

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior

**Ranking Directions:** Read the following rules of good manners and behavior. First, individually, rank the rules from 1-10, 1 being the most important to 10 being the least important. There is no right or wrong answer, you are ranking the items based on what you think.

Individual Ranking (1 is the most important – 10 is the least important)

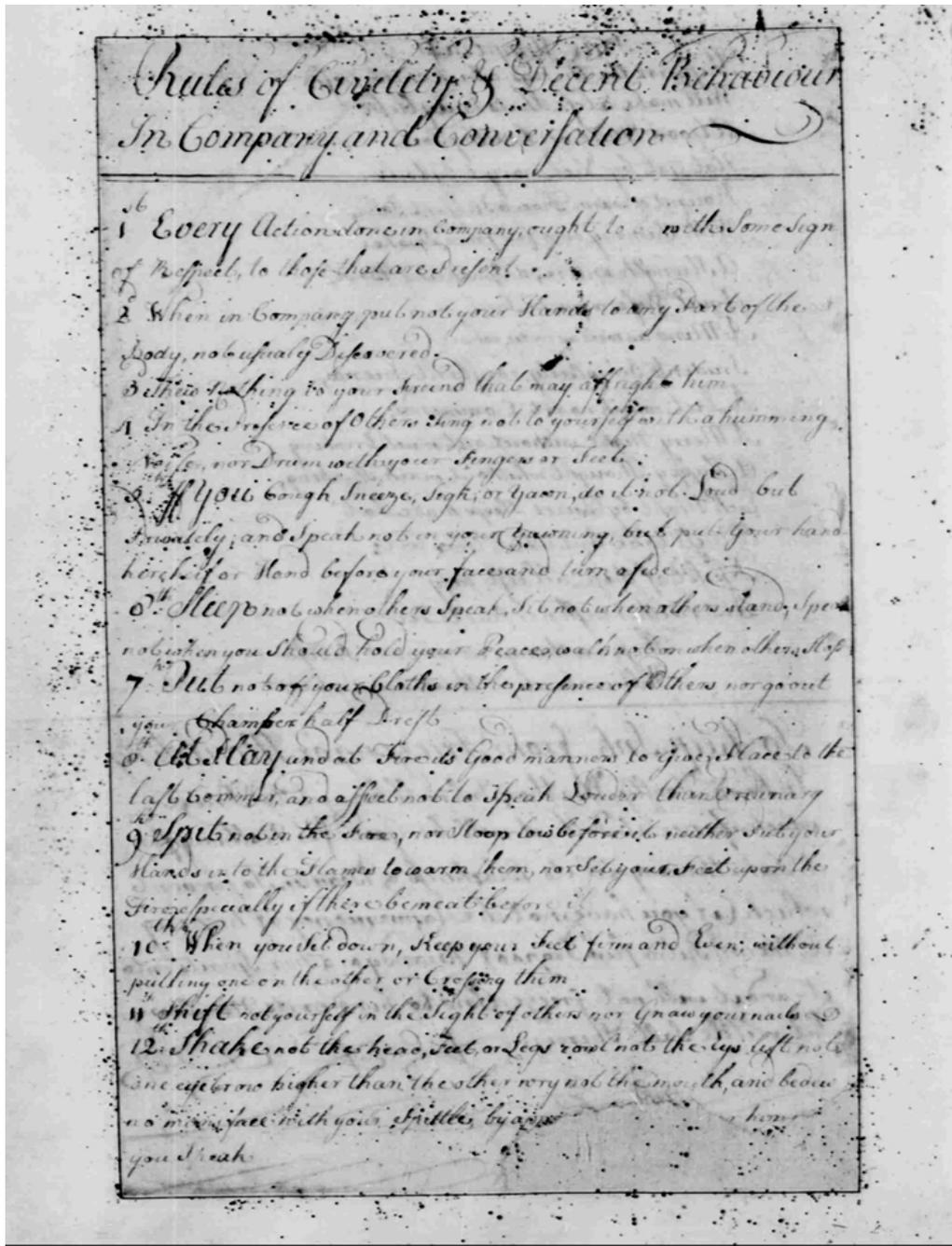
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should eat with your mouth closed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should place your hand over your mouth when you yawn or sneeze.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should turn off your cell phone while watching a movie.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should use the words *please*, *thank you*, and *excuse me*.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should share with your brothers and sisters.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should not pick your nose in public.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should keep your elbows off of the table.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should wait for someone to finish speaking before joining in the conversation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should “excuse yourself” to pass gas or burp in a private place.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should shake a person’s hand, look them in the eye, and say, “It is a pleasure to meet you” when meeting someone for the first time.

Next, divide into groups of 3 or 4. As a group you need to share your individual rankings and come up with a group ranking of the rules. When discussing your rankings, provide your reasoning behind your thinking.

Group Ranking (1 is the most important – 10 is the least important)

- \_\_\_\_\_ You should eat with your mouth closed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should place your hand over your mouth when you yawn or sneeze.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should turn off your cell phone while watching a movie.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should use the words *please, thank you, and excuse me.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should share with your brothers and sisters.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should not pick your nose in public.
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- \_\_\_\_\_ You should “excuse yourself” to pass gas or burp in a private place.
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Be ready to discuss and share your group answers with the class.



**Background:** At some point before the age of sixteen, George Washington wrote The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation in the last ten pages of a book of personal notes. The Rules were a series of maxims (sayings) that he likely copied to practice penmanship. The 110 rules covered many of the proper social graces of the time period.

*Source:* <http://www.mountvernon.org/research-collections/digital-encyclopedia/article/the-rules-of-civility-and-decent-behaviour/>

**Directions:** Read and analyze the document by using the Pre-AP strategy of APARTY.

What type of primary source is this?

What is the title of the document?

Author (Who wrote/created this document?):

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Place & Time (Where and when was this produced?):

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Audience (For whom was this document created?):

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Reason (Why was this document created? What did the author hope would happen as a result?):

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The Main Idea (If you were to reduce this document to a short, simple sentence or two, what would it say? Note: this is not the same as explaining what the document is about. What is it saying?):

Yeah: So What? (Why is this source important? What did you learn from analyzing it?):

**Directions:** Read the following Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior. Pick four rules that are interesting to you. For each of those rules, write what you think it means, choose a category of behavior for each rule, and decide if the rule is relevant or important today.

RULE:	MEANING IN OWN WORDS:	CATEGORY:	RELEVANT TODAY:
1 <sup>st</sup> Every Action done in Company, ought to be with Some Sign of Respect, to those that are Present.	<i>Treat everyone with respect.</i>	<i>Showing respect to others</i>	yes
2 <sup>nd</sup> When in Company, put not your Hands to any Part of the Body, not usually Discovered.			
5 <sup>th</sup> If You Cough, Sneeze, Sigh, or Yawn, do it not Loud but Privately; and Speak not in your Yawning, but put Your handkercheif or Hand before your face and turn aside.			
7 <sup>th</sup> Put not off your Cloths in the presence of Others, nor go out your Chamber half Dressed.			
24 <sup>th</sup> Do not laugh too loud or too much at any Publick [Spectacle].			

74 <sup>th</sup> When Another Speaks be attentive your Self and disturb not the Audience if any hesitate in his Words help him not nor Prompt him without desired, Interrupt him not, nor Answer him till his Speec[h] be ended.			
97 <sup>th</sup> Put not another bit into your mouth till the former be swallowed. Let not your morsels be too big for the jowls.			
98 <sup>th</sup> Drink not nor talk with your mouth full neither Gaze about you while you are a Drinking.			

**Categories:** Showing respect to others, Good table manners, Doing the right thing (ethics), Proper and polite behavior (avoid embarrassing situations)

In Washington's time, knowing how to behave properly in different social situations was an important skill in getting along with other people.

Are the *Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior* still important today or are they an outdated way of thinking?