



It takes courage and confidence to raise your voice. **By Mackenzie Carro**

Whether it's raising your hand in class, standing up for someone getting bullied, or disagreeing with people you love, speaking up isn't always easy. Look what happened to the poor Lord Chancellor in the play you just read. He was fired simply for voicing his opinion. Of course, in the end, the Emperor saw that the Lord Chancellor was right—and it was those who had remained silent who looked foolish.

Here are five ways you can find the confidence and courage to speak up.

1 Listen to the voice in your head.

We all have a little voice in our heads that sometimes speaks up and says, "Hey, this isn't right." You might hear it when you see a classmate being left out or a friend posting something hurtful on Instagram. That is the voice of your **conscience**—so listen to it!

2 Trust yourself.

If you have a particular skill or idea that will help improve a situation, trust that your input is valuable. If you're a time management whiz and the leader of your group project is struggling to get organized, offer to help. Your ideas could benefit everyone.

3 Enlist allies.

If you're unsure of yourself, first share your opinion or idea with a few people you trust. You'll feel more confident about what you have to say after talking it through with the people you're closest to.

4 Don't be afraid to be wrong.

Remember that it's OK to be wrong. If you think you have a solution to your town's littering problem, present it to your local representative. If your idea is rejected, so what? Find out why and use that information to come up with another, better solution.

5 Accept that your opinion won't always be welcome.

Not everyone is going to agree with you, but staying silent to avoid **confrontation** is not the solution. Change comes when people stand up for their beliefs, even when others disagree. Think about Martin Luther King Jr. What if he had stayed silent?

Writing Contest

Why do the characters in the play stay silent? What could have made the situation different? Answer this question in an essay. Use text evidence from the play and the informational text. Send your essay to Speak Up Contest. Five winners will get *Saving Wonder* by Mary Knight.

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