

ENCOURAGEMENT

OVERVIEW

lesson 8



BIG IDEA

Encouragement is lifting, supporting, and helping others through difficult circumstances. Encouragement can take the form of a kind word, practical action, a listening ear, a loving hug, or thoughtful advice.

KEY VERSES

I Thessalonians 5:11-14

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

MATERIALS LIST

- variety of small objects (rock, play dough, candy wrapper, unchewed gum, wet grape, sock, etc)
- paper bags
- blindfold
- copies of Braille Alphabet
- copies of Braille Alphabet without letters
- copies of bookmark template
- copies of coloring page





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LESSON STORY



OBJECT LESSON

Place a variety of objects with different textures (a rock, play dough, candy wrapper, unchewed gum, wet grape, sock, etc) into separate paper bags. Ask for volunteers to come up one at a time and without looking reach into the bag, describe what they are feeling and guess what the object is.

For added fun blindfold the volunteer and show the rest of the kids the object before the volunteer feels it.

LESSON SCRIPT

About 50 years ago, in Hong Kong, a baby was born. His name was Erik. When Erik was 4 his parents realized something was wrong with his eyes. The doctors did tests and said Erik had a rare disease that attacks the inside of the eye. Erik's sight slowly got worse.

Erik's parents were creative and thoughtful about encouraging their son to live life fully and not accept defeat. Erik loved to ride bikes and do tricks off ramps so his dad spray painted the edges of the ramps bright orange so that Erik could see them better. His parents encouraged him to play football and basketball and he enjoyed these activities until he totally lost his vision when he was 14.

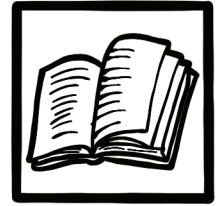
Erik's family got creative again and encouraged Erik to join the wrestling team since wrestling was a sport that relied more on movement and

feeling than on sight. Erik excelled in wrestling and became the high school team captain, he even competed in the Junior Olympics!

But then one day, during a wrestling tournament, Erik heard the terrible news that his mom had died in a car accident. Erik felt completely crushed and didn't know why he had to suffer the loss of his sight and his mother.

Erik's father continued to encourage his son to do hard things. He enrolled Erik in summer camp for blind kids. While there Erik was encouraged to use a cane to feel the sidewalk, play basketball with beeping basketball hoops, use braille tools in wood shop, and write computer programs.

During the last week of camp Erik was taught how rock climbing. He learned to feel the rock wall for hand and foot holds. He learned to use



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

special ropes and shoes. By the end of camp Erik was hooked on climbing.

Erik's father took him on hiking trips to Peru, Pakistan, Spain and Papua New Guinea. Soon Erik was dreaming of even bigger mountains. He became the first blind man to climb the tallest mountain in the world, Mount Everest.

Through these hard experiences Erik learned how to push himself beyond what people assumed he was capable of. He became well known for being a successful blind mountain climber. But Erik wasn't satisfied with summiting mountains only, he wanted to encourage other people to push beyond their fears and obstacles.

Erik worked with a man named Kyle who was born with no arms or legs. He encouraged Kyle to get creative and find ways to use the stumps of his arms and legs to climb. Kyle was able to summit Mount Kilimanjaro. Kyle's success encouraged Erik to try something even harder than mountain climbing, kayaking.

Kayaking was different than mountain climbing because the water is always moving. Erik had to learn to feel the movement of the water. It took him 8 years of hard training before he attempted to kayak the whole Grand Canyon. It took 20 days and he became the first blind man to kayak that river.

Today Erik has turned his knowledge and experience into an organization called No Barriers. He encourages people that "What's within you is stronger than what's in your way." He teaches people to attack their challenges head on, problem solve, become part of a team of encouragers and to serve others.

- What was it like to feel an object and guess what it was? Was your guess right?
- Do you know someone who is blind or deaf or disabled? How do they cope?
- Who were the main encouragers in Erik's life?
- How does Erik encourage others?
- Why is encouragement so powerful?
- What are some ways you can encourage people with words?
- What are some ways you can encourage people without using words?





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CRAFT

DESCRIPTION

Learn a little bit of Braille by making bookmarks with the kids written in Braille using sequins..

PREPARATION

- Print Braille bookmark templates on cardstock
- Cut ribbon. 12 inches per bookmark
- Print copies of “Braille Alphabet” sheets

DIRECTIONS

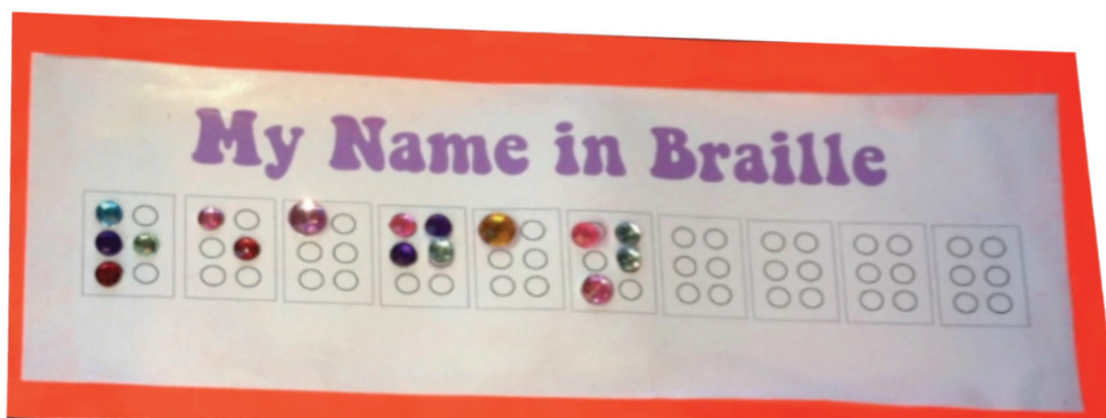
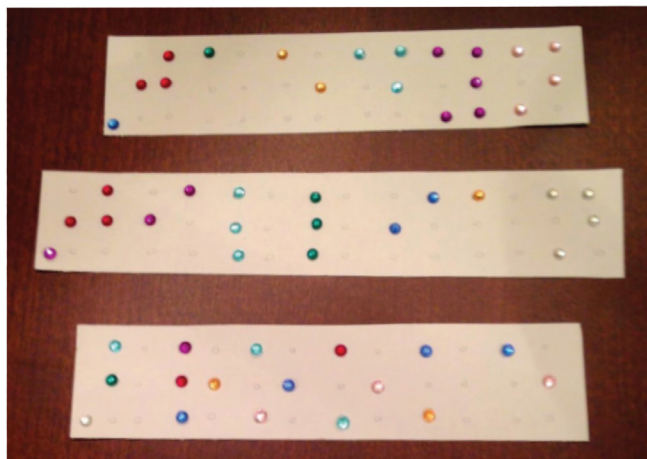
1. Using the “Braille Alphabet” sheets kids figure out how to make the letters that spell their names.
2. Reproduce the letters on the book mark template.
3. Glue letters in place.
4. Punch a hole in the top center.
5. Tie a ribbon through the hole.

VARIATION 1

Use self adhesive rhinestone stick on gems. 1500 5mm gems can be found inexpensively on Amazon.

VARIATION 2

Punch holes in colored cardstock or cereal cardboard. Glue in place to create Braille letters.





DESCRIPTION

Play an alphabet building relay race with Braille alphabet cards.

PREPARATION

- Print copies of the “Braille Alphabet” and “Braille Alphabet without letters” on cardstock. Make one copy per team.
- Cut out the “Braille Alphabet without letters” cards keeping the sets separate.
- Optional: Glue hole punched circles onto the black dots of each “Braille Alphabet without letters” card. Black cardstock or cereal box cardboard would work best. Or use self adhesive rhinestone stick on gems.

DIRECTIONS

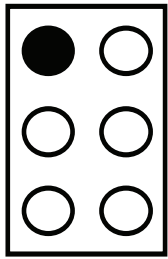
1. Divide kids into teams.
2. Give each team a copy of the “Braille Alphabet” page.
3. At the other end of the play area place a containers with the “Braille Alphabet without letters” cards. One complete alphabet per team.
4. Teams lineup.
5. The first person in each team studies the Braille “A” shape and runs to their container to find the matching letter.
6. Player runs back and tags the next team member.
7. The first team to collect all their letters and place them in order wins!

VARIATION

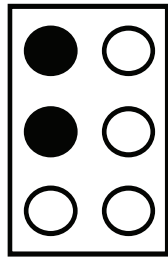
Place the “Braille Alphabet without letters” cards in paper bags. Kids may not look at the letters but must find them by feel. Use fewer letters, perhaps limiting the letters to the number of players per team.



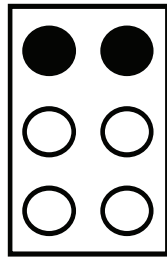
Braille Alphabet



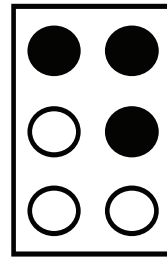
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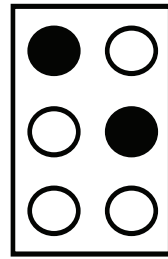
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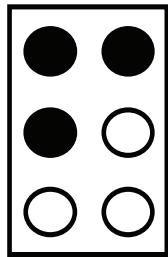
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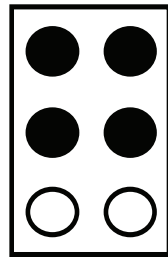
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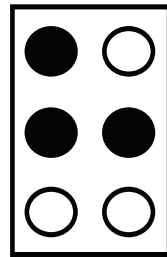
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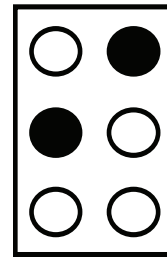
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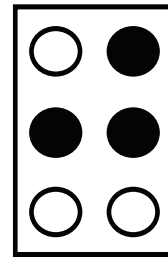
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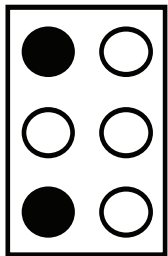
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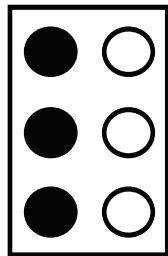
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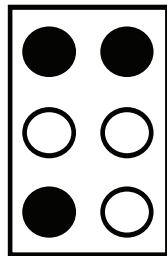
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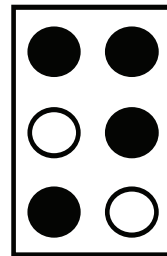
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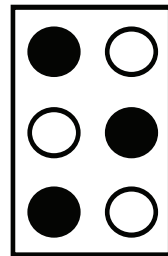
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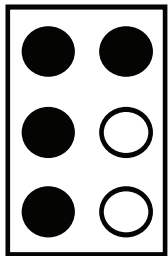
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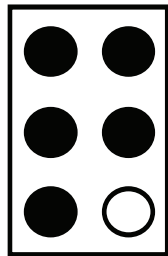
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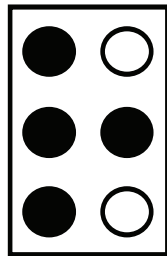
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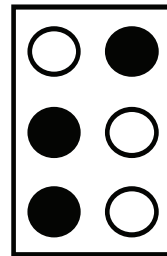
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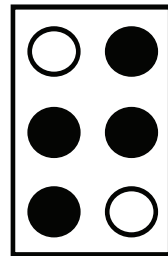
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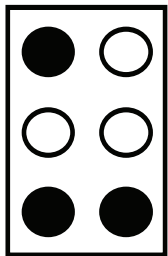
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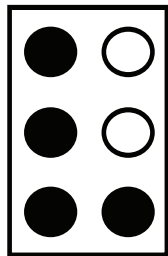
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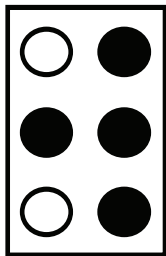
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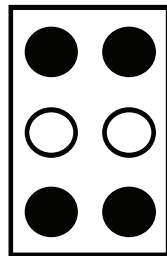
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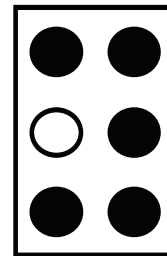
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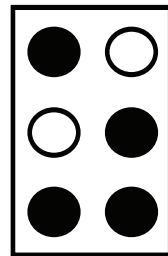
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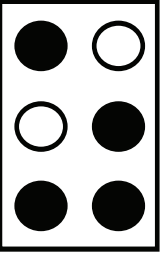
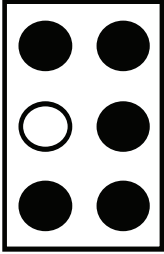
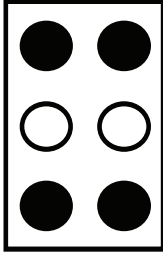
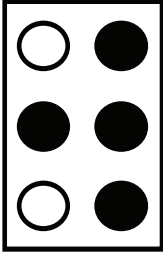
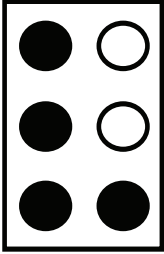
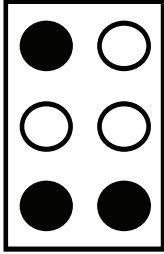
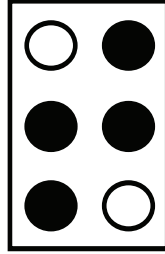
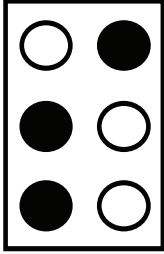
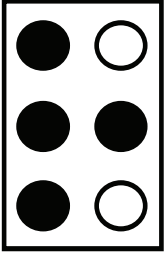
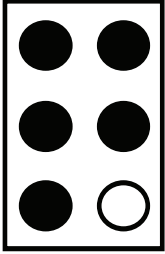
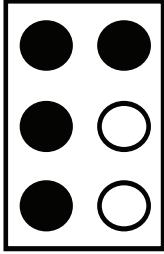
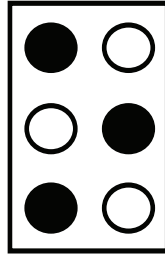
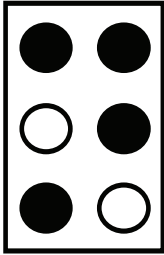
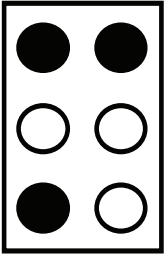
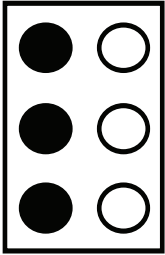
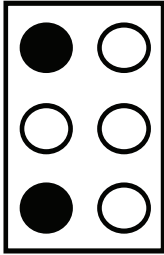
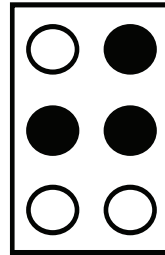
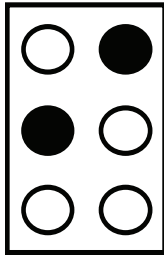
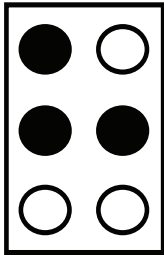
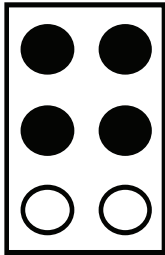
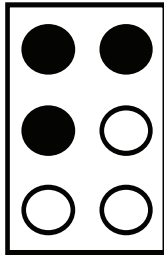
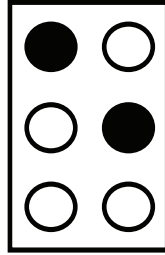
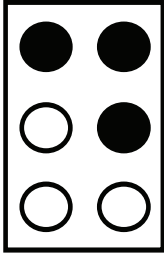
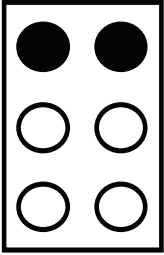
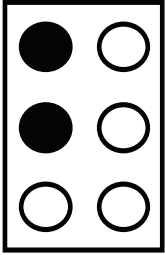
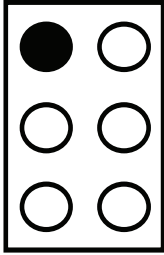
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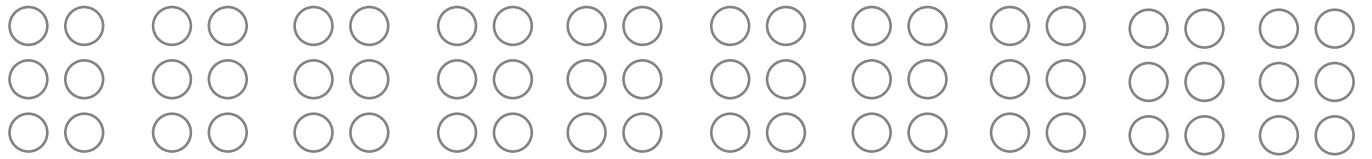
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Braille Alphabet

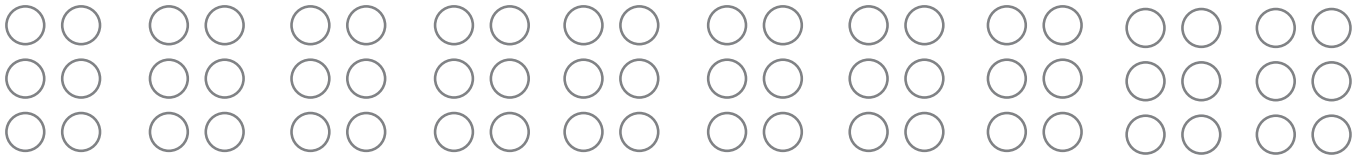
Without Letters



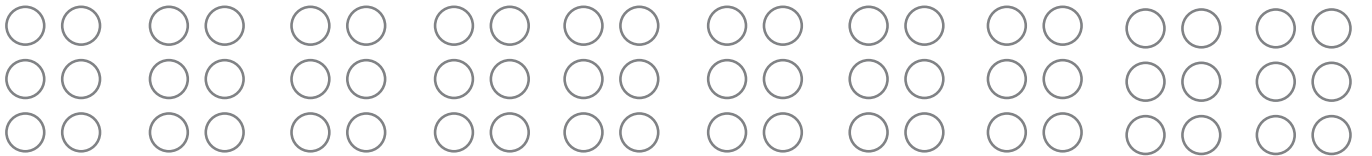
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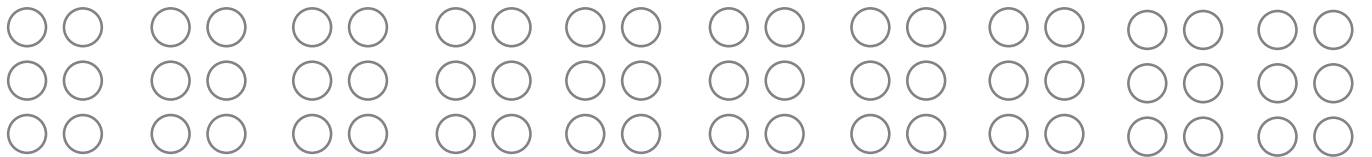
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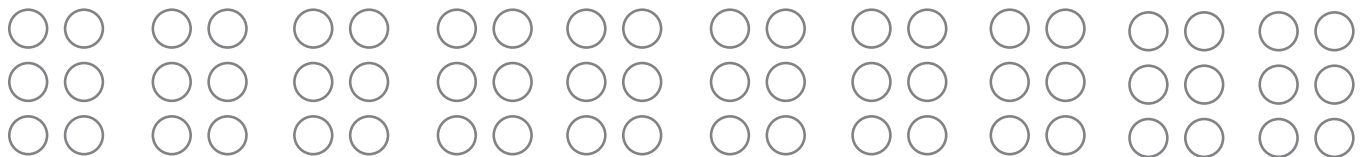
My Name in Braille



My Name in Braille



My Name in Braille



My Name in Braille

