

[citizen-times.com](https://www.citizen-times.com)

# The Why Queen and the Why Not King: Because I said so

*Pam J. Hecht, Special to WNC Parent Published 6:00 a.m. ET March 27, 2019*

4-5 minutes

---

One day, in a kingdom filled with a bustling band of lively children, there lived The Why Queen and The Why Not King.

Now, being that their highnesses were actually 10 years old, the rule of the land often forced them, along with the others, into following the basic tenets of courteous and respectful behavior.

Unfortunately for the grownups, they found a loophole.

Asking questions was routinely encouraged for all ages, but these two monarchs took it to a whole other irksome level. As a result, their after-school instructor started popping Tylenol and worrying about the state of humankind.

When it was time to go outside and play, The Why Queen would ask, “Why can’t we stay inside?”

Ironically, when it was time to go back inside, she would ask, “Why can’t we stay outside?”

In fact, she enjoyed using the word, “why,” as it pertained to her persistent malcontentedness. So much so, that one day, her

instructor answered in a way she never thought she would:  
“Because I said so.”

After a bit of pouting, it seemed to do the trick and for some time, The Why Queen reserved her “why” questions mostly for the times when she was genuinely curious. If she fell off the wagon, her instructor reminded her that she already knew the answer.

The Why Not King was a child who yearned for unbridled independence. His instructor gave it to him whenever and wherever possible, since she knew that a sense of control over his environment was particularly important to him. Also, she did not like to argue with him because, A) It was no fun, and B) There were no lawyers for hire on the playground.

## **Putting the adults to the test**

But sometimes, The Why Not King would test her. When told to stay on the ground and not to climb to the top of a high fence or not to randomly shoot game pieces in the air with a rubber band, he would ask, “Why not?”

And because it was fairly well known that The Why Not King was an intelligent young man who sometimes chose to ignore common sense just for kicks and giggles, his instructor occasionally dispensed with the unnecessary explanation in favor of a stern, “Because I said so.”

She likewise used that pithy phrase or others like it, on occasion, with the other nagging broken records in the bunch.

Safety to life and limb was another reason she broke out the

“because I said so.” For example, one day, a bear was on the prowl near the field where the children were playing. The instructor gathered the children to walk inside to safety, but The Why Not King wanted to get a closer look at the bear.

His “why not” was met with a particularly menacing, “Because I said so!” Quite clearly, there was no time to discuss the unpleasantness of possibly getting eaten by a bear.

Some chatty children operated under the false hope that a certain question might get a more favorable answer if they asked it, extra-politely, in unison. So they’d pair up to pack a stronger punch with their misguided question. Rather than become hostile or irritated, their instructor would inquire as to which person could come up with the best or most creative answer.

In the end, this instructor knew that respectfully discussing thoughts and feelings about rules and expectations together with kids is often an important thing to do.

But she also knew that grownups are grownups and sometimes, kids have to do things because the grownups say so.

*Pam J. Hecht is a writer, instructor and mother of two (but not necessarily in that order). Reach her at [pamjh8@gmail.com](mailto:pamjh8@gmail.com).*

Read or Share this story: <https://www.citizen-times.com/story/life/family/2019/03/27/pam-j-hecht-why-queen-and-why-not-king-because-said-so/3160455002/>