Name _____ Date _____

Brandon always tries to do his best in school. He studies hard, always does his homework, and asks his teacher questions about anything he doesn't understand. Whenever he gets a new assignment, he starts work on it right away, following all the teacher's directions and using all his resources.

One day, the teacher gives the class a new assignment. The class is learning about poetry, and the teacher asks each student to find a poem, memorize it, and recite it in front of the entire class the following week. Brandon suddenly starts to worry. "What if I can't memorize the poem and I forget some of the words? What if I make a mistake while reciting it and the other kids laugh at me?"

After class, Brandon talks to his teacher. His teacher knows how hard Brandon works, and encourages him to just do the assignment one step at a time. She tells him to start by finding a poem and then to try memorizing it, without thinking about the other kids. Wanting to try, Brandon goes home to start work. He finds a poem, and over the next couple of days, one line at a time, he memorizes it and practices reciting it. Even though he's preparing, he's still afraid of messing up. He thinks about it all the time. He even has bad dreams about it!

A few days before he and his classmates are supposed to recite their poems, Brandon asks his teacher if there is another assignment he can do instead of reciting his poem. The teacher understands Brandon's worries and tells him he can write a report about the poet who wrote the poem, instead. This makes Brandon happy.

The next day, Brandon runs into his friend and classmate John. John seems to be talking to himself! Brandon asks him what he's doing. John says he is anxious about his poem and wishes he didn't have to do it, but it was too late to do anything else. Brandon wants to encourage John, but at first, he isn't sure how. Suddenly, he has an idea. "Don't worry, John. I'm worried, too, but I'm going to try to recite my poem!" John is inspired by Brandon's choice, and Brandon feels proud of himself.

The next day, when Brandon is called to recite his poem, he stands up at in front of his class, takes a deep breath, and just does his best.

Name _____ Date _____

What value is reflected in this story?

Choose three values from the list below. Tell how **two** of them are **not** demonstrated in this story, and tell how **one** of them **is** demonstrated.

cooperation	honesty	fairness
patriotism	forgiving	courage

1. _____
    _____

2. _____
    _____

3. _____
    _____

Why do you think the value reflected in this story is an important one?

_____

_____

_____

Draw a picture to illustrate this value:

Values

Name _____ Date _____

Answers to COURAGE:

Answers will vary and should reflect student understanding and ability. Answers should be discussed for clarity.

Answers to the first question may include some of the following ideas:

Cooperation   While Brandon and John do help each other with practicing their reciting, this is not the overall point of the story.

Honesty   Brandon and his friend John are each being honest in admitting that he's afraid to do the assignment, but that is not the overall point of the story.

Fairness   Students might say that the teacher is showing fairness in giving Brandon another assignment because he feels unable to complete the original assignment, but that is not the overall point of the story.

Patriotism   Patriotism is not reflected in the story, and there is no mention of it.

Forgiving   Forgiving is not reflected in the story, and there is no mention of it.

Courage   This is the value shown in the story. Brandon is afraid and unsure of himself, and he even convinced the teacher to assign a different project. At the last moment, he shows courage, facing his fear and reciting his poem.

Answers to the second question may include that courage inspires others who are afraid, like John; courage allows us to try to do what we were once afraid to do and to try new things; courage helps us complete tasks that we fear approaching, etc.