

Ground Rules

Emphasizing the Elementary Years

What They Are
Why We Use Them
What Are They Good For
Establishing Ground Rules



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What Are Ground Rules?

Here Is One Definition

Ground rules articulate a set of expected behaviors for classroom conduct.

They can be set by the instructor or created by the students.

Eberly Center. CMU

<http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/solveproblem/srat-dontparticipate/groundrules.pdf>

A Second Definition

Ground rules are boundaries and rules to help create suitable conditions within which learners (and yourself) can safely work and learn. If they are not set, problems may occur which could disrupt the session.

Ann Gravells

www.anngravells.co.uk

Why Have Ground Rules?

- Ground rules hold students accountable for their behavior.
- They can address or prevent issues of incivility.
- Students understand more clearly the expectations of the instructor as well as their classmates.
- Students hold each other accountable in a variety of learning scenarios.
- When the children follow good ground rules, they are more successful learners

Offering Ground Rules

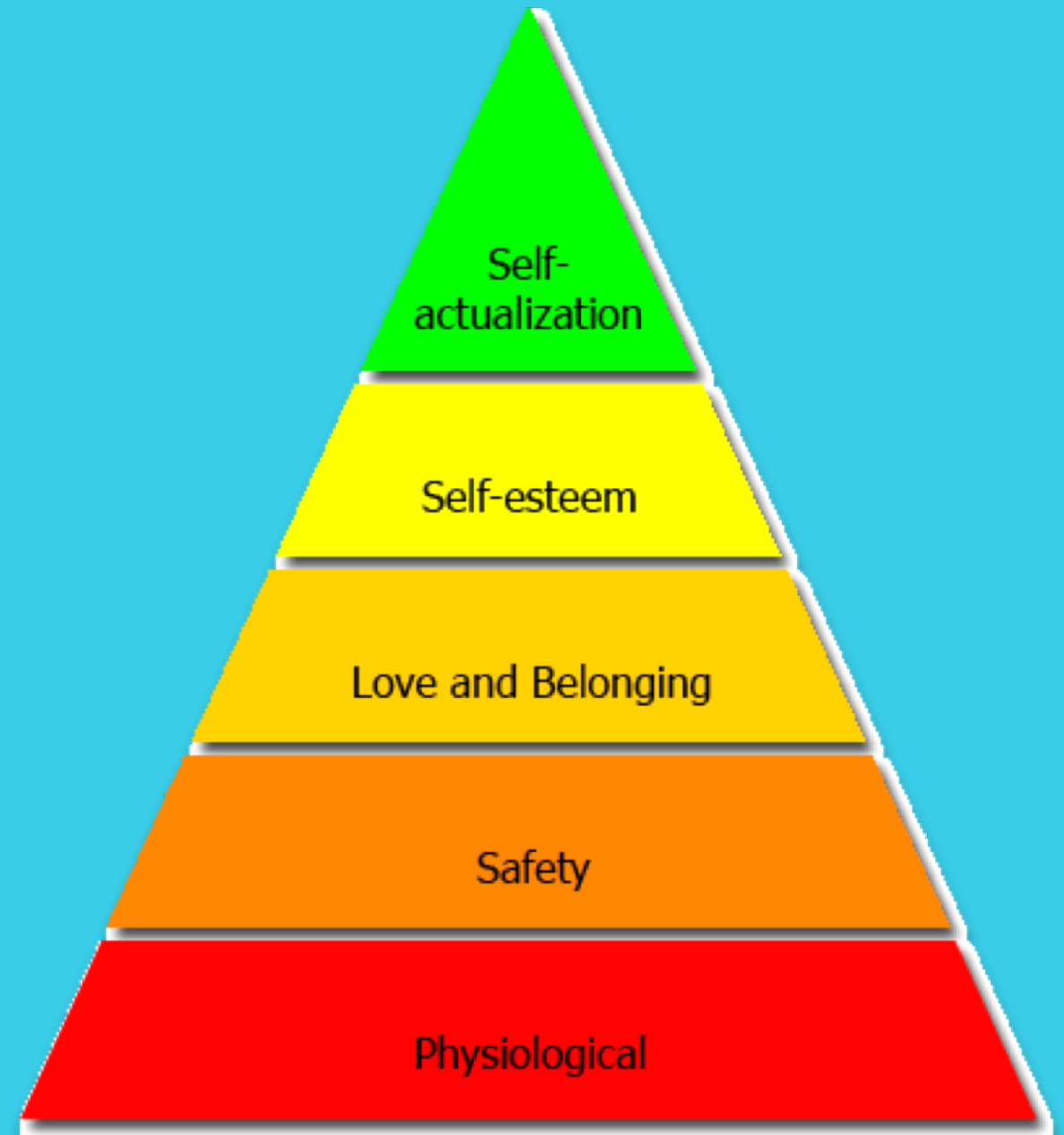
- Lessons should be given on a daily basis on the Ground Rules for the first days or weeks of school.
- This can be done using presentation, brainstorming, role playing, role modeling and discussion.
- Good Ground Rules become part of each child's rights to be safe, comfortable, and respected. They also support freedom of movement, concentration, attention, motivation and choice in the classroom.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Ground Rules address human needs, as identified by Abraham Maslow.

Ground Rules contribute especially to meeting needs of:

- Safety
- Belonging
- Self-esteem



Always Focus on Values over Rules

Good Ground Rules are values based: (essential for creativity)

- Rules are important, "but when you have rules, kids are much more likely to internalize them when you explain the why behind them." They must exemplify values.
- Children are far more likely to develop principles for themselves when you tie rules to reason.

(Adam Grant at Aspen Ideas Festival, Author of *Originals*).

- They are non-negotiable, because they articulate the values upon which they are based.

Why Values Based?

With other rules that are NOT based on values:

- If kids simply follow rules, they are acting basically to please adults - this is not teaching them to think.
- If they don't follow rules, they rebel. We aren't interested in simply encouraging rebellion. We do want them to be creative, not because they are rebelling against authority, but because they have genuine interest.

With values-based ruled, kids are much more likely to think for themselves, and ultimately challenge rules in general.



How many Ground Rules should we have?

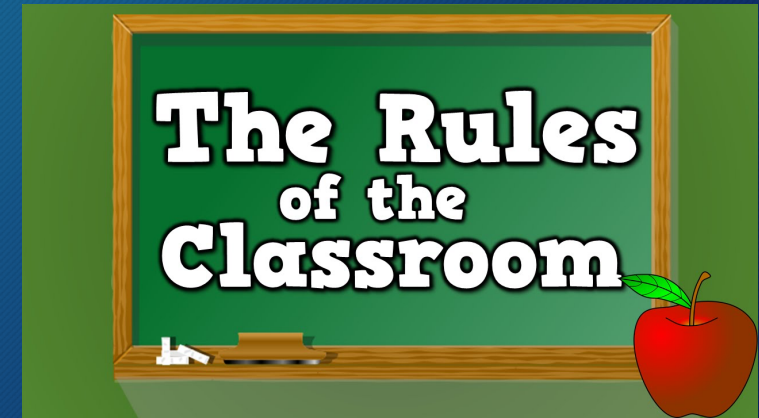
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Typical children (research based) state that they have had on average six rules growing up.

The most creative adults indicate that they had, on average, only one rule.

However, they are all more likely to internalize rules when they see the principle behind them.

I suggest only three ground rules.



Stats from Adam Grant

Ground Rule Guidelines

1.

These guidelines apply to all rules.

- Positive (very important)
- Clear
- Understandable
- Few
- Broad

2.

3.



Avoid

- Negative rules
- Too many rules
- Too much detail



Suggested Ground Rules

Respect

- Respect Yourself
- Respect Others
- Respect the Environment and Materials

Present The Three Respects

Respect means: esteem, regard, admiration, courtesy, a positive opinion, to treat well, caring, to recognize dignity

- Present one respect
- Brainstorm
- Begin a butcher's paper list
- Role Play
- Use the Sandwich Method



RESPECT YOURSELF

Brainstorm: What does self-respect look like?

- Forgive yourself for your mistakes
- Handle mistakes and failures in a positive way
- Be honest, always tell the truth
- Take good care of your body.
- Avoid comparing yourself to others.
- Speak up
- Keep your promises
- Be prepared for lessons
- Arrive on time
- Stay awake and alert
- Don't criticize yourself
- Be grateful
- Say what you like about yourself
- Be kind to other people.
- Concentrate
- Speak positively about yourself.
- Take responsibility

Respect others

- Listen to others when they speak.
- Be sensitive to other people's feelings
- Don't mock or tease people
- Try to learn something from the other person.
- Keep your promises
- Stay positive
- Work on Grace and courtesy
- Be calm
- Be quiet in the classroom and halls
- Ask people how you can help
- Smile
- Follow directions in the classroom
- Show gratitude
- Compliment others
- Try to be likable
- Walk quietly
- Speak in a low voice
- Offer help to other people
- Be Kind
- Help other people
- Only say good things about others
- Always say please, thank you and other courteous things
- Always walk without running inside
- Ask permission before working with someone else
- Pay attention to other people's feelings

Respect the Environment and Materials

- Carry the materials carefully
- Handle all materials with care
- Pick up anything dropped on the floor
- Clean off tables and desks
- Only use materials after they have been presented to you
- Call the materials by name
- Only wear inside clothing



- Always put materials away when an activity is finished.
- Always WALK in the classroom.
- Push in your chair whenever you leave your table (before picking up your materials).
- Help keep the classroom clean
- Report any missing or broken materials
- Always clean up after yourself

There may still be Some Conflict

Use my Four Step Plan for Conflict Resolution

1. Ignore it
2. Use an “I message” to tell them to stop
3. Leave
4. Speak with an adult

Ignore it

- Calm Down - walk away, count to ten, etc.
- Let it be
- Consider if it really is a problem
- If so, is it really your problem?
- Think of using the Beatles *Let It Be*



Tell Them to Stop

The I Message

- Children need to learn the pattern, “When you _____, I feel _____, because _____, so what I would like is _____.”
- This could be followed by a meeting at the Peace Table
- If children want to meet at the Peace Table for conflict resolution, first one needs to make an I-statement before the meeting.
- Display the I-message pattern in the class room and practice it as a Grace and Courtesy exercise.
- Begin with positive, fun statements, such as “When you smile, I feel happy, because it makes me smile too, so what I would like is for you to keep on smiling.”
- Next, practice with statements containing more difficult emotions, working with examples removed from direct personal experience. For example, we might use a situation from a book we are reading: “In Charlotte’s Web, when Wilbur heard he would get eaten, he felt scared, because he didn’t want to die, so what he would like is to be allowed to keep living.”

Feelings

- Make a list of words, to expand vocabulary for feelings. Display this list in the room so that children may look at it when composing I-statements. Note that *bad, good, fine, OK*, aren't feelings.
- **Happy Feelings:** glad pleased cheerful calm comfortable cozy safe relaxed confident peaceful silly. happy proud excited thankful loved blissful grateful satisfied terrific jubilant
- **Sad or Angry Feelings:** unhappy disappointed hurt sorry ashamed lonely discouraged awful unhappy disappointed hurt sorry ashamed lonely discouraged awful disgusted ticked off mad angry

Move Away

- Sometimes a person will not stop the annoying or disturbing behavior
- Moving away isolates the child who was annoying you
- Eventually she or he will have no one sitting near him or her.

Speak to an Adult

- Sometimes, someone may follow you across the room. Then you need to speak to an adult.
- This is not “tattling”
- It is reporting, and three steps have already been tried.



Recognize the person, not the behavior

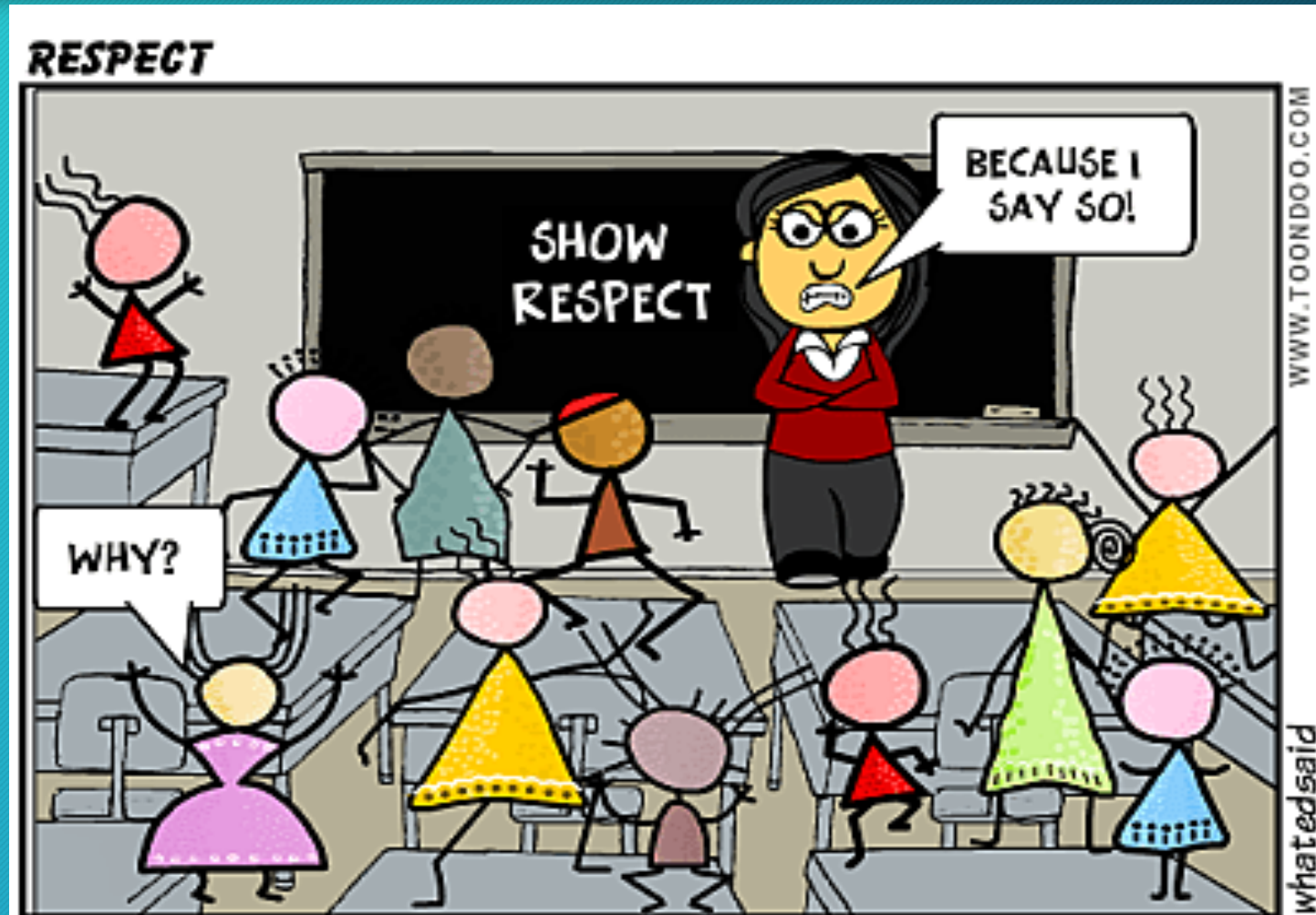
In the Domain of Character

- Not, “That was really helpful” → • But, “You are a helper.”
- Not, “Thank you for giving” → • But, “Thank you for being a giver.”
- Not, “You helped settle that argument.” → • But, “You are a peacemaker.”

This helps children to internalize values as a part of their identity. It becomes fundamental to who they are, and they are more likely to repeat it.

Adam Grant: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDID58CmQGo>

Talk the Talk - Walk the walk



Be a Respector



Are There Any Other Questions?



Thank You!

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Let's Keep in Touch!