

call it courage study guide

call it courage study guide provides a thorough exploration of Armstrong Sperry's classic novel, designed to enhance comprehension and critical thinking for students and educators alike. This study guide covers the essential themes, character analysis, plot overview, and historical context of the book, ensuring a well-rounded understanding of the story. It emphasizes the novel's exploration of courage, self-discovery, and resilience, which are pivotal for academic discussions and literary analysis. Additionally, this guide offers helpful summaries, discussion questions, and vocabulary insights tailored to support classroom learning and individual study. By integrating literary devices and thematic elements, the guide aims to deepen readers' appreciation of Sperry's work. The following sections will systematically break down the novel's components, providing structured content for a comprehensive study experience.

- Plot Summary and Overview
- Main Characters and Character Development
- Themes and Motifs
- Historical and Cultural Context
- Literary Devices and Style
- Discussion Questions and Essay Topics
- Vocabulary and Language

Plot Summary and Overview

The plot summary in this [call it courage study guide](#) outlines the journey of Mafatu, a young boy who struggles with fear and the desire to prove his bravery. Set in the South Pacific, the story chronicles Mafatu's quest to overcome his fears and earn respect among his tribe. After being mocked as a coward, Mafatu decides to face the ocean alone, embarking on a voyage that tests his courage and survival skills. The narrative follows his challenges with nature, including storms, wild animals, and isolation, which ultimately forge his transformation into a courageous individual. This section of the guide breaks down the story into manageable chapters, offering concise summaries that highlight key events and turning points.

Chapter-by-Chapter Breakdown

Each chapter summary provides detailed insights into Mafatu's development and the obstacles he faces. From his initial decision to leave home to his eventual return as a hero, the guide emphasizes the narrative progression and important moments that shape the protagonist's character.

- Introduction to Mafatu's fear and motivation
- Preparation and departure from the village
- Encounters with nature and survival challenges
- Moments of self-reflection and growth
- Return to the tribe and acceptance

Main Characters and Character Development

Understanding the characters in *Call It Courage* study guide is essential for analyzing the story's message on bravery and maturity. Mafatu is the central figure whose transformation drives the narrative. Initially portrayed as fearful and uncertain, his journey reveals layers of determination and strength. The study guide also examines secondary characters such as Mafatu's father and the island community, who influence his motivations and actions. This section highlights the complexity of characters and their roles in reinforcing the novel's themes.

Mafatu's Character Arc

Mafatu's growth from a frightened boy to a confident young man is the core focus. The guide explores his internal conflicts, fears, and the milestones that mark his progression toward courage. It also considers how his interactions with nature serve as metaphors for his personal battles.

Supporting Characters

Other characters, including family members and tribal figures, provide context for Mafatu's social environment. Their expectations and reactions underscore the cultural significance of bravery within the community, adding depth to the protagonist's quest.

Themes and Motifs

The *Call It Courage* study guide delves into the major themes and motifs that Armstrong Sperry weaves throughout the novel. Central themes include courage, fear, self-reliance, and the relationship between humans and nature. The guide explains how these themes are developed through Mafatu's experiences and the narrative structure. Motifs such as the ocean, animals, and isolation are analyzed for their symbolic meanings and their contribution to the story's emotional impact.

Courage and Fear

The exploration of courage versus fear is foundational to the novel's message. Mafatu's struggle to overcome his fears reflects a universal human experience. This section discusses how the author portrays courage not as the absence of fear but as the ability to confront and manage it.

Man and Nature

The relationship between humans and the natural world is a recurring motif. The guide examines how nature functions both as an adversary and a teacher in Mafatu's journey, highlighting themes of survival, respect, and harmony with the environment.

Self-Discovery and Growth

Mafatu's voyage is also a metaphor for self-discovery. The guide elaborates on how his isolation and challenges lead to personal growth, maturity, and a broader understanding of himself and his place in the world.

Historical and Cultural Context

A comprehensive call it courage study guide includes an exploration of the historical and cultural backdrop of the novel. Set in the Polynesian islands, the story reflects indigenous cultures and traditions of the South Pacific. This section discusses the significance of the island setting, tribal customs, and the portrayal of Polynesian life during the early 20th century. Understanding this context enriches the reader's appreciation of the narrative's authenticity and depth.

Polynesian Culture

The guide highlights key aspects of Polynesian culture as depicted in the novel, including community

life, traditional beliefs, and the importance of the ocean. It explains how these elements shape the characters' actions and societal expectations.

Historical Background

The time period in which *Call It Courage* is set influences the story's themes and conflicts. The guide provides insights into the historical setting, including the significance of seafaring and survival skills in island life.

Literary Devices and Style

This section of the *call it courage study guide* analyzes Armstrong Sperry's use of literary devices and narrative style. The author's descriptive language, symbolism, and use of third-person limited point of view create an immersive reading experience. The guide discusses how these techniques enhance the storytelling and reinforce the novel's central themes.

Symbolism

Symbolism plays a crucial role, with elements such as the sea symbolizing both danger and opportunity. The guide identifies key symbols and interprets their significance within the context of Mafatu's journey.

Language and Imagery

Sperry's vivid descriptions of nature and the island environment contribute to the novel's atmosphere. The guide examines examples of imagery that evoke sensory experiences and emotional responses.

Narrative Perspective

The third-person limited point of view allows readers to closely follow Mafatu's thoughts and feelings. This narrative choice is analyzed in terms of its effectiveness in conveying the protagonist's internal struggle.

Discussion Questions and Essay Topics

The study guide offers a variety of discussion questions and essay prompts designed to provoke critical thinking and deeper analysis of *Call It Courage*. These questions cover themes, character motivations, and literary techniques, encouraging engagement with the text.

- How does Mafatu's fear shape his identity at the beginning of the novel?
- In what ways does the ocean represent both a challenge and a teacher?
- Discuss how the theme of courage is developed through Mafatu's experiences.
- Analyze the role of Polynesian culture in shaping the story's setting and conflicts.
- Examine the use of symbolism in the novel and its impact on the reader's understanding.

Vocabulary and Language

The *Call It Courage* study guide includes a focus on key vocabulary and language used throughout the novel. Understanding specific terms related to the setting, cultural references, and descriptive language enhances comprehension. This section provides definitions and explanations of challenging words and phrases that appear in the text.

Key Vocabulary

Important terms related to seafaring, island geography, and cultural practices are highlighted. The guide explains these words to support students' reading fluency and contextual understanding.

Language Tips for Readers

The guide offers strategies for interpreting figurative language and complex descriptions, helping readers to appreciate the author's stylistic choices and narrative depth.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of 'Call It Courage'?

The main theme of 'Call It Courage' is overcoming fear and gaining courage through personal growth and self-discovery.

Who is the protagonist of 'Call It Courage' and what challenge does he face?

The protagonist is Mafatu, a young Polynesian boy who fears the sea. He faces the challenge of conquering his fear by venturing out alone into the ocean.

How does Mafatu's journey in 'Call It Courage' symbolize his inner transformation?

Mafatu's journey represents his transition from fear and insecurity to bravery and independence as he learns to survive and thrive in the wild.

What role does the setting play in the story 'Call It Courage'?

The setting, a Polynesian island and the surrounding ocean, is crucial as it provides both the physical and symbolic challenges Mafatu must overcome.

How can teachers use the 'Call It Courage' study guide to enhance student understanding?

Teachers can use the study guide to facilitate discussions on themes, character development, and literary elements, as well as to provide comprehension questions and activities.

What are some key literary devices found in 'Call It Courage'?

Key literary devices include symbolism, imagery, and personification, which help convey Mafatu's emotions and the story's themes.

How does Mafatu's relationship with nature evolve throughout 'Call It Courage'?

Initially fearful and distrustful of the sea, Mafatu grows to respect and harmonize with nature, learning survival skills and appreciating its power.

What lessons can readers learn from 'Call It Courage'?

Readers learn about the importance of facing fears, self-reliance, perseverance, and the courage to grow beyond limitations.

Additional Resources

1. *Call It Courage: The Story of Mafatu* by Armstrong Sperry

This is the original novel that follows Mafatu, a young Polynesian boy who overcomes his fear of the sea to prove his courage to his tribe. The story explores themes of bravery, self-discovery, and

resilience. It's a classic coming-of-age tale set against the backdrop of the South Pacific islands.

2. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* by Joseph Campbell

This influential work delves into the common patterns found in heroic tales across cultures. It provides insight into the "hero's journey," a narrative framework that can deepen understanding of Mafatu's adventure in *Call It Courage*. Readers can explore mythological archetypes and the universal quest for identity and courage.

3. *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell

This novel tells the story of a young Native American girl who survives alone on an island off the California coast. Similar to *Call It Courage*, it highlights themes of survival, bravery, and personal growth. The protagonist's journey resonates with the challenges Mafatu faces in mastering his fears.

4. *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls

A touching story about a boy and his two hunting dogs, this book explores themes of determination, courage, and coming of age. Like *Call It Courage*, it emphasizes the importance of facing adversity and growing stronger through personal trials. It's a heartfelt tale that complements the emotional depth of Mafatu's story.

5. *The Open Boat and Other Stories* by Stephen Crane

This collection includes stories about human endurance and man's struggle against nature. The title story, based on Crane's real-life shipwreck experience, parallels the themes of bravery and survival found in *Call It Courage*. Readers can appreciate the realistic portrayal of courage under extreme conditions.

6. *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen

A modern survival story about a boy stranded in the Canadian wilderness, *Hatchet* explores themes of self-reliance and courage akin to those in *Call It Courage*. The protagonist's growth and resilience in the face of nature's challenges provide an engaging comparison to Mafatu's journey. It's a compelling read for understanding the development of inner strength.

7. *The Courage of Sarah Noble* by Alice Dalgliesh

This historical novel centers on Sarah Noble, a young girl who bravely faces the challenges of colonial life in early America. The book shares themes of bravery and perseverance that mirror those in *Call It Courage*. It offers a different cultural perspective on the concept of courage and maturity.

8. *The Sign of the Beaver* by Elizabeth George Speare

This story involves a young boy learning to survive in the wilderness with the help of a Native American friend. Themes of friendship, courage, and cultural understanding align with Mafatu's experiences in *Call It Courage*. It highlights the importance of trust and courage in overcoming fear.

9. *My Side of the Mountain* by Jean Craighead George

A tale of a boy who leaves home to live in the Catskill Mountains, learning to survive independently. The book explores themes of courage, self-sufficiency, and personal growth much like *Call It Courage*. It provides readers with another perspective on the journey toward self-discovery through nature.

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