



## UNIT 4.01

# WHAT IS FAIR?

### SCHEDULE

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**Day 1**  
Action News  
Reader's Theater

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**Day 2**  
Characters' Perspectives

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**Day 3**  
Word Study

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**Day 4**  
Word Study

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**Day 5**  
Science

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**Day 6**  
Interview

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**Days 8 and 9**  
Prepare and Debate

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**Day 10**  
Writing

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Extension Activity

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## Action News

## What is fair?

## Playground Politics

**PAIGE REIDER:** Good day, student viewers! Paige Reider here with a breaking story on playground politics. Have you ever been **excluded** from playing a game at recess? Not **chosen** for a team? Do you want to figure out a better way to make recess fun and fair? Is your classroom a place where everyone is welcome? Well, our field reporter, Justin Thyme, found a couple of experts to speak to this very issue. Can you tell us more, Justin?

**JUSTIN THYME:** Thanks, Paige. I did **discuss** this issue with a couple of experts who write about problems of fairness and **exclusion**, and they have quite a few **suggestions** for making the playground a better place for all kids.

**PAIGE:** So, first things first, Justin. Why do these experts say kids get **excluded** in the first place?

**JUSTIN:** Well, Paige, our local experts say that kids can be **excluded** for a lot of different reasons. Some kids are **excluded** from games because they're not very athletic. Others are **excluded** because some kids have their own groups and don't want to include anyone else. Some kids don't speak English very well. But then there are some kids who are just plain mean to other kids. There's a lot of bullying on school playgrounds.

**PAIGE:** So, these are really difficult situations for kids. How are kids supposed to handle them?

**JUSTIN:** Well, experts say that both students and teachers need to address these problems. The first step is to identify what the problem is and then **discuss** how these problems affect kids in and outside the classroom. Kids can't learn math or science or feel good about themselves if they're feeling picked on or **excluded**.

**PAIGE:** I couldn't agree with you more! So, you're saying that when the problems are **discussed** and understood by everyone, then students and teachers can set up rules for fairness in class and on the playground. Sounds like this should happen on the first day of school.

**JUSTIN:** I agree with you, Paige! And so would our experts. But they'd also want students and teachers to make clear **decisions** about consequences, or what should happen if and when a student breaks a rule.

**PAIGE:** I wish we'd had those rules back when I was a student! I was **excluded** from a lot of games because I was slow. I didn't even know how to jump rope!

**JUSTIN:** Well, fortunately things are getting better for students today. I remember I wasn't very nice to some of the slower kids, and I have to say, I'm feeling pretty ashamed about what I was like. I'm teaching my fourth-grade son how to be fair in the classroom and outside.

**PAIGE:** That's great! Thanks again for that report, Justin.

This is Paige Reider, signing off!



**Discussion questions:** Have you ever been **excluded** from something? Have you or your friends ever **excluded** someone on the playground or in school?



[wordgen.serpmedia.org/action\\_news](http://wordgen.serpmedia.org/action_news)

## Reader's Theater

## What is fair?

## Getting Excluded

## Line

- 1  **Paul:** Vivian, are you okay? You seemed sad yesterday on the playground.
- 2  **Vivian:** Well, I wanted to play tag, but I didn't get **chosen** by either team. I know I'm not very fast, but they should let me play! It's not fair.
- 3  **Paul:** Some kids act like "bosses" at recess and decide who can play and who gets **excluded**.
- 4  **Vivian:** But why do they get to decide who's included or who isn't? There should be a rule about this. I want a new playground rule that says "you can't say you can't play."
- 5  **Germaine:** But shouldn't kids make their own **decisions** about who they play with? Sometimes you just want to play with your friends. I like playing four square, but it's less fun with kids who aren't very good at it. And recess is too short!
- 6  **Binh:** I like teaching people games and including everyone who wants to play, but there's another problem, Vivian. If you had to play with everyone, then you'd have to play with kids who push other kids around or act mean. I don't want them anywhere near me at recess!
- 7  **Vivian:** Me either, but that is not what I am talking about. **Exclusion** usually happens to the shy kids and the slow kids. I'm not fast, so I'm **excluded** from games like tag. It feels terrible.
- 8  **Binh:** It happens inside the classroom, too. When the teacher asks us to turn and talk, I can't get the words out fast enough so kids don't want me as their partner. Other times I raise my hand, but the teacher always seems to choose the loudest students. I wish I was better at English so I could talk more in class.
- 9  **Germaine:** I didn't know that was hard for you, Binh. You're like the best student!
- 10  **Paul:** I think we should **discuss exclusion** and fairness rules in class so we can come to an agreement TOGETHER! I'll **suggest** to Ms. Feroletto that we do this at our next class meeting. My question is going to be: What do you think? Should the rule on the playground at school be: "You can't say you can't play"?



**Turn and Talk:** Talk with a partner about what you think a fair rule would be for the school playground. Can you come up with a slogan? For example: *I'm proposin' that everyone gets **chosen!***

**Characters' Perspectives**

**What is fair?**

*Vivian, Germaine, Binh, and Paul*

**Directions:** With a partner, talk about each statement and decide which one describes each character's perspective. **Find and highlight** evidence from the Reader's Theater text to support your answer.

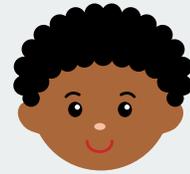
What does **Vivian** think?

- Vivian thinks the way kids play is fair.
- Vivian is the fastest runner in the fourth grade.
- Vivian is upset she isn't **chosen** to play because she isn't fast.



What does **Germaine** think?

- Germaine thinks he should decide who he plays with.
- Germaine is focused on his studies instead of who plays together.
- Germaine feels **excluded** from most playground games.



What does **Binh** think?

- Binh likes playing four square more than he likes playing tag.
- Binh thinks it will be worse if kids are forced to play together.
- Binh is always telling kids what to do on the playground.



What does **Paul** think?

- Paul doesn't mind being **excluded** from games; he'd rather read.
- Paul is upset at kids who **exclude** others and wants some new rules.
- Paul has a lot of friends and doesn't know what the problem is.



What do **you** think?

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Word Study

What is fair?

A Closer Look at Our Focus Words

	chosen	exclusion (n.) exclude (v.)	suggest (v.) suggestion (n.)
<p>Definition</p> 	<p>(verb) picked or selected from a group</p>	<p>(noun) a practice of not including (verb) to leave out</p>	<p>(verb) to offer an idea (noun) an idea about what somebody should do</p>
<p>Sample Sentence</p> 	<p>Well, I wanted to play tag, but I didn't get <b>chosen</b> for either side.</p>	<p><b>Exclusion</b> usually happens to the shy kids and the slow kids. I'm not fast, so I'm <b>excluded</b> from games like tag. It feels terrible.</p>	<p>I'll <b>suggest</b> to Ms. Feroletto that we talk about exclusion at our next class meeting.</p>
<p>Another Example</p> 	<p>Have you <b>chosen</b> your seats yet to watch the show?</p>	<p>Reporters were <b>excluded</b> from the secret meeting held by the president.</p>	<p>The waiter at the restaurant <b>suggested</b> that we try the soup.</p>
<p>Turn and Talk</p> 	<p>One thing I wish I had been <b>chosen</b> for is...</p>	<p>Think about a time you saw <b>exclusion</b> happening at recess. What happened?</p>	<p>What would you <b>suggest</b> we play at recess today?</p>
<p>Rewrite with a focus word</p> 	<p>The kids picked Igor to lead the team.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Mandy was crying because she wasn't included on the team.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Ben responded to Marvin's unwelcome advice.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Choose a picture</p> 	<p>Circle the picture where the girl was <b>chosen</b> to be president.</p>  	<p>Circle the picture that shows the <b>exclusion</b> of animals from stores.</p>  	<p>Which billboard is <b>suggesting</b> something?</p>  

Word Study, continued

What is fair?

	decision	discuss
<b>Definition</b> 	<i>(noun)</i> a position or conclusion	<i>(verb)</i> to talk in a group about an issue, idea, or question
<b>Sample Sentence</b> 	But shouldn't kids make their own <b>decisions</b> about who they play with?	I think we should <b>discuss</b> exclusion rules in class and come to an agreement TOGETHER!
<b>Another Example</b> 	Selecting frames for my new glasses was a difficult <b>decision</b> .	Our teacher often asks us to <b>discuss</b> our work with each other.
<b>Turn and Talk</b> 	Can you think of a <b>decision</b> your mother made that you wish she had made differently?	What do you wish we would <b>discuss</b> more in class: protecting animals or favorite books?
<b>Rewrite with a focus word</b> 	I saved my dessert for later. _____ _____ _____	We spent hours talking about the movie. _____ _____ _____
<b>Choose a picture</b> 	Circle the picture that shows a school <b>decision</b> about cell phone use.    	Circle the picture you would use to show that people are <b>discussing</b> something.    

Synonyms and Antonyms

Many of you are familiar with synonyms and antonyms.

**Synonym:** A synonym is a word that is similar in meaning.



cold / chilly

**Antonym:** An antonym of a word means its opposite.



love / hate

1. Match **synonyms** from the words below with the following focus words:

**chosen** / \_\_\_\_\_

**decision** / \_\_\_\_\_

2. Match **antonyms** from the words below with the following focus words:

**exclusion** / \_\_\_\_\_

**chosen** / \_\_\_\_\_

Word bank:



**Day 5**

**Science**

**What is fair?**

*Fairness in Scientific Testing*

Being fair in science is as important as being fair on the playground. For example, if scientists want to compare the bounciness of two balls, they need to make sure everything else is the same when the balls are dropped. Today, you will watch a demonstration of this experiment and think of ways to make the test more fair.

**Directions:** Observe like a scientist as your teacher models an experiment to compare the bounciness of two balls. Below, write down what you notice is *unfair* about the experiment and ways to make the experiment *fair*.

**What wasn't fair about each try?**

Example: She bounced the balls from different levels.

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 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

✦ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
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✦ \_\_\_\_\_  
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**What could you do to make it fair?**

Example: The balls have to be bounced from the same height.

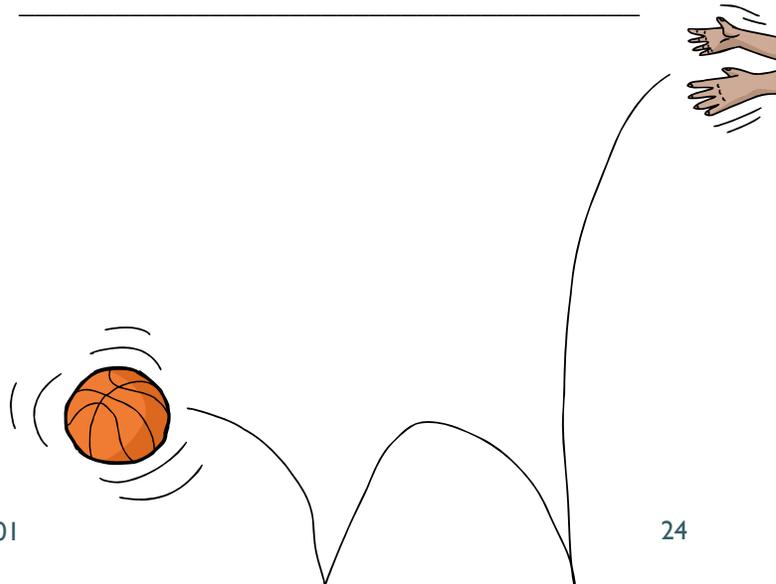
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 **Discussion question:** How is deciding what is fair in science the same and different from how we decide what is fair on the playground?



## Interview

## What is fair?

Interview with Professor Robert Selman



*When Harvard professor Robert Selman was a young man in New York, he became fascinated with how some people resolved their problems better than others. So he set out to study the importance of relationships and create ways for teaching people how to become better friends, family members, students, and citizens.*

## Line

- 1     **Susana:** Why is it so hard for people to be fair to each other?
- 2     **Prof.** One reason is because it's hard to put yourself in someone else's shoes. It's also really hard to  
**Selman:** listen to someone else, especially if you want your own way very badly.
- 3     **Arun:** Why are some people able to resolve problems better than others?
- 4     **Prof.** That's a good question. I think it's because some people know how to **discuss** their problems  
**Selman:** with other people and listen to all sides. They're also able to **suggest** to one another how to solve a problem in a better way.
- 5     **Susana:** What can happen to students who get **excluded** a lot?
- 6     **Prof.** Kids who get **excluded** can get very sad. Kids who get teased can get very upset. What  
**Selman:** happens later is that the more upset they get the more kids will tease them. In the long run, they can get very lonely and unhappy, or even angry.
- 7     **Arun:** What should these kids do?
- 8     **Prof.** This is hard. There are lots of things they can choose to do. They can talk to a trusted adult.  
**Selman:** They can be very brave and tell the kids to stop teasing them. They can ignore the teasing, and it might stop. Every situation is different. I think it's also important to understand that teasing can be fun sometimes. But good teasing doesn't hurt. People who tease in a mean way are bullies. They tease to upset people.
- 9     **Susana:** How can we improve our abilities to **discuss** our problems instead of fighting about them?
- 10    **Prof.** If problems are happening at school, an important thing you can do is to get together as a group  
**Selman:** and talk to the teacher about creating a respectful and safe classroom. Because then students can listen to each other, **discuss** problems instead of being mean, and come up with rules that make sure that kids are not **excluded**.
- 11    **Arun:** Do you have any final words of advice to kids?
- 12    **Prof.** It's important not to be passive. If you see somebody bullying, try to think of something to do  
**Selman:** that would help. Maybe you and your friends could talk to the bully, especially if the bully or teaser doesn't realize how mean they are being. Or tell an adult about the problem. It can feel bad to watch someone being bullied. You don't have to be a hero or put yourself in danger, but there are usually things to do. So, take action!
- 13    **Susana:** Professor Selman, thank you for your advice!

Interview, continued

What is fair?

**Directions:** In line 8, Professor Selman **suggested** a few ways that children can deal with teasing. Write two of these options that you like and think of another option of your own. Finally, *draw* or *describe a situation* when you would do this below.

Professor Selman's  
**suggestion #1:**

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Professor Selman's  
**suggestion #2:**

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Your own  
**suggestion:**

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Draw or describe a scenario when you would do this.



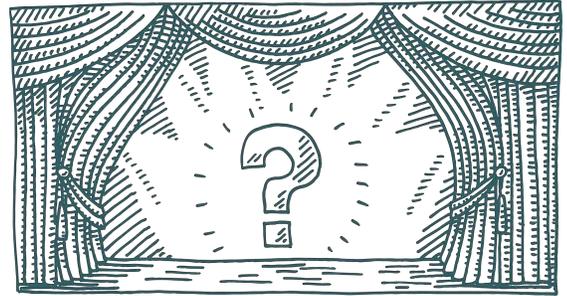
**Discussion directions:** Share, compare, and **discuss** your **suggestions** and drawing with a partner.

Math

What is fair?

What's fair for tryouts?

The tryouts for the Lakewood school play are next week. No one wants to be **excluded** from the performance, but the director knows she cannot include everyone. The director made the **decision** that 50 students from the fourth grade would be **chosen**. Before **discussing** how she will run tryouts with students and teachers, she needs to do some math to make sure the process is fair.



**Directions:** To help the director make tryouts a fair process, read, **discuss**, and answer the problems below.

- A. There are 3 fourth grade classrooms. Each class has 25 students. *If everyone auditions for the play, what is the total number of students who will try out? Work with a partner and explain your thinking.*

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- B. The director has a limited amount of time to complete the tryouts. To keep them fair, the director wanted students to try out in equally sized groups. She **suggested** that students practice their lines together in preparation.

One possibility is to split the students into 3 groups of 25. Considering how many students are auditioning, what are all the combinations the director could use to keep the tryout groups equal?

Fill in the chart to the right to show all her options.

	# of groups	# of students in a group
Possible combinations	3	25



**Discussion directions:** Which option do you think would save time and be most fair to all the students? **Discuss** your answer and reasons with a partner and write your conclusions below.

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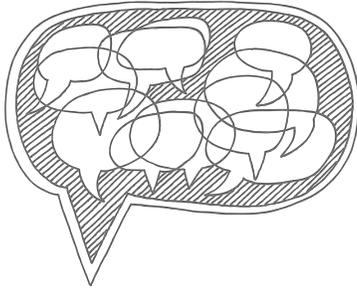
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Prepare and Debate

What is fair?



What is fair on the playground?

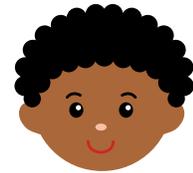
**Directions:** Read and decide what you think about each character’s proposed rule.



**Vivian’s proposed rule:**  
*Playground **exclusion** is not allowed.*



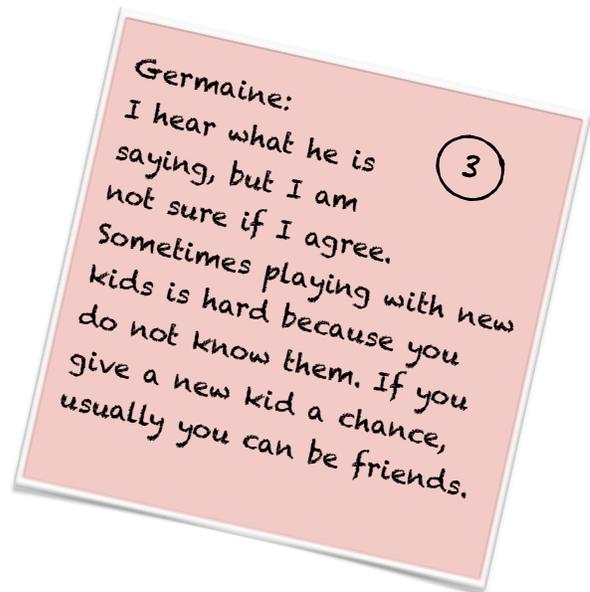
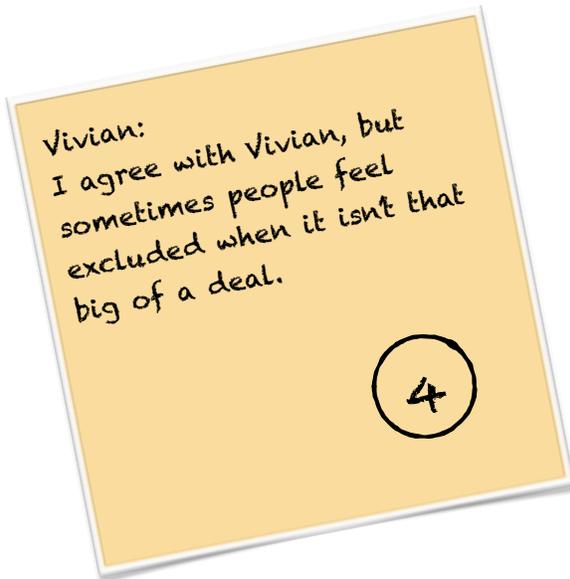
**Germaine’s proposed rule:**  
*You can play with anyone you want at recess.*



1. Choose a rule from the poster, and rank how strongly you agree or disagree on the following scale:

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree
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2. Like the examples below, write a number showing how much you agree with the rule on a sticky note and explain why. Place your sticky note in the correct column on the class poster.



**Writing**

**What is fair?**

*Persuasive Writing*

When you write your opinion about a topic, this is called persuasive writing. Vivian wrote the following paragraph to answer the question: Should everyone be included on the playground?

**Directions:** Read Vivian’s paragraph with your classmates. Then, look at the graphic organizer with a partner to understand the purpose of each sentence.

*Vivian’s Paragraph:*

I suggest that everybody be included on the playground. First of all, people who are excluded feel bad because they are not chosen to play. Excluded people might become bullies later because they want to hurt other people to make themselves feel better. Lastly, including everybody will make us better at discussing our problems because it will give us a chance to put ourselves in other people’s shoes. As you can see, including everyone on the playground will make us happier and better at solving problems.

Component	Sample from paragraph	What is the purpose?
Topic sentence	I suggest that everybody be included on the playground.	introduces your opinion
Reason 1	People who are excluded feel bad because they are not chosen to play.	provides reasons that are supported by facts and details
Reason 2	Excluded people might become bullies later because they want to hurt other people to make themselves feel better.	provides reasons that are supported by facts and details
Reason 3	We will become better at discussing problems because including everyone will give us a chance to put ourselves in other people’s shoes.	provides reasons that are supported by facts and details
Closing sentence	Including everyone on the playground will make us happier and better at solving problems.	restates your opinion



**Turn and Talk:** Why is it important to provide reasons to support your point of view?

**Extension Activity**

**What is fair?**

What do other people think about this topic?

**Directions:** Think about what you wrote on the first day when you read the Reader’s Theater. Now, read what these bloggers had to say. When you finish, **discuss** with a partner which blog post you agree with.

**@iluvbacon Equal treatment for everybody!**

Schools are communities. We learn together and we should play together. If someone wants to join a group to play soccer, swing, or just talk, they should be included. **Exclusion** can be hurtful. If someone you don’t like has **chosen** you for an activity or asked to play with you, I **suggest** getting to know them and learning how to get along. Equal treatment for everybody!

**@qtpie Kids need to make the rules!**

Arguing about who can play on the playground makes no sense. Even if the teacher makes a new rule, no one will really follow it and more kids will get in trouble unless we make the **decision** together. Talking about conflicts and letting people who feel **excluded** talk in a class meeting will help everyone understand how hurtful being **excluded** feels. I think **discussing** this as a group is a better way to improve friendships and help people get along on the playground.

**@tacojello We have the right to decide!**

**Exclusion** can be hurtful, but sometimes I want to make the **decision** not to play with someone. Sometimes we play tag on the playground and some kids run really fast and push people out of the way. My friend fell and hit her head. A few kids, like me, want to play the game a little differently so that no one will get hurt. If the other kids want to play with the new rules we come up with, great! But if they don’t want to play by our rules, then we want to play the game by ourselves.

 With a partner, **discuss** which blogger you agree or disagree with. Check the box that best identifies your opinion.

I  *strongly agree*  *agree*  *disagree*  *strongly disagree* with \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

I  *strongly agree*  *agree*  *disagree*  *strongly disagree* with \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_