**Ten Rules You Absolutely Must Not Break If You Want to**

**Survive the School Bus**

**by John Grandits**

**Louisiana young readers’ choice nominee 2014**

**3-5th Grade**

*Discussion Guide submitted by Julie Grice, Children’s Coordinator, Shreve Memorial Library, Shreveport, Louisiana and Angela Germany Children and Teen Services Coordinator*

**Title: Ten Rules You Absolutely Must Not Break If You Want to Survive the School Bus**

**Author: John Grandits**

**Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, Clarion Books**

**Pages: 32**

**SUMMARY**

Kyle is afraid.  Of what you might ask…riding the school bus!  He has been warned by his big brother James of the rules for riding a school bus.  Not one rule, or even two, but 10 RULES. Ten rules that he must absolutely, positively must obey to avoid getting laughed or yelled at.  Ten rules to keep him from being “pushed around or even pounded”.  The rules begin to be broken almost as soon as the bus pulls up.  The bus driver shouts at him, he can’t find a seat, and worse of all he looks at a girl!  How was Kyle going to survive?  This book had me smiling as the author and illustrator paints us a picture of the trepidation and fears each young child must face the first time riding a school bus.  Nervousness and giggles will be the reaction of young children as you share this story of which they can easily relate.  The art work is simple yet bright as it depicts Kyle and his “emotional” first bus ride.

**AUTHOR’S BIOGRAPHY**

John Grandits is a creative author whose sense of humor is both dry and witty. While he delights in writing poetry he possesses many other talents. He has been both a designer and art director. Cartooning is another avenue he has explored. His humor is also displayed in his writings. Magazine articles, short stories, fiction, and even non-fiction stories by Mr. Grandits will entertain a wide range of readers, and even educate the unexpected reader. He has been associated with prominant children’s periodicals such as Cricket, Muse, and Click magazines with various subject manner. He has also been the art director for some children’s textbooks, and at one time he was owner and publisher of Film and Video News magazine. He has had his finger in on many artistic projects from designing books, and book jackets, to brochures, fliers, periodicals, and even corporate logos and posters. I found most of this information at http://www.johngrandits.com/bio/index.php

**ILLUSTRATOR’S BIOGRAPHY**

Michael Allen Austin was the illustrator for **Ten Rules You Absolutely Must Not Break If You Want to Survive the School Bus**. As an illustrator he has won many awards for children books. Library resource periodical Publishers Weekly has stated that his illustrations are "wild and wily," while Booklist said his art is both "unusual and exuberant." Michael makes Atlanta his home. He is married and they have a sheepdog named Riley. Check out his website [www.austinillustration.com](http://www.austinillustration.com).

**Other Titles by author**

John Grandits has written two other books[**Blue Lipstick**](http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/blue-lipstick)**, and** [**Technically,** and **It's Not My Fault**](http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/technically-its-not-my-fault)**.**

**Other Titles by illustrator**

Michael Allen Austin has also illustrated **Sam Patch: Daredevil Jumper** by author Julie Cummins, **The Horned Toad Prince** by author Jackie Mims Hopkins, and **Railroad John and the Red Rock Run** by author Tony Crunk.

**RELATED TITLES**

# If you liked Ten Rules You Absolutely Must Not Break If You Want to Survive the School Bus, you might also like School Bus by Donald Crews, The Energy Bus for Kids: A Story about Staying Positive and Overcoming Challenges by Jon Gordon, and The First Rule of Little Brothers by [Jill Davis](http://www.amazon.com/Jill-Davis/e/B001HNPBGC/ref=ntt_athr_dp_pel_1).

**CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS**

**ENGLISH**

**Writing**

Ask your students to imagine that they all ride the school bus and that they are giving advice to someone who is going to start riding the school bus. Individually or in groups ask your students make their own list of 10 things what they would or would not do on the bus.

**Similes and Metaphors**

In the book the author uses a lot of similes and metaphors to assign characters animal characteristics. For example, when he is looking for a seat on the bus, Kyle describes himself as feeling like a Zebra at a Lion party. Then he describes another kid on the bus being the size of a grizzly bear. Later in the book the author says that girls are “as mean as snakes” and his brother jumped “up and down like a spider monkey”. At the end of the day when Kyle is trying to find his bus among all the other buses he describes it as “a herd of identical yellow rhinos.”

These are metaphors and similies. Buzzle has some great examples and more information about what that is <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/similes-and-metaphors-examples.html>.

Exercise: Ask your students to come up with some animal characteristics themselves and use metaphors and similes to describe the following characters and objects in the book:

* Kyle
* Kyle’s older brother
* The mean dog down the street
* The talking Girl
* The bus driver
* The big mean kid on the bus
* Make up a description of how Kyle would have felt talking to the bus driver
* Describe the squirrel pictured in the book
* The school bus

**ART**

Ask your students to use their descriptions of the characters in the book from the activity above and draw them.

**Bus Bullying**

In the book, Kyle is scared that the bus bully will pound him. Unfortunately buses are the second more common place that bullying occurs. With the increasing instances of bullying in our schools, this book opens up an opportunity for you to go over your school’s guidelines and policies on bullying. Here is just one article out of many about bus bullying <http://www.schoolfamily.com/school-family-articles/article/10823-help-your-child-handle-school-bus-bullies>.

**Bus Safety**

This would also be a good idea to go over basic bus safety for students. Although they may have ridden the bus for a while, it is always good to review bus safety precautions.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has an entire website for school bus safety <http://www.nhtsa.gov/parents/parents-bus.html>. There are PDF’s of safety tips, 13 page activity and more. Here is another article on bus safety <http://www.schoolfamily.com/school-family-articles/article/6996-a-school-bus-safety-lesson-could-save-your-childs-life>.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Were you afraid to ride a school bus the first time? Why?
2. How did you get over your fears?
3. What would you tell your younger brother or sister when they have to ride a school bus for the first time?
4. In the book the author uses a lot of metaphors like when Kyle describes himself feeling like a Zebra at a Lion party when he was looking for a seat on the bus. What did he mean by that?
5. What does Kyle discover is really the most important rule for riding the school bus?
6. What other things were you afraid of when going to school?
7. What do you think is the most important rule of riding a school bus?