

## The Principled Academy: 7 Stories About Courage for Children

Isaac Durst  
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### *Courage*



*Illustration by Magnific*

Hey there friend,

This month, we're focusing on **Courage**. But is courage something people are born with, or is it something we learn? Like all virtues, courage can be taught, practiced, and modeled over time.

Courage is the willingness to move beyond fear in order to face a healthy (not reckless) challenge, even when it may involve risk, discomfort, or possible failure. Simply put, it means choosing to do what is right and trying your best—even when you feel afraid.

There are several wonderful books that help bring this idea to life for children. In *Free as a Bird*, young readers learn about **Malala Yousafzai**, who courageously stood up for her right to education despite great personal risk. *Thank You, Mr. Falker* by **Patricia Polacco** tells the moving story of a child who overcomes reading challenges with the help of a caring teacher, while *The Lion Inside* reminds younger readers that even the smallest among us can discover great bravery within themselves.

Activities and discussions can further support children in developing courage. When children see that both well-known figures and everyday individuals achieve meaningful things by facing their fears, they begin to understand that courage is something they can practice in their own lives.

In conclusion, Courage can indeed be taught and strengthened. With the right guidance, children can learn to manage their fears by talking with someone they trust, gathering information about what worries them, and, when it is safe, taking small, brave steps forward.

Please feel free to explore our selection of stories on Courage below, and if you'd like more options, I invite you visit [our website](#).

Wishing you health, happiness, always,

**Isaac Durst**

Isaac Durst  
Director

## 7 Books on Courage

### Free as a Bird

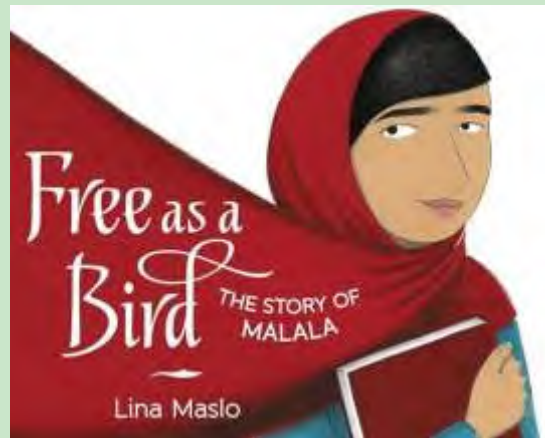
*Written and Illustrated by Lina Maslo*

**Grade level:** 5th & 6th graders

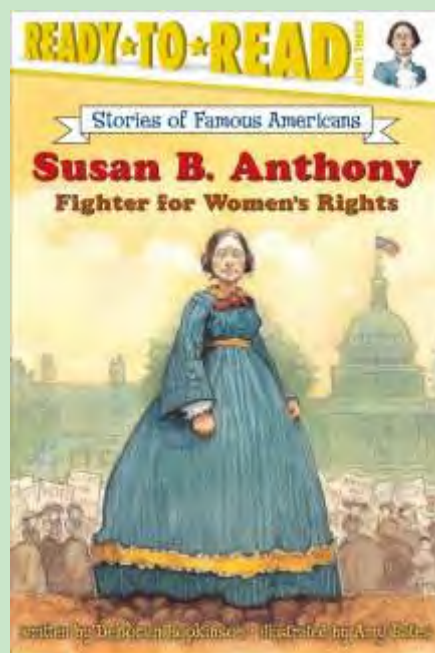
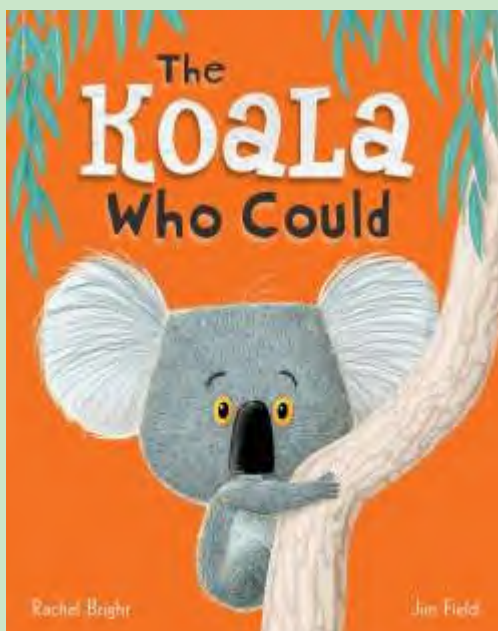
**Genre:** Biography

Malala Yousafzai's inspiring story follows a brave girl who, with the support of her father, stands up for every child's right to education. Despite attempts to silence her, Malala raises her voice for equality and becomes a global advocate for change.

*Free as a Bird* is a powerful story of courage, resilience, and the special bond between a father and daughter, showing young readers the power of using their voice to make a difference.



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## The Koala who could

by Rachel Bright

Illustrated by Jim Field

**Grade level:** Pre K/K

**Genre:** Fiction

High in his tree, Kevin the koala feels safe and prefers everything to stay the same, while the busy world below seems overwhelming. When change comes, he must choose between staying comfortable or being brave.

*The Koala Who Could* by Rachel Bright, illustrated by Jim Field, is a charming rhyming story about courage and embracing new experiences.

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## Susan B. Anthony

by Deborah Hopkinson

Illustrated by Amy Bates

**Grade level:** 5th & 6th

**Genre:** Biography

Unlike most girls of her time, Susan B. Anthony received an education. And besides reading and writing, her education taught her that women should have the same rights as men, above all the right to vote. So from the time she was a young woman until the day she died, Susan worked very hard to change America and make her dream reality.

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## One Giant Leap

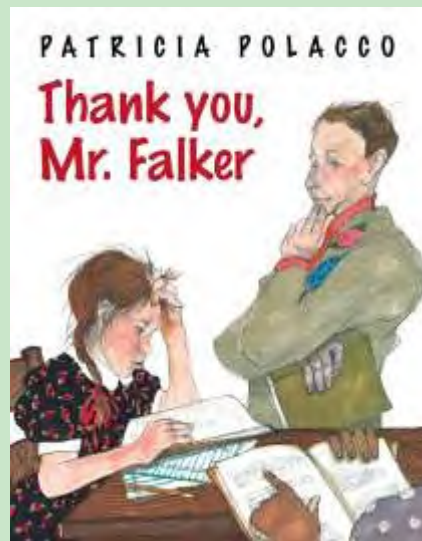
by Robert Burleigh

Illustrated by Mike Wimmer

**Grade level:** 5th & 6th

**Genre:** Biography

On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong became the first person to set foot on the moon, alongside Buzz Aldrin. *One Giant Leap* brings this historic moment to life by taking young readers on the incredible journey of Apollo 11—from liftoff to the moon landing. With vivid illustrations and engaging storytelling, the book captures the excitement, courage, and wonder of space exploration, while sharing an inspiring message that anything is possible with determination and curiosity..



## Thank you, Mr. Falker

Written and Illustrated by Patricia Polacco

**Grade level:** 3rd & 4th

**Genre:** Biography

*Thank You, Mr. Falker* shares the true story of Patricia Polacco as a young girl named Trisha who struggled with reading due to dyslexia. While she was talented in art, words on a page felt confusing and out of reach, leaving her frustrated and discouraged. Everything changed when a compassionate teacher, Mr. Falker, recognized her difficulties and gave her the support and confidence she needed to learn. This moving story highlights perseverance, self-belief, and the

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powerful difference a dedicated teacher can make in a child's life.

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## The Lion Inside

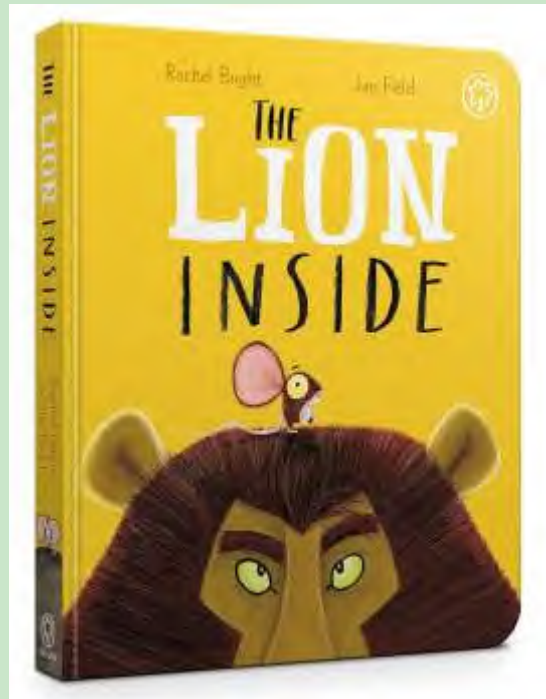
by Rachel Bright

Illustrated by Jim Field

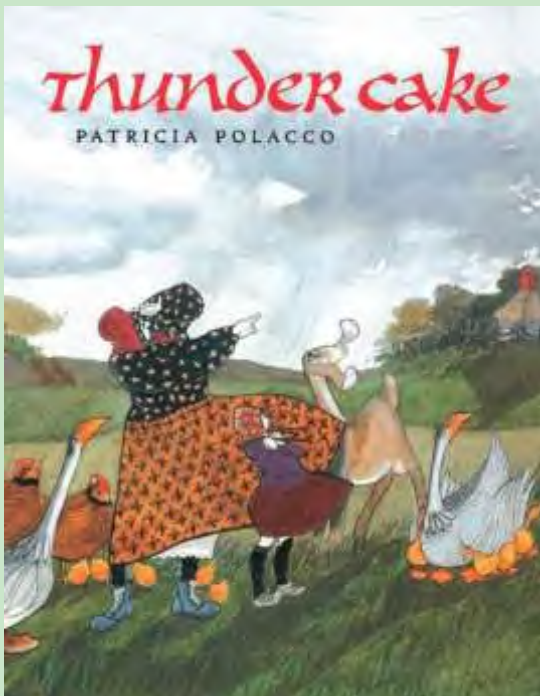
**Grade level:** Pre K/K

**Genre:** Fiction

*The Lion Inside* is a heartwarming story about confidence, self-esteem, and a shy little mouse who sets out on a journey to find his roar. Tired of being ignored, Mouse wishes he could be brave and powerful like Lion, but along the way he discovers that even the biggest and boldest can be afraid sometimes. Through this charming adventure, Mouse learns that courage comes in all sizes, and that even the smallest creatures can have the heart of a lion. This beloved modern classic delivers an uplifting message about bravery, friendship, and believing in yourself.



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## Thunder Cake

Written and Illustrated by Patricia Polacco

**Grade level:** 1st & 2nd

**Genre:** Picture Book

As thunder rumbles outside Grandma's old farmhouse, Grandma and her granddaughter rush to gather ingredients and bake a Thunder Cake before the storm arrives. Along the way, the approaching storm turns into an adventure, helping the little girl face her fear of thunder. Drawing from her childhood memories, Patricia Polacco weaves a heartwarming story about courage, family, and the comforting wisdom of a grandmother, while vivid illustrations bring the excitement and magic of a thunderstorm to life.



Thanks for reading

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