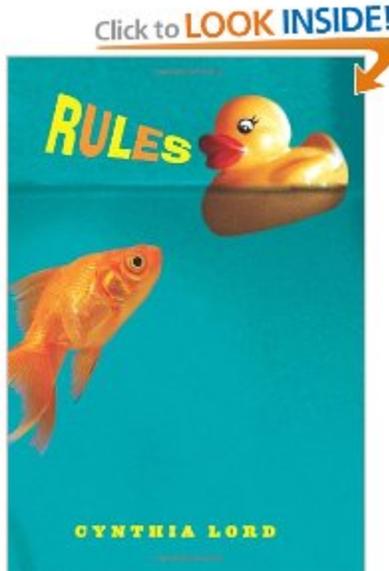


## Welcome to Little Read 2013

We hope that these chapter summaries and response prompts accompanied by activities will be a helpful guide in your planning and teaching the book, *Rules*.



# Rules

by Cynthia Lord

**A Teacher's Planning Guide**

Chapter summaries, compiled by Sarah Borders, are based on the reflective dual entry journals which were kept by the LR students as they read the book.

## Helpful Links

Here are links to the best materials which we found on the internet. Here you will find information about the author, discussion questions, templates to organize your planning, as well as student responses.

1. *This discussion guide from Scholastic is a good source for learning about the author. Good questions to consider at beginning, middle and end of the book. The list of references is well researched and helpful.*

[http://www.cynthialord.com/pdf/rules\\_discuss.pdf](http://www.cynthialord.com/pdf/rules_discuss.pdf)

2. *A second discussion guide focuses on elements of literature. It includes questions for pre-reading, during the reading. Another good feature is that it has selected passages for read -aloud. It is a good source of information about the author.*

<http://www.lesliepreddy.com/yhba/08-09/Intermediate/Rules-Reiff.pdf>

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3. *This is a reader's guide written in New Rochelle, New York for a project similar to ours. It is excellent. The section on pre-reading and planning will be most helpful to you. There are excellent discussion questions addressing the details in each chapter.*

[http://www.nred.org/www/nred/site/hosting/Events/Literature\\_Festival/RULES\\_Study\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.nred.org/www/nred/site/hosting/Events/Literature_Festival/RULES_Study_Guide.pdf)

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or

[http://www.cynthialord.com/rules\\_extra.html#behind](http://www.cynthialord.com/rules_extra.html#behind)

### **Chapter 1: Follow the Rules**

**Setting: Catherine and David's home**

Catherine, the narrator, is twelve and her brother David is eight. We notice immediately that David is different from most children. Catherine's mom depends on Catherine to help with David, which she does willingly, yet it is not easy. We also learn that Catherine misses her best friend, Melissa, who is in California for the summer. She is lonely for her friend, and is "tingly with hope" that the family moving in next door will have a girl her age. For Catherine it is a challenge to watch David. He needs to be taught everything. It works well for her to make rules for him, because he needs structure or he will get out of bounds. In fact, he loves rules. Autistic children such as David need surefire answers: "Yes", "No" or "Wednesday at 5 o'clock." David's favorite place is the video store where he loves to read the ratings on the boxes. His dad often takes him there at five o'clock after work. David counts the minutes until the promised time, and has great difficulty coping if his dad is late. Much to Catherine's embarrassment, People often look at David with a "wrinkled forehead" look when they are in public. ("What's wrong with this kid?") Whether they are in public or at home, rules are helpful. Some are more common such as "Eat with your mouth closed." Others are clearly made for David's unique needs: "Late doesn't mean not coming." "No toys in the fish tank." Some are more hints than rules. There is Catherine's "sorry, gotta go" rule. Some rules are just little pieces of wisdom for her own life which she has learned: Others are more philosophical: "Sometimes people don't answer because they didn't hear you. Other times it's because they don't want to hear you."

### ***Think about/ Talk about/ Write about***

- Social Studies: Talk about rules and reasons for rules in different settings where what we do affects other people: The school, the bus, the classroom, the cafeteria, on the highways and streets. Brainstorm rules for public places. Brainstorm safety rules. (Picture book...Officer Buckle and Gloria by Peggy Rathmann--a Caldecott winner--is about safety.) Write your family rules. Write rules you make for yourself and want to keep. **See activity: "Rules All Around Us" under Social Studies.**

## **Chapter 2: Don't run down the clinic hallway**

### **Setting: The clinic**

David goes to the clinic for occupational therapy. Catherine likes to go along because it is one of the few times she can spend time with her mom, who reads aloud to her in the waiting room. Catherine loves to draw, and she always carries her sketchbook and colored pencils. The same people are always there, one of whom is Jason, who is in a wheelchair and can hear and understand, but can't speak. His mother brings him. Another person is his speech therapist who talks way too loud, as if this would help Jason understand. He communicates with cards in a book, to which he points when he wants to say something. Today he is angry because he wanted to go shopping for a guitar at a yard sale. Catherine doesn't know what's wrong with Jason, but it must be "something big." Embarrassed to look straight at him, she decides to draw him. Catherine has discovered in her life that "**Looking closer can make something beautiful.**" Jason's mother misunderstands, thinking Catherine is making fun of Jason. Catherine speaks to Jason, noticing that his eyes are ice blue and "stunning." She feels very bad, and apologizes. Jason and his mother leave, but his mother returns saying to Catherine that Jason likes another drawing she is working on. She tears it out of her sketchbook and

gives it to his mom to give to him.

***Think about/ Talk about/ Write about***

- Learning about autism. See activity called **The Word Cloud** under Language Arts as you assess students' knowledge of autism

**Chapter 3: If it's too loud, cover your ears**

**Setting: Catherine's Home**

We learn that David hears everything "extra loud." This is the reason he covers his ears. It is the last day of school. Catherine is really angry because a neighbor, Ryan, makes fun of David. David, however, admires Ryan, not even realizing what he is doing. David counts minutes and cars because he is so frustrated waiting for Dad to come home. He calls out, "The whole world is covered with buttons" which is a line from his favorite book ***Frog and Toad are Friends***. It is comforting to David when Catherine steps right into the little drama, "Frog, you are looking quite green." One of David's conversational rules is "If you need to borrow words, Arnold Lobel had some good ones." Dad arrives late at 5:42. (He was supposed to be there at five.)

***Think about/ Talk about/ Write about***

- Reader's Theater from *Frog and Toad are Friends*. Find the story about the buttons. How are the feelings expressed in the Frog and Toad story similar to how David feels? Have you ever had a day when you felt that same way? Sometimes we use expressions like , "He had a meltdown" or "She hit the wall." These are idioms. What are some other idioms for losing your cool?
- See lesson plans for Frog and Toad under Language Arts and Science for more ideas.

**Chapter 4: Sometimes you've gotta work with what you've got.**

**Setting: The clinic**

Catherine still has the new girl next door on her mind. "I try not to let my hopes run loose, but they wash with the **water** under the bridges." Mrs. Morehouse lets Catherine know that Jason thanks her for the drawing. Jason taps his book to let Catherine know that he would like to have a card with her name. Catherine wonders how it must feel to need cards to talk to people. Catherine gives Jason a card with her name and a sketch of herself. Jason is happy. "Good job!" Catherine offers to make more words for Jason. They are interrupted by the loud talking speech therapist. Jason finds the cards to say: "STUPID. SPEECH. WOMAN."

***Think about/ Talk about/ Write about***

- The quotation from Catherine about hopes is a metaphor. Metaphors are different from similes. Cynthia Lord wrote this instead of saying something like “Catherine really kept hoping she would have a new friend next door.” How does this make the description come alive to us? From now on in your reading, notice the importance of **water** in the story,

### **Chapter 5: If you don't have the words you need, borrow someone else's.**

Setting: Catherine's room

Catherine's room is typical of a 12-year-old girl, with art supplies, mementos, reminder notes, a Georgia O'Keefe calendar, a collection of little bottles from Elliot's Antiques, a bulletin board, and her two guinea pigs under the window. She works on cards for Jason, wanting to make them “juicier” than just sad or mad. GROSS, AWESOME, STINKS A BIG ONE! She is interrupted by David peeking in. He has dropped a Barbie doll in the fish tank. David remembers some words from Frog. “Will power is trying hard not to do something that you really want to do.” (Like not eating all the cookies in the Frog and Toad Together story)

#### ***Think about/ Talk about/ Write about***

- **Narrative Writing:** Find the cookie story in Frog and Toad Together. Read Aloud. Do a reader's theater of the chapter. Or, invite a second grade class to read aloud with your class. Talk about a time when you had no will power. Talk about our understanding of David as a character. It is typical of autistic children to have a great deal of trouble with will power. As you see with David, they need much extra help to with control themselves. Write a paragraph about a time you “lost it” or “had a meltdown.” Students will be able to think of other idioms if they are allowed to brainstorm.
- **Descriptive writing:** Write a description of a room you know well. It could be your room, your own kitchen, front porch, a room at your grandmother's, or your friend's. Visualize it. Use details. Make the reader really see the room.
- **ART:** Draw a map of Catherine's room. Use colored pencils. Or draw a map of a room you know well. (as listed above)
- **ART** Artist Georgia O'Keefe is Catherine's favorite. What does Catherine say or do which reminds you of her role model, Georgia O'Keefe? **See three activities in the Art folder.**

### **Chapter 6 Sometimes things work out, but don't count on it.**

**Setting: Catherine's Home**

Catherine's mom agrees that she can invite the new neighbors over for hamburgers. Catherine can't help but worry about what David will do. When her mom and dad both agree to watch him, it's almost worse than when one of them is in charge. Catherine speaks to Kristy's mother across the fence, and finds out that Kristy is not at home. Just then David becomes afraid of a bee and lets out a piercing howl. “Sorry, gotta go.” says Catherine. (That's her rule!)

#### ***Think about/ Talk about/ Write about***

- Catherine's "Sorry, gotta go" rule is one she made for herself. What does this rule tell us about Catherine's character? What rules do you have for yourself when you are trying to get out of an embarrassing situation? How are these kinds of rules different from school rules or rules at the swimming pool, or classroom rules?