



Lesson Plan

Mayor Moe Sees Stars

Subject(s): Language Arts; Social Studies/Humanities

Grade Level: 2 - 6

Specific Student Learning Objectives:

- Students will explore the fairness of laws and rules that limit fundamental rights and freedoms.
- Students will question a law's purpose, effectiveness, and side-effects to develop an informed opinion of the law
- Students will have an opportunity to suggest how the law can be improved

Enduring Understanding + Big Ideas:

- 1) Rights and freedoms are guaranteed in democracies
- 2) One of our rights is to be safe from harm
- 3) Rules and laws limit rights and freedoms and they are created in order to accomplish important goals (for example, to keep us safe).
- 4) Sometimes rules/laws are fair, sometimes they are unfair.

Essential Questions

- How do you know when a rule/law is fair or unfair?
- Is a rule fair just because it has a good purpose and works well?

Context: This lesson would be most effective if students have already been introduced to the “Acorn test” that will be reinforced in this lesson plan. If students are not familiar with the Acorn test, an interactive presentation explaining this three-question critical-thinking test is accessible via this link: [CCLA Acorn Test](http://thatsnotfair.ca/mayor-moe-sees-stars-lesson-plan). This lesson is supported by web resources.

PREAMBLE:

In order for this lesson – or any critical-thinking lesson – to be effective, students must be given clear permission to disagree. Divergent points of view must be encouraged throughout the lesson, so that the issues raised can be fully and meaningfully explored. There are no right answers to these questions, and part of the lesson is to help students understand how challenging and interesting issues of fairness, citizenship and justice can be. Quite aside from adding to the debate, encouraging diversity of opinion and point of view is vital to fostering democratic habits and active citizenship.

Is there a Connection for Students? The content of the lesson is linked to democratic issues/concerns – rights, rules and responsibilities– that students confront every day. In particular, this lesson explores the concept of arbitrary rules/laws and more generally, limits to rights and freedoms. This lesson is constructed to help encourage students to become critical thinkers who are more aware and better prepared for civic engagement.

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<p>PART 1: Minds On: Activating Prior Knowledge</p> <p>Introduction to Rights and Freedoms: Poll students: What does it mean to have rights? What does it mean to have freedom? <i>(Students will likely suggest that freedom means you can do whatever you want.)</i></p> <p>Discussion on the need for rules and laws which are limits to our rights and freedoms: 1) If I have freedom and can do what I want, what if I like to flap my arms? Should I be free to do this? (demonstrate by flapping your arms like a bird) 2) Should I be free to flap my arms with my eyes closed while walking around the classroom? Why or why not? <i>Students should be led to the conclusion that one person's freedom to flap their arms, can also interfere with another person's right to feel safe.</i></p> <p>Discussion on REASONABLE limits: How do we know of a rule/law is fair or if it goes too far to try to achieve a certain goal? In order to keep us safe in school, we follow rules that tell us what we can and cannot do. 3) Since flapping my arms could be unsafe, shouldn't we just make a rule that I am NEVER allowed to flap my arms? Why or why not? <i>Students are being introduced to the concept that, in order to be fair, we have to try to consider and balance how rules can affect different people in different ways.</i> 4) If you were the teacher, how would you write the rule about arm flapping to make it more fair and reasonable? <i>Conclusion: Rules and laws (limits to our freedoms) are necessary, but they need to be FAIR and reasonable.</i></p>	<p>Materials</p> <p>Mayor Moe Sees Stars Word-Wall Words</p>
<p>PART 2: Action - What is a fair limit to our rights and freedoms?</p> <p>Introduce and watch Mayor Moe Sees Stars: <i>In this video, City Council passes a by-law in response to a problem that Mayor Moe has identified. While you're watching, keep in mind the questions from our Acorn test to help you decide whether or not you think the law is fair.</i></p> <p><i>Review the Acorn Test (see materials for printable anchor chart)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Take an initial vote: after students watch the video for the first time, ask them to vote: is the "No-Lights after Dark Regulation" fair or unfair? Optional: Students may use their Fair/Not Fair voting paddles (see Materials) if they wish. 2) Divide the class into smaller groups. Ask each group to apply the Acorn Test to the No-Lights after Dark Regulation to help them think about arguments to inform their opinion of the Regulation. 3) After the small group discussions, ask students to share their responses to each of the questions from the Acorn Test with the rest of the class. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Was there a good purpose for creating the No-Lights after Dark Regulation? Do you think it's important to be able to see the stars at night? Is there another good reason to turn off the lights at night? ii. Did the rule work? Were the stars more visible when the lights were turned off? iii. What else did it do? Were there any consequences or side-effects when the lights were turned off at night? 4) Take a second vote: After applying the Acorn test, who thinks the No-Lights after Dark Regulation is fair? Unfair? Optional: Students may use their Fair/Not Fair voting paddles (see Materials) if they wish. 5) Because we live in a democracy, our leaders who make rules have to listen to us when we have a concern about the decisions they make. What suggestions could you make 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chalk or white board or flip chart. • AV equipment • Mayor Moe Sees Stars Video: http://thatsnotfair.ca/episodes/mayor-moe-sees-stars/ • Optional: Fair/Not Fair voting paddles printouts (one for each student). • Acorn Test anchor chart

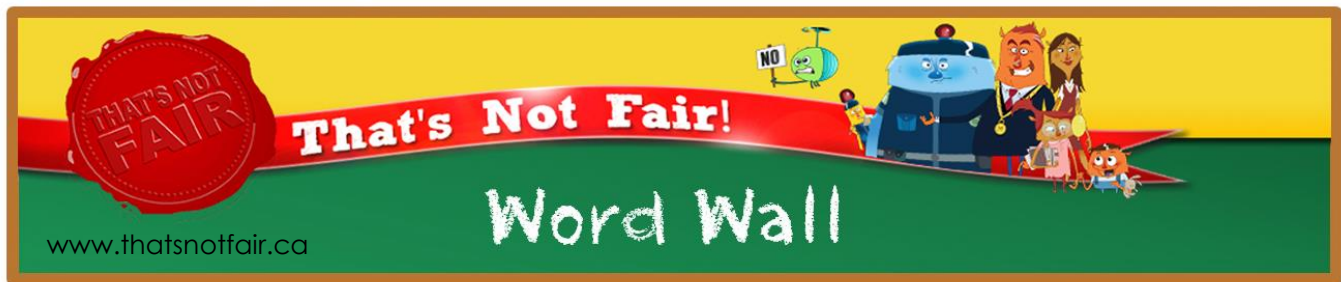
<p>to Mayor Moe and City Council to improve the No-Lights After Dark Regulation? (Some students might suggest that the By-law should be withdrawn completely)</p>	
<p>PART 3: Consolidation and Debrief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concluding statement: Just because a law is effective in achieving its purpose, it doesn't always mean it's fair. What else do we need to ask ourselves in order to determine if a law is fair and reasonable? (What else does the law do? Are there any consequences or side-effects that arise as a result of trying to achieve the purpose?) • Law makers and judges (and now you!) are able to apply these questions in situations where there is a conflict of rights and freedoms. Do you think this can help you to figure out if something is unfair? What other questions could help you to decide if something is fair or unfair? • Is there an issue or a rule in your school or elsewhere that you feel is unfair? Use your critical thinking skills and go through the Acorn Test to assess whether or not the rule/issue is unfair, and if so, see if you can come up with suggestions to address the problem. 	<p>Materials</p>
<p>Next Steps – Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension activity - Write a letter to Mayor Moe: Use your freedom to express yourself in a letter to Mayor Moe and the City Councillors. Tell them what you think about the No-Lights After Dark Regulation and what can be done to make it more fair. • Continue exploring issues of fairness in your classroom using the rest of the That's Not Fair! videos and teacher resources. • Next time you hear students say, "That's not fair," see if they can apply the Acorn Test to help resolve conflicting viewpoints. 	

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Here are a few key words and definitions from **Mayor Sees Stars and Mayor Moe and the Nasty News**. As you watch the videos, feel free to add new words and definitions of your own. Send your suggested words to us at info@thatsnotfair.ca and we may even use your definitions on our website!

Word:	Definition:
By-law	A rule or law voted on by a majority of law-makers, that tells people what they may or may not do.
Democracy	Government by the people with protection for rights and freedoms.
Regulation	A rule, order, or law
Safety	Safety Knowing or feeling that no harm will come to anyone
Withdraw a by-law	To cancel a rule. To reverse an earlier decision to make a rule or law.
Freedom of expression	The ability in democracies to share opinions and ideas in different ways (through talking, writing, art, clothing etc.). Freedom of expression also allows everyone to hear or see the opinions and ideas of others.
Freedom of the press, media and other forms of communication	Everyone is free to create and share their ideas with others. Ideas and opinions can be communicated widely to other people in a newspaper, TV, magazines, internet etc.

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Make your own voting paddle to use when you decide something is fair or unfair in each of the *That's Not Fair* videos! Here's how:

1. Cut out both Councillor Bug images on the dotted line.
2. Using a pencil, trace around one of your Councillor Bug cut-outs onto a piece of construction paper. Cut out the traced shape.
3. Tape one end of a tongue depressor to the back of the construction paper (this is the handle of your voting paddle)
4. Paste each Councillor bug image on one side of the construction paper cut out (it should look like a sandwich with the construction paper in the middle)
5. Watch the *That's Not Fair* series at www.thatsnotfair.ca and vote whenever you see something fair or unfair happening in each story! Happy voting! ☺



For more teaching resources,
and videos visit
www.thatsnotfair.ca

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To help you decide if a limit to a right or freedom is fair, use:

The Acorn Test

- 1.** Why? What is the *purpose* of the limit?
- 2.** Will the limit work? Does the limit achieve its purpose?
- 3.** What else will it do? How are others affected by the limit? Does the limit go too far?

If you decide the limit is unfair, what could be done to make the limit more fair?