

Avoiding Conflict

Month: Jan.

Week #: 20

Day: T - F Time: 30 min.

# The Golden Rule: Practice

Life Tree Learning Systems ©

Objectives/Aims

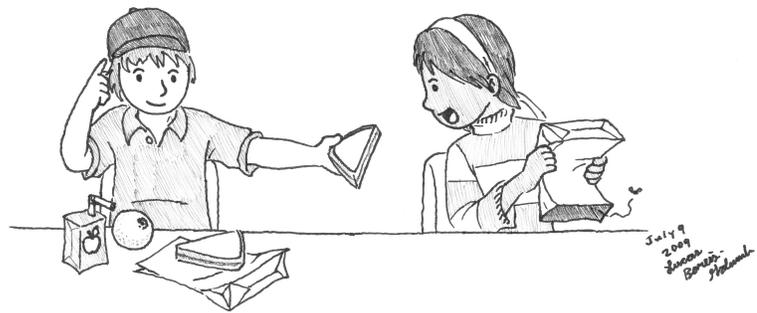
The students will: memorize the paraphrase of the Golden Rule; learn to apply it to real life situations.

Materials

none

Illustration

The boy stopped, put his finger to his head and thought something... Whatever it was, it sure was nice of him to share his lunch with the girl that didn't have any!



Background

The Golden Rule, in one form or another, is practiced and preached in almost every major world religion (see below). The most common and accepted Judaic/Christian version is, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Especially for younger students, the paraphrase, "Treat others how you want to be treated" is much easier for them to remember and understand. Even if a person doesn't espouse a particular

religion or is secular in their world view, the Golden Rule as a stand alone principle, can be justified by its positive results for both oneself and for others.

While this rule sounds simplistic, if everybody applied the Golden Rule to their actions, it would prevent conflicts and violence, demonstrate love and caring for others and even, perhaps, bring about world peace.

Group Activity

1. Ask the students if they remember the Golden Rule. Recite it together as a class: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." If you haven't done so yet, teach them the paraphrase of the Golden Rule, "Treat others how you want to be treated." Ask if anybody saw the Golden Rule in action over the past day and if they would like to tell the class about the incident. Tell them that today they are going to practice applying the Golden Rule to real life situations.

2. Brainstorm with the students possible conflict situations or situation in which others needed help. Write the different situations on the board. Choose 4 -5 situations to act out.

Examples: A student:

- cuts in line.
- wants to join a game.
- forgets their lunch.
- can't find something important.
- is teasing another student.
- is injured.

### **Group Activity (continued)**

3. Split the students into pairs, or triads, depending on the needs of the particular situation. Label one person as 'A', the other person as 'B' and the third 'C' if needed. Tell the students that this is a skit and it is only pretend... so don't take the other person's words personally.

4. Assign each person a part in the play. For example, A wants to join a game that B and C is playing. Leave it to the group to solve the problem using the Golden Rule. Encourage them to point to their temple with their index finger and say, "If I were \_\_\_\_\_ (name of person or group), how would I like to be treated?" whenever they are contemplating the use of the Golden Rule. This serves as physiological clue for them. Have all the small groups work on their situation concurrently.

5. When all of the small groups are done, ask if anybody would like to do their skit for the whole class.

### **Group Discussion Questions:** After each skit ask:

1. How was the Golden Rule applied in this situation?

A: Answers will vary.

2. What would be the possible consequences if the Golden Rule was not used?

A: Conflict, violence, etc.

3. What did you like in particular about this skit?

A: Answers will vary.

### **Variations/Extensions**

1. Give each student a piece of blank white paper and have them either draw a picture or write a story about a situation where they observed the Golden Rule being used. Then, those that choose to can share their picture or story with the other students. In addition, they can also draw or write about a situation where the Golden Rule was not used.

2. To contrast the Golden Rule, you can teach them the 'Lead Rule' which is very similar to the Golden Rule but is significantly different in practice. The Lead Rule is, 'Do to others what they do to you.' This is really the principle of revenge as espoused in the saying, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' This principle usually precipitates an ever escalating cycle of violence.

3. Show the students the painting by Norman Rockwell, entitled "The Golden Rule", and ask the students:

1. What do you see in this painting?

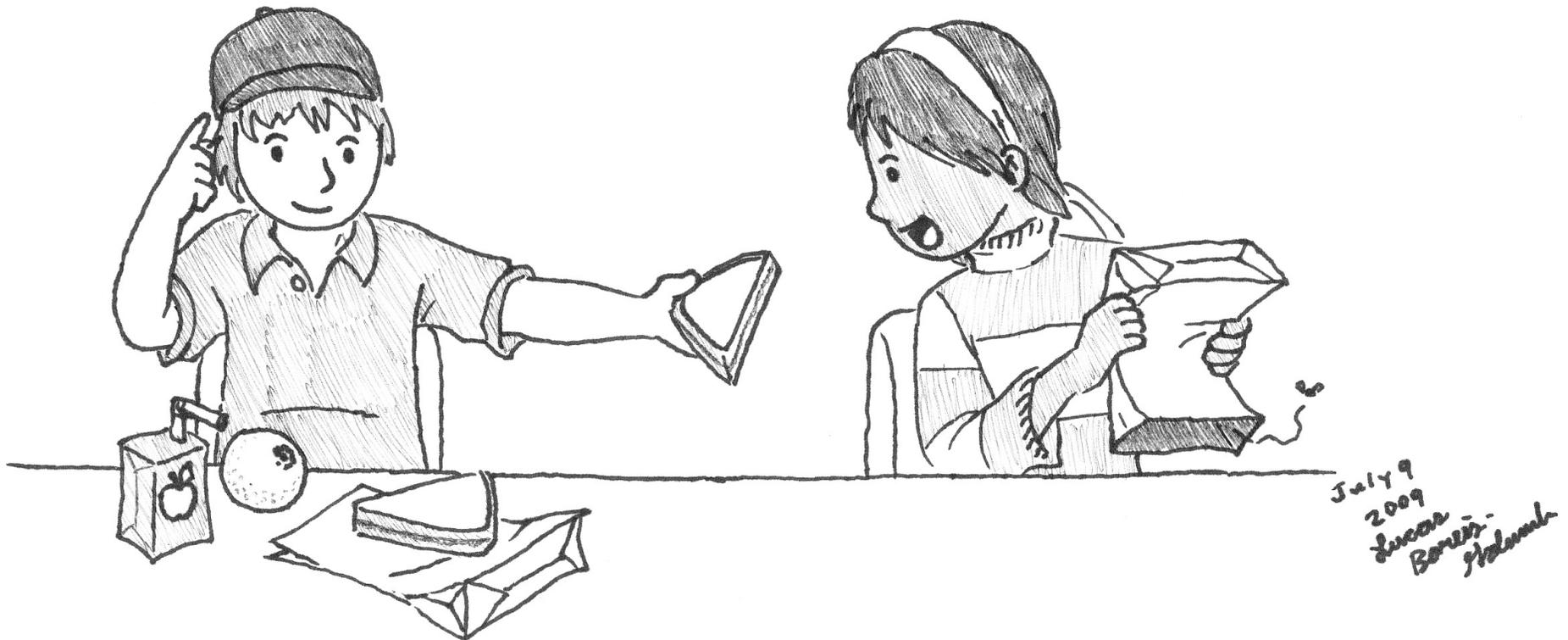
A: People from different racial groups, cultures and religions.

2. What do you think the artist was trying to say with this painting with the Golden Rule written on it?

A: That we need to use the Golden Rule not only with people that are similar to us, but with all people regardless of their color, culture or creed.

### **Conclusion**

Say, "While the Golden Rule sounds really simple, it can be a little tricky to apply. However, it's worth the effort. If everybody applied the Golden Rule to their lives, it would prevent conflicts and violence, demonstrate love and caring for others, and perhaps even bring about world peace."



**The boy stopped, put his finger to his head and thought of something... Whatever it was, it sure was nice of him to share his lunch with the girl that didn't have one!**