



Shreck the Golfer

Ben, my eight-year-old son, was on a mission to ace his test. He was studying very intently, but was struggling with some of the memorization. This wasn't any ordinary test; this was his golf test – for his beige bag-tag!



But wait a second, what would you have to memorize if you're taking a golf test? The ball either goes toward the target or it doesn't. Or, maybe it sort-of goes toward the target.

Well, Ben's test included both a skills component and a theory component. He's taking golf lessons through the Nike Golf Learning Centers. Their program is a stepped learning process that works great for kids. It builds incentive and challenge into the golf learning experience. And what kid doesn't like a challenge backed up with a prize? Ben has already jumped through the hoops for his white tag. Now he was full steam ahead onto the beige!

So, let's look at the theory part which Ben was having difficulty. He couldn't remember all of the criteria that went into the "Caring" topic. Jumping back into my rusty study skill tricks, I boldly told Ben that "Caring" was all about "Shreck," the ogre. "Shreck Golfs?!" he asked with excitement. I let Ben in on the secret of mnemonic devices and told him that, yes indeed, Shreck golfs! (What an oxymoron, an ogre who cares!)

Here's what we put together:

S = Watch out for the **Safety** of others

(Don't swing your club when others are close to you. Don't hit your ball if there's a chance you might hit someone in the group ahead of you.)

H = **Help** people in need

(If someone forgets their golf clubs on the green, pick them up and give them to back to him or her.)

R = **Really** forgive others

(When someone makes too much noise and distracts you while you're hitting, don't hold a grudge and blame him or her if you hit a less than stellar shot).

E = Express gratitude

(Shake hands with your playing partners at the end of your round, thanking them for their company.)

C = Be Compassionate and show you **Care**

(Watch the line of flight of your playing partner's ball and help them find their ball if it doesn't land in the fairway. Repair your divots in the fairway and fix your ballmark on the green plus one more.)

K = Be Kind

(Watch your language. Offer to tend the flagstick for someone who is putting from a far distance and may not be able to see the cup.)

Yes, Shreck golfs! And Shreck helps us see the applicability and the value of incorporating golf for character building and for teaching life skills to children (and to adults, too!). Ben did pass his test. A beige bag-tag awaits all of us!

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