*Rules* by Cynthia Lord

The rules of Rules

Catherine thinks that writing her brother, David, a series of Rules will help create a “normal” life for her. The following is a list of several of the rules Catherine gave to her brother throughout the novel, *Rules*.

1. Follow the rules.
2. Chew with your mouth closed.
3. Say “thank you” when someone gives you a presnt (even if you don’t like it).
4. When you want to get out of answering something, distract the questioner with another question.
5. Not everything worth keeping has to be useful.
6. Don’t run down the clinic hallway.
7. If it’s too loud, cover your ears or ask the person to be quiet.
8. Sometimes you’ve gotta work with what you’ve got.
9. Sometimes things work out, but don’t count on it.
10. Saying you’ll do something means you have to do it- unless you have a very good excuse.
11. If you can only choose one, pick carefully.
12. At someone else’s house, you have to follow their rules.
13. If it fits in your mouth, it’s food.
14. Sometimes people laugh when they like you. But sometimes people laugh at you because they want to hurt you.
15. Open closet doors carefully. Sometimes things fall out.
16. Sometimes people don’t answer because they didn’t hear you. Other times it’s because they don’t *want* to hear you.
17. No toys in the fish tank.
18. Solving one problem can create another.
19. No dancing unless I’m alone in my room or it’s pitch-black dark.
20. Not everything worth keeping has to be useful.
21. Pantless brothers are not my problem.
22. Some people think they know who you are, when really they don’t.
23. Late doesn’t mean not coming.
24. A real conversation takes two people.
25. If you need to borrow words, Arnold Lobel wrote some good ones.

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|  | Rule 1 | Rule 2 | Own Rule |
| Explanation of why rule is important; significance is explained to characters and/or selfPoints possible: 10 |  |  |  |
| Word choice, ideas are communicated clearly, no grammar mistakes, punctuationPoints possible: 5 |  |  |  |
| Overall presentation is neat and finishedPoints possible: 5 |  |  |  |

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/60

Think about the rules that Catherine wrote for her brother. Some of these rules were specifically designed for David, while others had significance for Catherine as well.

1. Choose 2 rules and explain their significance to Catherine and/or David. Why did Catherine write this rule? What message was she trying to send her brother? Do you think this rule is reasonable? Why or why not?

Example:

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| Rule: No toys in the fish tank.  Catherine wrote this rule for her brother because David often times put toys in the fish tank, which is not what you are supposed to do with fish tanks or toys. Catherine wrote this rule for David because she thought she could keep situations under control this way. Catherine was hoping that she would be able to limit the trouble David caused by giving him this rule. I think Catherine wrote this rule more so to express that there were certain ways to behave, and one of those ways was not to put toys in the fish tank.  I think this rule makes sense, however, I think it is a little unreasonable because the fish tank is in Catherine and David’s house. So, if David puts toys in the fish tank, it doesn’t really matter because he is in his own house.  |

1. In the story *Rules,* David goes to Jason’s house for a birthday party. Catherine is really nervous about how he will behave and tells him the rule “Don’t open doors at other people’s hosue” If David were to visit your house for a play date or birthday party, what rule would he have to follow while at your house? Write a rule for David and explain the significance it has to your house. In other words, why is this an important rule for David to have?

 Example:

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| Rule: The earlier you go to bed, the more books you can read. But no more than 5 books allowed.  If David were to come to my house for a play date, it would be really important that he knows our family rule about books and bed. The reason this is a rule in my house is because I loved to read books, but I didn’t like going to bed. My mom had to make this rule for me when I was 7 because I would want to stay up really late and read an endless amount of books. It is important that David know about this rule when he comes to my house because he likes to have a number limit with things.  I think this rule will be easy for David to follow because there is a definite limit on the number of books that we are allowed to read. However, I think this rule might be difficult for him because there is no specific bedtime that we must follow. I know that David likes times because he is always counting down the minutes until he gets to go to the video store with his Dad every day. Time and definite things are really important to David.  |