

Value of Rules

Grade Level: 5-12

Time: 45 minutes

Objectives:

- Identify four components of good rules (law): Purpose, Notice, Consistency and Fair Application.
- Equate the lack of good rules with feelings of confusion, frustration and anger.
- Recognize the need for good rules to achieve order as well as goals.

Curricular Connections: Civics

Materials: Paper clips

Procedure:

- 1) Divide the class into rows, making sure that one row has more students and that one row has more boys (or girls).
- 2) Give each student in the front row five paper clips. Then tell them to begin. (Students will exhibit confusion, not knowing what to do. Eventually someone will start doing something.)
- 3) After a brief period, stop the game. Tell them they may only pass one clip at a time. The object is to pass the clips backward and then forward and the first row to finish wins. Start them over again.
- 4) After a brief period, stop the game. Tell them the clips must be passed back over the left shoulder and passed forward over the right. Start them over again.
- 5) After a brief period, stop the game. Explain that there are too many people in one row and they should have twice as many clips to pass and that there are more girls (or boys) in one row, so they should have less clips to pass. After making these adjustments, start the game over again.
- 6) Allow the game to now proceed to the end and debrief the students on their feelings and observations. List the student generated responses on the board.
- 7) Discuss society's need for rules, their purpose, their consistency and their fair application in order to avoid confusion and frustration and achieve goals. Specific examples of rules and laws should be used to further illustrate the points made.

Reflection:

- Students will discuss the benefits of rules.
- Can be used as a segway into developing a list of classroom or PA rules and expectations.

Assessment:

1. Class discussion to determine students' understanding of rules and power.

Source: Adapted from Kathleen Franz; Educator's Reference Desk Lesson Plan #:AELP-CIV0023