



California Partnerships in Character Education

“Building Communities and Schools of Character”

A collaborative effort between the California Department of Education, Sacramento County Office of Education, the Center for Youth Citizenship and ten (10) K-8 California public schools.

Kids Law Lessons – GRADE 2

People Who Make a Difference

- **Overview**
- **Coordination with Instructional Materials**
- **Framework Connections**
- **Selected Topic(s):**

Our Parents, Grandparents and Ancestors from Long Ago

Focus Lesson: *"The Tablecloth:" A Jewish Folk tale*

Extension Lesson(s):

1. *Rights in Conflict*
2. *Good Rules and Laws*

- **Additional Activities**

1. *Defining Vandalism*
2. *Buckle Games*

- **Resources**

Overview

Children in the second grade are ready to learn more about the people who make a difference in their lives. During this year, they will be exploring the many ways that their parents, grandparents and ancestors have helped to shape their lives. Examining familiar relationships allows students to examine the importance of caring, trustworthiness, responsibility and respect. At the same time, they should be developing a beginning "sense of history" as they collect family stories and traditions.

Throughout the first grade curriculum, the students were introduced to problem-solving strategies. In their exploration of different cultural traditions, the students will begin to see that most groups face similar everyday situations and problems. One of the most important of these commonalities is an acceptable means for resolving conflicts and disputes. The Lessons and Activities in this unit will deepen your students' appreciation of the need for rules (laws) and peaceful means of resolving conflicts.

Coordination with Instructional Materials

The lessons and activities in this unit coordinate well with the second grade social studies textbook, *Some People I Know*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin). The Focus Lesson fits quite naturally with Unit 2, "Knowing Your Family," in which students learn about ancestors, traditions and working together. The Extension Lessons expand on the discussion of citizenship begun in Unit 3, "Living in Our Country." You might use the Activities with Unit 4, "People Who Have Made a Difference," to help students see how their own actions and decisions can and do "make a difference."

Framework Connections

The unit supports the goals and curriculum strands of the *History-Social Science Framework* while connecting to the grade two topic **People Who Make A Difference** (see pages 37-40 of the *History-Social Science Framework*).

Topic Connections

- Our Parents, Grandparents and Ancestors from Long Ago
- People from Many Cultures, Now and Long Ago

Goals and Curriculum Strand Connections

The chart below lists goals and curriculum strands from the Framework. The phrases printed larger and in **bold** type are History-Social Science Goals and Curriculum Strands that are addressed in the lessons and activities for the second grade. Students will use literature, specifically myth and folklore, to address history from a multicultural perspective. Through this experience, students will develop historical empathy and recognize history as a common memory. Qualities important to citizens in a democracy

will be discussed, and students will get a chance to work on social skills as they work as a group to define and clarify problems, judge information, solve problems and draw conclusions.

<i>Knowledge & Cultural Understanding</i>	<i>Democratic Understanding & Civic Values</i>	<i>Skill Attainment & Social Participation</i>
Historical Literacy	National Identity	Basic Study Skills
Ethical Literacy	Constitutional Heritage	Critical Thinking Skills
Cultural Literacy	Civic Values, Rights and Responsibilities	Participation Skills
Geographic Literacy		
Economic Literacy		
Sociopolitical Literacy		

***Selected Topic(s): Our Parents, Grandparents
And Ancestors from Long Ago***

Focus Lesson: *"The Tablecloth:" A Jewish Folk tale*

BACKGROUND

In the Jewish Folk tale "The Tablecloth," (*My Grandmother's Stories* by Adele Giras) a rabbi is asked to decide who truly owns a very beautiful and expensive tablecloth after it is claimed by two women. This story provides a springboard for a broader discussion of different traditions of justice, fairness and conflict resolution.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand that different traditions of law, justice and conflict resolution have been created by various cultures based on their needs and beliefs.
2. To appreciate the need in all cultures to deal with inappropriate behavior in a manner that is regarded as fair and just.
3. To compare the students' lives today with the traditions and values of the past.

MATERIALS

- Copy of *My Grandmother's Stories* by Adele Giras (*Knopf, 1990*)
- Chalkboard and chalk
- White tablecloth

TIME NEEDED

Approximately 1½ hours.

PROCEDURE

Into

Before reading the story, ask the students whether they have ever gotten into an argument with a friend, brother or sister over ownership of a toy or items of clothing? If they couldn't settle the argument themselves, to whom did they turn to settle the issue? What happened?

Through

1. Tell the students that today you're going to read/tell them a story told by a grandmother to her young granddaughter. As you do so, ask them to look for clues that suggest that this story was originally told a long time ago.

2. Read (or tell) the first four pages of the story and then ask:

- How can you tell this story was written a long time ago? (Women hung the wash on clotheslines on the roof, there were no washing machines, the names sound old-fashioned, men wore hats, there was no elevator in the building.)
- What does a rabbi do? (A rabbi leads services in the synagogue, gives advice, settles arguments and helps everyone to live together peacefully.)

3. Complete the reading (or telling) of the story and discuss the following:

- P'nina and Malkah had very similar lives (both were married, had children, lived in the same building, etc.), yet they seemed very different. In what ways were they different?
- What was so special about P'nina's tablecloth?
- What happened to the tablecloth, and why did the women take it to the Rabbi?
- How did the rabbi decide who was the rightful owner of the tablecloth?

- How did his wife help him make that decision? Why did people consider the Rabbi to be so clever?
- Should Malkah have been punished for lying about the tablecloth?
- Did the ending seem fair?
- How did P'nina show she cared about her table cloth

Beyond

After discussing the story, ask your class to consider these broader questions:

- Why might people today take their problems to a rabbi? Can you think of other religious leaders in our community who might help people solve their problems or disputes?
- What other ways do we have of solving conflicts and disputes today? If P'nina and Malkah had taken their conflict into a modern court, who might have been called on to serve as witnesses?

ASSESSMENT

One way to assess students' understanding that the need for a means of peaceful conflict resolution can be met in many different ways is to have them work in small groups to create short skits loosely based on the story.

1. Divide your class into groups of five students each. If possible, also have a white tablecloth available for students to use as a prop.
2. Tell students that each group will prepare a short skit showing how it would resolve the question of who owns the white tablecloth. Challenge students to be both creative in coming up with a way to resolve the conflict and dramatic in their presentation. For example, they might decide to set the case in another time and have someone other than a rabbi resolve the property dispute.
3. After each group presents its skit, ask the rest of the class what they liked about it as well as how it could be improved or made more dramatic.
4. At the end of the skits, ask students to evaluate the different means of conflict resolution presented by the groups. Did some seem to work better than others or seem more fair?

SOURCE

Lesson developed by Jackie Caplan based on Giras, Adele. *My Grandmother's Stories*. Knopf, 1990.

EXTENSION LESSONS

A. Rights in Conflict

BACKGROUND

Everyone has the same rights under the U.S. Constitution, with the result that my right to speak sometimes conflicts with your right not to be teased. These conflicts can often be resolved by having each of the parties look at the problem from the other's viewpoint and working out resolutions through *mediation and negotiation*. Taking conflicts to court should be the last resort.

OBJECTIVES

1. Recognize that simply exercising our rights can result in conflicts.
2. Analyze alternative solutions from different viewpoints.
3. Understand a perspective different from their own.

MATERIALS

- Copies of "Rights in Conflict" Handout #1
- Chalkboard and chalk
- Squares of self-adhesive paper

PROCEDURE

1. Introduce the activity by telling the students that you are going to conduct an experiment. Everyone is going to talk at the same time, but will stop when you ring a bell. Have students read something out loud, sing their favorite songs, recite poems or just repeat their names and addresses. You should also speak, giving the class some directions to do certain things. Continue for a few minutes and then talk about what happened. Did anyone follow the teacher's directions? Students will inevitably conclude that when everyone is talking, no one is listening.
2. Read the story titled the "The Keyboard Kid" in the "Rights in Conflict"(Handout #1) aloud to the class. (With older students you can distribute copies of the handout.) Tell students to pay attention to what happened to the two people in the story. (Note: You may use an actual conflict that has arisen among class members in place of this story.)
3. Ask students to identify the problem. Mike's rights are in conflict with Karen's rights. Explain that conflicts are a natural part of human relationships. Everyone gets into fights or arguments once in a while. Sometimes people can resolve their conflicts, but

sometimes they cannot. A third person can often help to resolve the conflict between two people. That person has to be someone who can see both sides of the argument and come up with a solution that's fair to both people. In a court, that "third person" is a judge.

4. Have students identify what two rights are in conflict in the story: (Karen's right to prepare for a profession and to express herself through music. Mike's right to have peace and quiet in his own home.) Explain that there are many ways to resolve this conflict. Some solutions, however, are better than others. Write the following scales on the chalkboard and ask students how they might be used to evaluate a solution:

Reasonable Unreasonable

Peaceful Violent

Fair for All Unfair for Some

Legal Illegal

5. Have students consider each of the following solutions to the problem using the scales you wrote on the chalkboard:

Solution 1 - Mike ties a rope across the stairs so that Karen will trip and break her wrist. No more keyboarding.

Solution 2 - Mike buys ear plugs and that lessens the noise somewhat.

Solution 3 - Mike and Karen agree on a schedule of keyboarding on alternate evenings.

Solution 4 - Mike and Karen go to their parents and have the parents resolve the problem.

6. Have students brainstorm as many other alternatives as they can. Write all the alternatives on the chalkboard. Then pair the students for role plays. One student will be Karen and the other Mike. Pairs should discuss the conflict and come up with a resolution that is acceptable to both sides.

7. Have the pairs announce their decisions and the reasons for them. Be sure they discuss the issue of a violent or non-violent resolution (Solution 1). Create a graph of the pairs' responses on the chalkboard using tallies or squares of self-adhesive paper.

8. Isidore Starr suggests the following follow-up lesson to be more specific. Ask students to identify episodes where the speech of others has made them uncomfortable, unhappy or fearful.

a. Have volunteers identify things that were said to them by others that made them feel badly. Then ask:

- Did the other person have a **right** to say it?
 - Was it **fair** for the other person to say it?
 - How should this type of unfairness be handled by your class? By teachers? By the school?
- b. Have volunteers describe the actions of others that made them feel bullied or fearful. Then ask:
- Did the bully have a **right** to do what was done?
 - Was the bully's action **fair** to the other person?
 - How should students who bully others be educated to understand that what they are doing is unfair?
 - Should students who won't stop bullying be punished? How? By whom?

SOURCE

Gallagher, Arlene and Laurel Singleton. *Education for Freedom*. Denver: First Amendment Congress, University of Colorado, 1991.

HANDOUT #1 *Rights in Conflict*

THE KEYBOARD KID

Karen and Mike lived in an apartment building. Mike's apartment was directly above Karen. They were pretty good friends who spent a lot of time together. They both liked bowling, eating pizza, reading good books and lots of other things. Their friendship ended when Karen got an electronic keyboard.

"I don't have anything against keyboard players, Karen," Mike said. "But do you have to practice every evening? The noise is driving me crazy."

"Sorry," said Karen. "But I have to practice if I'm going to be a professional musician. Besides, music is how I express myself."

"Sure," said Mike, "but what about my rights? You're disturbing the peace. My peace."

B. Good Rules and Laws

BACKGROUND

This activity focuses on rules and laws and what makes them seem fair and reasonable.

OBJECTIVES

1. Identify characteristics of a good rule or law.
2. Evaluate rules or laws based on these characteristics.

MATERIALS

- Copies of "Good Rules and Laws" Transparency #1
- Overhead projector
- Signs posting new classroom rules
- Chalkboard and chalk

PROCEDURE

1. Make signs for the following rules and post them in your classroom before the students enter.

- No sitting at desks while writing
- Absolutely no talking at any time
- Keep your eyes closed while walking around the classroom
- No blinking your eyes during class
- All pencils must be sharpened at night when no one is in the classroom
- All students whose first names begin with A, K, G and J will clean up after all other students
- Students will not have recess, depending on the teacher's mood

If the signs are obvious, the students will probably notice them and begin talking about them before the lesson begins.

2. Display the "Good Rules and Laws" Transparency on an overhead projector and then ask students what is wrong with this picture? Why is it impossible for the driver to follow the rules? (The rules are contradictory.)

3. Have students read the new rules you have posted in the classroom and ask for their reactions. What is wrong with each rule? What would good rules be like? Use their responses to create a list of generalizations, or understandings, about good rules and laws on the chalkboard. Your list might include some or all of the following:

- Rules and laws should be necessary.
- Rules and laws should be consistent.
- Rules and laws should be possible to follow.
- Rules and laws should be understandable.
- Rules and laws should be flexible; capable of being changed.
- Rules and laws should be enforceable.

4. When the class finishes its list, ask students to apply their generalizations to the rules you just posted. Have students dramatically tear down any rules that do not meet their criteria.

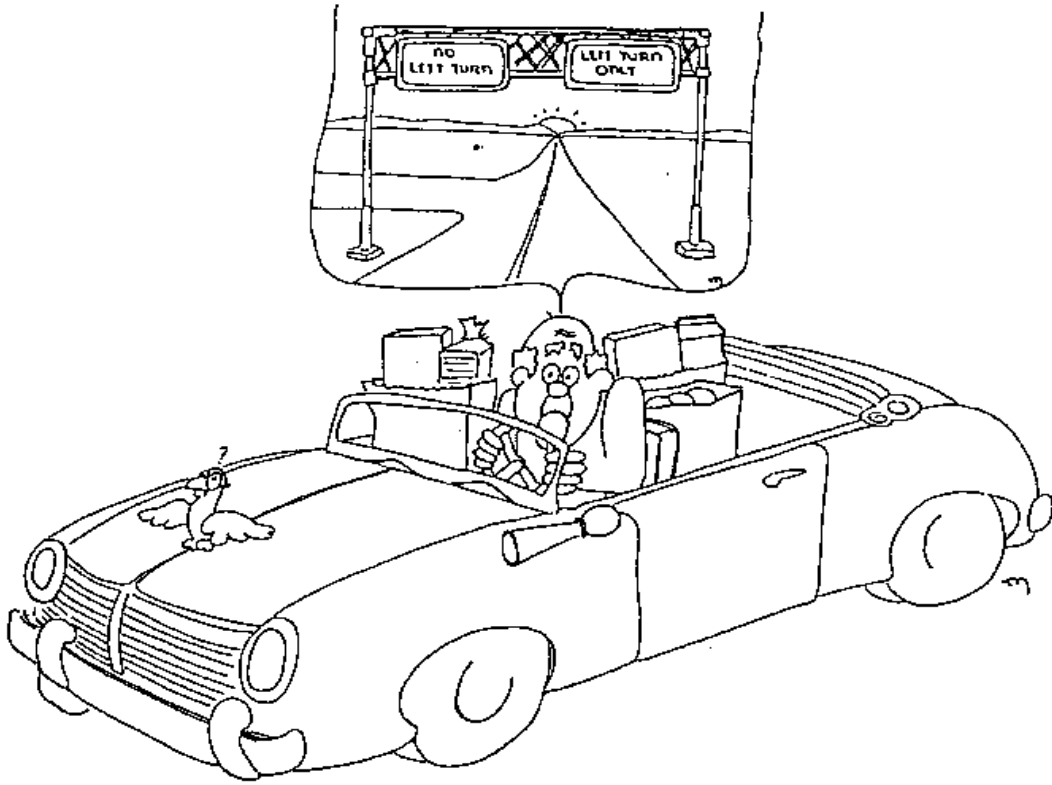
5. Have the class list the rules you normally expect them to follow in your classroom. Then ask them to apply their generalizations to these rules. Ask:

- Are these good classroom rules?
- Can you think of any way to improve these rules?
- Are there any new rules you would like to add to this list?

SOURCE

Gallagher, Arlene. *Living Together Under the Law: An Elementary Education Law Guide*. Law Youth and Citizenship Program, New York State Bar Association, 1988.

TRANSPARENCY #1



Good Rules and Laws

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

A. Defining Vandalism

Vandalism is a growing problem in many communities and schools. Explain that vandalism is based on the following definition:

Vandalism: *The destruction or defacement of property, without the agreement of the owner.*

Present students with several examples of vandalism such as those listed below or others drawn from your school or local community. Vandalism also provides a good opportunity to discuss the idea of respecting property. In each instance, ask students:

- Who is harmed by this kind of vandalism?
- How might such an act of vandalism affect you? Your family?
- What might be done to discourage acts of vandalism such as this?

Examples of vandalism:

- Students scribble graffiti on the bathroom walls in your school.
- On Halloween, children splatter several homes with eggs.
- Several children set fire to an open field and then call the fire department to see how long it takes for the fire trucks to arrive.
- A group of students tears up a homeowner's flower garden on their way home from school just for the fun of it.

Students can begin to understand how our legal system provides an orderly manner for resolving issues. Depending on the maturity of your students, you might hold a mock vandalism trial in your classroom. Explain that when people have problems or disagree with one another they may have to take their problems to a court where lawyers will help present the facts of each side of the case, and the judge or jury tells them what has to be done to settle the problem. Tell the students that when people break the law or damage another person's property, they may have to go to court for a trial. Discuss the roles of the various "players" in a trial, including the judge, the prosecutor, the defense lawyer, the defendant, the witnesses and the jury. (Have large cards prepared with the new courtroom vocabulary: *court, courtroom, bench, judge, gavel, trial, lawyer, prosecutor, witness, client, defendant, jury, jury box.*)

With your class, expand on one of the examples of vandalism presented earlier to create a mock vandalism case to take to trial. Assign students to the roles of judge, prosecutor, defense attorney, defendant(s) and witness(es). The remaining students should serve on the jury that will decide on the defendant(s)'s guilt or innocence.

B. Buckle Games

In this activity, students learn about the importance of clear and consistent rules as they try to play a pair of simple games. For both games, you will need a buckle, or any other item that has no inherent value (such as a bean, piece of macaroni, a 2 inch length of rope, etc.). As you start each game, answer students' questions vaguely; don't volunteer information

Game 1:

Tell students this is a game about passing an object to each other. Ask about 6 students to come to the front of the room (or stand in the center of circle). Pass a buckle to each student and tell them to play. Watch them as they try to figure out what to do. Stop when they get frustrated and ask them, "What's the problem?" Discuss the idea that every game must have a purpose and certain rules for everyone to follow in order to make any sense.

Game 2:

Have two new teams of five students each come to the front (or center) of the room to play a second game. Tell students that this game will be played according to the following rules.

- Each team lines up in a row with one student in front of the other.
- The first person in each row begins the game with a buckle. At the word "Go!" that person passes the buckle to the team member behind. This backward passing of the buckle continues until it reaches the end of the row.
- The last person to get the buckle then runs to the front of the row to begin the process again.

Conduct a sample game following these rules. When both teams are ready to begin the "real" game, however, add a rule that the buckles can only be passed overhead. Then say "Go!" Once the game is underway, shout out two more rules.

- The third person in the row to get the buckle must turn around in place before passing it on.
- The last person in the row to get the buckle must clap their hands before running to the front.

The game should deteriorate with all these rules. If not, add more arbitrary requirements until it does. Once again ask the group "What's the matter with this game?" Discuss why having too many rules or changing the rules in the middle of the game is unfair and confusing. If possible, have students relate their thoughts to rules in school and at home.

SOURCE

Adapted from "The Buckle Game" in *Law in the Classroom* by Mary Jane Turner. Social Science Education Consortium. Boulder, Colorado, 1979.

Resources

Literature Links

Anderson, Jay. *Juma and the Magic Jinn*, Lothrop, 1986. Muslim Africa is the setting for the tale of a boy whose three wishes show him that there is more magic at home than can be conjured from the family jar.

Blaine, Marge. *The Terrible Thing that Happened at Our House*, Scholastic, 1983. When both parents become employed outside the home, a crisis is resolved with humor and understanding.

Bryan, Ashley. *Beat the Story-Drum, Pum-Pum*, Athenium, 1980. Bryan offers retellings from the African House and other traditions. The stories are best read aloud or told at this grade level.

Friedman, Ina R. *How My Parents Learned to Eat*, Houghton, 1984. A child tells of the happy resolution of a slight problem stemming from diverse cultures within the same family.

Giras, Adele. *My Grandmother's Stories*, Knopf, 1990. The author retells the stories her grandmother told her when she was a young girl.

Grefalconi, Ann. *Osa's Pride*, Little Brown, 1990. The beautiful illustrations of African village life is the setting of Osa's story of self-discovery, moral truth and family love.

Heller, Linda. *The Castle of Hester Street*, Jewish Publications Society, 1982. This picture book presents two views of the past. Julie's grandparents give her a complete picture of their past.

Lee, Jeanne. *Toad is the Uncle of Heaven*, Holt, 1985. This Vietnamese Folk tale relates how Toad earned the respectful title of "uncle."

Lin, Adet. *The Milky Way and Other Chinese Folk tales*, Harcourt, 1961. "How the Miser Turned Into a Donkey," one of the tales in this book, is from the Taoist culture.

A Precious Life, illustrated by Rosalyn White, Dharma Publishing Co., 1989. The Jataka tales are similar in structure to fables and reflect Buddhist teachings and beliefs.

Quayle, Eric. *The Shining Princess and Other Japanese Legends*, Arcade, 1989. Ten Japanese Folk tales provide examples of the humor and wisdom to be found in folklore. Best read aloud.

Uchida, Yoshiko. *The Dancing Kettle*, Creative Arts Books, 1986. This collection of myths and legends of Japan contains stories that relate to Shinto principles.

Yoshima, Taro. *Crow Boy*, Viking, 1955. This story, set in Japan, is about prejudice and appreciation of others.

Teacher Resources

Gallagher, Arlene. *Living Together Under the Law. An Elementary Education Law Guide. Law, Youth and Citizenship Program*, New York State Bar Association, 1988.

LeShan, Eda. *Grandparents: A Special Kind of Love*, MacMillan, 1984. This book explores the unique relationship between grandchildren and grandparents. Advice for dealing with conflicts and problems between generations is simply stated.

Parramon, J.M., Maria Ruis, and Carmen Sole Vendrell. *Coleccion las Cuatro Edades*, Parramon Ediciones, Barcelona, 1985 (US: Barron's). Available in both English and Spanish, these books depict the "four ages" of human existence. Titles include: *Los Niños* (Children), *Las Evenes* (Teenagers, Youth), *Los Padres* (Parents), *Los Abuelos* (Grandparents).

Turner, Mary Jane. *Law in the Classroom*. Social Science Education Consortium. Boulder, Colorado, 1979. Designed, as a handbook to provide practical assistance to resource people (attorneys, judges, and police officers) making presentations in the classroom, this source book of strategies can be invaluable for teachers.