

Topic: The legal system

Lesson: Crime and the recession	KS or Year Group: KS4
Resources: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Resource 1 – Sky News video clip: ‘Credit crunch brings crime wave’2. Resource 2 – Think, Pair, Share3. Resource 3 – Civil versus criminal Law4. Resource 4 – Mystery question and evidence cards5. Resource 5 – Diamond 9 template and punishment cards6. Resource 6 – Magistrate’s report7. Resource 7 – Sky News articles	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will investigate the difference between civil and criminal law.• Students will examine why there has been an increase in certain crimes during the recession.• Students will evaluate punishments, taking into account mitigating circumstances.

National Curriculum

Key Concepts: 1.1b, 1.2b, 1.2c

Key Processes: 2.1a, 2.1d, 2.2b, 2.2c

Range and Content: 3b, 3j

Curriculum Opportunities: 4a, 4b, 4g

Lesson overview

This lesson will develop students’ understanding of crime and the law. Students will examine why there has been an increase in certain types of crime during the recession, taking into account circumstances that may prompt people to turn to crime. Students will be presented with different forms of punishment, which they will have to evaluate before deciding which punishment best fits the crime.

Starter

- Show the students **Resource 1 – Sky News video clip: ‘Credit crunch brings crime wave’**.
- Hold a class discussion on ‘What sorts of crimes may increase during a recession?’ (Ideas include: theft, fraud, muggings and alcohol-related crime.)

Main activity

Activity 1:

- Ask students to write down as many different crimes as they can think of using **Resource 2 – Think, Pair, Share**.
- Ask students to share their ideas in pairs and as a class.
- Explain the difference between civil and criminal law (using **Resource 3 – Civil versus criminal Law**).
- Ask students to decide which of the eight crimes on **Resource 3** are criminal and which are civil offences.
- The answers are:
 1. civil
 2. criminal
 3. civil
 4. criminal
 5. criminal
 6. civil
 7. criminal
 8. civil
- Students should then return to the Think, Pair, Share activity on **Resource 2** and decide, of those crimes, which are civil and which are criminal offences.

Activity 2:

- Hand out **Resource 4 – Mystery question and evidence cards**. Explain to students that they have a mystery to solve and must use the evidence cards to answer the question: ‘Why did Tom Humphreys, a respectable father from Birmingham, end up in a police cell?’
- Note: This activity can be done in pairs, groups or individually. It is a good idea to cut up the evidence cards so that students can arrange them. There is no right or wrong way to arrange the cards.
- Some prompts for arranging the cards include:
 - ▶ What crime did Tom commit?
 - ▶ What are the effects of the recession?
 - ▶ What factors caused Tom to commit the crime?
 - ▶ Why did Tom get caught?
- Ask students to share their ideas as a class. Use the prompts above to question students about the crime.
- Tell the students that they now have to decide how Tom should be punished for the crime that he committed. Hand out **Resource 5 – Diamond 9 template and punishment cards** on which they are presented with nine options that they must arrange from most to least appropriate using the diamond 9 template.

Crime and the recession

- Students can cut out the cards and position them in a diamond 9 shape or write in the number of the punishment in the appropriate box.
- Students now have to imagine that they are a magistrate in charge of assessing Tom Humphreys' case. They must use the evidence collected throughout the lesson to write up their thoughts on the case and to generate an appropriate punishment. Students may wish to use the writing frame on **Resource 6 – Magistrate's report**.
- Note: There is a high chance of a custodial sentence in the scenario. However, with the present prison situation, alternative methods of sentencing, e.g. tagging or curfew may be applied. Factors such as pleading guilty rather than innocent, first-time offence, act of desperation, etc. may all be taken into consideration in mitigation, i.e. they may reduce the sentence.

Plenary

- Ask students to share their ideas from the diamond 9 activity with the class. Select students to read out their magistrate's reports.

Aim high

- Ask students to read one of the articles about crime and the recession on **Resource 7 – Sky News articles** and to summarise it using the PEEL format:
 - ▶ **Point** – What is the article about?
 - ▶ **Evidence** – Write down any facts/figures to support the point.
 - ▶ **Explain** – Give reasons why there is a rise in crime (students may refer to their own knowledge as well as reasons given in the article).
 - ▶ **Link** – Can this article be linked to other similar issues?
- Higher ability students should include information from the news article in their magistrate's report (e.g. facts and figures to support their arguments).

Extension activity:

- Ask students to imagine that they are the couple who have been burgled. They then have to write a statement from the couple outlining how they feel about the crime and why they feel Tom should get a prison sentence for the crime that he committed. Higher ability students should be able to consider how different parties are affected in different ways and present a counter-argument.

Assessment

The magistrate's report provides opportunities for teacher and peer assessment.

Check the web

<http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org>

Crimestoppers

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/crime-statistics>

Crime statistics

http://www.policeoracle.com/news/Figures-Confirm-Recession-Crime-Wave_17318.html

Police Oracle

<http://www.upmystreet.com/local/crime-in-uk.html?gclid=CIL9k4WPnpsCFZQU4wod6T0wow>

Up My Street crime statistics

Summary of key learning

- Students understand the difference between civil and criminal crime.
- Students examine why certain crimes increase during a recession.
- Students evaluate different types of punishments.

Resource 2 – Think, Pair, Share

Write down as many different types of crime as you can think of.

Share

Add extra ideas from the class on the outside of the circles.

Pair (2 minutes)

Think (1 minute)

Resource 3 – Civil versus criminal law

There are two types of law.

Civil law is associated with cases involving disputes between individuals and tends to be linked to **human rights**. Civil cases include disputes over consumer rights, family issues (divorce, adoption) and employment. Most civil cases are dealt with in a local **County Court**. Here, a judge decides on almost all of the cases (without a jury).

Criminal law is associated with more serious offences such as drug dealing, murder and theft. Offenders have to stand before a judge and jury in a **Crown Court**. Criminal offences that are less serious would be dealt with in a **magistrates' court**.

In some cases, there are reasons why a person may have turned to crime, which are taken into account when sentencing. These are called **mitigating circumstances**. For instance, a woman who killed her husband may have done so in self-defence because he physically abused her. Another example could be a single mother who has stolen money out of desperation because she is too poor to feed her children.

Decide if the offences below would fall under civil or criminal law:

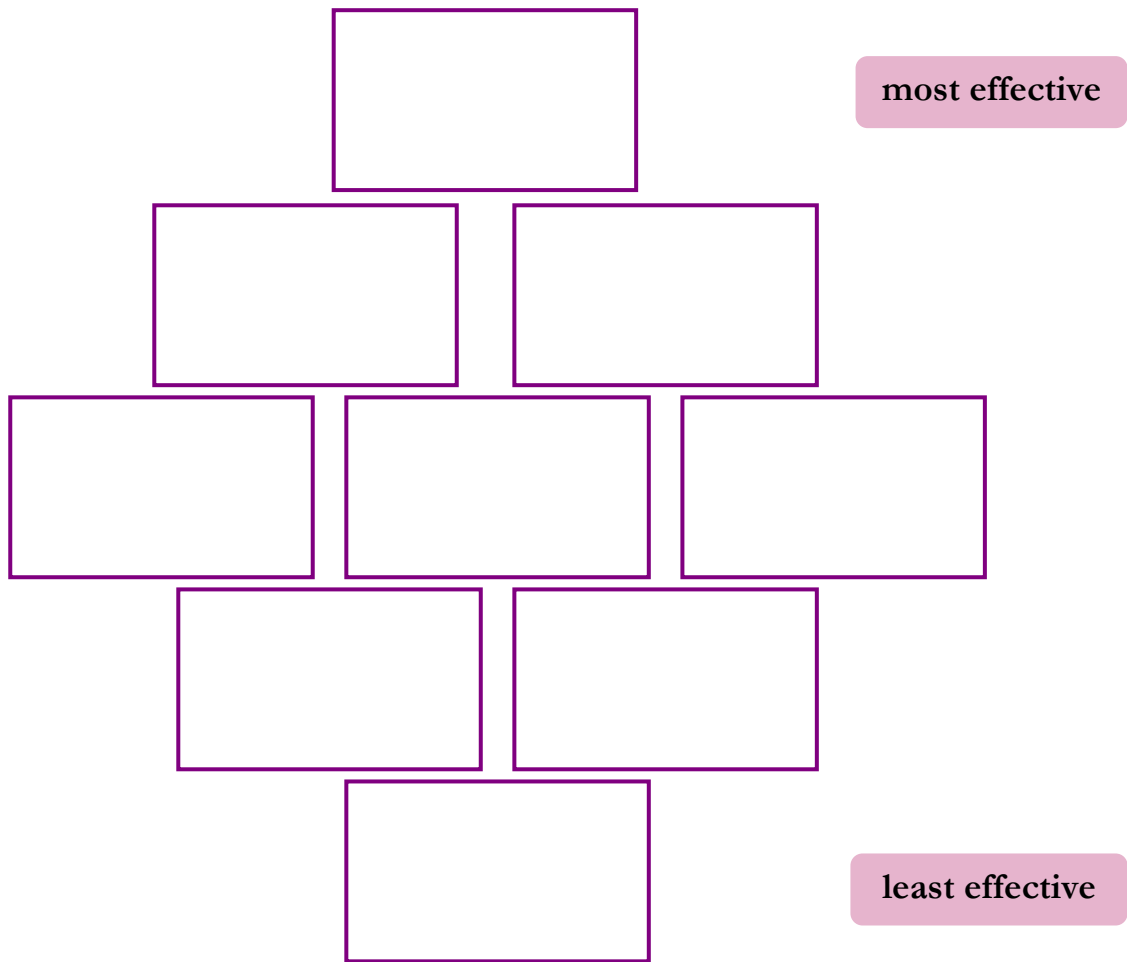
		Civil?	Criminal?
1.	An employer sacks a member of staff for refusing to remove a religious piece of clothing.		
2.	A man murders his wife during an argument over an alleged affair.		
3.	A couple have paid a surrogate mother for a baby. The surrogate mother has given birth but now refuses to give up her baby.		
4.	A woman is caught dealing drugs to schoolchildren.		
5.	A man is arrested for downloading inappropriate images of children on the internet.		
6.	A woman feels she is being sexually discriminated against at work.		
7.	A drunk driver kills someone.		
8.	A woman finds a fingernail in a chocolate bar and decides to sue the company.		

Resource 4 – Mystery question and evidence cards

Why did Tom Humphreys, a respectable father from Birmingham, end up in a police cell?

Tom was made redundant by the double-glazing firm he worked for in Birmingham.	Tom cannot afford the mortgage payments and is at risk of having his house repossessed.	The company Tom worked for built some new properties on Wood Street the year before.
Tom was arrested on 27 May for theft.	The UK is in an economic recession.	Wood Street has a neighbourhood watch scheme.
The Midlands is one of the areas hardest hit by the recession.	Tom has no previous criminal records.	Tom is suffering from low self-esteem and depression.
Tom owed £1000 to a debt company that he couldn't pay back. A bailiff came to the house and took the family's flat screen TV and computer to pay off the debt.	A burglary took place at 13 Wood Street. Some money and electrical goods were stolen. There was no sign of a forced entry into the house.	The building industry has been affected by the recession as property developers have stopped building new homes.
Tom fitted the windows in 13 Wood Street when it was built.	Tom's fingerprints were found in the house where the theft took place.	Tom has applied for 15 jobs but has not been called for any interviews.
Tom gets £64.30 a week through Jobseeker's Allowance.	A man fitting Tom's description was witnessed acting suspiciously on Wood Street by a neighbour.	The young couple who were burgled are very wealthy. They bought the property on Wood Street for £300,000 the year before.
Tom is a single father. He has two young boys to look after.		

Resource 5 – Diamond 9 template and punishment cards



<p>1. A referral to a mental health rehabilitation centre</p>	<p>2. 25 hours' community service (cleaning up graffiti, litter, building a community centre)</p>	<p>3. Curfew order restricting movement beyond the home – electronic tag fitted to monitor the offender's whereabouts</p>
<p>4. Exclusion order prohibiting the offender from going within 1 mile of Wood Street</p>	<p>5. A reparation order (the offender works for the victims to make up for any harm or financial loss) on the provision that the victim agrees</p>	<p>6. An absolute discharge – no punishment, provided the offender does not get into trouble again within a set period</p>
<p>7. Three-year prison sentence</p>	<p>8. A £5000 fine</p>	<p>9. The offender's children put into care by social services</p>

Resource 6 – Magistrate’s report

You are a magistrate in charge of assessing Tom Humphreys’ case. You must use the evidence provided to write a report about the incident and to decide on a suitable punishment for the crime that he has committed.

The offender, Tom Humphreys, is accused of

.....

Evidence to suggest that he is guilty includes

.....

.....

There are several mitigating circumstances which must be taken into consideration, these include

.....

.....

I therefore believe that he should be punished in the following way

.....

This is because

.....

I do not believe that

.....

are appropriate punishments because

.....

Resource 7 – Sky News articles

Crunch Crime Wave ‘Not Inevitable’

7:49pm UK, Wednesday February 04, 2009

A credit crunch crime wave is not inevitable, the Home Secretary has insisted.

Jacqui Smith made the announcement after a summit of business leaders, insurers, police, charities and local councils. The groups gathered in a bid to stop people becoming victims of recession-related burglaries.

It comes after the latest figures showed there were 69,700 burglaries between July and September last year, a 4% rise on the same period in 2007 – and the equivalent of one burglary every two minutes in England and Wales.

The figures seem to support Government fears that were revealed last September, when a leaked letter from the Home Secretary to the Prime Minister warned that the credit crunch could lead to an ‘upward pressure’ on property crime.

After the summit, the Home Secretary said she would take action to make sure it does not happen. But the Conservatives have released figures suggesting almost four out of five serial burglars fail to get the minimum statutory sentence of three years.

Just 21% of those convicted three times received the minimum punishment, according to Ministry of Justice figures. Shadow justice secretary Chris Grayling said: ‘There is little point in Jacqui Smith hosting summits, while Jack Straw continues to give burglars a break.’

As part of the initiative, the Home Office also launched a new website which will allow the public to fill out a questionnaire about the security of their homes. The results would provide them with a score indicating how secure their property is as well as recommendations for improvements.

The Home Secretary has said previously: ‘We are determined to stay on the front foot in keeping crime down but this needs to involve all of us, presenting a united front against the small minority who continue to commit crime.’

There are further measures planned in the coming weeks, with the Home Office planning to launch a £1.6m advertising campaign aimed at crime prevention.

Source: Sky News

Resource 7 (continued) – Sky News articles

Crime Survey: More Thefts And Burglaries

1:02pm UK, Thursday April 23, 2009

Thefts from the person rose by a quarter in 2008 while house break-ins recorded by police rose 4% between October and December.

The increase in domestic burglaries is a repeat of the rise in home break-ins recorded in the third quarter. It prompted fears of a ‘credit crunch crime wave’ linked to the rise in unemployment. The British Crime Survey, which is based on people’s experience of crime, found ‘theft from the person’, which includes pickpocketing and ‘snatch’ thefts from cars, rose by 25% in 2008 compared to 2007.

Association of Police Authorities chairman Bob Jones said: ‘This is a worrying development, and one which police authorities will want to monitor closely with their forces, so that any correlation with the economic downturn can be established, and effective action taken to tackle this increase.’

The police figures also showed a 4% increase in burglaries at business and other premises, though total recorded crime was down 4%.

Recorded crime Oct – Dec 2008

- House break-ins up 4%;
- 4% increase in burglaries at business and other premises;
- Robberies at knifepoint up 5%;
- Killings involving knives down 12%;
- Total recorded crime down 4%.

There was a sharp drop in the number of killings involving knives, which fell by 12%. But robberies at knifepoint were up by 5% to 4,283.

The Tories also described the figures as ‘worrying’. Shadow home secretary Chris Grayling said: ‘In particular the jump in burglaries and robberies at knifepoint is an alarming step in the wrong direction. All of this underlines the need for the government to stop wrapping up our police in unnecessary paperwork and get more officers back on to the streets.’

Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesman Chris Huhne said ministers had been ‘far too complacent’ on crime. ‘With Alistair Darling confirming yesterday we were entering the deepest recession since the Second World War, we are also facing a credit crunch crime wave,’ he said. ‘Labour has been far too complacent about falling crime rates and too eager to take the credit, since crime has been decreasing across Western Europe over the last decade.’

Source: Sky News