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"Mavis the Bravest" Lesson Plan Guide

by Lu Fraser, illustrated by Sarah Warburton

Unit Overview

Duration: 1-2 weeks

Grade Level: K-2

Subject Integration: ELA, Character Education, Social-Emotional Learning, Art

Essential Question: What does it mean to be truly brave, and how can caring about others help us overcome our fears?

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Analyze character development and personality traits in literature
- Understand the difference between fearlessness and true courage
- Explore themes of friendship, loyalty, and overcoming fear
- Make connections between story themes and personal experiences with fear and bravery
- Practice empathy for characters with different personality types
- Express understanding through creative projects and reflective discussions

WEEK 1: Character, Courage, and Friendship

Day 1: Introduction to Characters and Personalities

Objective: Introduce main characters and explore different personality types

Materials: Character comparison chart, personality trait vocabulary cards, book cover

Opening (10 minutes)

- Quick-write: "Describe something that makes you feel scared or nervous"
- Partner share in a safe, judgment-free space

Main Activity (30 minutes)

1. **Book Introduction and Character Preview (15 minutes)**
 - Examine book cover and title



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- Introduce Mavis (fearful) and Marge (adventurous)
- Discuss: Can two very different people be good friends?
- 2. **Personality Exploration** (15 minutes)
 - Create class chart of different personality traits
 - Discuss how being cautious vs. adventurous are both okay
 - Predict: What challenges might Mavis face?

Closing (5 minutes)

- Exit ticket: "Are you more like someone who tries everything, or someone who's more careful?"
- Assign reading: Opening sections introducing the barn and characters

Assessment: Understanding of personality differences, respectful discussion participation

Day 2: Understanding Mavis and Her Fears

Objective: Analyze Mavis's character and explore the nature of fear

Materials: Character analysis worksheet, fear discussion guidelines

Opening (10 minutes)

- Think-pair-share: "What things does Mavis find scary?"

Main Activity (30 minutes)

1. **Character Deep Dive** (20 minutes)
 - Analyze Mavis's fears (night-time, daytime, anything hairy!)
 - Discuss: Why is it funny but also relatable that she's scared of so many things?
 - Explore how Mavis feels about being different from Marge
2. **Fear Discussion** (10 minutes)
 - Create safe space for discussing common fears
 - Normalize fear as a universal human experience
 - Distinguish between reasonable caution and limiting fear

Closing (5 minutes)

- Quick poll: "What's something you've been brave about even though you were scared?"

Homework: Read sections about the barn friends and their daily life



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Assessment: Character analysis quality, empathetic understanding

Day 3: Friendship Between Different Personalities

Objective: Explore how different personality types can be friends

Materials: Friendship analysis chart, Venn diagram worksheet

Opening (5 minutes)

- Quick discussion: "How are Mavis and Marge different? How are they similar?"

Main Activity (35 minutes)

1. **Friendship Analysis** (25 minutes)
 - Create Venn diagram comparing Mavis and Marge
 - Identify what makes their friendship work despite differences
 - Discuss how friends can complement each other's personalities
2. **Barn Community Exploration** (10 minutes)
 - Analyze the relationships between all the barn animals
 - Discuss Sandra the sheep and her role in the story
 - Explore what makes their barn a community

Closing (5 minutes)

- Exit ticket: "What makes someone a good friend even if they're different from you?"

Assessment: Friendship analysis depth, understanding of complementary relationships

Day 4: The Crisis - Someone Tries to Steal Sandra

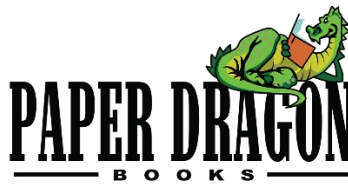
Objective: Analyze the story's conflict and Mavis's crucial decision

Materials: Story mapping worksheet, decision-making analysis chart

Opening (10 minutes)

- Partner discussion: "How do you think Mavis felt when she realized Sandra was in danger?"

Main Activity (30 minutes)



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1. **Conflict Analysis** (20 minutes)
 - Identify the story's central problem
 - Discuss why this situation requires bravery
 - Explore Mavis's internal conflict: fear vs. loyalty to friend
2. **Decision Point Discussion** (10 minutes)
 - Analyze the moment when Mavis must decide whether to act
 - Discuss: What helps people make brave choices?
 - Connect to concept of "bright spark of braveness"

Closing (5 minutes)

- Quick-write: "What would help you be brave if a friend needed you?"

Assessment: Conflict understanding, analysis of character motivation

Day 5: Finding the Bright Spark of Braveness

Objective: Explore the story's resolution and themes of courage

Materials: Theme analysis worksheet, courage definition chart

Opening (5 minutes)

- Poll: "What do you think 'a bright spark of braveness' means?"

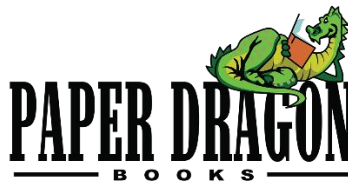
Main Activity (35 minutes)

1. **Resolution Analysis** (20 minutes)
 - Read/discuss how Mavis finds her courage and saves Sandra
 - Analyze what enabled Mavis to act despite her fear
 - Identify the role of friendship and caring in motivating bravery
2. **Courage Definition Building** (15 minutes)
 - Create class definition of true courage
 - Distinguish between fearlessness and bravery
 - Discuss: Is Mavis braver than Marge? Why or why not?

Closing (5 minutes)

- Share one thing Mavis taught us about being brave

Assessment: Theme understanding, courage concept grasp



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WEEK 2: Personal Applications and Creative Expression

Day 6: Character Transformation and Growth

Objective: Analyze how Mavis changes through her experience

Materials: Before/after character chart, growth analysis worksheet

Opening (10 minutes)

- Small group discussion: "How is Mavis different at the end of the story?"

Main Activity (30 minutes)

1. **Transformation Analysis** (20 minutes)
 - Compare Mavis at beginning vs. end
 - Identify: Does Mavis stop being scared? Or does she learn to be brave while scared?
 - Discuss what Mavis learns about herself
2. **Personal Growth Connection** (10 minutes)
 - Students share times they discovered they were braver than they thought
 - Connect Mavis's experience to personal growth opportunities
 - Discuss how challenges can reveal hidden strengths

Closing (5 minutes)

- Exit ticket: "What's the most important thing Mavis learned?"

Assessment: Character transformation understanding, personal connection quality

Day 7: Illustration Analysis and Visual Storytelling

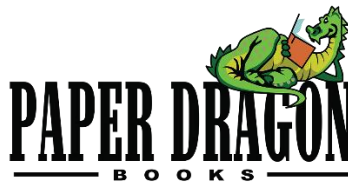
Objective: Analyze how illustrations contribute to the story

Materials: Book illustrations, visual analysis worksheet

Opening (5 minutes)

- Review Sarah Warburton's illustrations throughout the book

Main Activity (35 minutes)



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1. **Visual Analysis** (25 minutes)
 - Examine how illustrations show Mavis's fear vs. her bravery
 - Analyze facial expressions and body language
 - Discuss how pictures add humor and emotion to the story
2. **Creating Our Own Illustrations** (10 minutes)
 - Students sketch their own "bright spark of braveness"
 - Draw a time they were brave like Mavis
 - Share illustrations with partners

Closing (5 minutes)

- Gallery walk of student illustrations

Assessment: Visual literacy understanding, creative expression

Day 8: Personal Bravery Stories

Objective: Connect story themes to personal experiences

Materials: Story planning worksheet, bravery story examples

Opening (10 minutes)

- Brainstorm: "Times when we need to be brave in everyday life"

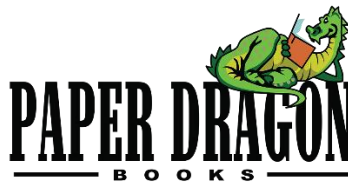
Main Activity (30 minutes)

1. **Personal Story Planning** (20 minutes)
 - Students identify a time they were brave despite being scared
 - Plan personal narratives following story structure
 - Focus on feelings before, during, and after brave moments
2. **Sharing Circle** (10 minutes)
 - Volunteers share their bravery stories
 - Practice supportive listening and encouragement
 - Celebrate various types of courage

Closing (5 minutes)

- Reflection: "What makes all our brave moments special?"

Assessment: Personal connection depth, narrative planning quality



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Day 9: Creative Project Work

Objective: Express understanding through creative projects

Materials: Various art and writing supplies, project guidelines

Project Options:

1. **Bravery Book:** Create illustrated book about own brave moment
2. **Character Portrait:** Draw Mavis showing her "bright spark of braveness"
3. **Sequel Story:** Write what happens next in the barn
4. **Courage Poster:** Design poster showing what courage means
5. **Barn Scene:** Create diorama or illustration of the barn community

Structure:

- **Opening** (5 min): Project explanation and selection
- **Work Time** (35 min): Independent project work with teacher support
- **Closing** (5 min): Progress sharing

Assessment: Project planning, creative engagement

Day 10: Presentations and Celebration

Objective: Share creative work and celebrate courage

Materials: Presentation space, celebration materials

Opening (5 minutes)

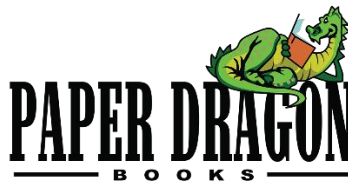
- Review sharing guidelines and supportive audience behavior

Main Activity (35 minutes)

- Student project presentations (2-3 minutes each)
- Audience provides encouraging feedback
- Celebrate both the projects and the courage to share them

Closing (5 minutes)

- Unit reflection: "What will you remember most about Mavis's story?"
- Celebration of classroom community and bravery



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Assessment: Presentation quality, supportive participation

Assessment Rubric

Reading Comprehension (25%)

- **Exceeds:** Demonstrates deep understanding of plot, character, and themes
- **Meets:** Shows solid comprehension with adequate examples
- **Approaching:** Basic understanding with support
- **Below:** Limited comprehension

Character Analysis (25%)

- **Exceeds:** Insightful analysis of character personalities and motivations
- **Meets:** Clear understanding with specific examples
- **Approaching:** Basic character recognition
- **Below:** Minimal character understanding

Theme Application (25%)

- **Exceeds:** Makes meaningful connections between courage themes and personal experience
- **Meets:** Understands major themes with some personal connections
- **Approaching:** Recognizes basic themes
- **Below:** Limited theme understanding

Social-Emotional Learning (25%)

- **Exceeds:** Demonstrates empathy, self-awareness, and courage concepts
- **Meets:** Shows understanding of emotional themes
- **Approaching:** Basic emotional awareness
- **Below:** Limited SEL engagement

Differentiation Strategies

For Students Who Struggle with Anxiety or Fear:

- Provide extra validation and gentle encouragement
- Offer choice in sharing personal experiences
- Celebrate small brave acts consistently
- Create safe, judgment-free discussion spaces



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For Naturally Confident Students:

- Explore how even brave people feel fear sometimes
- Discuss supporting friends who are more cautious
- Connect to leadership and helping others feel brave
- Challenge to recognize courage in different forms

For Students with Different Learning Styles:

- Offer multiple project format options
- Use visual supports for abstract concepts
- Provide kinesthetic activities (acting out scenes)
- Allow various ways to demonstrate understanding

For English Language Learners:

- Use visual supports for emotion vocabulary
- Provide sentence frames for discussions
- Allow drawing/illustration to support verbal expression
- Connect to universal experiences of fear and courage

Materials List

- Class set of "Mavis the Bravest"
- Chart paper and markers
- Art supplies for projects
- Emotion/personality trait vocabulary cards
- Character analysis graphic organizers

Extension Activities

Home Connections:

- Family discussions about brave moments
- Sharing family bravery stories
- Creating family courage traditions
- Reading other books about courage together

Community Connections:

- Invite community helpers to discuss courage in their work



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- Visit farms or petting zoos to learn about chickens and sheep
- Create kindness/courage campaign for school
- Recognition of everyday bravery in school community

Cross-Curricular Connections

Science:

- Study chicken and sheep behavior and characteristics
- Learn about farm animals and their care
- Explore animal adaptations for protection
- Discuss fight-or-flight responses

Social Studies:

- Explore different types of communities
- Discuss how communities help and protect members
- Study helpers in our community
- Learn about cooperation and interdependence

Art:

- Illustration techniques and visual storytelling
- Expression of emotion through art
- Character design and personality through visuals
- Creating book illustrations

Character Education:

- Building empathy and understanding differences
- Practicing courage in age-appropriate ways
- Developing friendship skills
- Understanding and managing fears

Real-World Applications

Social-Emotional Skills:

- Identifying and managing fear and anxiety
- Building courage through small steps
- Supporting friends through challenges



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- Celebrating different personality types

Everyday Courage:

- Trying new things despite nervousness
- Standing up for friends
- Speaking up in class
- Making new friends
- Facing age-appropriate challenges

Community Building:

- Creating supportive classroom environment
- Celebrating diverse personalities and strengths
- Practicing helping behaviors
- Building culture of encouragement