



**word**

generation

**UNIT 4.09**

**WHEN IS IT ACCEPTABLE TO BREAK THE RULES?**

**SCHEDULE**

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Action News  
Reader's Theater

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Debate

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## Action News

## When is it acceptable to break the rules?

*Is Chad a bad citizen?*

**PAIGE REIDER:** Today, we have a disturbing story about a 12-year-old boy who got into quite a bit of trouble for picking flowers in a national park. Justin, can you bring us up to date on the details?

**JUSTIN THYME:** Sure thing, Paige! First, let me tell you that I'm in one of the San Francisco Bay Area National Parks, home to several species of protected wildflowers. I just spoke to the park ranger who **apprehended** 12-year-old Chad Trujillo, the boy mentioned in your introduction. The ranger said he saw Chad **straying** off the **designated** area and picking California poppies and silver lupine. Chad was caught red-handed, holding a big bunch of flowers.

**PAIGE:** Did Chad know that picking wildflowers was prohibited?

**JUSTIN:** No, he said it never occurred to him. He said there were lots and lots of flowers blooming and that he wanted to do something nice for his mother, who has been sick for a long time.

**PAIGE:** So Chad didn't comprehend why he was **apprehended**? It seems then that Chad picked the flowers with the best of **intentions**. His motives were entirely innocent. Did the ranger not take that into account?

**JUSTIN:** The ranger said, and I quote, "Chad might have been a good son, but he was being a bad citizen of planet earth. What would happen if everyone who visited the park took just a couple of flowers? Soon there would be none left for other visitors to enjoy!"

**PAIGE:** Well, I guess we can see his point on that. Are there other **regulations** for how we should behave in national parks?

**JUSTIN:** Yes, lots. For example, don't leave the marked paths. Just walking on the wildflowers or certain grasses and mosses can kill them. Don't ever feed the animals. They shouldn't get used to depending on humans for their food. Don't smoke or start fires. Fires have devastated many national parks, ruining them as places to visit for years. These and other rules are designed to ensure that the parklands remain beautiful, accessible, and safe for everyone.

**PAIGE:** Thanks so much, Justin. Perhaps the lesson Chad learned doesn't apply just to national parks. There are lots of things that seem not to matter much when one person does them—littering, pouring pollutants down the drain, walking across a lawn, tagging in public spaces. But what if lots and lots of people do these things? We have to think about what would happen if everyone violated the rules prohibiting such actions. Then the world would be a much less pleasant place to live.

**JUSTIN:** I couldn't agree with you more, Paige!

**PAIGE:** Thanks so much for that important report. Remember, student viewers: Don't pick the flowers! Be good citizens of planet Earth!

This is Paige Reider, signing off!



**Discussion question:** Do you think Chad should have been punished even though his **intention** was to help his mother?



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

## Reader's Theater

## When is it acceptable to break the rules?

## National Park Regulations

## Line

- 1  **April:** Do you believe that story we heard on the newscast? How could a kid think that it would be **acceptable** to pick flowers in a national park? Pretty dumb, if you ask me.
- 2  **Marco:** Don't be so hard on him, April. He was trying to do something nice for his mom.
- 3  **April:** Do you think his mom was happy that he got **apprehended** by a park ranger for violating the park rules? I bet she was really embarrassed to have the story about him on the news and in the paper.
- 4  **Marco:** Well, she might have been embarrassed that the story came out, but she knew he picked the flowers to make her happy. My mom would be really happy if I brought her flowers. Don't his **intentions** count at all? I think he should have just been warned. He said he didn't know he was breaking the rules.
- 5  **April:** That's hard to believe. The rules are posted. There are signs everywhere telling you not to pick flowers or to **stray** off the **designated** paths. Whatever his motives, I think he knew he was breaking the rules.
- 6  **Herlinda:** But April, what does it matter if a few flowers get picked? One kid isn't going to kill all the flowers in the park.
- 7  **April:** I didn't say he was killing all the flowers. I said he should have known he was violating the rules!
- 8  **Nick:** Anyway, Herlinda, it's not about one kid. If one kid does it, how can the park rangers prohibit every kid from doing it? We'd all like to take a bouquet of flowers home for our moms. But if everyone does it, then there won't be any flowers left for everyone to enjoy.
- 9  **Herlinda:** That's ridiculous, Nick. How many kids who go to national parks have sick mothers? I don't believe there are enough that we have to worry about the flowers disappearing.
- 10  **Nick:** It's not about how many people pick flowers. It's about needing to enforce the rules. Plus, I bet there are millions of visitors to the national parks every year.
- 11  **Herlinda:** What??? That can't be. Way less.

*Reader's Theater continues on the next page.*

## Reader's Theater, continued

## When is it acceptable to break the rules?

- 12  **Marco:** This is a stupid argument. I'm going to go ask Ms. Morazán to help us look up the real numbers on the internet, and then we'll know for sure.
- 13  **Ms. Morazán:** (*overhears as she comes to call the students in from recess*) Sure, Marco, we can look something up. What do you want to know?
- 14  **Marco:** I think that millions of people go to the national parks every year, but Herlinda thinks it's much less. We are wondering how bad it would be if everyone who visited picked just a few flowers.
- 15  **Ms. Morazán:** What do you think?
- 16  **Nick:** I think the rule is there because so many people visit. If one kid gets away with picking flowers, then everyone will feel they can break the rules. Then, sooner or later, the parks will be ruined, and there will be no flowers left.
- 17  **Ms. Morazán:** That's a great point, Nick. Violating some rules doesn't seem to be a big deal until we think about what would happen if everyone did it. What if everyone left their trash on the lunch table? Or if everyone threw their gum on the ground? Or if everyone peed in the swimming pool? If one person does it, it doesn't seem like a big deal. But if everyone does it, we're in big trouble!
- 18  **Herlinda:** I still think it isn't a big deal if there aren't many visitors to the parks. I don't know anyone who has ever visited a national park.
- 19  **April:** Well, you know me! My family went to Acadia National Park last summer. It's in Maine. We camped there and took long walks and met lots of other people at the campground. But we read all the rules and **regulations**, and we didn't pick any flowers!
- 20  **Ms. Morazán:** Good for you! Let's go look up those visitor numbers on the internet.



**Discussion question:** Which student do you agree with? Why?

**More on National Parks**

The National Parks: America's Best Idea <http://www.pbs.org/nationalparks/>

National Park Foundation Electronic Field Trip <http://www.nationalparks.org/our-work/programs/electronic-field-trip>

National Parks WebRangers <http://www.nps.gov/webrangers/>

Characters' Perspectives

When is it acceptable to break the rules?

April, Herlinda, Marco, and Nick

**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 **April** think?

- April thinks that national parks are too overcrowded and should be better **regulated**.
- April thinks that Chad's motives were good because his **intention** was to make his mother feel better.
- April thinks that Chad should have known better and followed the **regulations**.



What does **Herlinda** think?

- Herlinda thinks that anyone who picks wildflowers should be **apprehended**.
- Herlinda thinks we shouldn't worry about damaging our parks because only a few visitors would have sick mothers.
- Herlinda thinks that **straying off designated** areas isn't that important because not many people go to national parks.



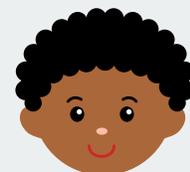
What does **Marco** think?

- Marco thinks that Chad's **intentions** were good and that he shouldn't be judged so harshly.
- Marco thinks that if his mother were sick, he would save his money to buy her flowers instead of stealing them.
- Marco thinks that Chad should have been **apprehended** and given a more severe punishment.



What does **Nick** think?

- Nick would like to become a park ranger to help protect our parks and wildlife.
- Nick thinks that so many visitors come to national parks that strong **regulations** are needed to protect them.
- Nick thinks that because the national parks are so hard to get to, it's **acceptable** for visitors to take some flowers.



What do **you** think?

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Word Study

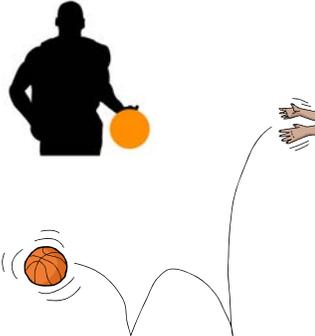
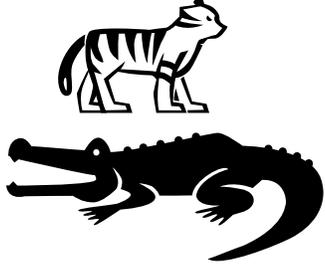
When is it acceptable to break the rules?

A Closer Look at Our Focus Words

	apprehend	designated (adj.) designate (v.)	acceptable
<p>Definition</p> 	<p>(verb) to take into custody; to arrest</p> <p>(verb) to take in (as in the beauty of a place or the power of something)</p>	<p>(adjective) assigned to a status, name, or quality; specified</p> <p>(verb) to appoint someone or something to a specified position; to point out</p>	<p>(adjective) allowed; able to be agreed on</p>
<p>Sample Sentence</p> 	<p>Do you think his mom was happy that he got <b>apprehended</b> by a park ranger?</p>	<p>There are signs in the park that show the <b>designated</b> pathways.</p>	<p>My mom said that it is never <b>acceptable</b> to hit my sister.</p>
<p>Turn and Talk</p> 	<p>Do you think it was fair that Chad Trujillo was <b>apprehended</b> for picking flowers?</p>	<p>If I could <b>designate</b> the characteristics that would qualify a person to be a class leader, I would choose _____.</p>	<p>What is <b>acceptable</b> behavior in your house?</p> <p>What behavior is not <b>acceptable</b> in your house?</p>
<p>Choose a picture</p> 	<p>Circle the picture of the criminal being <b>apprehended</b>.</p> 	<p>What sign shows the <b>designated</b> area for cell phone use?</p> 	<p>Circle the sign that suggests behavior that is not <b>acceptable</b> in a movie theater.</p> 
<p>Draw something to remember</p>  <p>Draw a picture, write a word, or give yourself another way to remember each word.</p>			

Word Study, continued

When is it acceptable to break the rules?

	stray (v.) stray (adj.)	intention (n.) intentionally (adv.)	regulation (n.) regulate (v.)
<p>Definition</p> 	<p>(verb) to go away from a marked path or an assigned area</p> <p>(adjective) not in the right place</p>	<p>(noun) a plan or decision</p> <p>(adverb) on purpose</p>	<p>(noun) a rule; a law</p> <p>(verb) to control or maintain</p>
<p>Sample Sentence</p> 	<p>If everyone <b>strays</b> from the path, pretty soon the park will be destroyed.</p>	<p>It was not my <b>intention</b> to hurt your feelings, so please accept my apology.</p>	<p>The <b>regulations</b> are there to protect the beach environment and the sunbathers.</p>
<p>Turn and Talk</p> 	<p>What can happen if tourists <b>stray</b> from a designated area in a place like the Amazon?</p>	<p>Have you known someone who did something accidentally but was accused of doing it <b>intentionally</b>?</p>	<p>What <b>regulations</b> at school do you like? Which <b>regulations</b> do you dislike?</p>
<p>Choose a picture</p> 	<p>Circle the example of a <b>stray</b> ball.</p> 	<p>Which sign has a specific <b>intention</b>?</p> 	<p>Circle the picture of an animal that uses the water to <b>regulate</b> its temperature.</p> 
<p>Draw something to remember</p>  <p>Draw a picture, write a word, or give yourself another way to remember each word.</p>			

## Interview

## When is it acceptable to break the rules?

*Interview with Professor Kenji Hakuta*

*Kenji Hakuta is a professor at Stanford University. As a professor, he studies how to help students who are learning English as a second language. In his free time, he goes whenever possible to Yosemite National Park for rock climbing, often taking along groups of kids who would otherwise never get to visit the park. Susana Flores and Arun Khanna, Word Generation's intrepid reporters, interviewed Professor Hakuta in Palo Alto, California, where he lives.*



**Susana:** Professor Hakuta, tell us why you love rock climbing so much.

**Dr. Hakuta:** When you are rock climbing, you have to be completely intentional. You can't think about anything but where to put your foot and where to get the next handhold, because if your mind wanders, you can fall and get badly hurt.

**Arun:** Have you fallen?

**Dr. Hakuta:** Yes. Ten years ago, I fell and broke my tailbone. After that, for some time, I would still go to Yosemite, but to hike and not to rock climb. I love being there—the trees, the flowers, and the rock structures are all wonderful.

**Susana:** Tell us why you take the kids along.

**Dr. Hakuta:** I think it is crucial that they have an authentic experience with nature. Kids can read about Yosemite in *National Geographic*, but I want to be sure they experience the real thing. These kids live only an hour away from the park entrance, but they have never visited. For me, it is just fun to help the kids **apprehend** the beauty of Yosemite.

**Arun:** You're arresting Yosemite's beauty?

**Dr. Hakuta:** I'm sorry! I used the word **apprehend** in another way. It also means "to take in." You know how words can have more than one meaning? Well, this is one of those words, although most people would say this meaning is pretty rare. Good catch, Arun!

**Susana:** So, to get back to why you're bringing kids to Yosemite: That must be challenging, taking young kids who are used to the city to such a different environment.

**Dr. Hakuta:** Challenging and fun. Of course, they have to learn to follow the rules while they are there.

**Susana:** What rules?

**Dr. Hakuta:** There are lots of official **regulations**—don't **stray** off the **designated** trails in dangerous areas, such as around waterfalls; don't leave any litter behind; don't pick any flowers; don't damage the trees; don't feed the animals; and more.

**Arun:** Do the kids you take to Yosemite ever violate those rules?

**Dr. Hakuta:** Not if I can help it. The hardest rule for them is not **straying** from the trail. When they get tired, they really want to take shortcuts.

*Interview continues on the next page.*

## Interview, continued

## When is it acceptable to break the rules?

**Susana:** So what do you do?

**Dr. Hakuta:** I try to justify why we have those rules. It seems like just a couple of kids taking shortcuts can't be bad. But if everyone **strays** from the path, then pretty soon the park will be destroyed. And shortcuts can be dangerous as well.

**Arun:** Any other rules we should know about if we go?

**Dr. Hakuta:** Well, there is no official rule against yelling and screaming. But there is an unwritten rule about not disturbing other visitors or the wildlife. So I enforce the "keep it down" rule as well.

**Susana:** Professor Hakuta, thanks so much for talking to us about Yosemite. Can we interview you about your research on English as a second language? Both Arun and I speak other languages so we want to know more about kids like us.

**Dr. Hakuta:** I would love that! See you soon, Arun and Susana. This was a lot of fun. Remember, protect your national parks and mother nature!



### Turn, Talk, and Write:

Principal Carol just announced that all school trips to national parks will be cancelled. She argued that students can learn about nature by doing projects and book reports. Based on the interview, what do you think Dr. Hakuta would say to Principal Carol?

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Illustration of Yosemite National Park

Science

When is it acceptable to break the rules?

*A Little Change Can Make a Big Difference*

There are lots of different reasons for why people make rules. Classroom rules help with learning. Playground rules are written with safety in mind. Rules usually promote courtesy, respect, and other **acceptable** behaviors.

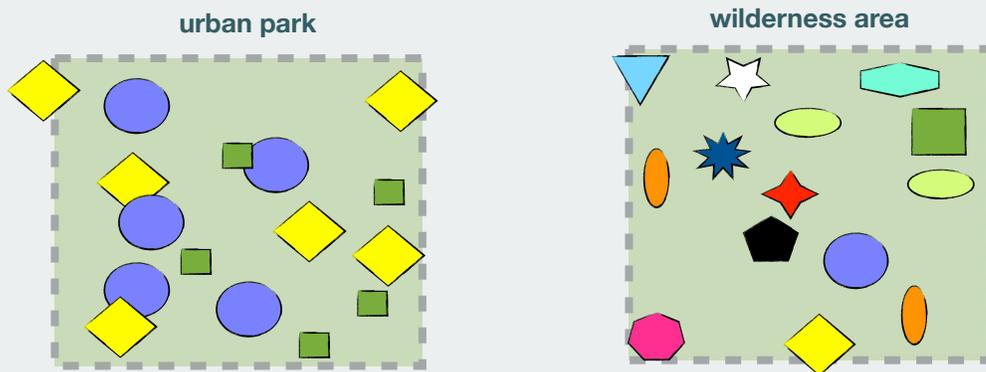
But what about a rule that prohibits picking a flower in a park? There are two main reasons for rules like this:

1. To respect other park visitors who may enjoy seeing the flowers
2. To protect a park's biodiversity

Reason 2 is more serious in wilderness areas where protecting the plants and animals is the main purpose of the park. In places like this, a small amount of change can be a very big deal. Removing a plant or animal can cause damage to the whole park environment. Leaving a **stray** animal, plant, or even a seed in a different place can also upset the balance within the park. That means that dropping something like an apple core in a wilderness area might get you **apprehended** by a park ranger! Don't break rules and **regulations**: Stay within **designated** areas!

*Why is this so serious? Let's do a science simulation to find out.*

The pictures below are models of the trees in two parks. One park is an urban park. It is a great city park and fun to visit, but it only has three different kinds of trees. The other park is a wilderness area. It has 12 different kinds of trees! Notice that different symbols are **designated** to mean different tree species.



Your work is to remove three trees from each park. Do this by marking through the tree symbols with an "x." After you have removed three trees from each park, complete the data table.

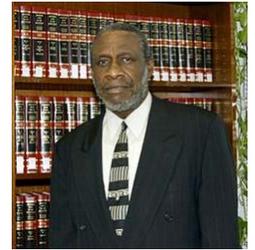
	Number of trees before	Number of trees after 3 are removed	Number of kinds of trees before	Number of kinds of trees after 3 are removed
urban park			3	
wilderness area			12	

## Article

## When is it acceptable to break the rules?

*Is breaking the rules always wrong?*

When Oliver “Olly” Neal was a young man in Arkansas during the 1950s, he didn't care much for school. In high school, he'd mouth off to his teachers and shoplift. One day during his senior year, he skipped class and **strayed** into a pretty unlikely place: the school library. While Neal was looking in the book stacks, he came across a book written by African American author Frank Yerby. The book was *The Treasure of Pleasant Valley*—and it had a cover showing a beautiful woman. Suddenly, Neal had a powerful motive to find out what was inside that book!



But Neal had a big problem: If he checked the book out, he was pretty sure that the students who worked in the library would tell his friends that he wasn't so cool after all. On *StoryCorps*, a radio show that gathers interesting stories about people's lives, Neal told his daughter about his dilemma.

*“[M]y reputation would be down, because I was reading books,” Neal said. “And I wanted them to know that all I could do was fight and cuss.”*

So instead of checking the book out, Neal decided to steal the book in order to maintain his reputation. No one would know that he was reading books. After he finished the book, Neal decided to return the book and brought it to the same place where he had found *The Treasure of Pleasant Valley*. When he put it back, he saw another book by the same author. Neal was so excited to read another book written by Frank Yerby, he took that one too. When he returned the second book, he found a third book by Yerby. He took that one, and by the end of the semester he had read four of Yerby's books but had never checked any of them out. He thought he had outwitted everyone, but when he went back to his 13<sup>th</sup> high school reunion, he bumped into the school librarian, Mildred Grady. She surprised Neal by telling him that she had seen him take *The Treasure of Pleasant Valley* years ago. Mrs. Grady remembered thinking that she ought to go over there and tell him that he didn't need to steal books, that he could check them out for free. But then she realized Neal's situation: He couldn't let his peers see that he was reading, or he'd lose his reputation as a tough guy. Mrs. Grady told Neal that her **intention** was to support his interest in books. So she would drive down to Memphis with another teacher, Mrs. Saunders, to find books by Yerby and put them in the exact place where Neal would return the one he'd stolen and finished reading.

Olly Neal explained to his daughter that it wasn't easy to find books by black authors in the 1950s, so the fact that these women would drive long distances to find books that would motivate him to continue reading was amazing. Their efforts paid off, though. Neal attended college and law school and then was **designated** the first African American prosecuting attorney in Arkansas. He later became a judge! When Mrs. Grady died, her son asked Judge Neal to speak at her funeral and tell the story of how his mother, the librarian, made him a book lover. Judge Olly Neal said Mrs. Grady helped him become the success he is today.

Resources: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=113357239>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/22/opinion/sunday/kristof-how-mrs-grady-transformed-olly-neal.html>



### Discussion questions:

What could have happened if Olly Neal had been **apprehended** and punished?

What would happen if everyone stole books?

How does this story affect your position about breaking rules?

**Prepare to Debate**

**When is it acceptable to break the rules?**

*Get Some Perspective!*

On Day 6 you read about Olly Neal, who stole library books in high school and is now a judge. Today, you will put yourself in Judge Olly Neal’s shoes and respond to the characters from the Reader’s Theater. Work with a partner to fill in the chart. There are many right answers, so be creative!

Reader’s Theater Characters	What would Judge Olly Neal say?
 <p>April and Nick think that everyone should follow the rules and regulations.</p>	
 <p>Herlinda and Marco think that it’s okay if only a few people break the rules, especially if their intentions are good.</p>	

**Defend yourself!**

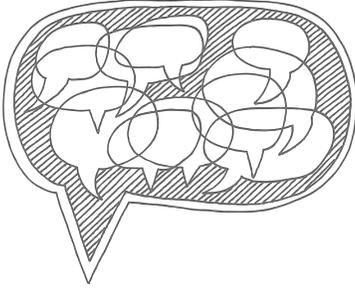
Now, put yourself in the shoes of one of the Reader’s Theater characters. Write a *counterargument* that the character could use to defend his/her argument against Judge Olly Neal.

I am putting myself in \_\_\_\_\_’s shoes.

My counterargument: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Debate

When is it acceptable to break the rules?



Is it ever acceptable to break the rules?

Your teacher will explain the format of this week’s discussion or debate. You may need to organize some notes in the space below:

Perspective	Reasons for	Reasons against
never		
sometimes		

## Pre-Writing

## When is it acceptable to break the rules?

## Comparing Two Letters

April and Nick wrote letters to Professor Kenji Hakuta asking to join one of his trips to Yosemite. Read both letters. Then answer the questions below.

Dear Dr. Hakuta,

Your interview in Word Generation was so fascinating to me that I got several books about Yosemite National Park out of the library. The wealth of flowers and trees and animals in Yosemite is truly amazing. Preservation of those natural resources has become my most important goal. I hope we can meet some day, and you can advise me about how my classmates and I can promote conservation efforts.

Sincerely,  
April

Dear Dr. Hakuta,

I read your interview in Word Generation. It was great. I love rock climbing and being in nature, too. I just really like being outside. I got a few books about Yosemite out of the library. The pictures of wild flowers were really cool. I would like to help keep the plants safe. My class hopes we can go to Yosemite on one of your trips some time. That would be a fun adventure.

Yours truly,  
Nick

1. Which letter sounds more formal?  April  Nick
2. Underline the words and phrases in the more formal or academic letter that make it seem academic.
3. Circle the words and phrases in the more informal letter that make it seem informal.



**Turn and Talk:** When might it be helpful to write an informal letter? When might it be helpful to write a formal letter?



**Writing Support Option**

**When is it acceptable to break the rules?**

Use this chart to plan your writing if you find it helpful.

**TOPIC SENTENCE:**  
*Introduce your opinion.*

My opinion is \_\_\_\_\_

**REASONS:**  
*Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.*

**A REASON AGAINST:**  
*Strengthen your argument by showing you have thought about both sides of the issue.*

People who disagree with me might say \_\_\_\_\_

**RESPONSE:**  
*How would you respond to the reason against?*

**CLOSING SENTENCE:**  
*Restate your opinion.*

In conclusion, \_\_\_\_\_

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