Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior Workbook

When he was about 14 years old, George Washington copied 110 rules by hand into his schoolbook. They were intended to guide his everyday actions and behavior.

WashingtonHeritageMuseums.org 2021
Create three of your own rules of civility for your friends or classmates to practice:

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Create three of your own rules of civility for your family to practice:

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Find a recent news story of a person practicing civility and share it with your family or class.

Using your best handwriting, write a thank you note to someone for a gift or a kind act.
Word Match

Draw a line between a word in the left column and its correct match in the right column.

Respect
Behavior
Chamber
Vermin
Manner
Countenance
Reproach
Eminent
Modesty
Mock
Malice
Envy

Conduct
Humility
Spite
Criticize
Bugs
Distinguished
Expression
Etiquette
Bitterness
Room
Make fun of
Regard

Explore

Choose three words from the column on the left and use each in a sentence.

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Rules of Civility

This represents only a portion of the rules. The full list may be found by visiting: www.WashingtonHeritageMuseums.org/activities

A hardback copy of the rules is available for purchase in the Washington Heritage Museums' Museum Store

1. Every action done in company ought to be with some sign of respect, to those that are present.

2. When in company, put not your hands to any part of the body, not usually discovered.

3. Show nothing to your friend that may affright him.

4. In the presence of others sing not to yourself with a humming noise, nor drum with your fingers or feet.

5. If you cough, sneeze, sigh, or yawn, do it not loud but privately; and speak not in your yawning, but put your handkerchief or hand before your face and turn aside.

6. Sleep not when others speak, sit not when others stand, speak not when you should hold your peace, walk not on when others stop.

7. Put not off your cloths in the presence of others, nor go out your chamber half dressed.

8. At play and at fire its good manners to give place to the last comer, and affect not to speak louder than ordinary.

9. Spit not in the fire, nor stoop low before it neither put your hands into the flames to warm them, nor set your feet upon the fire especially if there be meat before it.

10. When you sit down, keep your feet firm and even, without putting one on the other or crossing them.