

## Moral Courage Project

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In this project my middle school students go on a self-exploration journey through original poems and stories, studying the civil rights movement, bullying and cyber bullying, and the bystander effect. They create personal shoe art to represent who they are as a person. Through these exercises they begin to get a sense of their own power to change things simply by standing up for what they believe. In the end, they demonstrate their understanding of moral courage and historical events by writing and performing original moral courage plays for the community.

### Teacher Reflection

My students have lots of questions and contributions to make when it comes to the concept of moral courage. Their ability to share who they are, what they fear, what they believe, the things they wonder about, and their own level of moral courage is astonishing to me. The thing that made me the proudest was the fact that there were situations happening in school during this project where several of my students made the deliberate choice to share their moral courage with others and change a situation simply by speaking up for what was right.

### Student Reflections

I learned how one person standing up for someone or something they believe in can really make a difference. Also, being a moral bystander is as bad as being a bully, because you are basically telling the bully that what they are doing is okay with you. . After studying the effects of bullying we learned more about moral courage by writing our own “All About Me” book in which we shared original poems and monologues and answered a series of questions that helped us understand more about who we really are.

—Liz Egler

In the Moral Courage Project we learned how to find the bravery in us as we grow and not to doubt ourselves and our own level of moral courage.

—Emily Olmeda-Smith



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