

FROM THE CREATOR OF THE  
ENRAGED2ENGAGED SOCIAL SKILLS  
CURRICULUM

*Mountains and*  
**MOLEHILLS**

A GAME ABOUT  
REACTING...  
AND OVERREACTING

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# Mountains and Molehills: A Game About Overreacting

Students in my classes tend to have difficulty mitigating how serious of a reaction they should have to frustrations or setbacks, often “making a mountain out of a molehill”...or a molehill out of a mountain. This game helps students understand the appropriate reactions to common school and home setbacks teens and young adults face.

## Number of Players

2-4 (more students could play if they are placed into pairs)

## Length of Game

Approximately 30 minutes

## Objective

Players will recognize the appropriate strategies for expressing frustration, problem solving, and applying coping strategies for a variety of common minor and significant stressors.

## Directions for Play

1. Print and cut out the two sets of cards onto two different colors of cardstock (scenario cards and mountain/molehill cards). Shuffle both decks of the cards (separately). Place the two decks side by side, facedown, in the center of the table.
2. The oldest player goes first.
3. The player will draw one card from each of the decks and will turn them face up on the table in front of him/her.
4. The player will read the scenario card out loud and will state whether he/she is to respond as though the scenario is a “mountain” (“over the top” reaction--anger, sadness, hysteria, etc., “all or nothing” thinking, lack of problem-solving) or a “molehill” (reasonable, minor reaction, problem-solving approach).
5. The player will then model a person reacting to the scenario card as either a “mountain” or a “molehill.” The response may be totally inappropriate. For example, a student draws the cards “Mountain” and “You’re out of milk and want a bowl of cereal.” The person drawing these cards would overreact to a minor complaint (“Oh, noooooo! My life is ooooooover! I’ll starve to death now!”).
6. The teacher will determine if the student has responded correctly. If he/she has provided an appropriate response, he/she will be granted a point. If the player has not responded correctly, another player may provide a corrected response and “steal” a point (preference goes to the player seated to the left of the current player). An additional point can be gained by allowing the player to determine if the drawn responses were an appropriate match and correcting an incorrect match as needed. For example, you draw the cards “Molehill” and “Your grandma passed away.” The student would first act out an inappropriate “underreaction” (“Oh, well. Whatever. See ya, Grandma!”). The student would then have the chance to earn an additional point by correcting this “mismatch” (“Having your grandma die is a big deal. It’d be way more appropriate to cry or to say something like ‘I’m so sad.’”)
7. The player will set the used scenario card aside and will return the used mountain/molehill card to the bottom of the deck.
8. Play will continue around the table (repeating steps 3-7) until all cards have been played.
9. The player with the greatest number of points at the end of the game is the winner.





<p>The battery on your laptop died in the middle of class, and you forgot your charger.</p>	<p>You forgot to tell your mom you were staying after school for an activity. No ride home.</p>
<p>You burned the microwave popcorn.</p>	<p>You tripped and skinned your knee.</p>
<p>You were typing a document, and the program didn't save your work.</p>	<p>The shoes you're wearing are really uncomfortable, and there's still another 6 hours of school to go.</p>
<p>The zipper on your backpack broke.</p>	<p>You don't understand the math problem, and the teacher is going on with the lesson.</p>

<p>The person you wanted to go out with doesn't want to go out with you.</p>	<p>There is no toilet paper in the bathroom. The timing on that is...unfortunate.</p>
<p>You got a speeding ticket while driving your dad's car without permission.</p>	<p>You flunked second semester English. You'll have to go to summer school, which means no vacation to the Lake for you!</p>
<p>Someone else ate the last of the cottage cheese.</p>	<p>You busted your friend gossiping about you.</p>
<p>Your teacher snarked, "Nice of you to finally join us!" when you were tardy to class for the second time so far this week.</p>	<p>Your favorite flavor of ice cream has been discontinued.</p>

<p>A girl in your class made fun of your hair, and several people in class laughed.</p>	<p>Some kid said your dog's name is stupid.</p>
<p>You lost the ring your grandma gave you before she died.</p>	<p>You can't figure out how to operate the combination lock on your locker and it's already second semester.</p>
<p>Your dad called you lazy and stupid.</p>	<p>A bird pooped on you at the park.</p>
<p>You got really upset and stormed out of class. Now, you've got to go back in there tomorrow.</p>	<p>You got a papercut on your tongue while licking an envelope.</p>

Your dream has always been to go to Big Name University. You applied and were not accepted.	You've been practicing for the school play for weeks. It's the night of the big performance. Your mom has the flu and can't go.
Your grandma tells your mom that she's disappointed in you.	You wanted a bowl of Fruity Pebbles, but you're out of milk.
A group of mean kids is posting really mean and personal stuff about you on Facebook.	Your sister is in the hospital after a bad car crash and is in a coma.
The movie you wanted to see all week is sold out when you get to the theater.	You submit your very best poem to the school literary magazine, and it doesn't get chosen to



	be printed.
You stubbed your toe.	Two kids in the hallway are whispering about your “nasty B.O.” as you walk by.
Your cat dies.	The pop machine gave you a regular Coke instead of a Diet Coke.
You’ve been walking around all day with a hole in the crotch of your pants.	You didn’t make the varsity soccer team, even though you worked really hard.
Nobody remembered your birthday.	You sneezed. Nobody said “Bless you.”

Your home wi-fi is going to be out for the next 24 hours.	Your friend cancels your movie date because she has to study for a test in order to pass her class.
Your best friend and your boyfriend/girlfriend started going out behind your back. You were the last to know.	You didn't pick up your dog's poop, and your neighbor freaked out and screamed at you.
The cafeteria ran out of tacos on Taco Tuesday.	The dog ate your favorite socks.
Your mom read your diary.	Somebody stole your personal iPad.

Your friend totally ruined the season finale of a show you've been waiting to watch (spoiler alert!)	You have to get five cavities filled at the dentist.
Someone posted an embarrassing video of you on YouTube. So far, 250,000 views!	You got fired at work for being late too many times.
Someone calls you racial slur.	You find out you're not going to graduate on time and walk with your class.
Oops. You accidentally snap-chatted that inappropriate photo to your mother.	You texted a message complaining about your mom...to your mom.

That apple was surprisingly bland.	You got new glasses yesterday. You lost your glasses today.
That coffee was decaf.	You stepped in dog poop.
Your boyfriend/girlfriend breaks up with you the day before Homecoming.	You're messing around with a lighter and accidentally burn your friend pretty badly.
Your friends all go out without you.	Your teacher doesn't like Batman. He likes Aquaman.

You barf on the new couch. You drank milk all day first.	Someone bought the unsalted saltines.
You get suspended for fighting.	You have to go to your cousin's wedding instead of to the big party everyone else is going to.
You fall face-first onto the concrete when skateboarding and knock out three of your front teeth.	You have a headache.
The McRib is out of season.	Your friend almost died from huffing.

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