

Obedience

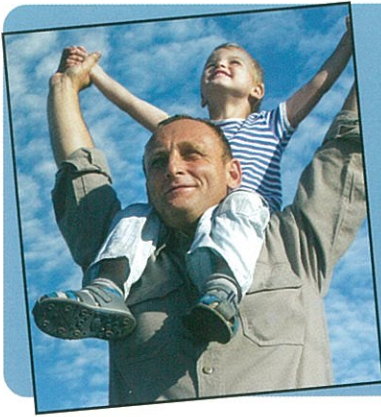
Quickly and cheerfully carrying out
the direction of those who are
responsible for me

What is Obedience?

When many think of obedience, they imagine only rules, regulations, and punishments. But obedience helps individuals relate to one another in an orderly way.

Traffic laws, for example, help move people safely from one place to the next. Similarly, the authority structure at school offers protection and direction. Learn what it means to obey, and enjoy the benefits of doing what is right.

Obedience Introduction



Understand Authority

In an orderly society, everyone functions under authority and has responsibilities to fulfill.

Parents love and care for their children. Children honor and obey their parents. Citizens obey the law and respect officers of the law. Government officials treat others justly and obey the law themselves.

When anyone fails to fulfill their part, it creates hardships for everyone. Good leaders give direction, correction, and protection to those under their care. You might think it is easy to be in charge, but greater authority brings greater responsibility.

Five Keys to Obedience

1

Get Full Instructions

Listen carefully when given instructions. Clarify your task by asking, "Is this what you mean?" or "Is this how you want me to do it?"

2

Have a Good Attitude

Attitude makes a big difference in the way others respond and in your own enjoyment. Teachers and parents might have more understanding for those who willingly obey than for those who resist or complain. Adjust your attitude, and do your best, even when faced with unpleasant assignments.

3

Act Immediately

Delayed obedience is not obedience. Begin the process immediately. The sooner you start, the sooner you can finish.

4

Go the Extra Mile

True obedience discerns what the authority really wants and goes beyond minimum requirements. Do what you know you should do, not what you think you can get away with doing.

5

Follow the Rules

If someone tells you to lie, steal, or compromise your integrity, remember it is never right to do wrong. Make an appeal with a respectful attitude.



Umbrellas only help when you stay under their protection. Respect those in authority over you, and learn to function within the structures of responsibility.

Think about it

After reading this lesson, discuss the following questions with a parent, guardian, or teacher who can sign below.

1. Why is obedience important for society? What happens if everyone ignores the law?
2. How can staying under authority protect you?

Signature & Date _____

Obedience in History

Nathanael Greene **Nathanael Greene 1742-1786**

Nathanael Greene joined the American Army as a private in 1774. He became a Brigadier General and then Major General in one of the fastest promotions in military history.

Understand the Need

On December 19, 1777, the American army established winter quarters at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. The soldiers suffered from the lack of proper food, clothing, shelter, and sanitation.

Concerned about his demoralized army, General George Washington asked his trusted friend, General Nathanael Greene, to take over the Quartermaster Department and resolve the supply problems. This meant giving up his field command and becoming a purchasing agent for Congress.

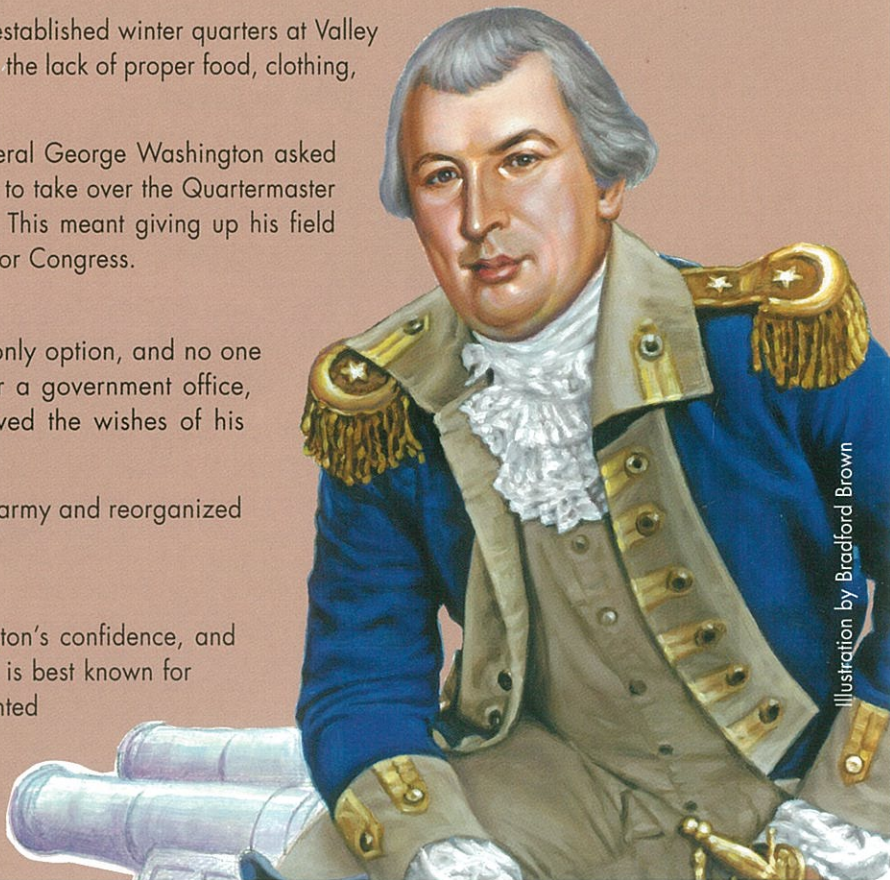
Respect Authority

Becoming Quartermaster was not Greene's only option, and no one could order Greene to leave the military for a government office, but he gave up his own desires and followed the wishes of his authority.

Quartermaster Greene quickly resupplied the army and reorganized the Quartermaster's Department.

Complete the Job

Greene's exceptional character won Washington's confidence, and after Greene returned to the field in 1780, he is best known for leading the Southern campaign, which prevented the British from taking North Carolina and Virginia. His strategic leadership contributed to the successful outcome of the war.



As many as 2000 American soldiers died at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777-1778 because they lacked food, clothing, and shelter.

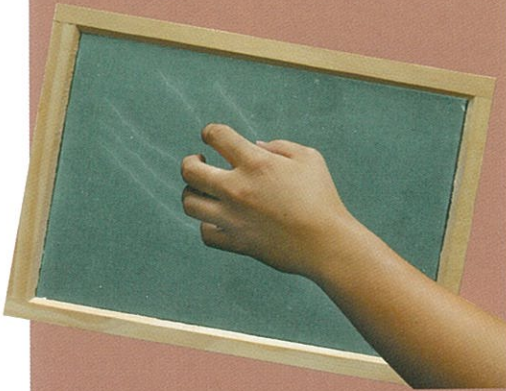
Get it?

Nathanael Greene demonstrated a commitment to honor and serve his leaders.

- Recognize your authority's true wishes.
- Show yourself trustworthy by doing your best, even when the task seems unimportant.
- Do not complain when given an unpleasant assignment.
- Set a good example.

Obedience Application

No Excuses!



When others depend on you, few things sound worse than excuses. Do the right thing instead of explaining why you didn't.

- Beware of phrases such as, "I'll do it later" or "I'm too tired."
- Look for ways you can obey instead of finding reasons why you cannot obey.
- If others pressure you to do wrong, say, "I can't do that," and walk away.
- Choose friends who will help you do the right thing.
- Look for the reasons behind rules and instructions. Laws restricting alcohol and other drugs are designed to protect you and others. Rules against bullying help promote a safe school.

Respect Authority

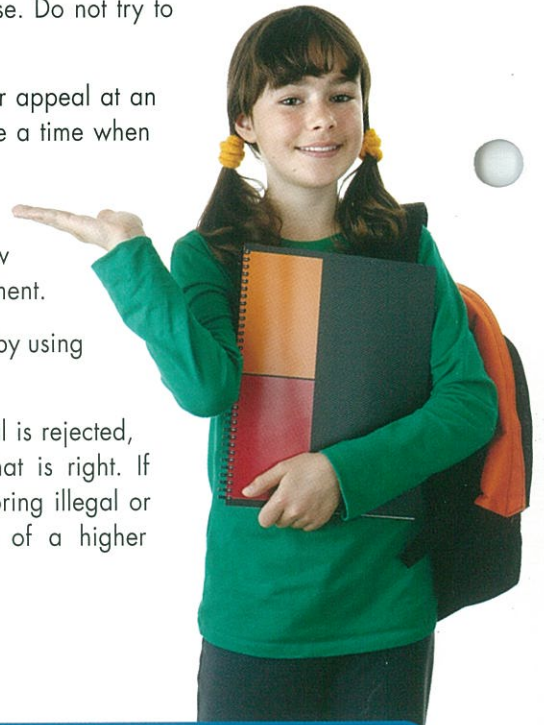
A wise person realizes he or she does not know everything and there is much to learn from others' experiences and perspectives.

Those older than you, including your teachers and parents, have experienced more and gained more knowledge than you have. Accept their advice and instruction. Cooperate when your parents tell you to be home at a certain time or your teacher makes you correct an assignment. They see a bigger picture, and they want to help you.

Make an Appeal

If an authority asks you to do something that violates legal or ethical principles, use the following steps to make an appeal:

1. *Establish good standing.* Build a reputation for obedience before problems arise. Otherwise, your appeal will look like one more example of willfulness.
2. *Check your motives.* If your motives are selfish, your appeal might make the situation worse. Do not try to avoid responsibility.
3. *Time your appeal.* Avoid making your appeal at an awkward or stressful moment. Choose a time when your authority has time to listen.
4. *Present accurate details.* Honesty is the best policy. Do not hide or skew facts in order to strengthen your argument.
5. *Choose words carefully.* Show honor by using a respectful tone.
6. *Prepare your response.* If your appeal is rejected, be prepared to suffer for doing what is right. If necessary, take the proper steps to bring illegal or unethical behavior to the attention of a higher authority.



Think about it

After reading this lesson, discuss the following questions with a parent, guardian, or teacher who can sign below.

1. When is it appropriate or necessary to make an appeal?
2. Why is your attitude important when speaking to an authority?
3. What excuses have you made for breaking rules or disrespecting your parents? What is wrong with these excuses?

Signature & Date _____


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