

**20 Lessons for 20 Years**

**The Criminal Justice System**  
**Key Stage 4 / Year 10 GCSE**

<p><b>Overview</b></p>	<p>This lesson is the first from a series of lessons investigating the Criminal Justice System in England. The original lessons were designed by Citizenship teacher Luke Jenner to fit into Edexcel's GCSE Citizenship Studies Theme C. Students had been introduced to CJS in Year 9, and to austerity in Years 7 and 10 during the government budgeting topic in theme B (Democracy in the UK).</p>
<p><b>Citizenship Skills and Concepts</b></p>	<p>Designed as an engagement lesson. The key information for students to understand is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what a system is - like a giant machine with interconnected parts, and that the CJS involves a range of agencies and connected parties.</li> <li>• how justice has been affected by austerity</li> <li>• how they might take positive action to bring about change</li> </ul>
<p><b>Essential Teaching Guidance</b></p>	<p>Be aware that there may be students in class who may already have personal experience with the criminal justice system, either themselves or family members. Ensure sensitivity and a non-judgmental approach during discussion, and make it clear that no student should feel compelled to share personal information.</p>
<p><b>Learning Objectives</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To examine issues and challenges facing the CJS in recent years</li> <li>• To consider the impact of a 'broken' system on those who use it</li> <li>• To consider ways in which people can make a difference</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<p>Depending on your individual approach, you may want show-me boards, post-it notes or flip chart paper to gather mindmaps from students.</p> <p>Journalistic scaffolding sheet for takeaway task.</p>

<p><b>Assessment Opportunities</b></p>	<p>Students' verbal responses and feedback can enable assessment of understanding. The final plenary slide can be used to informally assess whether progression in understanding has been made.</p>
<p><b>Do now / Starter /Entry Task</b></p>	<p>Ask pupils to write their own definition of the Criminal Justice System, then take feedback to gauge existing understanding.</p> <p>Ask students if they would want to work within the CJS, and why/why not.</p>
<p><b>Task 1</b></p>	<p>Show the definition on Slide 3 and ask if anyone can name any roles within the CJS. Show the summary of roles on Slide 4. Had pupils identified them all? Were there any surprises?</p> <p>Show the different headlines about the CJS on Slide 5. In pairs, ask students to discuss reasons why they think the CJS is 'failing'. What kinds of things might budget cuts affect?</p>
<p><b>Task 2</b></p>	<p>This activity allows pupils to consider different experiences within the CJ, one fictitious (but based on real situations), and one real life.</p> <p>Show pupils the videos about the effects of cuts within the CJS, and for each video, ask them to make notes as if they are researching a newspaper article (they could do this individually or in pairs). After each video ask them to feed back their notes.</p> <p>Use the questions on Slide 9 to structure a discussion about what action could be taken to address some of the challenges facing the CJS.</p>
<p><b>Plenary / Reflection</b></p>	<p>Create a mindmap of any Active Citizenship ideas which students could take to address the issues they have discussed.</p> <p>Go around the class and ask students to give you up to five things they have found out that they didn't know before.</p>
<p><b>Takeaway Task</b></p>	<p>Ask students to find a story in the media that relates to the CJS. Did the person/people involved get justice? Why/why not? Use Journalist writing tips sheet to support.</p>

**Additional Teacher  
Links & Resources**

**Glossary**

**Austerity**

difficult economic conditions created by government measures to reduce public expenditure.

"the country was subjected to acute economic austerity"

**Barrister**

A person qualified as a lawyer and called to 'the bar' to represent people, particularly in the higher courts.

**Supreme court**

It is the highest court in the United Kingdom. The judges, known as justices, have the final say on the biggest legal issues. They are the ultimate check and balance on the UK's laws and constitution.

**Defendant**

an individual, company, or institution sued or accused in a court of law.

**Victim**

a person harmed, injured, or killed as a result of a crime, accident, or other event or action.

**Witness**

a person who sees an event, typically a crime or accident, take place.