

Topic: The legal system

Lesson 1: Young people – the need for a different approach?	KS or Year Group: KS 3
Resources: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Resource 1 – PowerPoint word scramble2. Resource 2 - Types of sentence for young people (1 set of cards per group)3. Resource 3 – Effectiveness Venn diagram (1 per group)	Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students understand the purpose of the criminal justice system in relation to young people.• Students understand the role that magistrates play in the criminal justice system.• Students consider whether we need new approaches to punishment.

National Curriculum

Key concept – 1.1b

Key processes – 2.1a, 2.2a, 2.2b & 2.2c

Range and content – 3b

Lesson 1

This lesson provides an introduction to the role and purpose of the criminal justice system in relation to young people.

Starter

Using the first slide of **Resource 1 – PowerPoint word scramble**, ask students to unscramble as many words as possible in a limited time period. Use the second slide to go over the answers. Having unscrambled the words, students could even be asked to guess what the ensuing lesson is going to focus on! Explain that this lesson is going to focus on the criminal justice system, particularly in relation to young people.

Main activity

Activity:

- Ask the class to guess what is meant by the term ‘criminal responsibility’. This term refers to the fact that an individual is held responsible for any crime they commit by the justice system. At what age does a child become responsible for any crimes they commit? The answer is 10 years old in the UK.
- Divide the class into groups of four. Ask each group to discuss the following question: ‘should the age of criminal responsibility be younger or older?’. Each group should feedback to class and be prompted to give a full rationale for their answers.
- Put the word ‘punishment’ on the board and ask groups to write down a response to the question: ‘what is the purpose of punishment?’ Emphasise that the question is strictly confined to people who have definitely been convicted of committing a crime.
- The groups share their answers with the rest of the class. Clarify that a punishment is a penalty, i.e. a way of making individuals pay for something they have done wrong. Explain that the punishment that can be given for any particular crime is determined by the law of the country. This means that the punishment for the same crime can vary from country to country. For example, drug dealing is punishable by imprisonment and/or a fine in the UK, while in some other countries it is punishable by death. In this country, there is a maximum and minimum punishment for every particular offence enshrined in law.
- Put the word ‘reform’ on the board and ask the groups to write down a response to the question: ‘what does reform mean in relation to people who have been convicted of committing a crime?’
- The groups share their answers with the class. Clarify that reform in this context means transforming people so that they become productive and contributing members of society.
- Explain to the class that sentencing young offenders is not simply about punishing them but also trying to help them so they don’t re-offend. The objective is to stop offending behaviour and provide support and help early on.
- The groups should discuss the question: ‘do you think young offenders (10–17 year olds) should be dealt with differently to adult offenders?’. The groups should feedback to the class with a clearly argued rationale for their views.
- Explain they are now going to consider the types of sentences given to young offenders. Give each group a set of cards from **Resource 2 - Types of sentence for young people**. Ask the group to discuss the sentences in relation to young people and sort the cards into 3 piles according to the categories given in **Resource 3 – Effectiveness Venn diagram** (effective/not sure/not effective).
- Lead a class discussion about each sentence in turn. Ask each group to explain and give reasons for their views about the effectiveness or otherwise of each sentence.

Plenary

Ask each group to complete the sentence starter: ‘today we have learnt ...’. Each group should share their sentence with the rest of the class.

Young people – the need for a different approach?

Check the web

Useful sites for all three lessons in this series:

www.policelaw.co.uk/

www.lawontheweb.co.uk/

www.channel4.com/learning/citizenpower

www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk

www.crimereduction.gov.uk

www.21citizen.co.uk

<http://www.galleriesofjustice.org.uk>

The Galleries of Justice museum in Nottingham explores the history of crime, punishment and law through a range of interactive exhibitions, such as an 18th century prison and a Victorian courtroom. The multimedia website provides information for visitors and several games on the themes of citizenship and law.

http://www.citizenz.org/public_html/index.html

This citizenship education resource for schools is aimed at teachers and students working at Key Stages 3 and 4. It covers areas such as community action, the democratic process, employment, law and order and rights and responsibilities.

Resource 2 – Types of sentence for young people

<p>Curfew order The offender must remain in a specified place for set periods of time</p>	<p>Community rehabilitation order The offender is supervised by the Youth Offending Team</p>
<p>Community punishment order Unpaid work for a period of 40-240 hours</p>	<p>Conditional discharge The offender must not commit a further offence for a period of between six months and three years</p>
<p>Pay a fine For a person under 16yrs, the payment of the fine is the responsibility of their parents/carers</p>	<p>Receive an ASBO Anti-social behaviour order (a civil order restricting the behaviour of someone shown to have behaved in an antisocial manner)</p>
<p>Reparation order Designed to repair the harm caused by the offence either directly to the victim or indirectly to the community</p>	<p>An absolute discharge No further action is taken</p>
<p>Detention and Training order The first half of a sentence is spent in custody while the second half is spent in the community under the supervision of the Youth Offending Team</p>	<p>Parenting order The parent/carer is required to attend counselling. There may also be conditions imposed, e.g. ensuring the child does not visit a particular place unsupervised</p>

Resource 3 – Effectiveness Venn diagram

