learning with someone else. **Use the space below to summarize the above passage.**

Questioning strategies (such as asking questions that begin with *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how*) can help you understand what you're reading. Stop and ask yourself questions while you read to check your understanding. **Ask and answer two questions about the passage above.**
