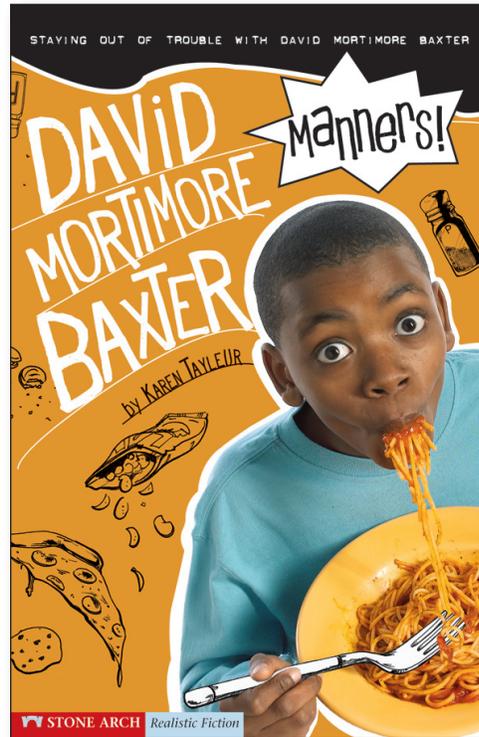




READER'S THEATER



Manners! **by Karen Tayleur**

Characters: **David**
 Narrator
 Harry
 David's Mom
 Mr. McCafferty

Genre: **Realistic Fiction**

Ages: **9-13**

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David:

There are many things that you are not supposed to do. When you do something like drive your car too fast or steal or hurt someone, it's called breaking the law and you could go to jail.

There is another group of laws. My mom calls them unwritten laws. If you break these laws you probably won't go to jail, but you might not have any friends.

Narrator:

These unwritten laws are called manners. And here's what David thinks are some of the most important manners to watch out for.

David:

If you have a ball that goes into your neighbor's yard, it is polite to ask your neighbor **before** you go and get your ball. Let's say one night you lose your ball in the neighbor's yard and you go get it. Your neighbor, Mr. McCafferty, can't see that it is you and he calls the police because he thinks you are a robber.

Mr. McCafferty:

Hello? Police? There's a robber in my front yard!

David:

Pretty soon the police are shining a flashlight in your face.

Mr. McCafferty:

David Mortimore Baxter, you made me call the police. I should have them arrest you.

David:

Now I have to explain things to the police officers. This is why I should have minded my manners.

Narrator:

The next day at dinner, David was making a mountain out of his mashed potatoes and pretending that the peas were downhill skiers racing down the mountain. David and his little brother, Harry, were having a lot of fun. Until ...

Mom:

David, you know the table is no place for playing.

Harry:

Can we leave the table and play with our food?

Narrator:

David's mom did not like that idea. Harry had bad table manners. He used to squeeze food through his teeth. That is a lot easier when you have a missing tooth. Just remember, if you want to play with your food, you should make sure there are no adults in the room. You could get in trouble.

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David: Another very important table manner is that you shouldn't reach in front of someone for the salt. I have only done that once, but it could have been very bad! One night, my mom invited Mr. McCaffery over for dinner. The salt was right in front of him and I reached my arm out to grab the salt. The next thing I knew, he bit down on my arm. Yowww!

Mr. McCafferty: I'm so sorry, David. I was about to take a bite of my corn, and I thought your arm was the corn. It was right in front of me, where my corn is.

David: I think he was trying to teach me a lesson. Well, it worked.

Narrator: Here are some more eating manners. At fancy restaurants, you have to put a napkin on your lap. There are certain rules about napkins. If you drop your napkin on the floor at a restaurant, leave it. They will bring you another one. I guess there are a lot of germs on the floor of restaurants.

You use napkins to wipe your mouth, but DO NOT blow your nose with one.

David: One night, when we were at home having dinner, I had a cold. I was sniffing for about five minutes. Mom was going crazy.

Mom: David, stop sniffing! It is rude. Get up from the table and blow your nose.

David: I got up to blow my nose. But on my way back to the table, the TV caught my eye. About five minutes later, I heard ...

Mom: David, get in here right now. It doesn't take this long to blow your nose and we are all eating dinner.

David: Great! I was trying not to be rude by blowing my nose somewhere else but I ended up being rude for not coming back to the table. I hurried back to the table and everyone was almost done. They were mad at me because we have a rule in our house that no one can leave the table until everyone has the secret signal by their plate.

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Narrator:

The secret signal is when you are done eating, you put your fork and knife side by side on your plate. Other families have that secret signal too.

David:

One time we were at a restaurant and I went away from the table to blow my nose. I accidentally put my fork and knife on my plate. The waiter walked by and took my plate. This wouldn't have been so bad if I didn't like to eat my favorite food last. My plate had a huge pile of French fries on it.

Harry:

Ha ha!

David:

When I got back to the table, I begged my mom to let me go into the kitchen and get the French fries back. Please, please, please can I go look for my French fries?

Mom:

No, David. They have probably already thrown them away. Plus you wouldn't know which plate was yours. You could get someone else's germs.

David:

I was not very happy, but I guess it is all part of not being rude. Wow. There are so many of these unwritten rules that need to be followed. One of my favorites is all of the body manners.

Mom:

Body manners?

Mr. McCafferty:

What is David talking about? Body manners? I just don't get it.

Narrator:

If you want to find out what David is talking about, read the book *Manners*. You will get a lot of information and you will not be a rude person. And you won't pick up someone else's germs, either.

THE END