

# HOW TO SPEAK UP

## Reporting by Adee Braun

Whether it's standing up for someone getting bullied or disagreeing with people you love, speaking up can be hard. But it can also be important!

We talked to Amber Cabral, an author and speaker who helps companies create fair and inclusive workplaces, about how you can find the confidence and courage to speak up.



### 1 Accept your emotions.

It's perfectly normal to experience nervousness or hesitation before speaking up. But those feelings, Cabral says, don't necessarily mean that it's dangerous or wrong to speak up. They just mean you're having an intense experience.

### 2 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.

### 3 Decide if you're the right person.

Sometimes you may not be the best person to speak up about something, or it may not be safe for you to do so. If that's the case, find someone you trust who might be better suited to speak up.

### 4 Focus on the outcome.

"Remind yourself that speaking up is one of the ways we change the world," Cabral says. If you stay silent about a problem, you have to continue to deal with it. For example, if you're upset that someone is saying your name wrong but you never tell them, they never get the chance to fix their mistake.

### 5 Don't be afraid to be wrong.

Remember that it's OK to be wrong. "Being open to feedback gives you an opportunity to grow," says Cabral. 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.

#### Writing Prompt

Write a scene in which one of the Royal Dressers admits to a friend that they cannot see the clothes the tailors are working on. The Royal Dresser should explain why they are afraid to speak up, and the friend should try to persuade the Royal Dresser to do so anyway, using ideas from "How to Speak Up."

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