

## Ground Rules

What are Ground Rules?	Why do we need them?	Who forms them?
<p>Ground rules define the <i>principles</i> of working with peers, such as everyone should share all relevant information about the topic.</p> <p>They also outline <i>procedures</i> that should be followed during group work, such as taking turns to handle ICT resources.</p>	<p>Group work is effective when pupils work well with each other. Research has shown that ground rules are useful for this purpose.</p>	<p>Ground rules are democratically and collectively formed by the pupils generally in consultation with the teacher.</p> <p>Observations are the best way of forming ground rules. When a problem is observed, its solution is suggested. When the solution is accepted by most group members, it becomes a ground rule.</p>



Watch the **video**<sup>i</sup> for your group: Herbert Putschta shares some of his ideas about ground rules for pupils who learn English as their second language. Importantly, he suggests ways of forming ground rules in the classroom.



Ground rules are effective only when they are followed explicitly and implicitly. Teachers have to model this so that pupils learn to follow the rules.

Sometimes you may have to moderate the rules that children make if they are too difficult or unrealistic to follow. Other times you may have to clarify the language so that everybody clearly understands the rules.

**Some examples of ground rules are:**

- Encourage everybody to contribute during group discussion
- Respect contributions of other members
- All group members have responsibility for completing the task
- Try to agree with each other before presenting work
- Check that everybody has learnt the concept before moving to the next task
- Give reasons for your ideas
- Listen carefully
- Return equipment to its place after use
- Challenge ideas if you do not agree
- Be critical about the idea not the person

**GROUP TASKS**

1. Form at least five ground rules for working in your group at present. You can list all ideas on a mini blackboard or paper, then decide five rules that all of you agree with and pledge to follow implicitly and explicitly. Finally list them on this sheet...

RULE 1:

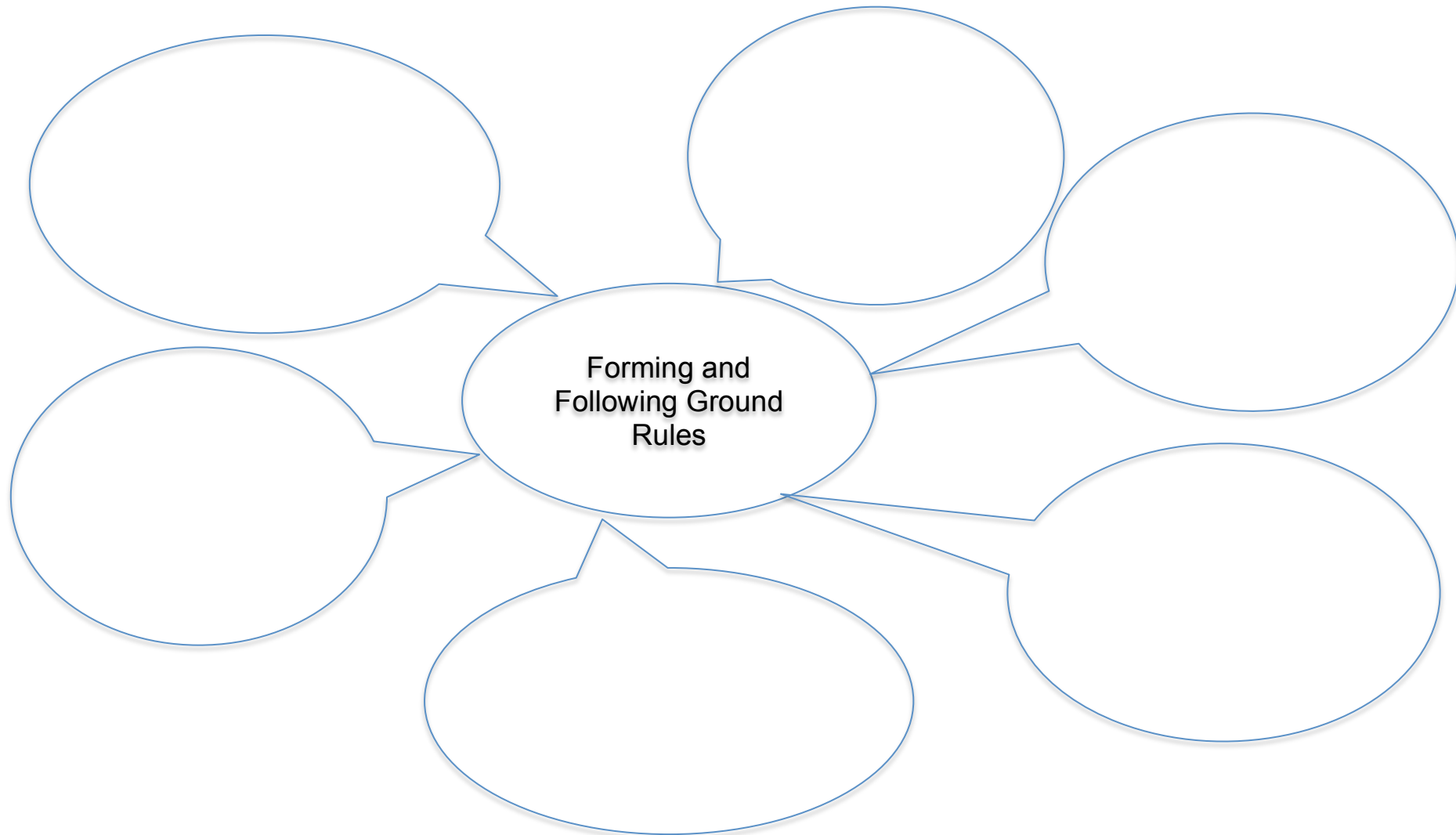
RULE 2:

RULE 3:

RULE 4:

RULE 5:

2. Discuss how will you get your pupils started on forming ground rules and following them. Decide on realistic ideas that you can actually carry out in your class or school. (Clues: display on charts, ground rules monitor, golden points for following rules). Map your points here:



3. The other groups are working on different aspects of group work. For their benefit, prepare a presentation of about 3-5 minutes about 'ground rules'. Include ideas about getting pupils started on forming ground rules and following them and examples of your own group's ground rules.

(If you were not a member of the group working on Ground Rules, you can use this space for writing your thoughts while watching the presentation.)

*Sources:*

Some examples of ground rules have been taken from Lyn Dawes' (2008) worksheets available at The Thinking Together website (<http://thinkingtogether.educ.cam.ac.uk/resources/>)

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<sup>i</sup> [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uBk4Hq4IEx8&feature=results\\_video&playnext=1&list=PL4EEFE75F9DA0AE2E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uBk4Hq4IEx8&feature=results_video&playnext=1&list=PL4EEFE75F9DA0AE2E)