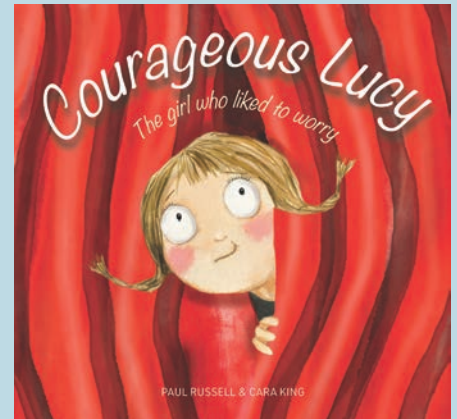




# EK BOOKS TEACHER NOTES & RESOURCES

**Title:** Courageous Lucy  
**Subtitle:** The Girl Who Liked to Worry  
**Author:** Paul Russell  
**Illustrator:** Cara King  
**Publisher:** EK Books  
**Price:** ANZ \$24.99 | USA \$18.99 | CA \$24.99 | UK £10.99  
**ISBN:** 9781925820775  
**Publication date:** Feb 2021  
**Audience age:** 4-8 years  
**Key Curriculum Areas:** English, Critical and Creative Thinking, Science, The Arts: Drama, Health and Physical Education



## SYNOPSIS:

Lucy worries about everything and she worries a lot. She's so skilled at worrying that she worries about new and interesting things no one else even thinks about! But when Mrs Hunt tells the class there is going to be a school musical, Lucy decides she wants to be a part of it. She's too worried to try out for any of the parts but Mrs Hunt finds the perfect role for her. Being a piece of the landscape may not suit everyone but Lucy puts everything into being the best tree she can, and with a sprinkle of courage she stands proud and tall even as her knees knock and her tummy ties in knots. She becomes the best tree anyone can ever remember!

Lucy may worry, but she also knows that sometimes she can be courageous too, showing children everywhere that it's okay to be worried and still embrace opportunities!

This book doesn't ignore anxiety in children or offer a hollow solution to 'just be brave'. Although her experiences don't totally change Lucy, they show her that while stepping out of your comfort zone always takes courage, once you do, wonderful and magical things can happen. Just taking one tiny step and deciding that you want to do something is sometimes all it takes to be courageous.

## THEMES:

Anxiety. Working together. Courage. Problem solving Creativity

## SELLING POINTS:

- Offers kids with anxiety a chance to see how small actions can help them through everyday worries. They don't need to undertake enormous personal leaps.
- A gentle read for kids beginning school who may have worries.
- A valuable resource for parents/caregivers, teachers, school counsellors and psychologists to help children cope with and reduce anxiety and worry.
- The first book together for writing and illustrating team Paul Russell (author of *My Storee* and CBCA Notable *Grandma Forgets*) and Cara King (illustrator of *Scaredy Book* and *The Box Cars*).



### AUTHOR MOTIVATION

I read an article that stated that when we are born, the only things we are scared of are loud noises and falling; everything else we learn and if we can learn them, we can unlearn them.

I found the article really interesting even though it offered no support to those who had accumulated many more fears since birth.

I also had a six-year-old, Lucinda, who had trouble getting to sleep at night, and whenever I asked her why she was having trouble, she would always have the most incredible thing that she was thinking about or worrying about that was keeping her awake.

It was these two things that inspired the book. Originally it was a story to read to my Lucinda when she was awake again and needed something to calm her down. I sent it to my publisher under Lucinda's request, so that she could have some pictures to go along with it.

### WRITING STYLE:

I often find myself writing from experience. Although I genuinely believe you don't have to have climbed Everest to write about mountains, I think if you have your text becomes so much richer for it.

I am always the lead character of the stories I write. I am always every character in the stories I write. Now that I am a father of two girls who are very different from me and each other, I find myself also sharing their experiences, but a story seems to really burst to life when something happens that is honestly shared.

As a child (and even often as an adult), I would get terribly nervous about stepping out of my comfort zone. I'd have butterflies in my stomach before the start of every new term, every camp, every time I had to give a class speech and every time I had to do something new.

I always thought I would be such an amazing support for my daughters when they got anxious because I had already been there. Then I had Lucinda, who would worry about the strangest and most wonderful things. Things that I could never do anything about.

So together we would tell stories. It didn't always help her worry less or me worry less about her worrying, but the stories had a life of their own. That's the kind of stories that I like to write; stories inspired by something real but that also have a life of their own.

### ILLUSTRATION STYLE:

Soft watercolours with a little bit of humour and whimsy added.

### AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR BACKGROUND:

**Paul Russell** is a primary teacher, playwright and children's author who never wants to grow up. He is passionate about fostering imagination in children's learning.

**Cara King** is a designer and illustrator who runs her own design business, Caratoons.



### INTERVIEW:

#### AUTHOR

##### **What is the inspiration for this story?**

My daughter's anxiety inspired the story. When you plan on having children, you always think of things like hair colour, eye colour, the shape of noses, and other things you pass on. For me, seeing this in my daughter, I recognised it straight away as something from my childhood too.

I was never great at describing my anxiety when I was little. I would always just sort of call it butterflies in my stomach and never really want to share what I was worried about. My daughter is fantastic at sharing what is worrying her. Originally I thought this was great because I would be able to fix it. The problem was that the worries were never things that could actually be fixed.

Instead we made up stories. Exaggerated, imagined and explored. Thought of worries that were bigger or characters that were braver. *Courageous Lucy* was one of these stories.

##### **What was the most rewarding part of this project?**

Seeing Cara's interpretation of the story and bringing it to life with her artworks.

Often being an author is a solitary sort of job and this story was really such a small story in our house, but once you let it out there and an illustrator takes it on, it stops being just one story and becomes something bigger.

Cara has been able to keep the joy of the story and make it something spectacular. That is always the greatest part of being a picture book author.

##### **What was the most challenging part of this project?**

Every picture book has the same challenge. TIME!!! Everything always takes so long and waiting to see the finished pieces and the next step and to finally see that actual book seems to take a lifetime. No matter how many books I write I don't think I will ever get used to the waiting.

#### ILLUSTRATOR

##### **What media do you use to create your illustrations? Briefly describe your process.**

The book was illustrated in a soft watercolour palette with a mixture of coloured pencil and a touch of Photoshop.

##### **What was the most rewarding part of this project?**

All the little stories within the story really captured my interest. I loved Paul's writing and it was a really easy project to play with.

## TEACHER ACTIVITIES/NOTES:

### Before Reading

- Look at the cover of Courageous Lucy. What do you see?
- What do you think the girl is feeling?
- Courageous is a really big word. Has anyone heard the word before or knows what it might mean? Come up with a class definition of the word courageous.
- Why might the book be called Courageous Lucy?
- What do you think the story is about? What does the cover make you wonder about?
- Have you ever felt nervous or frightened of doing something new? What did you do? What did you think to yourself? Were there strategies you used, or could have used, to overcome your fear?

### After Reading

- What was the story about?
- Do you think Lucy's worries are real or imagined?
- What do you think life is like for someone like Lucy, worrying about lots of things? Is it okay to have worries? Do you think people can simply stop worrying?
- Why do you think Lucy was worried about telling people about the clever facts she knew?
- Lucy often imagined the worst scenario, like the stage collapsing, or missing out. How do you think Lucy could change her mindset or her way of thinking about possible (or not very likely) situations happening?
- How did Mrs Hunt react to Lucy asking to be involved in the school musical? Why?
- What could you do if you didn't know how to help with a group activity?
- What do the illustrations tell you about the ways Lucy feels in the story? What about the ways the other children felt about Lucy? What do you notice?
- In what ways did Lucy show that she was 'courageous'?
- How do you think Lucy changed from the beginning to the end of the story? How did she stay the same?
- What kinds of things do you like learning about? How do you show your creative and performing abilities? How do these things make you feel?
- Is there a time when you have felt courageous? Is there a time when you wish you were more courageous?

## ACTIVITIES:

### ENGLISH

#### **Foundation Curriculum Links**

*Expressing and developing ideas:* Understand the use of vocabulary in familiar contexts related to everyday experiences, personal interests and topics taught at school ([ACELA1437](#))

*Responding to literature:* Share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts ([ACELT1783](#))

*Examining literature:* Identify some features of texts including events and characters and retell events from a text ([ACELT1578](#))

*Creating literature:* Retell familiar literary texts through performance, use of illustrations and images ([ACELT1580](#))

*Interacting with others:* Use interaction skills including listening while others speak, using appropriate voice levels, articulation and body language, gestures and eye contact ([ACELY1784](#))

*Interpreting, analysing, evaluating:* Use comprehension strategies to understand and discuss texts listened to, viewed or read independently ([ACELY1650](#))

#### **Years 1 and 2 Curriculum Links**

*Text structure and organisation:* Understand how texts are made cohesive through language features, including word associations, synonyms, and antonyms ([ACELA1464](#))

*Interpreting, analysing, evaluating:* Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to analyse texts by drawing on growing knowledge of context, language and visual features and print and multimodal text structures ([ACELY1670](#))

*Creating texts:* Create short imaginative and informative texts that show emerging use of appropriate text structure, sentence-level grammar, word choice, spelling, punctuation and appropriate multimodal elements, for example illustrations and diagrams ([ACELY1661](#))

#### **Vocabulary and Synonyms:**

- The term 'worried' is used throughout the text. Make a list of synonyms (words with similar meanings) for 'worry' or 'worried'.
  - o Anxious, troubled, bothered, nervous, uneasy, stressed, fearful, afraid
- Look at antonyms for worried as well. Discuss with children how these are words that can help us feel courageous, and that sometimes just thinking of these words can help us feel this emotion.
  - o Calm, unconcerned, peaceful, carefree, relaxed, soothed

## Visual Literacy:

- Discuss how the illustrator shows the emotions Lucy is feeling in the story. Draw different faces and link them with emotion words. For example, worried, scared, relaxed, relieved, embarrassed, and so on.
- Have children begin by just drawing the eyes, examine how cartoons can use eyes to show different emotions. Use angled eyebrows to show anger, little pupils to show shock. Eyelids can be used to show sleepiness or worry.

## Comprehension:

Answer the following questions.

- Which part in the school musical did Lucy play?
- Why did acting as this part mean that Lucy had to be courageous?
- Why did Lucy practise so hard to sway, drop her leaves and fall over like a tree?
- How can Lucy still worry and sometimes be courageous at the same time?

## Creative Writing:

- *Recounts* – Encourage students to write about an occasion when they felt worried about trying something new or unfamiliar. How did they feel and how did they resolve the situation?
- Which part would you have in Lucy's play? Get students to write themselves into the book and have a new character based on their own attributes. Would they be a tree with Lucy or would they be something else? How would they show their courage?
- *Invitation* – Students can design and create an invitation, flyer or poster advertising their very own version of Lucy's school musical. Students may need to make up supporting details that would need to be stated including heading, place, date and time, colourful decorations and the character from the book.
- Write a letter to Lucy before she got her role in the musical. How could you convince her to be brave and take the role?

## Thinking Tools:

- *Y-Chart* – Students can imagine themselves, or Lucy, in the scene in the musical to complete a graphic organiser with the headings: Looks Like, Sounds Like, Feels Like. See BLM 1.

## THE ARTS: DRAMA / HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

### Foundation to Year 2 Curriculum Links

Drama: Explore role and dramatic action in dramatic play, improvisation and process drama ([ACADRM027](#))

Use voice, facial expression, movement and space to imagine and establish role and situation ([ACADRM028](#))



## TEACHER NOTES: Courageous Lucy

Being healthy, safe and active: Describe their own strengths and achievements and those of others, and identify how these contribute to personal identities ([ACPPS015](#))

Practise strategies they can use when they feel uncomfortable, unsafe or need help with a task, problem or situation ([ACPPS017](#))

Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing: Practise personal and social skills to interact positively with others ([ACPPS004](#))

Identify and describe emotional responses people may experience in different situations ([ACPPS005](#))

Moving our body: Perform fundamental movement skills in a variety of movement sequences and situations ([ACPMPO25](#))

### Mindfulness/Drama:

- *Strike a Pose* - Practise body poses. Choose the different characters from the text or the theme of a play and have students strike a pose to mimic them and hold it. This can be done independently, or students can copy a partner's chosen pose.
- Pose like you are ...
  - o A tree (swaying, dropping leaves, growing, falling)
  - o singing an opera
  - o sewing a costume
  - o building a set
  - o dancing in a production
  - o holding a spotlight
  - o making a speech
  - o cutting down a tree
- *Put on a Mini-Musical* – Have students choose a couple of songs that they know and try to create a simple storyline to tie them together. Make simple costumes or have props and perform it for another class or parents. Instead of making posters for Lucy's musical, make posters for your own. Give students the power to create and ensure that each student has a part. Discuss with students that, like Lucy, we all have our strengths and courage we can bring to the performance.
- *Recreate Courageous Lucy through dramatization* – Improvise or retell the story.
- *Exploring Feelings* – Get in touch with 'feelings' by exploring each of the five senses in pretend play. For example, TOUCH a hot stove, ice, pins, cotton balls. TASTE a sour lemon, lollipop. HEAR the wind, a loud whistle. SEE a car coming towards you, a giant spider, an ant. SMELL freshly baked cookies.
- *Identifying the Fear* – On a human body template, identify the body parts where you might feel fear or anxiety. Act these out. For example, shaky hands, headache, tummy tied in knots, knees knocking, dry mouth. See BLM 2.

**LOOKS LIKE**

**SOUNDS LIKE**

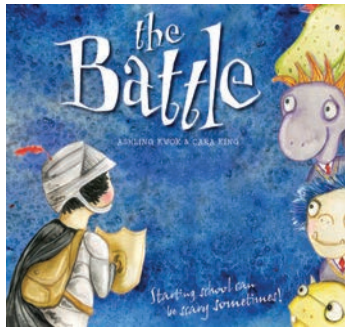
**FEELS LIKE**



# My body when I have fear



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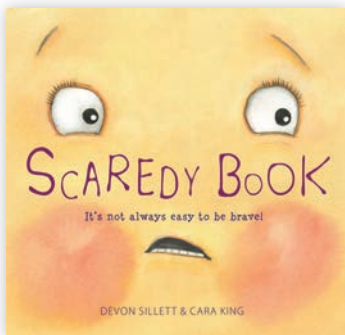


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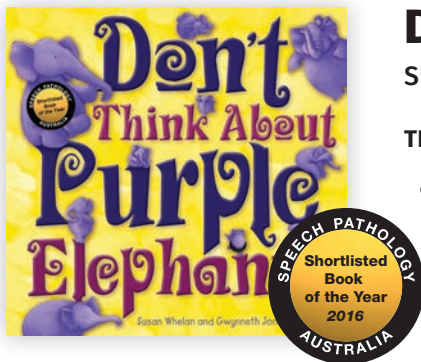
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