

That's Not Fair! ★ Teaching Guide

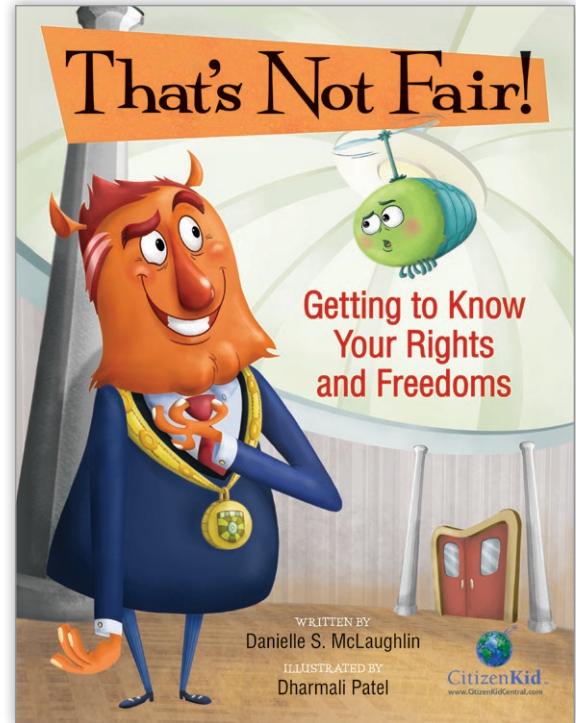
If you are a teacher, you have certainly heard your students say, “That’s not fair!” — you may have even said it yourself! “That’s not fair” is a very important phrase because as soon as we are able to say it, we are ready to think critically about our rights and freedoms. In fact, this phrase gives teachers the perfect opportunity to help students form their own opinions about fairness.

About the Book

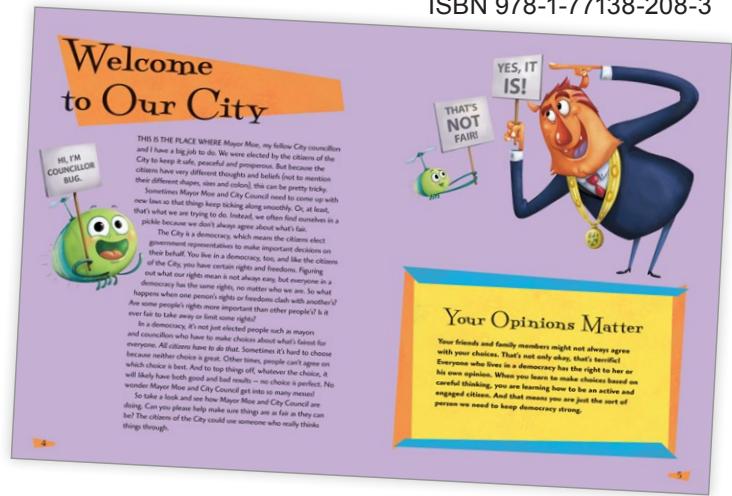
This unique addition to the CitizenKid collection, written by Danielle S. McLaughlin, provides an accessible exploration of the rights and freedoms of citizens in a democracy through a series of six short stories starring Mayor Moe and the councillors of a sometimes wacky city. In each story, the councillors are first presented with a problem, and the group then makes a decision to address that problem with a new law, only to discover later there are unintended consequences. There is one councillor, Bug, who objects to each decision being proposed by commenting, “That’s not fair!” — a sentiment familiar to children, who have an innate sense of justice. The topics are child-friendly: Should you be allowed to search someone’s bag because you think they could have something of yours? Does it make sense to have a law that states people can say only nice things? Conclusions for each story include an extended discussion of the rights and freedoms featured in the story, along with three questions to ponder: Why did the councillors make their decision? Did the new law achieve its purpose? Were there any unexpected results? There are no right answers given. Instead, children are encouraged to look at all sides of each issue, which engages their critical-thinking skills and fosters empathy for other points of view. This book would be perfect for sparking spirited discussions on civics lessons and inspiring children to become involved citizens.

About the Author

DANIELLE S. MC LAUGHLIN has been a civil liberties advocate since she was old enough to say, “That’s not fair!” As the director of education for the Canadian Civil Liberties Association and Education Trust, she has developed programs and resources for nearly three decades to help teachers and students think critically. She lives in Toronto, Ontario, with her husband, Hooley, with whom she shares three brilliant children and three amazing granddaughters.



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About the Illustrator

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Everyone Can Think Critically

With a little practice and a lot of questioning, each one of us can learn to be a critical thinker — someone who thinks very carefully about everyone's rights and freedoms and weighs what it means to be fair in different circumstances.

There are three questions at the end of each story in this book that will help you and your students decide if it could be fair to limit someone's rights and freedoms. This is the process that people in democracies everywhere, from lawmakers to judges to everyday citizens, can use to help them make important decisions. Teachers can use the questions in the book and also adapt them to other issues and circumstances that arise on a daily basis in all of our communities.

The three basic questions are:

1. What is the purpose of limiting the right or freedom? Is it an important purpose?
2. Will limiting the right or freedom achieve that purpose?
3. What else happens when you limit the right or freedom? How are people affected? Could there be any unexpected results?

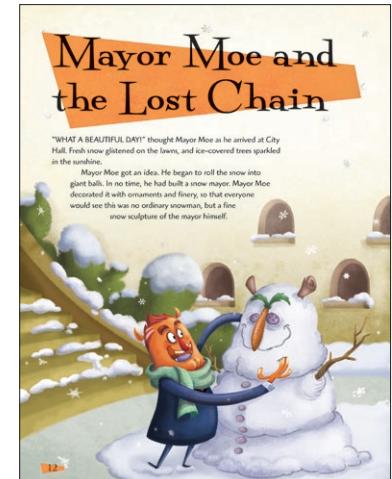
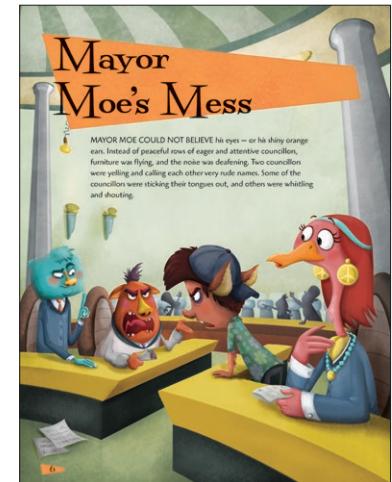
For even more ways to exercise your critical-thinking skills, try the following questions and hands-on activities with your students. By keeping our critical-thinking skills strong and sharp, we're helping to keep democracy strong, too!

MAYOR MOE'S MESS — PAGE 6:

1. Sometimes, rules and laws can conflict with certain people's beliefs or religious rules. When this happens, we should ask questions to help us decide whether it would be fairer to enforce the rule or to change it in order to protect a person's freedom of religion or belief. Do you think wanting everyone to dress the same in City Council is more important than allowing the councillors to wear their religious head coverings? Why or why not?
2. Do you think the Hats Off Neat and Tidy Law should change for councillors who want to wear their favorite team's baseball cap while in City Council? Is this different from councillors who wear religious head coverings? Why or why not?
3. When the councillors voted on the Hats Off Neat and Tidy Law, the majority (the largest number) of councillors were in favor of the law. Only a minority (the smallest number) of councillors had religious beliefs that required them to wear head coverings. Do you think it is always fair to decide about limits to our freedoms by doing what the majority of people want? Why or why not? What could happen to the rights of people who are different from those in the majority if we only made decisions in this way?

MAYOR MOE AND THE LOST CHAIN — PAGE 12:

1. Have you ever felt upset or embarrassed when someone searched through your belongings without your permission? Searching through private things can reveal a lot of very personal information about someone that he or she may not want others to know. Could there ever be a time when it might be fair to search through someone's personal stuff without his or her permission? Who do you think should be allowed to search and for what reasons?
2. Is it fair for the Mayor to assume that because Councillor Quackley won't open her bag, she stole the chain?
3. Is finding the chain more important than Councillor Quackley's privacy? Why or why not?



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4. Would it have been fairer to search everyone's belongings if there were a dangerous snake on the loose? Why or why not?
5. What else could the Mayor have done to find his missing chain without violating everyone's right to privacy?

MAYOR MOE SEES STARS — PAGE 18:

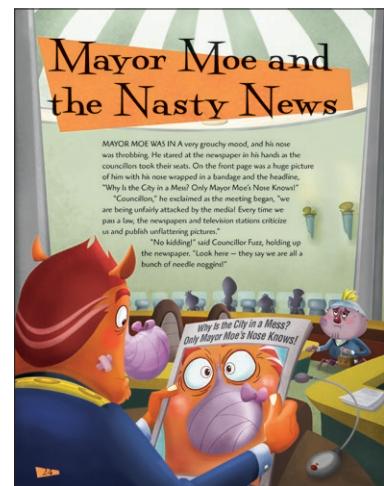
1. Rules and laws are needed to achieve important goals, such as keeping people safe or protecting the environment. In "Mayor Moe Sees Stars," the Mayor quickly realized that just because a rule works doesn't always mean it is fair; and in the case of the Lights Off After Dark Law, sometimes rules can even be harmful! Look at the rules below and decide if you think they are fair or unfair. Don't forget to provide your reasons! Would you ever make an exception to a rule that you thought was fair?

Rule	Fair or unfair?	Reasons	Exceptions to the rule
No running in the halls at school			
No running in the school gym or playground			
No yelling indoors			
No yelling, even in an emergency			

2. List one rule at school or at home that you think is unfair. Apply the three questions that are found at the end of each story in this book to help you think critically about the fairness of the rule.
 - a. Why was the rule made? Is it for an important purpose?
 - b. Does the rule achieve its purpose?
 - c. What else does the rule do? Are there any unexpected results?
3. Have each student or groups of students make up a rule that they think would be fairer than the one they don't like. Then ask the three questions about the NEW rule! After asking the three questions, does the class still think the new rule is fair?

MAYOR MOE AND THE NASTY NEWS — PAGE 24:

1. Democracy can only exist where people can freely share their ideas and opinions with one another. Without free expression (or freedom of speech), we would not be able to learn about points of view that are different from our own, nor would we be able to challenge our own views (which are both necessary for critical thinking!). Sometimes, however, expression can also be used to hurt people. What kind of expression have the students experienced that they wish they had not heard or seen?
2. Ask the students to come up with a rule to help everyone decide what kind of expression should be allowed and what kind of expression should be limited. Don't forget to use the three questions to examine the class's new rule. Is it fair?
3. What would happen in your class if there were a Be Nice Law? Would the students be kinder to one another? What else could happen?

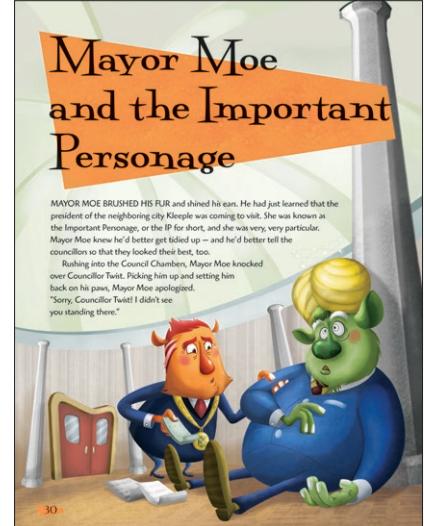


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- Do you think the media (newspapers, television, radio, internet) should have the freedom to report on everything that is happening in the world, even if the news could embarrass an important person or a whole government? Why or why not? What kind of information should the public have a right to know? Ask the class to make a list of important information they have learned from the media. Is there any information the media should be restricted from reporting? What would this list look like?

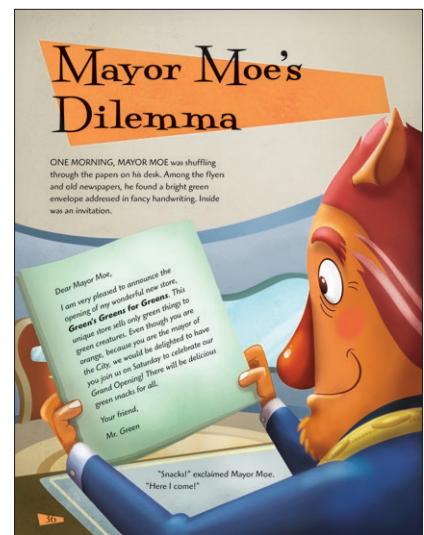
MAYOR MOE AND THE IMPORTANT PERSONAGE — PAGE 30:

- Freedom of association and peaceful protest allow people to come together as a group and complain when they believe something is unfair. What could happen if we never allowed people to gather in groups to complain or say unpleasant things in public?
- Can the students come up with examples of when they or people in their communities gathered in groups for a special purpose? Have the students seen a picket line or a political rally? What do they think about such gatherings? What do they like about them? What don't they like about them?
- What are some different methods groups of people in democracies use to complain about things that aren't fair? Some protest tactics are lawful, but others are not. If your class were making the rules, which kinds of protest would they permit and which kinds of tactics would they outlaw?



MAYOR MOE'S DILEMMA — PAGE 36:

- The right to equality means that we should all be treated fairly despite our differences. But the right to equality can be very confusing. Some people think that in order to be fair, we must treat everyone the same. But sometimes, treating everyone the same can lead to some people being treated unfairly. Can your students think of examples of this? (e.g., Everyone must use the stairs — what happens to people who need wheelchairs? Or, everyone must read aloud — what happens to people who cannot read?)
- Consider the following examples and think critically about the right to equality:
 - Getting an education is very important. Should all children have an equal opportunity to go to school? Why or why not?
 - If two people needed to see over a barrier but one is much taller than the other, would it be fair to give them the same-sized platform on which to stand? Why or why not?
 - Driving a car is a big responsibility. Should everyone be allowed to drive a car? Why or why not?
- Opening a new store is a lot of work and costs a lot of money! If Mr. Green has gone through all the trouble of opening a store, shouldn't he be allowed to choose who is allowed to work there? Why or why not?
- Imagine you are about to open a store of your own. List five of the most important qualities you would look for in the person you hire.
- Is it fair to exclude people from working at your store based on their appearance or another characteristic they cannot change (for example, their religion, disability or gender)? Why or why not? Would it be fair to have a rule requiring that all employees wear matching clothes (a uniform) so that they all have a similar appearance? Why or why not?



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Hands-On Activities

WRITE A LETTER TO MAYOR MOE!

One of the greatest things about living in a democracy is that when you think something is unfair, you have the freedom to try and do something about it as long as your actions are peaceful and don't break the law.

Pick any story in this book and use your freedom of expression to write a letter to Mayor Moe or one of the city councillors. If you are writing a letter of complaint, be sure to explain the problems you identified and try to provide suggestions on how to improve the situation. You may even want to use your answers to the three questions at the end of the story to help you explain the problems you identified.

PRACTICE YOUR VOTING SKILLS!

Voting is an important part of being an engaged and active citizen. Although you might not be old enough to vote in an election yet, there are still other ways to make your voice heard. Make your own voting paddle and, just like Councillor Bug, let others know your opinion after you've thought critically about what is and isn't fair in the world around you!

Instructions:

1. Color both Councillor Bug images (the front and back of the voting paddle) and cut out along the dotted lines.
2. Using a pencil, trace around one of your cut-outs onto a piece of construction paper and cut out the traced shape.
3. Tape one end of a tongue depressor or popsicle stick to the back of the construction paper (this is the handle of your voting paddle).
4. Glue one Councillor Bug image on one side of the construction paper, covering the end of the handle. Glue the other Councillor Bug image on the other side of the construction paper (it should look like a sandwich with the construction paper in the middle).

Note: Voting paddle images can be found in the Appendices.

EXTRA, EXTRA! EXERCISE YOUR FREEDOM OF THE PRESS!

Pick an issue or problem in your community that you think the public should know about. Create a newspaper headline complete with an illustration to report on your chosen issue.

Note: Newspaper image can be found in the Appendices.



