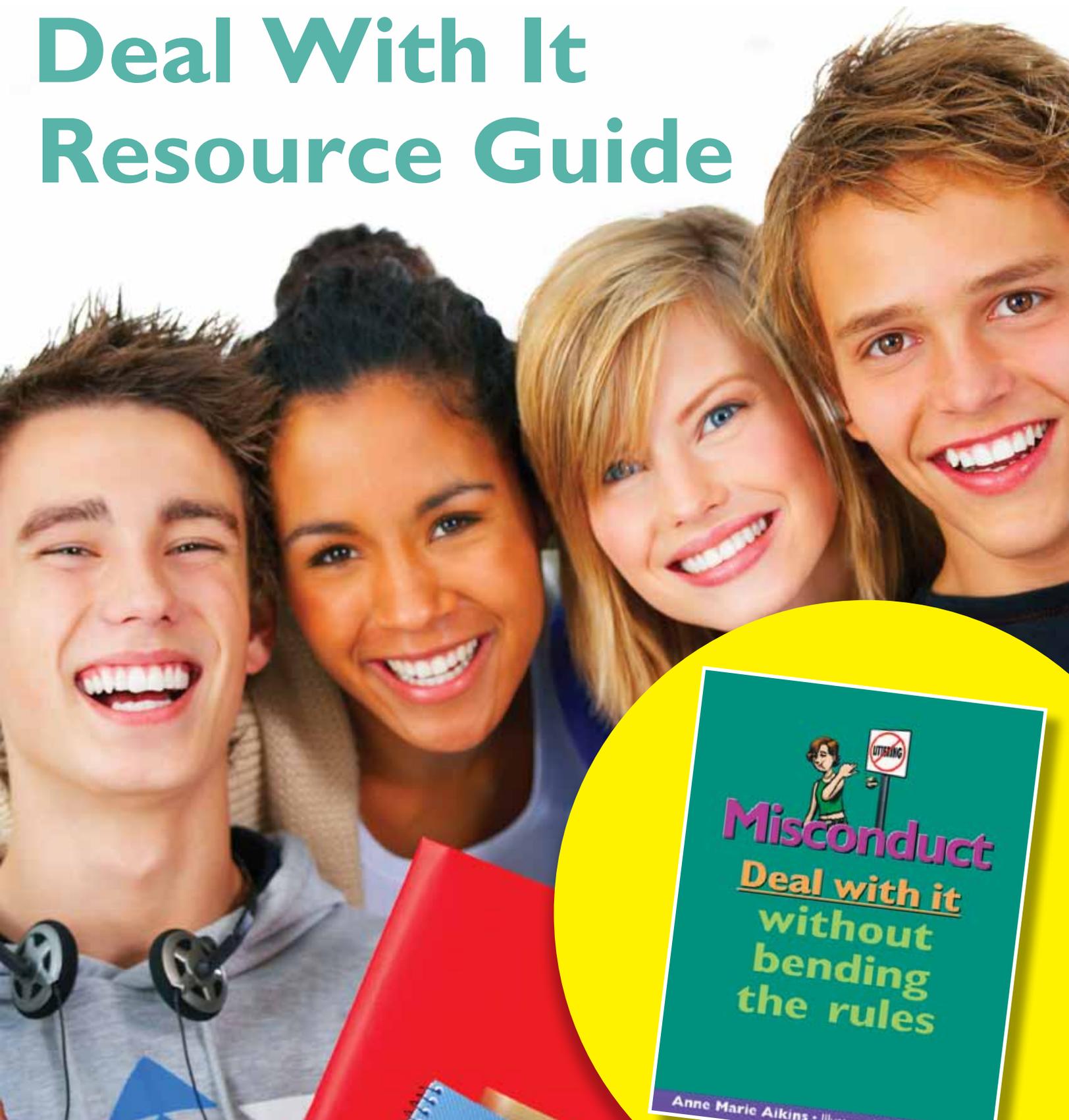


Misconduct: Deal With It Resource Guide



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How to Use this Guide

This guide offers a number of informative and enjoyable discussion questions and teaching activities that allow for in-depth coverage of the causes of conflict from several angles.

Guide Map

This guide begins on page 3 with an introduction to the issue covered in the Deal With It book. Please be sure to read the **Before You Begin** section, which provides suggestions to help you consider the specific needs and interests of your class. It also outlines any particular scenarios presented in the Deal With It book that may be sensitive to some students.

The pages that follow correspond with the sections of the Deal With It book.

These sections are:

- A **101** section that introduces readers to a subject (See page 4 of this guide)
- An **Instigator** section that focuses on the person who instigates the conflict (See page 6 of this guide)
- A **Target** section that focuses on the person who feels victimized in the conflict (See page 8 of this guide)
- A **Witness** section with tips for those caught in between (See page 10 of this guide)

For each of these sections, you will find:

Highlights that briefly capture the main points from the Deal With It book, which you will want to review with students.

Discussion Questions that are designed to introduce students to the topics and encourage them to think critically about the topics at hand.

Teaching Activities that correspond to page numbers in the Deal With It book, and are designated as activities for Individuals (I), Pairs (P), or Groups (G).

About the Series

The **Deal With It** series is a set of 32-page books that empower **kids ages 9–12** to resolve conflict in their lives. Information is presented in an interactive and graphic style to engage readers and help spark discussion of issues. The information in this **Resource Guide** is intended to help educators plan lessons around conflict resolution using the **Deal With It** books.



Misconduct: Deal with it without bending the rules

Rules are everywhere. From the strictest laws to the general societal guidelines that everyone inherently knows, there are all kinds of limits to your conduct. Rules can seem like bad news for kids, but imagine what our homes or society at large would be like if there were no rules. No matter how silly a rule may seem, there is usually a good reason behind it. Most people will break the rules at one time or other. If you decide to break a rule, you must be ready to face the consequences.

This resource guide offers teachers discussion topics and activities that will help to create a positive classroom atmosphere as they read *Misconduct*. This topic is especially significant to adolescents as they are testing their boundaries and developing their personalities and individual beliefs. Students need to feel that they can share their experiences without being judged or getting into trouble. It is important to explore the reasons why people misbehave and break the rules, and when opposing rules in a positive way is acceptable. Open classroom discussions will help to build your students' confidence and empower them to make conscious, responsible decisions.



Before You Begin

Here are some tips and suggestions to help you plan your misconduct unit.

- Gather as much material as you can about misconduct, including *Misconduct: Deal with it without bending the rules*. (See More Help on page 32 of *Misconduct* for a list of materials.)
- Decide on the scope of your study, depending on the grade level you teach and the needs of your students.
- Display books for children on this topic. In addition, prepare a bulletin board for posters, pictures, and, as the theme develops, your students' work.
- Consider inviting a police officer to come in and talk with the class about misconduct.
- Draw up a letter for the students' parents outlining your plans for the theme and noting that they may want to discuss the topic with their children and follow up on the activities they are doing in class.
- Note that misconduct is often part of children's and adolescents' development: they begin to question and test the rules as they learn more about their social environment and themselves. It is important to look at the reasons behind misconduct and explore alternative ways that students can express themselves. Challenging unfair rules can bring about positive change, but misconduct for its own sake can be self-destructive over the long term.

Misconduct 101

Highlights

- Misconduct is breaking the rules, whether they're clear and well known to everyone or not.
- Rules separate doing the right thing from doing the wrong thing.
- Rules are in place to uphold laws, agreements, safety and manners.
- Almost everyone breaks the rules at one time or other.
- Consequences for breaking the rules range from fines and jail sentences to disappointing others or yourself.
- Guidelines are not as stringent as rules and laws. It is up to the individual whether or not they choose to follow a particular guideline for behaviour.

Discussion Questions

- What kinds of rules do you have at home? How would you categorize these rules (i.e., safety, conduct)? What are the consequences for breaking these house rules?
- What is the relationship between breaking a rule and breaking a law? Explain your thinking.
- What are some of the unwritten rules (those that everyone knows implicitly, even though they are not written down anywhere) that you've discovered as you've gotten older? How do you think you learned these rules?
- What do you think is the most important unwritten rule at your school? What would be the most important written rule at your school? Are they the same? Why or why not?
- Imagine that a new student arrives at your school from another country and it is up to you to show her around and help her settle in. Which rules at your school are the most important for her to know? Why do you think so? What about outside the school (i.e., at the mall or a sporting event)?
- Have you ever seen someone in authority, such as a parent, teacher, or coach break a rule? How did witnessing this misconduct make you feel?
- Think about your typical day. How many sets of rules do you need to follow at home, on your way to school, at school, after school, etc? What are some of the consequences for breaking these rules?
- What is your school's policy on cell phones? Are these rules fair? Why or why not?
- Do the different social groups at your school have rules about who can belong? Who creates these rules? How are these rules enforced?

Teaching Activities

I = Individual

P = Pair

G = Group

Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 2–5	Social Studies/ Guidance and Career Education (I)	Ask students to write out the rules for their favourite game. As they are writing, encourage them to think about which rules are most important and why. When they are finished, ask them to imagine what the game would be like if players did not have to obey the most important rule. Would the game still be fun? Why or why not?
pp. 2–5	Language Arts/ Guidance and Career Education (I/G)	Have students complete the following sentence starters as a journal entry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have broken rules before because... • Seeing other people break the rules makes me feel... • I think that rules help me... • I don't like rules when they... Ask volunteers to share their entries with the class and discuss their thought process when they are thinking about whether to break a rule or not.
pp. 6–7	Social Responsibility (G)	Divide the class into four groups and assign each group one of the comic strips. Ask the groups to read through their comics and identify the moment where the characters decide to break the rules. Have groups brainstorm alternative ways that the characters could have dealt with the situation to create a positive solution. Ask volunteers from each group to present their group's ideas to the class.
pp. 8–9	Language Arts/ Social Studies (G)	Ask students to work in small groups to write a list of classroom rules. Have them organize the rules in a chart that includes the rule, the reasons for it, the consequences for breaking it, and the rewards for following it. When they are finished, have the groups present their lists to the class and talk about why these are rules to follow rather than break. Compile all the rules into a class list and display it in the classroom.
pp. 6–7	Language Arts/ Guidance and Career Education (G)	As a class, discuss the differences is between voicing your opinion and “giving attitude.” Divide the class into small groups and have them brainstorm a list of situations in which it is important to give your opinion and stand up for yourself. For each item on their list, ask them to think of ways that they could give their opinions without offending anyone else or having a bad attitude. Have each group share their list with the rest of the class and discuss them as a group.
pp. 12–13	Social Studies/ Canada and World Studies/Language Arts (I)	Have students research a rule that has changed over time, such as women's right to vote in Canada, or mandatory seat belt or helmet use. Ask them to prepare a brief report on their findings and present it to the class.

The Troublemaker

Highlights

- The Troublemaker is the one who breaks the rules and may be constantly punished for their misconduct.
- When he or she breaks the rules, it seems as though the Troublemaker gets to:
 - ☛ think only of him- or herself
 - ☛ be his or her own boss
 - ☛ be seen as brave and free-spirited
 - ☛ have fun
 - ☛ be noticed
 - ☛ get out of class sometimes
 - ☛ do whatever he or she likes
 - ☛ take whatever he or she wants
 - ☛ challenge injustices
- You can manage misconduct by:
 - ☛ exploring your feelings and think about why you break the rules
 - ☛ reviewing the rules to figure out what or who you are acting out against
 - ☛ examining the consequences and deciding if breaking the rules is worth it
 - ☛ finding fun alternatives
 - ☛ being a leader and find positive ways to question rules that you think are unfair
- Sometimes Troublemakers break rules just to get back at someone or to avoid responsibility, in which cases their natures simply lead them into trouble rather than positive change.

Discussion Questions

- Do you know someone who got into trouble for breaking a rule? What were the consequences? Do you think they were fair? Why or why not?
- Have you ever broken a rule? Why did you break the rule? How did you feel before you broke the rule? How did you feel afterward? If you were in the same situation again, would you do things differently?
- Has a rule that you have broken ever effected someone else in a negative way? Have you ever gotten in trouble or been upset by someone else breaking a rule?
- Have you ever been tempted to break a rule but you didn't? Why did you want to break the rule? How did you handle the situation? How did you feel afterward?
- Do you know anyone who worked to change a rule in your school or community? How did they go about it? Were they successful?
- Why do you think that adults who have gotten into trouble with the law often report that they had trouble following the rules when they were young? Do you see a connection? Explain your thinking.
- Is there a rule that bothers you right now? Why do you think it is unfair or hard to follow? What could you do to make the rule more acceptable?



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Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 14–15	Health and Physical Education (G)	Have students think about how they feel when they think a rule is unfair or they are about to break a rule. Ask volunteers to describe their thoughts and feelings. Have students work in small groups to research ways they might practice self-control, such as taking a deep breath or stopping to think about the situation. Ask them to create posters listing ways they might practise self-control and avoid becoming the Troublemaker. Display their posters around the classroom.
pp. 14–15	Social Studies/ Canada and World Studies (I)	Have students conduct research to find out about a person or group of people who challenged rules they thought were unjust (e.g., The Famous Five, Justine Blainey, Asmahan Mansour, etc.). Ask them to prepare a brief biography about the person or group, including their background, why they thought the rule was unfair, how they got involved and tried to change it, and what were the outcomes. Have students present their biographies to the class and collect them in a class book.
pp. 16–17	Language Arts (I)	Have students research and write a persuasive letter to their principal explaining why a change they feel is needed should be made in the school. Encourage students to include at least three arguments to support their case. Letters can be shared in class or posted on a class message board where students can respond to each other’s letters. You may also want to follow up with a class discussion about how expressing your disagreement with certain rules by writing letters or similar actions can be more effective than misconduct.
pp. 18–19	The Arts (visual)/ Social Studies (G)	Have students work in small groups to find some funny or outrageous Canadian laws. (Note: you may wish to do an Internet search for “funny Canadian laws” and then refer students to selected websites.) Ask them to choose the law that appeals to them as the most outrageous and present it, including the reasoning behind the law or details on how the law was changed. Display their posters around the classroom.
pp. 18–19	Guidance and Career Education/ The Arts (visual) (G)	Divide students into five groups and assign each group one of the suggestions on pp. 18–19. Have groups brainstorm lists for each of the suggestions. For example, they would brainstorm a list of feelings they associate with rules they think are unfair. When they have generated their lists, have them create posters for each suggestion using images to represent the feelings they listed. Have groups present their posters to the class and display them around the classroom.

The Follower

Highlights

- The Follower:
 - ☛ spends a lot of determining what the rules are so that he or she does not break them
 - ☛ may be teased for being a “goody two-shoes”
 - ☛ never questions or tries to negotiate changes in the rules
- Being the Follower can be a problem if:
 - ☛ following the rules all the time makes you feel powerless or angry
 - ☛ you are following rules that you know are unfair
- You can choose your own conduct and don’t need to follow along with friends who are breaking rules. You can:
 - ☛ suggest other activities
 - ☛ negotiate compromises
 - ☛ walk away
 - ☛ get help if you are worried about your or someone else’s safety
- It is good to follow fair rules, but it is also important to think for yourself and try to revise unfair rules.

Discussion Questions

- Who are your role models at school? Do they always obey the rules?
- Think about this statement: Successful people make more mistakes than unsuccessful people. Do you think this statement is accurate? Why or why not?
- What are the rewards for following school rules? Are there any rewards for following traffic rules or laws? Are there rewards for following the unwritten rules?
- Are there rules in your home for when you can use, how long you can use, and what you can do on the Internet? Why do you think these rules are in place? Do you think they are fair? What sorts of changes would you like to make to these house rules? Why?
- Is there a house rule that you think is unfair? How might you convince your parents that this rule should be changed? What compromises could you make that might make this rule easier for you to follow?
- Imagine that you are told that you can only be in a certain group if you’re not friends with kids from another group. You want to be accepted, but you don’t want to be mean. What should you do?



Teaching Activities

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Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 20–21	Media Literacy (G)	Working in small groups, have students brainstorm a list of all the Followers they can think of from popular TV shows and movies. Have them think about the characteristics they share and what makes them different. Ask volunteers to present their findings to the class. As a class, discuss the role of the Follower and why this character might reappear in different shows and movies.
pp. 20–21	Language Arts (I)	Have students brainstorm a list of books they have read in which the Follower voices his or her opinion and gains respect from the Troublemaker and the Witness because of it. Ask students to choose one of the books and write a journal entry on how they might learn from this book and apply the ideas in their own lives.
pp. 22–23	Media Literacy/ Social Studies/ The Arts (visual) (G)	As a class, have students brainstorm a list of ten rules to make sure that everyone is included and respected. Divide the class into ten groups and assign each group a rule from the class list. Have each group create a poster or webpage to illustrate their rule. Gather the posters together into a class rule book that could be shared with other classes, or compile the webpages together and include them on your school website.
pp. 24–25	Social Studies/ Canada and World Studies (I/G)	Have students research to find out about rules and laws that have caused injustice in Canada and around the world. Encourage them to find out more about The Indian Act, the internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II, or other unfair rules. Have them write a report about the rule, its effects on people, and how people worked to change it. Ask students to present their findings to the class. Then, as a group, discuss how these injustices were perpetuated and how it might have felt to live under these rules.
pp. 24–25	The Arts (visual/ music)/Social Studies/Canada and World Studies (I)	Have students design a CD of songs that challenge unfair rules or champion human rights. Ask them to create a song list, a title for their collection, and cover art. Display completed CD covers on the bulletin board.
pp. 24–25	Language Arts (P)	Have students work in pairs to discuss some dangers of the Internet, including personal safety and privacy. Ask them to develop a list of rules that young people should follow to ensure their safety on the Internet. Have them create a brochure to encourage younger students to follow these rules.

The Witness

Highlights

- You have a choice to make when you witness rules being broken. You can:
 - ☛ speak up
 - ☛ follow along
 - ☛ tell someone in authority
- Sometimes the Witness becomes part of the problem by:
 - ☛ being silent
 - ☛ doing nothing when someone might get hurt
 - ☛ accepting the benefits of misconduct, such as taking and using stolen goods
 - ☛ admiring a person who breaks a rule
 - ☛ pretending they are also breaking the rule
- Witnesses may not think there are any real consequences for breaking a particular rule, or they may fear a harsh consequence for taking a stand. They are afraid they might:
 - ☛ lose friends
 - ☛ look like a coward
 - ☛ interfere in something that's none of their business
 - ☛ make a mistake
 - ☛ misinterpret a person's intentions
 - ☛ get someone in trouble

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever witnessed someone breaking the rules and not known what to do? How did you feel? Were you worried about getting yourself or someone else into trouble? What happened? How might you deal with a similar situation in the future?
- Most adults are reluctant to interfere in other people's business even when they witness rules being broken. Have you ever witnessed an adult intervening when rules were broken? How did they handle the situation? Was there something else that could have been done?
- What sort of misconduct situations might you get involved or get help? Review the comic strips on pp. 6–7 of *Misconduct*. Would you intervene if you had witnessed any of these scenarios? What would you do to try to help?
- What is the difference between being a tattle-tale and speaking up as a Witness? Explain your thinking.
- Why do you think young people who break laws are treated differently than criminals over the age of 18? Do you think this is fair? Are there any circumstances where you think young offenders should be treated as adults? Explain your thinking.



Teaching Activities

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Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 26–27	Media Literacy/ Social Responsibility (I)	Have students create a slideshow to illustrate the “Do’s” of being a responsible Witness listed on p. 27. They may wish use software such as PowerPoint® or Photo Story 3.0 to create their slideshow. Encourage them to add comments and speech bubbles to help explain the images. When they are finished, have students present their slideshows to the class.
pp. 26–27	Language Arts/ Media Literacy/ Guidance and Career Education (I)	Ask students to write a reflective paragraph about rule breakers in the media. Encourage them think about how people who break the rules are characterized on TV and in the movies. Have them include their thoughts on what role — the Troublemaker, the Follower, or the Witness — they play most often and why. Encourage them to compare their response to the characters they see in the media.
pp. 26–27	Language Arts/ Social Studies (G)	Divide the class into two groups to debate the statement: Witnesses who do nothing should be punished. Give groups time to discuss their ideas and develop their arguments. After the debate, have students discuss the results and decide which groups had stronger arguments and why.
pp. 28–31	The Arts (drama)/ Social Responsibility (G)	Divide the class into groups of three or four and assign each group one of the situations from the quiz. Have each group act out each of the possible solutions (or some of their own) to show how they can be resolved in a positive way. When each presentation is complete, the class can vote on the best solution for each situation.
pp. 28–31	Social Responsibility/ Canada and World Studies/ The Arts (visual) (I)	Have students research to find out about rules for conduct and social responsibility in different cultures or religions. They may wish to use the Internet or conduct interviews as part of their research. Encourage them to compare these rules across cultures to find similarities. Based on their findings, have them create a poster of the Top Ten Rules for Social Conduct and display it in the classroom.
pp. 28–31	Language Arts/ Guidance and Career Education (I)	Have students write a journal entry about how they might better deal with misconduct as a Troublemaker, Follower, or Witness. Encourage them to include steps on how they might achieve their goal of dealing with misconduct in a positive way. Ask them to review their entries over the course of the year to see if they have implemented changes to better deal with misconduct.

Additional Resources

- <http://printables.familyeducation.com/puzzles-and-games/indoor-games/51515.html>: the Family Education website features a set of discussion cards each detailing a rule-breaking scenario.
- www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=105: The International Reading Association's website features a lesson plan dealing with heroes who break barriers. It also includes a biographies booklist and links to several brief online biographies.
- www.scarboromissions.ca/Golden_rule/school_curriculum.php#section4: The Scarborough Missions website features a history of the term "Golden Rule," as well as several lesson plans, discussion questions, and a quiz. There is also an interactive component on this site.

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