

# Backpack Bear Learns the Rules



By Chase Tunbridge

Illustrated by  
Dale Beisel



Today is the first day of school, and Backpack Bear is nervous!  
It's not long before he learns how rules help make every day  
a great day at school.



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**Starfall®**  
Boulder, Colorado

## About Backpack Bear™

Backpack Bear was born March 19th in Laguna Vista, Texas. That is a very unusual place for a bear to be born, but Backpack Bear is not your average bear. Intensely curious about books, he asked his mother to teach him to read, but sadly she was not able. She made him a colorful backpack and enrolled him in school instead. Backpack Bear loves kindergarten, and plans to stay there for the rest of his life!

## About the Author

Chase Tunbridge was born at the foot of Mt. Nebo in Nephi, Utah. Her mother was a rodeo queen and her father was a milkman. Even though she loved her parents, and was very proud of them, she didn't want to grow up to be either of these things so she packed her bags and began to travel. Today, she lives most of her life in airports around the world. She loves to stand on her head and eat crunchy green salads, but not at the same time.

## About the Illustrator

Ever since opening his first box of crayons, Dale Beisel has enjoyed drawing silly pictures. Dale grew up in Royal Oak, Michigan, where his mother and father supplied plenty of crayons and inspiration. His father worked for a big car company designing cars. Now living in Mill Valley, California, with his wife, Armen, Dale still daydreams, doodles, and draws. Sometimes, Armen has to remind him not to draw on the walls!

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# Mrs. Elliott



When Backpack Bear first arrived on the first day of school, he was very nervous.

He was so nervous, in fact, that he hid! He worried that the children wouldn't like having a bear in their class.

His teacher, Mrs. Elliott, noticed he was missing.



Mrs. Elliott asked all the children to look around the classroom to see if they could find Backpack Bear.



When the children found his hiding spot, one of them said,  
"Welcome to our class!"

Another said, "You can sit by me!"

And another said, "I'm so happy that you are a bear!"

That made Backpack Bear feel much, much better.





Mrs. Elliott said, "Tick tock, it's nine o'clock! At nine o'clock we play games. I will roll this ball. If you catch it, say your name, then roll the ball to a new person so they can say their name. Remember this rule: Only say your name when you catch the ball."



Backpack Bear really wanted Mrs. Elliott to roll the ball to him first, but she rolled it to Shane instead.

Before Shane could say his name, Backpack Bear shouted, "Backpack Bear! My name is Backpack Bear!"

Mrs. Elliott said, "It is nice to meet you, Backpack Bear, but it is not your turn to say your name."

"When will it be my turn?" he asked.

Mrs. Elliott said, "I have a hint. The answer is also the rule for this game."

Backpack Bear thought really hard. "It's my turn to say my name when I catch the ball?"

"Perfect!" said Mrs. Elliott. "When we wait for our turn to speak, we can listen to others."

Backpack Bear was sorry for not waiting, and said so.

Mrs. Elliott said, "It's okay. Making mistakes is part of learning."



After everyone had a chance to say their names, Mrs. Elliott said, "Wow, you really do know how to play by the rules!" Then she dropped the ball into the toy box.

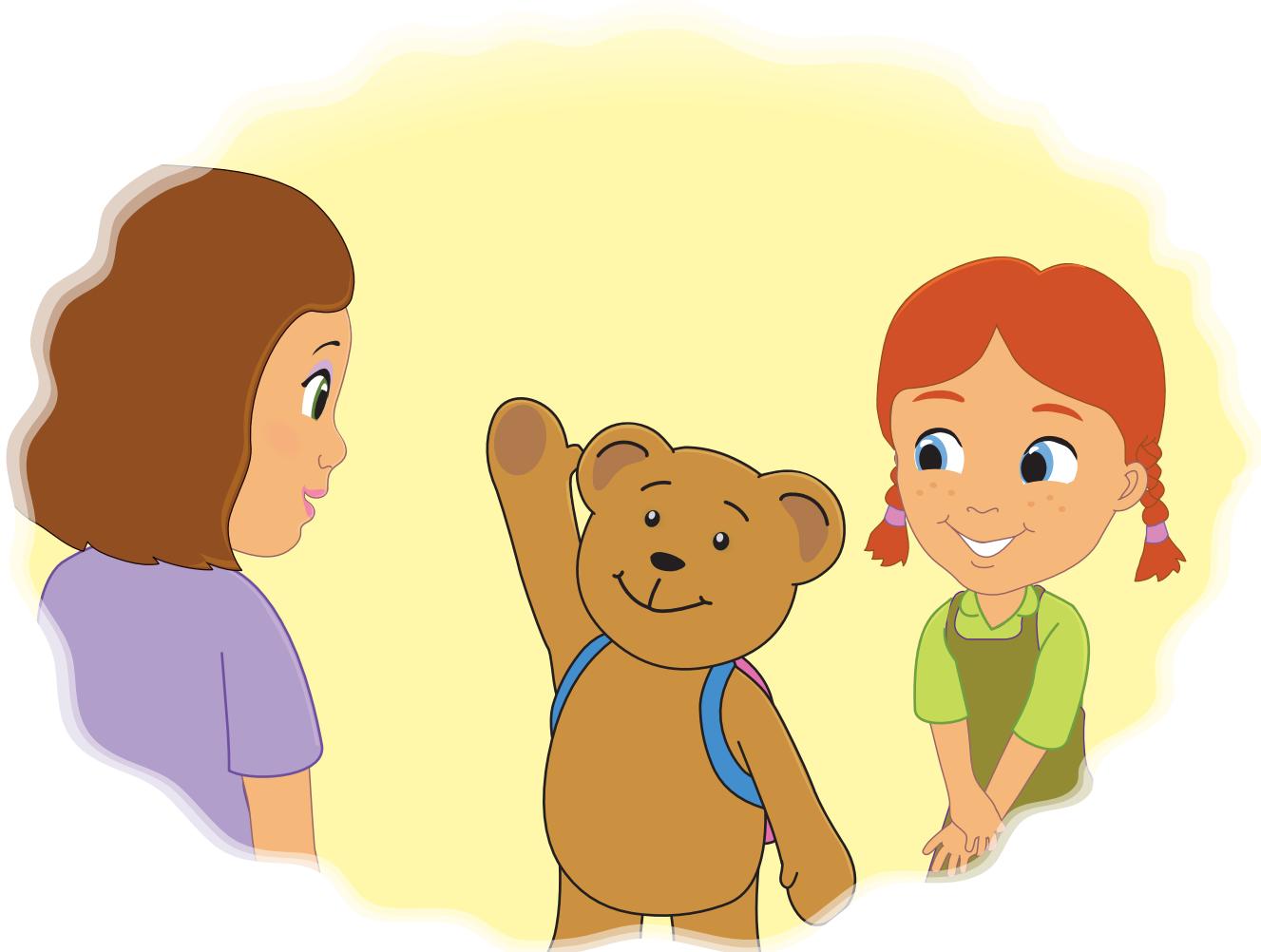
"It is everyone's job to clean up after themselves when they finish doing something, but you will also each have a special job of your own."

Mrs. Elliott showed the children their class job chart. Everyone in the class *did* have a special job! Backpack Bear was very happy because it was his job to be the gardener. But he noticed that Jackie looked sad.

He whispered, "What's wrong, Jackie?"

"I wanted to be the gardener," she whispered back.





Mrs. Elliott said, "Now that you know your jobs, I will answer the questions of children and bears who raise their hands or paws."

Backpack Bear raised his paw. "Can I trade jobs with Jackie? She wants to be the gardener."

Mrs. Elliott said, "It is nice of you to think of Jackie's feelings. You are the gardener this week. Jackie can be the gardener next week."

Jackie smiled.

Mrs. Elliott said, "Tick tock, it's ten o'clock! At ten o'clock we go to the computer lab. Where are our line leader and door opener?"

Shane yelled, "I'm the line leader!"

Jackie shouted, "I'm the door opener. I'll race you!"

Backpack Bear cried, "I can't wait to learn about computers!"





Mrs. Elliott said, "Before we go, I have two rules to teach you. The first rule is: Walk when you are indoors. The second rule is: Speak softly. Who can tell me why the first rule is important?"

Jackie raised her hand. "Because if we run, we might fall down and get hurt!"

"That is a very good reason," said Mrs. Elliott. "What about the second rule?"

Shy little Leslie raised her hand. "We should speak softly so other children can hear their teachers."

Backpack Bear thought about it, and he decided they were right.

The children walked to the computer lab.

Shane and Backpack Bear spoke very softly. Backpack Bear had heard about computers, but he had never used one before. He had a lot of questions.

"I have a computer at my house," said Shane. "I can show you how they work."





1. Enter quietly.
2. Be gentle!
3. Be patient.
4. Raise your hand for help.
5. Ask before printing.
6. Clean up after yourself.

Backpack Bear and Shane shared a computer. Shane used the mouse the most, because he was showing Backpack Bear how to use it.

Backpack Bear really wanted to use the mouse the most. It was hard for him to wait his turn and to listen, but he did it.



Mrs. Elliott said, "Tick tock, it's eleven o'clock. Computer lab time is over. Art time is about to begin!"

The children hung up their headsets, pushed in their chairs, and then lined up behind Shane. When Jackie opened the door, they walked quietly back to their classroom.

Backpack Bear didn't want to paint. He wanted to find out more about computers instead.

"What are you doing, Backpack Bear?" asked Mrs. Elliott.

"I'm looking for a book about computers," he said.

Mrs. Elliott smiled. "You're very clever to look for a book when you want to know more about something! But, right now, we are painting."



Leslie painted clouds and  
a big yellow sun.

Shane painted six  
slithering snakes.



Jackie painted a bright red flower.



Backpack Bear painted a computer, because he was still thinking about how much he liked using one.





Shane, Jackie, and Backpack Bear left their paints and brushes, and went to the bookshelf to find a story.

That's when Backpack Bear remembered.

"Shane and Jackie," he said, "we should go back and clean up our paints and things, now that we are finished using them."

Shane and Jackie were sorry for forgetting, and said so.

"That's okay," said Backpack Bear, "because making mistakes is part of learning."



First, the children worked together to clean up their paints and brushes,



then Backpack Bear  
watered the plants.

Mrs. Elliott called out, "Tick tock, it's twelve o'clock, time to talk! Look around the room and find a partner. Choose someone new, someone you have not talked to. Tell your new friend one rule you learned at school today."

Backpack Bear looked around the room. He *did* see someone he hadn't talked to.





Tyrell said, "I learned to listen when other people are talking."

Backpack Bear said, "Me, too. I also learned to clean up after myself."

"Me, too," said Tyrell.

Mrs. Elliott said, "Now that we have remembered all the rules we learned today, we can work together to write our rules for our classroom."

And that's just what they did.

