



Maggie's Civics Corner

LESSON 20 - Rules vs. Laws

Maggie Says...

In these difficult times, several rules have been put in place to keep people safe and healthy. One rule is that students can no longer attend school in their school buildings—learning must take place at home. Also, during this time laws are being made in our country to keep people safe and healthy. But what is the difference between a rule and a law?

Today's lesson asks us to think about rules and laws. Rules are very important and laws are very important. But what makes them different? Who makes rules and who makes laws? I know that I am supposed to be on a leash when I go outside to play on the sidewalks. But is that a rule or a law? Let's find out the difference together.

Sticky Situation: At your school, your principal made a new rule that learning must happen at the home. Now that you are learning at home, your parent or guardian might have put rules in place to help you learn while at home. **Rules are behaviors that must be followed in certain places.** Rules are made to help you can make the right choices for yourself and those around you. Rules are enforced by families, schools, and people in positions of authority. Rules have consequences if they are not followed.

Discussion Questions:

What is one rule that is in place at your home? What is the consequence of not following that rule?

Our Government is making laws to help people during this difficult time. One of the laws the government is working on seeks to help people who cannot work right now because businesses have closed. **Laws are a system of rules created by governments.** Laws are voted on and publicly enforced by police and courts.

Discussion Questions:

What is one law that helps you and your family stay safe? What is the consequence if someone breaks that law?

Activity: *Part 1:* Have a conversation about the difference between rules and laws. Focus on who creates a rule versus who creates a law. *Part 2:* Identify which statement below is a rule and which statement is a law.

Use your quiet inside voice	Rule or Law (Circle one)
Wear your seatbelt in the car	Rule or Law (Circle one)
Keep your dog on a leash	Rule or Law (Circle one)
Wash your hands for 30 seconds	Rule or Law (Circle one)
Do not steal from the store	Rule or Law (Circle one)
Throw your trash away	Rule or Law (Circle one)

Civic Resources: Check out “Why we have Rules: Basic Concept of Law for Kids”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rhWVQQQ5hVU&t=164s>