



## OCCUPY EVERYTHING-WITH COURAGE

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It all began with Occupy Wall Street and Occupy San Francisco. Both were protest movements mounted last September against social and economic disparities. Then, many Occupy movements were mounted worldwide. All of them aimed to “....protest corporate influence on democracy, address a growing disparity in wealth, and the absence of legal repercussions behind the recent global financial crisis.” (Wikipedia). My initial reaction was disgust. The world has been in enough pandemonium as it is, and people trying to “occupy everything” will just be adding to all the confusion. And then again, their objective got me thinking: Isn’t this what everyone wants? Social equality? Economic democracy? Weren’t these protesters clamoring for something that nobody, till that time, has had the courage to speak out for?

The planet has undoubtedly been run by the rich since time immemorial. The haves and have nots have never been more sharply delineated than in the present time. The middle class, which have been getting their feet wet doing the nitty-gritty, have been stuck in the middle, eking out a daily living. The lower classes have lost all hope of ever escaping from their lot. The upper class, despite making up the least composite group, may occasionally suffer setbacks, but still have their million-dollar mansions and their high-class yachts and their really fast cars. And no one has been courageous enough to protest all the apparent disproportions till now.

Courage to stand up for what you believe in is probably the greatest display of braveness one can show. In a world where the moneyed remain moneyed and the poor remain so, the courage to protest the status quo can be difficult to summon. And yet, here we are, at the crossroads of a global financial crisis where even the world’s most powerful nation has been severely affected. We can only sit in awe as these protests are mounted. Although they have seemingly died down, let us not forget the very essence of their being mounted---to uphold equality. We need not be heroes to sympathize with their efforts.

In our own little ways, let us be courageous heroes. Let us be considerate about how we use our resources, for there may not be enough left for the next generations to come. Let us be orderly citizens of our country, for we have been blest with a single one. Let us have understanding for one another, for such will promote peace. Let us be responsible in our roles, for the roles that we play have been gifted to us by a Higher Power. Let us be ablaze with passion for what we do everyday, for that brings us ever closer to our personal goals. Let us be generous in time, talent and treasure, for that fosters good relationships that are meant to last. Let us remain ever-loving, for that makes us a genuine treasure to everyone we know and love. Now, your homework is to string together the first letters of those qualities mentioned in the previous paragraph. See what you come up with.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Do some research on the Occupy Movement. Be able to talk about what you’ve read on it in class.
2. Do you think that the world has become only a place for the rich? Share your thoughts and elaborate on them.
3. Will the poor ever rise up from their poverty? Do you think the Occupy Movement has been effective in making governments see the plight of the poor?
4. Why is courage needed to mount a protest as far-reaching as the Occupy Movement? Do you think that those who organize such movements are brave enough to sustain those protests?
5. Take the letters from the word COURAGE and be able to come up with your own set of adjectives/nouns/adverbs for each letter. Explain your word choices in detail.