

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

Advisor's Guide to personal growth and leadership development

Lesson Number: **RNH.5.1**

You Never Have a Second Chance to Make a First Impression

Quick Reference:

Time Required:

50 minutes

Objectives:

After completing this lesson, students should be able to:

1. Discuss appearance and why it is important.
2. Discuss and select appropriate attire.
3. Discuss and practice proper personal hygiene.

Materials:

- ✓ Teacher costume
- ✓ RNH.5.1.AS.A – one per facilitator

Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to reinforce the importance of good grooming and appearance.

Directions:

The teacher may want to dress in a costume to begin this lesson. If so, begin by discussing different costumes and why we choose them (e.g., people choose clown costumes to make people laugh). Explain that even when we select a Halloween costume, we're choosing how we want people to react to us. Our clothing and personal grooming send powerful messages and influence how people treat us. Ask students what messages they are sending.

1. **Value of a First Impression:** Ask students if they have ever heard the expression, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression." Ask them what they think it means. Ask them if they can think of specific instances where they formed an opinion about someone based on the person's appearance the first time they met that person. We need to concern ourselves with the things that others see and hear the first time we meet them. The "Rules of 12" are good guidelines for making a positive first impression. (Display RNH.5.1.AS.A. As you explain each point, have students capture some major points made about each of the four points.)
 - a. **The Top 12 Inches:** This rule refers to your head, the top 12 inches of your body. Specifically, this means comb or brush your hair, make sure your hair and face are clean, and practice good oral hygiene. Remember that a smile has a significant impact on the people you meet. Check the mirror before you enter a public setting.





- b. The Bottom 12 Inches: Polish your shoes and make sure you have clean socks. Make sure your shoes and socks are appropriate for the rest of your attire.
 - c. Your First 12 Words: The first 12 words should include a pleasant greeting spoken in a friendly, confident, and poised manner. Try to find a way to give a sincere compliment to those you meet.
 - d. The First 12 Steps: Enter a room or public setting with confident steps, shoulders back, and head held high. Do not appear arrogant or “cocky,” but present yourself with self-assurance.
2. The clothing style you choose to wear sends a distinct message to others you meet. Make sure your clothing:
 - a. Fits properly (collars, length of sleeves, pants, skirts, etc.).
 - b. Is properly cared for and in good repair.
 - c. Is appropriate in color, textures, and patterns.
 - d. Includes appropriate accessories (belts, ties/scarves, etc.).
3. Ask your students to notice what they are wearing. Ask them to think about why they chose those items and what they think their appearance is saying about them.
 - a. Give examples such as wearing t-shirts with messages. Indicate that we don’t have to wear printed words to send powerful messages.
 - b. Explain that when we look good, we feel more positive about ourselves. When we are uncomfortable with the way we look, we probably won’t perform at our highest level.
4. Hold a class discussion on the different types of clothing styles and the messages they send. You may want to invite a guest speaker from a local clothier to your class to discuss appropriate attire and how to make good clothing selections. Or you may want to take a field trip to a clothing store so the person can give you examples. Either way, ask him or her to cover the following topics:
 - a. Proper fit (collars, length of sleeves, pants, skirts, etc.)
 - b. Types of fiber and care
 - c. Colors, textures, and patterns
 - d. Accessories



5. Wrap up the discussion on clothing by covering official FFA dress. Discuss what is accepted as official dress as stated in the *Official FFA Manual*, care of the jacket, when official dress is required, etc.

Be careful in the way you address this subject. It is a very sensitive area for many teens.

6. **Personal Hygiene**: Explain to students that personal hygiene is just as important to our image as the way we dress. Our society places a high value on personal cleanliness. Failure to develop good hygiene habits can cause embarrassment for them and discomfort for others. Beyond positive social interaction, personal hygiene is important for our health.
7. Discuss the following good hygiene habits:
 - a. Bathe regularly.
 - b. Use deodorant products.
 - c. Brush teeth frequently; use breath mints as needed.
 - d. Get plenty of exercise.
 - e. Keep hair clean and styled appropriately.

Connection Questions:

1. Think of one person that you have met in your life that left a lasting impression on you. What was it that impacted you?
2. Of the four points of the “Rule of 12” which area do you need to work on the most and why?
3. What makes personal hygiene so important today in our society?



LifeKnowledge Connections:

Precept(s) Addressed:

Relationships

B4. Eliminate barriers in building relationships.

Awareness

E2. Perform leadership tasks associated with citizenship.

Physical Growth

G2. Respect one's body.

Social Growth

H2. Present self appropriately in various settings.

LK Lesson Suggestion:



MS.19 – Creating Positive Impressions in Public

HS.54 – First Impressions

