



# What is the Rule of Law?

## Lesson 2

**How do laws affect us?**

**Lesson 2:  
What is the Rule of Law?  
Key Stage 3 (Year 7)**

<p><b>Overview</b></p>	<p>In this lesson, students scrutinise the concept of the Rule of Law and its significance in demonstrating justice in society. They will understand principles of fairness, accountability and equal treatment under the law, and how it creates stability and justice and secures protection of rights within society. Through analysis of the Lady of Justice statue, a video clip and real-life situations, students will understand how the Rule of Law impacts their own lives.</p>
<p><b>Citizenship skills and concepts</b></p>	<p><b>Concepts:</b> justice, democracy, legislation, responsibilities, community cohesion, society</p> <p><b>Skills:</b> political literacy, investigation, collaborative working, evaluation</p>
<p><b>Essential teaching guidance</b></p>	<p><b>Timings for each task are given as guidelines. Please use your professional judgement when deciding how to deliver the tasks, depending on time available and your students' needs.</b></p> <p>The main purpose of this lesson is to explain to students the Rule of Law and how this affects their lives. This is one of the Fundamental British Values introduced by the Government in 2014 to teach in schools to encourage democracy and citizenship education.</p> <p>The concept of the Rule of Law dates back to ancient civilisations like Mesopotamia and Egypt. It evolved through Greek philosophy and Roman mythology, culminating in the creation of the Magna Carta (1215). Enlightenment thinkers further refined it, leading to its modern embodiment in constitutions worldwide, ensuring equality, accountability and justice.</p> <p>Personalising students' learning to reference real-life situations in your community and school community will encourage them to engage fully with the lesson and deepen understanding of the Rule of Law – for example, through opportunities to contribute to school policies or through the student council.</p> <p>Be aware that different students in your class may have a range of</p>

	<p>backgrounds and some may be sensitive to issues discussed, due to negative experiences with the law through family members or friends. Some students will have a very different view about the Rule of Law than others and may have experienced injustice and unfair treatment in their lives, so you must consider the students in your class to pitch this lesson appropriately. You may want to check with the head of year or safeguarding lead in case any students in the class are affected.</p> <p>Be mindful of the diverse viewpoints that may arise, and seek to encourage empathy and promote community cohesion. Where the issues raised in teaching this lesson are sensitive or controversial in nature, ensure that you are in line with your school policies on such matters. You may find the <a href="#">Teaching Controversial Issues in Citizenship</a> and <a href="#">ACT guidance on Political impartiality in Citizenship</a> helpful.</p>
<p><b>Learning questions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What is the Rule of Law?</li> <li>● Why is the Rule of Law important in society?</li> <li>● How does the Rule of Law impact your life?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lesson resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Slide presentation for the lesson</li> <li>● Worksheet: What does Lady Justice symbolise? Labelling (for Task 2)</li> <li>● Quiz: The Rule of Law quiz (for Task 4)</li> <li>● Worksheet: How does the Rule of Law apply to these young people's lives? Real-life scenarios (for Task 6)</li> <li>● Worksheet: The Rule of Law diagram (for Takeaway task)</li> <li>● Glossary: Keywords (for entire scheme of work)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Differentiation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider pairings in the labelling task (Task 2) and the real-life scenario task (Task 6) that support the activity, paying particular attention to vocabulary and evaluation skills. Also consider whether it is suitable to change the pairings for the discussion tasks throughout the lesson to ensure that a high level of discussion is reached and effective debates can occur.</li> <li>● There are two levels of worksheets for the labelling task in case the vocabulary is pitched too high for some students in your class.</li> <li>● There are two versions of the quiz for those with visual impairments.</li> <li>● Use differentiated questioning – who, what, when, where, how and why – to create a range of accessible questions.</li> <li>● Use different levels of discussion tasks to support students, e.g. sharing opinions, analysing, solving a problem or</li> </ul>

	<p>persuading.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider using no-hands-up questioning to encourage students to engage with the learning and reduce the likelihood of students being passive.</li> <li>● Ensure that sufficient ‘think time’ is provided before selecting a student or before moving on to another student to get the answer.</li> <li>● When reviewing knowledge gained by the class, use targeted questioning to stretch students. Give them an opportunity to develop ideas by bouncing a question around the room.</li> <li>● Scaffold feedback – use prompting, recasting, eliciting, correcting, commenting on student language and promoting learning through discovery.</li> <li>● Use choral (whole-class) responses for new terminology or to address misconceptions.</li> <li>● Use hinge questions to ensure that the class understands an important area of knowledge or concept before the lesson can progress.</li> <li>● Give different levels of support – for example, paired work, scaffolding frameworks, one-to-one, TA-supported, model answers.</li> <li>● Encourage students to use the glossary of key terms.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assessment opportunities</b></p>	<p>This lesson offers many opportunities to assess understanding through group discussion and direct differentiated questioning (used to check that knowledge has been acquired). The quote that starts the lesson will assess previous knowledge learned in Lesson 1 from this scheme of work. Students can be assessed on their oral justification of how the Rule of Law impacts their lives. The labelling task about Lady Justice will allow a more thorough assessment of vocabulary and critical-thinking skills. Students will be expected to draw upon knowledge from across the lesson in the plenary, and this will be revisited in the next lesson to ensure that students have understood the material.</p>

<p><b>Do now / starter / entry task</b></p> <p><i>(5 minutes)</i></p>	<p><b>Mahatma Gandhi quote analysis</b></p> <p><i>Slides 2 to 4</i></p> <p>Share the Mahatma Gandhi quote on slide 2:</p> <p>“Just as we need air to breathe, we need laws to thrive as a community.”</p> <p>Ask students to reflect on this quote and pose the following questions. Reword and expand on these as necessary to support differentiation.</p> <p><b><i>Do you recognise this man?</i></b> Mahatma Gandhi</p> <p><b><i>Do you know anything about his life?</i></b> Mahatma Gandhi, often known as the Father of India, was a visionary leader who advocated for non-violent resistance to British colonial rule. Through civil disobedience and peaceful protest, he inspired millions to fight for independence and social justice. His teachings of truth, love and non-violence continue to inspire movements worldwide.</p> <p><b><i>What is Gandhi inferring in this quote?</i></b> This quote emphasises the essential role of laws in maintaining order and harmony within a community. Just as air sustains life, laws provide structure and guidance, ensuring fairness, protection and accountability for all members, thereby developing a thriving and cohesive society.</p> <p>Ask students the question on the slide. To extend this discussion, you can find out further information about Mahatma Gandhi <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Share slides 3 and 4 and explain that in this lesson you’re going to be focusing on what the Rule of Law is and how it impacts your lives.</p>
<p><b>Task 1</b></p> <p><i>(5 minutes)</i></p>	<p><b>Lady Justice</b></p> <p><i>Slides 5 to 8</i></p> <p>Share slide 5 and explain the definition of ‘justice’.</p> <p>Ask students to spend two minutes discussing the question on slide 6 in their pairs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you think this statue is called?</li> </ul> <p>Explain where the statue is found and give the students time to suggest names for the statue. It is unlikely that they would have</p>

	<p>heard of this statue, but you may find that some students already know what it represents and its name.</p> <p>Share slide 7 and tell the students that it is a statue of Lady Justice. Ask students what symbols they can see on Lady Justice and facilitate whole-class feedback. Share slide 8 to show them the symbols and where they are on the statue of Lady Justice.</p>
<p><b>Task 2</b> <i>(7 minutes)</i></p>	<p><b>Labelling Lady Justice</b></p> <p><i>Slides 9 to 11</i></p> <p>Give out the worksheet ‘What does Lady Justice symbolise?’ and explain to students that in their pairs they need to decide which meanings go with which of the three symbols. There are six words in the box below and students need to choose two of these for each symbol. There is a differentiated version on page 2 of the worksheet, which has a few letters already filled in and a vocabulary bank. Share slide 9 and ask students to spend two minutes labelling the Lady of Justice on their worksheets.</p> <p>Get feedback from this labelling activity for one minute by targeting six pairs to give one word each to encourage communication skills. Share slide 10 and ask students to correct their answers if necessary.</p> <p>Ask students the question on slide 11, and after discussing this question as a whole class for one minute, click the slide to reveal the suggested answers. This may be a useful time to remind students that it is these concepts that make up the law in England and Wales, and it is because of one key element that we will be discussing next.</p>
<p><b>Task 3</b> <i>(5 minutes)</i></p>	<p><b>The Rule of Law</b></p> <p><i>Slides 12 to 15</i></p> <p>Share slide 12 and explain the definition of the Rule of Law. You may want to ask students where they have heard this before, because some may have prior knowledge from assemblies on British Values or sessions in primary school.</p> <p>Share slide 13 and read the section about the Rule of Law, explaining its importance and its meaning. Connect it with the words on which students have just focused in the Lady Justice labelling activity in Task 2. Read slide 14 to strengthen their understanding of the Rule of Law.</p> <p>Explain the definition of ‘impartiality’ on slide 15, which is</p>

	<p>mentioned in the upcoming video for Task 4.</p>
<p><b>Task 4</b> <i>(12 minutes)</i></p>	<p><b>Video about the Rule of Law</b></p> <p><i>Slides 16 to 19</i></p> <p>Explain to students that they will now be watching a video containing lots of important information about the Rule of Law. Share slide 16 and give out the worksheet ‘The Rule of Law quiz’. Ask students to watch the video carefully first and then the quiz can be completed independently afterwards. Emphasise the need to concentrate, listen to information and not answer any of the questions in the quiz before you tell them to at the end.</p> <p>Play the video from slide 17 and watch the video in silence. You can also access it here:</p> <p><a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DGpOGxIU-z8">www.youtube.com/watch?v=DGpOGxIU-z8</a></p> <p>(Rule of Law, UK Judiciary 1:55)</p> <p>You may find it useful to play the video twice so that students get an even greater understanding of this content, or ask them to write down any questions they had, whether there was anything they did not understand or where they need further clarification.</p> <p>Share slide 18 and ask students to complete the multiple choice quiz on their own in two minutes. After the time is up, ask students to swap quiz papers with the person sitting next to them. Share slide 19 and allow students to see the answers to the quiz so that they can mark each other’s work. After one minute, students must hand the papers back to the original author and they can tally up the mark out of 10.</p> <p>To allow for a fast measure of progress, you could ask students to raise their hand if they got under 5, 5–6, 7–8, 8–9 or 10, so they can demonstrate their understanding. If many of the class got lower marks, explain the Rule of Law to students again using the answers from the quiz. You may prefer to divide the class into two teams and complete the quiz as a race.</p>

<p><b>Task 5</b></p> <p><i>(10 minutes)</i></p>	<p><b>What is the Rule of Law like today?</b></p> <p><i>Slides 20 to 25</i></p> <p>Share slide 20 and explain that we will now be focusing on the Rule of Law today, how it impacts society and how it affects their life as a young person in Britain.</p> <p>Read the information about the World Justice Project on slide 21 and tell students that we will now be looking at some of their research findings. To extend this section further, you can find more information about the World Justice Project <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Share slide 22 and explain that in the world today, including in our country, the Rule of Law is declining. Allow students to look at the evidence themselves by sharing slide 23 and answering the question on the slide with volunteers from the class. The UK is 15th on the list of adherence to the Rule of Law. Explore with students the definition of ‘adherence’ on slide 23 to ensure that they understand the graph fully.</p> <p>Now explain that we will be looking at the bottom half of the graph on slide 24, where Venezuela is at the end. Ask targeted students to answer the question on the slide because this is a higher-order thinking question, which requires both ability and perception to answer, and some students may struggle with this level of response. Share slide 25, which contains the answer and outlines why some countries have stronger adherence to the Rule of Law than others.</p>
<p><b>Task 6</b></p> <p><i>(10 minutes)</i></p>	<p><b>Applying to your life</b></p> <p><i>Slides 26 to 30</i></p> <p>Share slide 26 and divide the class into small groups of four or five students. Ask the students to discuss the question on the slide and collate their responses in the form of a spider diagram, as shown on slide 26.</p> <p>Allow each group to give feedback before you move on to the next activity. You could do this by asking one member of each group to give you some situations where the Rule of Law could affect them in their own lives. Keep this discussion short, as they will be adding to this spider diagram after the next activity.</p> <p>Share slide 27 and give out the worksheet ‘How does the Rule of Law apply to these young people’s lives?’. There are two levels of this worksheet, with two of the more tricky answers already completed on page 2 of the worksheet and key phrases highlighted. Explain that in their groups they must spend three</p>



	<p>minutes reading the situations and matching them up to the aspect of the Rule of Law that this situation demonstrates. Model the task by sharing slide 28 and reading the first scenario and answer to the class. Clarify with instructions and correct any misconceptions about the task. Students can mark their own answers using the modelled responses on slide 29, or you can read them from the answer sheet, provided in two formats depending on how students matched up their answers on pages 3 and 4 of the worksheet.</p> <p>Share slide 30 and ask students to see whether they can add two more situations onto their spider diagram from the beginning of this task (on slide 26).</p>
<p><b>Plenary / reflection</b></p> <p><i>(5 minutes)</i></p>	<p><b>Word scramble</b></p> <p><i>Slides 31 to 33</i></p> <p>Display the anagram on slide 31:</p> <p><b>Neoyevre si lquea</b></p> <p>Give students a couple of minutes to try to unscramble the anagram. If they're struggling, give them the initial letter of each of the three words as an additional clue. Some students may solve this quickly, in which case ask them to discuss how the Rule of Law connects to this statement. This could be done in pairs first and then together to encourage whole-class participation.</p> <p>The answer is shown on slide 32:</p> <p><b>Everyone is equal</b></p> <p>Display slide 33 and invite students to reflect on their learning in this lesson and how it has improved their knowledge and understanding of the Rule of Law and the importance and application to both our own lives and the society in which we live.</p>
<p><b>Takeaway task</b></p>	<p><i>Slide 34</i></p> <p>Share slide 34 and ask students to create a diagram to summarise everything they have learned in this lesson about the Rule of Law.</p> <p>Depending on your students, you may need to give them some ideas – for example, a wheel containing five parts of information or a flow chart, pie chart or similar diagram shape. Students should be encouraged to think of their own diagram. However, you may choose to give out the worksheet 'The Rule of Law diagram' if this</p>

	<p>would be more appropriate to use with your class.</p>
<p><b>Additional teacher links &amp; resources</b></p>	<p>There are lots of resources that can assist in delivering this lesson, including specific information about the Rule of Law.</p> <p>You may find it helpful to look at further ACT resources to find out more about the legal system before you teach this lesson. <a href="#">ACT curriculum briefing: Justice, the legal system and international law</a> offers Citizenship teachers advice on key areas of subject content and approaches to teaching the national curriculum for Citizenship. This briefing is designed to provide a starting point for teachers as they build their subject knowledge.</p> <p>This research will give you further insight into the Rule of Law and its origins and significance:</p> <p><a href="#">What is the Rule of Law? World Justice Project</a></p> <p><a href="#">What is the Rule of Law – United Nations</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Rule of Law: What does it really mean? Law Society</a></p> <p><a href="#">What is the Rule of Law? ROLE UK</a></p> <p><a href="#">Human Rights Council 35: Rule of Law – GOV.UK</a></p> <p><a href="#">Dicey and the Rule of Law – LawTeacher</a></p>

# The Rule of Law quiz

## 1. What is the Rule of Law?

- a. A law that only applies to the police
- b. A set of rules that everyone, including the Government, must follow
- c. Guidelines that judges can ignore
- d. Rules that change depending on whom you are

## 2. Why is the Rule of Law important?

- a. It protects rights and ensures fair treatment
- b. It allows for special treatment based on social status
- c. It makes rules confusing and unclear
- d. It restricts safety regulations

## 3. Who must follow the Rule of Law?

- a. Only the Government
- b. Nobody, it's optional
- c. Everyone, including the police and Government
- d. Only judges

## 4. What role do judges play in upholding the Rule of Law?

- a. They make decisions based on personal opinions
- b. They are partial and influenced by the Government
- c. They apply the law fairly and independently
- d. They must side with the police in all cases

## 5. How are judges appointed?

- a. Based on family connections
- b. Through a fair and open process based on merit
- c. By the Government's direct choice
- d. Random selection process

## 6. What does the independence of judges ensure?

- a. They can be easily influenced
- b. Fair application of the law without Government interference
- c. Judges can only rule in favour of one social group
- d. Judges have no say in legal matters

## 7. What do customers benefit from due to the Rule of Law?

- a. Unsafe products
- b. Confidence in safety regulations of products
- c. Lack of consumer protection laws
- d. No knowledge of product origins

## 8. How are investors protected by the Rule of Law?

- a. Their money is not protected
- b. They have no backing for their investments
- c. Contracts ensure the protection of their money
- d. Investing is a risky endeavour

## 9. What does the Rule of Law demand from the police?

- a. Strict procedures and legitimate reasons for arrest
- b. Arbitrary arrests without reason
- c. Preferential treatment for certain individuals
- d. No need for arrests at all

## 10. Why is the independence of judges valued in Britain?

- a. Because they are closely tied to the Government
- b. Their decisions are influenced by personal relationships
- c. It ensures fairness and impartiality in the legal system
- d. Judges are not allowed to have their own opinions

# The Rule of Law quiz ANSWERS

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- |      |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. b | 3. c | 5. b | 7. b | 9. a  |
| 2. a | 4. c | 6. b | 8. c | 10. c |

# What does Lady Justice symbolise?

Read the six words in the box below and match them up with their symbol.



1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

EQUALITY

FAIRNESS

NEUTRALITY

AUTHORITY

BALANCE

POWER

# What does Lady Justice symbolise?

Read the six words in the box below and match them up with their symbol.

## GLOSSARY

**Equality** = Everyone is given the same rights

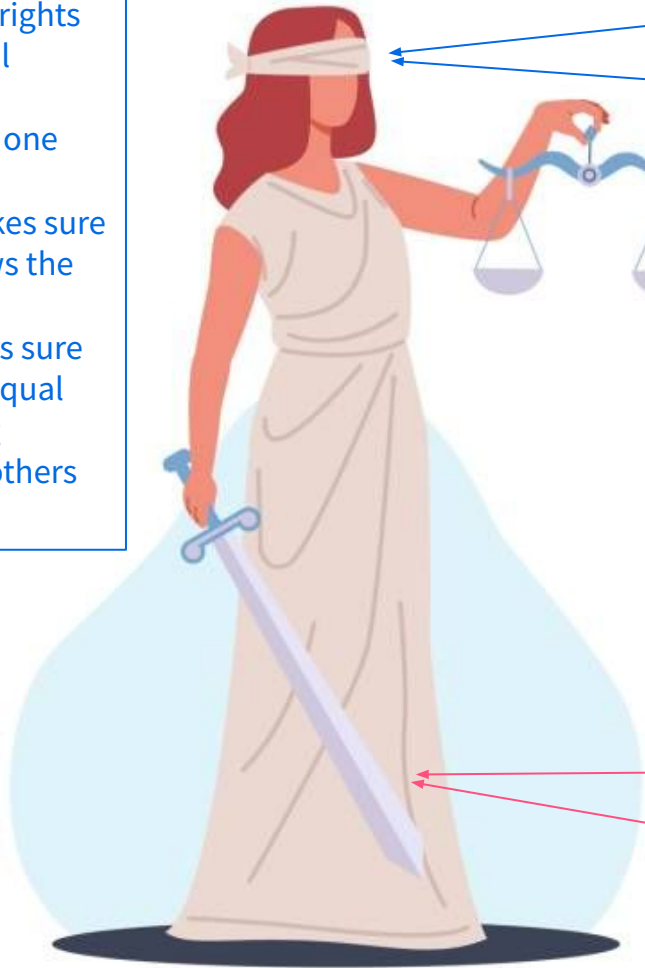
**Fairness** = Equal treatment

**Neutrality** = No one chooses sides

**Authority** = Makes sure everyone follows the law

**Balance** = Makes sure both sides are equal

**Power** = Having influence over others to punish them



1. N

2.

3.

4.

5. A

6.

EQUALITY

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# What does Lady Justice symbolise? ANSWERS

Read the six words in the box below and match them up with their symbol.



1. NEUTRALITY

2. FAIRNESS

3. EQUALITY

4. BALANCE

5. AUTHORITY

6. POWER

EQUALITY

FAIRNESS

NEUTRALITY

AUTHORITY

BALANCE

POWER

# How does the Rule of Law apply to these young people's lives?

Read the scenarios and match them up with the part of the Rule of Law that connects to their situation.

## 1. Emma

In class, Emma saw that her friend got three turns to read aloud. She reminded the teacher, who realised and made sure everyone had one turn.

## 2. Javraj

Javraj's bag was taken by a classmate without asking. Their teacher explained that taking things without permission is against the rules, and the toy was returned to Javraj.

## 3. Lily

Lily lost a library book and understood she had to follow the rules by either finding it or paying for it.

## 4. Shabana

Shabana shared an idea during a group project, but Mark claimed it as his own. The teacher intervened and made sure Shabana got the marks for her work.

## 5. Aiden

During a football game, Aiden noticed a teammate cheating. The coach explained the importance of playing by the rules and they replayed the game.

## 6. Carlos

Carlos saw classmates throw their rubbish in the playground. He reminded them of the rule to clean up after themselves. Together, they tidied up, showing how rules help keep our environment and community nice for everyone.

A. HONESTY

B. GOOD FOR SOCIETY

C. EQUALITY

D. RESPONSIBILITY

E. RESPECTING OUR RIGHTS

F. FAIRNESS



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**C. EQUALITY**

**E. RESPECTING OUR RIGHTS**

**D. RESPONSIBILITY**

**A. HONESTY**

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# The Rule of Law diagram

