

The Mars Outpost: Rules for a New World

Materials Needed

- Paper and pens/markers
- A timer (phone or kitchen timer)
- Two small items to act as "tokens" (coins, buttons, or LEGO bricks)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify and define **Decision-Making**, **Inclusion**, and **Justice** rules.
 - Apply these rules to solve a complex resource problem in a fictional scenario.
 - Evaluate how different rules create different outcomes for a community.
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1. Introduction: The Blank Slate (3 Minutes)

The Hook: Imagine you have just landed on Mars. There are no laws, no government, and no "boss" yet. You and a small group of people have to build a society from scratch. If you don't have rules, things will get messy fast. But what *kind* of rules do you need?

The Goal: Today, we aren't just making "don't run in the halls" rules. We are making **Foundational Rules** that determine how your new world actually functions.

2. I Do: The Three Pillars of a Society (5 Minutes)

To keep our Mars colony from turning into chaos, we need three specific types of rules. Let's define them:

- **Rule 1: Decision-Making Rule**
Definition: This tells us **how** we make a choice when people disagree.
Example: "Majority Rules" (51% wins) or "Consensus" (Everyone must agree).
 - **Rule 2: Inclusion Rule**
Definition: This tells us **who** gets to be involved and how we make sure no one is left out.
Example: "Every age group must have a representative in the meeting."
 - **Rule 3: Justice Rule**
Definition: This tells us **what happens** when a rule is broken or someone is treated unfairly.
Example: "If you break it, you must spend your weekend helping fix it" (Restorative Justice).
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3. We Do: The Pizza Party Paradox (7 Minutes)

Let's practice together using a relatable scenario. Imagine our colony has one extra pizza, but there are

10 hungry people.

Let's apply our rules:

1. **Inclusion:** Before we decide who eats, we check our Inclusion Rule. *Rule: Every person must be present in the room before the box is opened.* Why? To ensure the quietest person isn't forgotten in the back of the lab.
2. **Decision-Making:** Now we have to choose a topping. *Rule: Rank Choice. Everyone lists their top 3. The one with the most total points wins.* This is fairer than just the loudest person screaming "Pepperoni!"
3. **Justice:** Someone took two slices when they were only supposed to take one. *Rule: The "Give Back" Rule. That person must give their dessert to the person who didn't get a full slice.* It fixes the imbalance.

Discussion: Does this feel "fair"? Why or why not?

4. You Do: The Mars Outpost Challenge (10 Minutes)

The Scenario: A massive dust storm is approaching the Mars Outpost. You only have enough backup battery power to keep **ONE** of these three sections running at full capacity:

1. **The Greenhouse:** Keeps the plants (food) alive.
2. **The Oxygen Lab:** Keeps the air fresh (but we have 48 hours of bottled air left).
3. **The Communication Hub:** Allows you to talk to Earth for help.

Your Task: You must decide which section gets the power. However, you **must** follow these specific rules to make your decision. Write down your final choice and a brief explanation of how the rules changed your thinking.

The Mandatory Rules:

- **Decision-Making Rule (The 70% Rule):** You cannot make a choice unless 70% of your colony (represented by your left and right hand "tokens") agree. If your tokens "disagree," you must find a compromise.
- **Inclusion Rule (The Expert Voice):** You must write down one "Pro" and one "Con" for every section before choosing. No section can be ignored.
- **Justice Rule (The Shared Sacrifice):** Whatever section you shut down, the leaders (you!) must give up your personal luxury items (like your tablet or special snacks) to the workers of that section as a "thank you" for their hardship.

Success Criteria:

1. You have a final decision written down.
 2. You have a list of Pros/Cons for all three sections (Inclusion).
 3. You can explain how you would "make it right" for the people in the darkened sections (Justice).
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5. Conclusion: Recap & Reflection (2 Minutes)

Summary: Today we learned that a fair society isn't just about "being nice." It's about having systems in place:

- **Decision-making** to prevent arguments.
- **Inclusion** to ensure everyone is seen.
- **Justice** to fix things when they break.

Final Question: Which of the three rules was the hardest to follow in your Mars scenario? Why?

Differentiation Options

- **For Advanced Learners:** Add a "Scarcity Modifier." What if a fourth rule is added mid-challenge: "A secret vote is taken, and 20% of the colony wants to hoard the power for themselves." How does your Justice rule handle greed?
- **For Struggling Learners:** Simplify the scenario to "Choosing a Movie for a Group" using the same three rule types to practice the concepts in a lower-stakes environment.