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Opening Lesson

- Ask the following big questions of the entire class.
- Discuss the answers.
- List answers to these questions on the chalkboard.

What Are Manners?

Use your dictionary to find a definition of manners.

My dictionary says, in part, “a way or style of doing something. A socially correct way of acting; etiquette, the prevailing customs, social conduct, and norms of the specific society, or group. The way in which a thing is done or happens. A way of acting, bearing or behavior.”

What Does Social Mean?

Another dictionary task: Find the definition of social.

Living together in communities, neighborhoods, schools, relating to society, living together in organized groups.

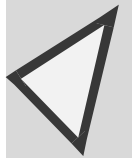
What Are Social Skills?

Use your dictionary again to find a definition of the word skills.

My dictionary says, in part, “To be an expert in doing something. Doing something well; developed through training and experience.”

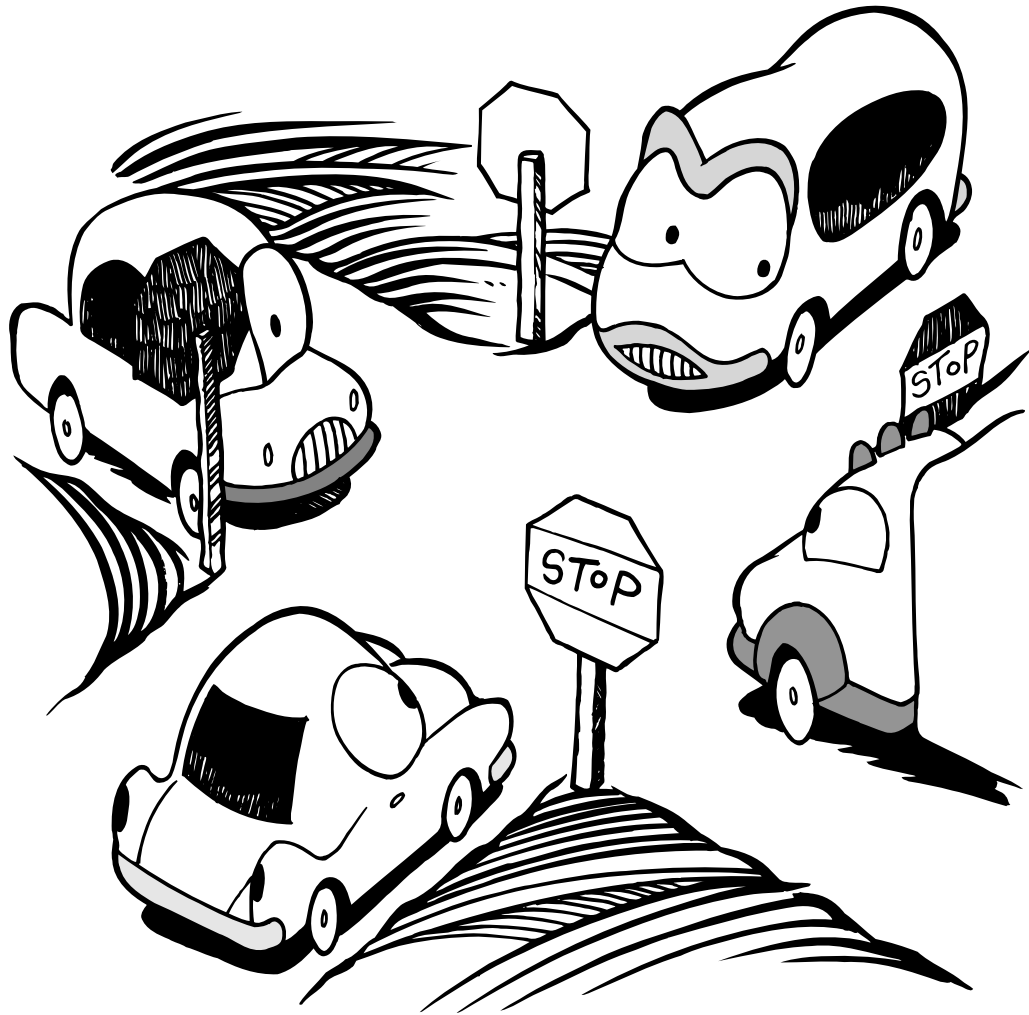
Caveat

America is a mix of many cultures. Remember, there may be people in your school or neighborhood who observe different social conventions than we. Be aware of this—and respect and allow for those differences.



An Analogy

Analogies often help to illustrate a concept concretely. Think about manners in terms of rules of the road as a perfect example. Consider the four-way stop street for motorists. Everyone knows the rule and observes it. Each driver arrives at the intersection at a slightly different time.



The rule is that drivers each take their turn and proceed with caution. This arrangement goes on all day long, all week, all month, year after year. The beauty of it is that it is a procedure that is understood by everyone on the road, including pedestrians and bikers. It is not necessary to have a police officer present to enforce the law.

An Analogy

- Imagine, in your mind's eye, what would happen if no one observed the four-way stop street law! Draw a picture of that intersection without the law. What is happening? Who is getting mad and where are the cars? The pedestrians are trying to cross the road. School kids are anxious to get home for lunch. Even Cheeter, the dog is upset! He knows he's got to wait for the traffic to clear.
- Now! How can you apply the described situation (about the reasons for traffic laws) and apply it to manners and social skills? (Answer: Our day-to-day lives would be unsafe and unpredictable. We wouldn't know what to expect from others. In short, our existence would be disorderly and dangerous!) To generalize means "to draw conclusions from a broad situation and apply them to specifics."

Act Out

Host Speaks to the Class:

"Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I am your host, Maddy (or Manny) Manners with another show that will demonstrate to you the reasons for traffic rules. Try to apply this situation to social rules of behavior as well."

"We are on Pingree Street where there seems to be quite a commotion among the motorists and the pedestrians at a four-way intersection! There are no stop signs here and nobody seems to know what to do. I have a few drivers here who would like to explain their side of the story and the reasons for their anger. We will try to keep the situation calm. We hope they don't start shouting at one another!"

Characters Introduce Themselves:

Mr. Gabby (a big-mouthed driver): He thinks he owns the road and isn't shy at all. He wants the right of way and doesn't care about anyone else.

Ms. Nicely: A quiet and courteous driver. She has been sitting at the intersection for a long time, but others keep going through and don't give her a chance.

Mr. Meek: A frustrated driver who is afraid his new car will get smashed if he takes a chance and starts through the intersection.

Cheeter, the dog: He knows enough to stand and wait until traffic clears. He is fed up with all the humans! He's tired and wants to get home because he's hungry.

