



## COURAGE – Seven Grandfather Teachings, Cree Métis Artist George Littlechild

Students use modelling clay to create a low relief sculpture that tells a personal story connected to the Grandfather Teaching *courage/bravery*. Then they reflect on, and write about their experiences in life when they have needed courage.

Required Time

180 Minutes

Grade Level

Grade 1 to Grade 8

Subject

Language Arts  
Visual Arts  
First Nations, Metis, Inuit

Vocabulary

Materials

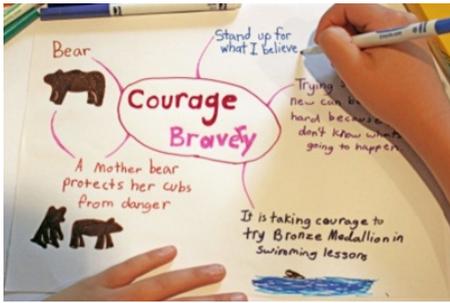
Crayola Modeling Clay - Jumbo Pack  
Crayola Watercolour Paints - 8 Count  
Crayola Paint Brushes - 5 Count  
Crayola Fine Line Markers - 12 Count  
Crayola Marker & Watercolour Paper - 22.9 cm x 30.5 cm (9" x 12")  
Crayola No-Run School Glue  
Salt  
Variety of Sculpture Tools  
Flat Canvas Painting Boards - 15.2 cm x 20.3 cm (6" x 8")

Shop Crayola  
Products

# Steps

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## Step One



1. Brainstorm the Grandfather teaching *courage/bravery*.
2. Use images and words to create a mind map about courage/bravery.
3. Describe and draw a life experience you have had where you needed to have courage and be brave.
4. Explain the meaning of courage/bravery.
5. Remember a time when you stood up for something you believed in, how did you feel?

## Step Two

1. Close your eyes and think about a time in life when you have been courageous.
  - *Where were you?*
  - *What were you doing?*
  - *Look around, what is the environment like?*
  - *What colour is the sky?*
  - *What is the land like?*
  - *Are there buildings?*
2. Form a picture of the event in your mind's eye.
3. Begin your artwork by gathering a variety of modelling clay colours and a flat canvas board.
4. Create a background using colours and shapes that represent the environment you are in.
5. Mix colours together to make new colours.



## Step Three

1. Reflect on why you needed to have courage and be brave.
2. Create your self-portrait from modelling clay that contrasts against your background.
3. Skin colours can be made from mixing white, yellow, red, and blue together.
4. Experiment with different colour combinations.
5. Begin your self-portrait with larger shapes.



## Step Four

1. Add detail to your face by using different colours and a variety of sculpture tools such as toothpicks, rollers, and combs.





### Step Five

1. Attach larger shapes onto your background by smoothing the edges together.



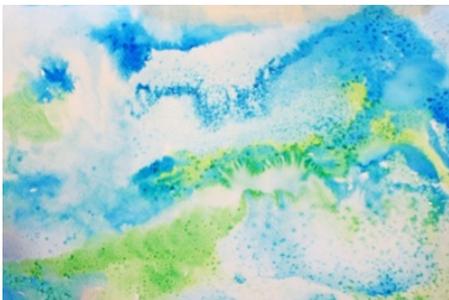
### Step Six

1. Add other animals, people, or plants to your background to create a story about a time in your life when you were brave and showed courage.
2. Continue to add detail to your artwork.
3. When it is complete reflect on the story you have told through your low relief sculpture.



### Step Seven

1. Create a mat to frame your artwork.
2. Begin your mat by painting watercolour paper with clear water.
3. Brush watercolour paints in colours similar to an area in your low relief sculpture that is important to your story into the wet paper.
4. Allow the paints to flow into each other naturally and fill the space.



### Step Eight

1. Add salt to your painting while the paint is still wet to change the way the paints appear.



### Step Nine

1. When your watercolour painting is dry attach your low relief sculpture to it using tape or glue.
2. Reflect again on your story of courage/ bravery.
3. Use your mind map, thoughts and feelings to write about your life experience, making connections to the Grandfather teaching courage/ bravery.
4. Use a fine tip marker to write your ideas around the outer edge of the mat.

# Learning Goals

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Students will be able to:

- use modelling clay to create a low relief sculpture that communicates a time in their life when they showed courage/ bravery;
- use watercolour paints to make an abstract painting of an element in their low relief sculpture;
- use words and images to communicate personal life experiences connected to the Grandfather Teaching *courage/bravery*;
- use contrast to create a foreground and background in their low relief sculpture;
- demonstrate technical accomplishment and creativity.

## Extensions

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Have students:

- discuss having the courage to stand up for children who are being bullied;
- create posters focused on anti-bullying and post them around the school;
- create drama improvisations about situations when one needs to be brave or have courage;
- research role models who have shown courage/ bravery, and share their life stories with the class.

## Prepare

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1. Explore the Anishnaabeg Bimaadiziwin: An Ojibwe Peoples Resource, website from Georgian College to deepen your understanding of the 7 Grandfather Teachings at the following link,  
**Teachings**
2. Download images from the Internet, or find images in books of George Littlechild's artworks that communicate the theme *courage/bravery*.  
**Littlechild**  
The book titled, *In Honour of Our Grandmothers* (1994), is a collaboration of 4 artists including George Littlechild. *Natasha Rae Learns Cree* is the title of a powerful artwork created by George Littlechild, and inspires courage/bravery.
3. The *Traditional Teachings Handbook* will provide background information for the teacher on the 7 Grandfather Teachings from the perspective of the authors. It is available in pdf format from the Native Women's Centre at the following link,  
**Traditional Teachings**
4. Download the following pdf and read about the Seven Sacred Teachings, Niizhwaaswi gagiikwewin, by David Bouchard & Dr. Joseph Martin, paintings by Kristy Cameron,  
**Sacred Teachings**  
This pdf and or video will give you background knowledge about the 7 Grandfather teachings from the perspective of the writers,  
**Video**  
This second link is based on the Seven Sacred Teachings from a child's perspective,  
**Child's Perspective**  
*The paintings and writings about the 'Seven Sacred Teachings' can be shared with the students. Make sure students understand who wrote the teachings and where they are from. First Nations Peoples from different communities will have different understandings and perspectives on the 7 Grandfather teachings.*
5. Download, *The Seven Grandfather Teachings*, by Rabbit and Bear Paws,  
**Rabbit and Bear Paws**  
*The Seven Grandfather Teachings*, by Rabbit and Bear Paws can be shared and reflected on daily (one teaching each day) with your students.
6. Gather and make available books by Barbara Reid such as, *The Subway Mouse* (connecting the story with courage/bravery).
7. Download images from the Internet of Barbara Reid's modelling clay artworks,  
**Barbara Reid**

## Introduction

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1. Introduce students to the artist George Littlechild (an artist of Cree and Scottish ancestry).
2. View and discuss a variety of George Littlechild's artworks, focusing on artworks that communicate courage/bravery.
3. Explore his use of colour and shape.
4. Introduce the 7 Grandfather Teachings focusing on the human quality courage/bravery.
5. Have a class discussion about the Grandfather teaching courage/bravery, and how it is connected to life experiences.
6. Ask students to share an example from their own life in which they have made connections to the Grandfather teaching courage/bravery
7. Introduce students to the illustrator and author Barbara Reid.
8. View her artworks and discuss how she has created space (background, foreground), and used colour and texture.
9. Reflect on the detail she has added to her artworks.

## Activities

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## The Challenge

1. Use modelling clay to create a low relief sculpture that communicates a time in your life when you showed courage/ bravery.
2. Use watercolour paints to make an abstract painting of an element in your low relief sculpture.
3. Use words and images to communicate personal life experiences connected to the Grandfather Teaching *courage/bravery*.
4. Use contrast to create a foreground and background in your low relief sculpture.
5. Demonstrate technical accomplishment and creativity.

## The Process

1. Ensure that everyone understands the challenge.
2. Establish success criteria with your students, for example,  
I know I am successful when I have:
  - *written words that communicate the meaning and life experience of courage/ bravery*
  - *created images that communicate a personal life experience connected to bravery/ courage*
  - *used contrasting colours and shapes to define the foreground and background*
  - *carefully constructed a low relief sculpture*
  - *framed the artwork with a watercolour painting and words connected to my understanding of courage/ bravery*
3. Guide students through the steps outlined in this lesson.
4. Observe students as they work.
5. Provide individual assistance and encouragement.
6. When students have completed their artworks, ask them to reflect on the words and images they have chosen to represent the Grandfather teaching, courage/ bravery.

## Sharing

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1. Once all the artworks and reflections are complete ask students to bring their artworks into a large circle.
2. Invite each student to share his/her low relief sculpture.
3. During the circle discussion include references to colours, contrast, texture, and space.
4. Share personal connections to the Grandfather teaching courage/ bravery.

## Assessment

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1. Observe students as they work – exploring, experimenting, adding detail, thoughtful focus.
2. Listen to and observe students as they discuss the artworks – attentive listening, insightful contributions.
3. Use a checklist to track progress (Downloads – Courage\_tracking.pdf)
4. Have students reflect on their own artworks in their sketchbooks. Ask students:
  - *What worked well in your artwork? What do you see that makes you say that?*
  - *What would you change or do differently next time?*
  - *What does the Grandfather teaching courage/ bravery mean to you?*