

## Dino Knights Teacher Notes

### **PDMU Activities:**

#### **Activity 1: Courage Class Discussion**

The teacher/children could read aloud the first 31 pages.

In the story Henry shows great courage (pages 17-31) in going after the Lord and Lady. Not only does he ride out on his dinosaur to save them from a T-Rex, he also shows courage in dealing with the situation when he gets to them. By asking the Dino Knights to put away their swords he gains the T-Rex's (Rex) trust and Rex proves to be a very useful friend. Henry had the courage to do the right thing even though it went against the others' wishes. The class could discuss some other examples of when they or someone they know had the courage to do the right thing. The class could discuss the importance of listening to their conscience and not following the crowd.

#### **Activity 2: Team work: 'The Flag Challenge' Thought Shower Activity**

Talk about what has happened so far and read pages 52-65 about the flag challenge to recap.

As part of their training for the tournament with Avingdon and his knights, Lord Harding gives the Dino Knights a challenge to capture a flag that sits on top of a two-storey tower. He does ask them to work as a team but the Knights choose to work individually.

- Iyla uses a tree trunk and a plank of wood to catapult herself up to the flag but is unsuccessful and has to be caught by Rex (pp. 54-56).
- Gally uses his Ornithomimus, Avin to fly and retrieve the flag (pp. 58-59).
- Torin replaces the flag by scrambling up the side of the tower himself (p. 59).
- Henry stands on his T-Rex, Rex's head and the Rex tosses him up in the air. Henry catches the flag and Rex catches him on the other side (pp. 60-63)

The class could work together or in groups and create a thought shower on how the Dino Knights could have worked as a team. What could each of them have done differently? How could they use their strengths as a team?

To finish, the class could relay their thought showers to the class and have a brief discussion about the importance of working as a team.

### **Activity 3: Aggression and Empathy- Discussion and Poster:**

The teacher could talk about Henry's bond with animals. He cares for them and aims to enhance their well-being. The animals then respond to this by wanting to help Henry and by doing what he says.

Read pages 27-28 and talk about how Henry notices the T-Rex's scars. Note the hostile reaction of the dinosaur towards the knights' aggression. Why? (Past experience, fear etc.) Discuss Henry's actions of asking the knights to put away their swords. Henry has shown empathy toward the dinosaur and the dinosaur becomes his trusted friend.

The teacher could then parallel animal behaviour with human behaviour. If someone or something acts aggressively to another, the other person or animal will normally act aggressively back. The class could think of a few of their own examples.

The class could then talk about how we should respond to aggression. I.e. count to 10, don't retaliate, go and tell an adult, walk away etc.

The teacher could highlight that aggression in people and animals can sometimes be a way of hiding their true feelings i.e. fear, sadness etc. and that retaliating only makes it worse. It is better (context depending) to be calm and empathise with the other person.

**Activity:** The class could create a poster in groups for a school display to remind them to be empathetic and to respond calmly to aggression.

## **Activity 4: Having the courage to do what is right: Discussion and Drama Activity**

(Read chapter 1)

The class could talk about how Henry, a stable boy, has not known anything else but the stables and the dinosaurs and has been kept in his place by Arthur the steward. When Henry learns that Arthur did not warn Lady and Lord Anwyn of the presence of a T-Rex, Henry's loyalty to his guardians and his courage sees him leave the safety of his stables and ride out on his dinosaur to warn them. The class could discuss Henry's reasoning behind his actions and what this tells us, the readers, about Henry.

The class could talk about some examples of showing courage and doing the right thing. The teacher could then split the class into groups of 4 and the children could choose (or be given) a vignette to act out. I.e. Having the courage to tell a teacher if you see someone in school being bullied. These could be rehearsed and shown to the class. The class could verbally peer mark each performance with two stars and a wish (providing two good things and one thing to improve on for next time).

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