

## Swimmy's Bravery and Abolitionists

---

<b>Created:</b>	07/16/2017	<b>Type of Contribution:</b>	Lesson/Project
<b>Last Modified:</b>	07/16/2017	<b>Technology Needed:</b>	LCD projector, Overhead projector, Computer Lab
<b>Class Time:</b>	2-3 days of instruction		

---

### Summary:

Use this question to introduce a lesson on reform, specifically abolitionism. "When looking at the actions of abolitionists, how do you know they were brave?" Here's how to do it using *Swimmy* by Leo Lionni.

### Teacher Instructions:



Use this lesson as the introductory activity for a unit on reform in an American history course. Students will explore resources and gather information to better understand the motivation, actions, and characteristics of abolitionists.

Organize your class into groups of four students, and appoint a group leader who will write and be a spokesman for the group.

- Play a YouTube video of the book, *Swimmy*. If this option isn't available, use a projection system and document camera to display each page, or hold the book up in the front of the class. As you read the story, ask students to think about how they would answer the question "What is bravery?"
- Give students 5 minutes to discuss and complete the [Bravery Is . . .](#) (attached) graphic organizer. Students can write examples, definitions, and descriptions of what bravery is from the book or even provide real life examples. **TIP:** Students may add more circles to the graphic organizer, if needed.

- Ask each group to share their Bravery Is . . . graphic organizer with the document camera. **TIP:** Be flexible on time because students may want to further discussion another group's answer(s).
- Hand each pair the graphic organizer, *Abolitionists* (attached). Have them research 3 abolitionists. Allow students about 30 minutes to complete their research. **TIP:** Since this is an introductory lesson about abolitionists, students may need to select abolitionists to research from a list. I am going to limit the choices to those that we will be discussing in upcoming lessons: Angelina Grimke, Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and John Brown. **TIP:** *American Experience* is an excellent resource.
  - What characteristics did he/she display?
  - How did he/she support the abolitionist movement?
  - What did he/she do that was brave?
- With 10 minutes left in class, pass out exit slips with the compelling question **“When looking at abolitionists, how do you know they were brave?”** Collect slips as students leave the room. **TIP:** Students should refer back to the Bravery Is . . . and *Abolitionists* graphic organizer when answering the compelling question.

Images:

*The Abolitionists*. Digital image. *American Experience: The Abolitionists*. PBS, n.d. Web. 13 July 2017.

Lionni, Leo. “Swimmy.” *Center for Philosophy for Children*. University of Washington, n.d. Web. 13 July 2017.

Resources:

“American Experience: The Abolitionists.” *PBS Learning Media*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 July 2017.

*Swimmy*. YouTube, 8 Sept. 2013. Web. 13 July 2017.

Lionni, Leo. *Swimmy*. New York, NY: Scholastic, 1993. Print