Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice
Jesuit Education Desk

ON THE MARGINS

Teacher resource materials for the junior cycle of post-primary education

Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice

The Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice promotes social justice by fostering an understanding of public issues through social analysis, theological reflection and advocacy. Its aim is to influence government policy and practice as well as raise awareness of difficult social issues. The Centre do this through conducting research and analysis on a variety of issues such as penal policy, housing and homelessness, health policy, environmental justice and economic development.

Jesuit Education Desk

The Jesuit Education Desk has responsibility for supporting and promoting Jesuit education and for fostering the ethos and identity of the schools as informed by the Catholic faith and Ignatian Spirituality. It supports the development of the Jesuit Vision within the Province and advances new projects and initiatives in the schools and colleges.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ON THE MARGINS: INTRODUCTION

On the Margins is the first of a series of modules being developed for students in Jesuit schools. These modules have been informed by the requirements of the Framework for junior cycle and they incorporate themes and approaches that are in keeping with the best traditions of Ignatian pedagogy.

This module explores issues of social justice and focuses in particular on how society responds to crime and the use of imprisonment. As part of a Religious Education (RE) or Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) programme this module supports students in exploring contemporary issues within a moral context and enables them to develop 'a faith that does justice' through engagement in social justice activities in the local community or the wider world. It is based on the premise that people learn best through experience and through a process that connects learning, reflecting and doing. The material is grounded in Christian values of care, solidarity, equality and social justice which are at the heart of Ignatian education.

As the aim of Jesuit education is to form 'men and women of competence, conscience and compassionate commitment' this module is geared to developing the students' capacity for ethical reasoning, critical thinking and skilful analysis of social justice issues and towards fostering empathy for people living on the margins. It aims to encourage a sound understanding of the causes and structures that gives rise to social injustice and to develop a sense of solidarity with the poor and the marginalised. Fr Peter McVerry SJ – whose book The Meaning in the Shadows is a recommended accompaniment to this module – sums it up this way:

Jesus wasn't a man for others; he was a man with others. Eating with outcasts he broke down the walls of division; the disreputable became reputable, but in the eyes of those who wished to retain the walls, the reputable, Jesus himself became disreputable.

The hope is that students in our schools will come to the realisation that people on the margins, including those who have done great harm, share the same desires as us for love, care and acceptance. Our duty as Christians is to move towards the margins so that the margins themselves will be erased and everybody feels a part of the human family. In the words of another Jesuit, Fr Greg Boyle SJ:

We locate ourselves with the poor and the powerless and the voiceless. At the edges, we join the easily despised and the readily left out. We stand with the demonized so that the demonizing will stop. We situate ourselves right next to the disposable so that the day will come when we stop throwing people away.

This may be a tall order but it is the challenge of the Gospel.

This module has been developed by the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice and the Jesuit Education Desk. We believe that you will find this module an invaluable resource in the classroom and trust that the students will be assisted to becoming people of even greater 'competence, conscience and compassionate commitment'.

Eoin Carroll

Social Policy
and Communications Co-ordinator
Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice

Brian Flannery

Education Delegate
Jesuit Education Desk

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This module has been created to develop students' capacity for ethical reasoning, critical thinking and skilful analysis of social justice issues and to foster empathy for people living on the margins of society. To achieve these goals, the module encourages active and reflective learning in keeping with the best traditions of Ignatian pedagogy.

Although set out in three strands the module does not need to be worked through in a linear manner. The material can be adapted to accommodate the needs and interests of your students and to draw on nearby resources and links. While the focus of this module is younger people on the margins, other issues of interest to the students may also be explored. It is hoped that these materials will support active and engaged teaching and learning so these resources are therefore offered as tools for planning rather than a set of steps to be followed in a prescribed manner.

The emphasis on active and reflective learning is seen throughout the module. In order to maintain this emphasis, it is important for students to complete an 'Action Project' (see p. 11) which should be planned and carried out over the course of the module. Similarly, students should make full use of their reflective journal (see p. 10). The following pages contain an overview to the module, which sets out the key skills and statements of learning that this module hopes to impart. Next the module structure breaks down the module into its three strands – 'Understanding Social Justice', 'Understanding Crime' and 'Understanding Prison' – and outlines the learning goals for each strand. Finally, there is a note on assessment and how to keep a reflection journal.

Advance planning and timetabling

1. Read the summary outline at the beginning of each strand to get an overall sense of what this module is about.
2. Make early contact with individuals, agencies or groups who can contribute to the learning in this module. For example, if there is someone involved in social justice work within your community who would be willing to speak to your class or if there is an opportunity to bring your students out to visit with a group or a place of interest.
3. Check to see if you can have access to computers on occasions as there are substantial web-based resources available for this module and many student activities can be completed online.
4. Ask students to get ready for this module by purchasing a journal or special notebook for use in class

The module is designed for approximately 25-30 hours of student engagement and is best suited for 2nd or 3rd year students. Some timetable options are suggested below:

Possible timetable arrangements

Three R.E. classes (i.e. 2 hours) per week for 15 weeks

In this scenario a double class with a single class would be the ideal timetable arrangement to facilitate group work, guest speakers, etc.

OR

One R.E. class per week for one year (i.e. 40 mins x 35 weeks)

Lessons may take longer than one class. They are designed to teach a full concept rather than stay within a certain time. Teacher discretion on this is advised.

It is important to allow space for the students' to take their learning in directions that interest them. So don't feel under pressure to cover all the lesson, or to follow them in order.

Finally, we would welcome your feedback on this module and suggestions on how it might be improved.

MODULE OVERVIEW

Aim

This module aims to develop students' capacity for ethical reasoning, critical thinking and skilful analysis of social justice issues and to foster respect, understanding and empathy towards people living on the margins.

Rationale

'We can never judge anyone, for we do not know what has gone on in their childhood, in their hearts and in their feelings. I know that if I was born into their family, I would be no different to them and possibly even a lot worse.'

Fr Peter McVerry, The Meaning is in the Shadows

Life circumstances, where you live, go to school and the socio-economic group your family belongs to, are key factors that determine a person's likelihood of succeeding in life. Young people don't have a choice as to whether or not they will be born into poverty or social exclusion.

This module will challenge students to consider their knowledge and attitudes in relation to people living on the margins of society. It will give students the opportunity to consider the root causes of poverty and inequality and ways that they can be overcome. They will develop the skills and knowledge needed to identify, reflect upon and critically evaluate contemporary and often controversial social issues such as crime, prison, drugs, mental health issues, poverty, inequality and homelessness. Through active learning the students will have the opportunity to develop problem solving skills, critical thinking, co-operation and communication skills as well as ICT competences.

The module is grounded in Christian values of care, solidarity, equality and social justice which are at the heart of Ignatian identity and education. As part of a junior cycle R.E. programme this module provides the opportunity for students to explore what it means to be a Christian in the world today and enables students to put their faith into action through engagement in social justice activities in their own community and the wider world.

LINKS TO JUNIOR CYCLE

This module has clear links with a number of subjects:
Religion, **CSPE**, **Geography**, **History**, **English** and **ICT**.

The following pages show how the module may be linked to central features of learning and teaching in keeping with Ignatian pedagogy and in anticipation of the new junior cycle.

a) Junior Cycle Statements of Learning

Statement	Examples of relevant learning in the module
Describes, illustrates, interprets, predicts and explains patterns and relationships (SOL 16)	Students will examine the complex relationship between poverty, crime and prison and other related phenomena. They will learn how to examine patterns and relationships between problems as well as learning to identify the links between causes and consequences.
Values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts. (SOL 7)	Across all strands of the module, students learn about issues that concern them and the wider world and consider the role and responsibility of all citizens in bringing about a more just society. This module fosters a sense of moral and social responsibility as students are helped to recognise the importance of taking positive action in the community and in a social justice action project.
Has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making. (SOL 5)	This module encourages students to examine their own beliefs, assumptions and values and the values of society through engagement with case studies, walking debates, drama, art and other creative learning methodologies. They will also learn how to examine the moral dimension of contemporary and sometimes controversial issues such as crime, prison, punishment, poverty, inequality and homelessness.

b) Literacy and numeracy

Literacy and numeracy skills are embedded across each of the strands and in the learning outcomes of this module. Students develop their oral literacy skills through the strong focus on communication, discussion and debate in each strand.

They develop their reading and comprehension skills through engagement with a variety of texts including the material on the website, newspaper articles and reports. The writing skills of students are developed as they source and record information on social justice issues and as they create presentations and write reflections on their learning. Their digital literacy skills are developed as they use digital technology for research and presentation purposes. Media literacy skills are developed when students analyse the role of the media in influencing attitudes towards people living on the margins. This module also helps students develop political literacy as they gain the vocabulary and skills to discuss issues affecting them and as they come to understand the political structures that operate at local, national and global levels.

Students develop their numeracy skills through analysing and collating statistical information relating to crime, prison and other social issues. The module also helps students see trends, patterns and linkages between issues.

c) Other Key Skills

Key Skill	Key skill element	Student learning activity
Managing information and thinking	▶ Gathering, recording, organising, and evaluating information ▶ Using ICT and digital media to access, manage and share knowledge	Students use www.whycare.ie and other forms of digital media in order to deepen their understanding of the issues relating to the module. Students use newspapers, books, documentaries, surveys and statistical information to research, evaluate and present information on a topic of choice.
Staying well	▶ Being social ▶ Being spiritual	Students become aware of themselves and others as citizens with rights and responsibilities and become familiar with concepts such as 'the common good' and social justice. They become more mindful of the ways in which they can find meaning and purpose in life and what can happen when that sense of purpose is lost.
Communicating	▶ Discussing and debating	Students become more confident through class debates and discussions as they learn how to present their opinions and support them with evidence from case studies and/or numerical data.
Working with others	▶ Developing good relationships and resolving conflict ▶ Contributing to making the world a better place	Students will learn how to listen respectfully to a diversity of views when discussing controversial issues Students will think critically about the social issues, propose solutions and take action in the community.
Managing Myself	▶ Being able to reflect on my learning	Students complete a reflective journal entry at the end of each topic and also after they complete their action project.

MODULE STRUCTURE

The strands in this module are:

Strand 1: Understanding Social Justice
Strand 2: Understanding Crime
Strand 3: Understanding Prison

A key component to this module is the Action Project 'Stand! Speak! Act!' where students design and carry out an action for social justice. It is envisaged that the action project begins early on in the module.

The suggested start point is Lesson 10: Social justice – me and my school. The action project is designed to run parallel with the module.

Strand One: Understanding Social Justice

Students learn about	Learning Outcomes Students should be enabled to...	
Social justice	1.1	Explain, with examples, concepts of social justice, social injustice and human rights.
	1.2	Express and defend their opinion in relation to different human rights scenarios.
Poverty and inequality	1.3	Identify groups that are at risk of poverty and explain the reasons.
	1.4	Express an informed opinion about the root causes of poverty and inequality.
Social justice and me	1.5	Identify specific areas where their class or schools could take action on an issue of social justice.
	1.6	Discuss how the religious/school ethos supports their engagement in social justice.
The moral imperative to do justice	1.7	Reflect on their own religious/moral values and how they influence their attitudes and behaviour in regard to social justice.
	1.8	Interview people or read the testimonies of people who are involved in social justice paying particular attention to their motivation.
	1.9	Create a timeline of the Church's Catholic Social Teaching.

Strand Two: Understanding Crime

Students learn about	Learning Outcomes Students should be enabled to…	
Perceptions versus reality of crime	2.1	Distinguish between perceptions of crime and the reality of crime.
	2.2	Evaluate and critically analyse trends and patterns relating to crime by interpreting statistical information.
	2.3	Critically analyse media reporting of crime.
Causes of crime	2.4	Identify the sociological reasons why a young person may commit a crime through a case study.
	2.5	Consider the link between imprisonment rates and crime rates by analysing how these change across different countries.
How can we prevent crime?	2.6	Identify and explain key terms used in criminal court.
	2.7	Present some possible solutions to the problem of crime by working in groups.

Stand Three: Understanding Prison

Students learn about	Learning Outcomes Students should be enabled to…	
Why do people go to prison?	3.1	Trace the history of prisons in Ireland.
	3.2	Discern the main elements of a Christian view on crime.
	3.3	Identify and explain the relationship between educational attainment, poverty and inequality, homelessness, crime and prison.
	3.4	Identify and debate the four principle theories on the purpose of imprisonment.
Young people and prison	3.5	Compare knowledge of UN human rights documents with the reality of treatment of children in detention in Ireland.
	3.6	Participate in a mock court case, and decide a sentence for a young person convicted of a crime.
	3.7	Consider and analyse alternatives to sending young people to prison.
Life in prison and beyond	3.8	Identify the issues prisoners face in prison by imagining the daily life of a prisoner.
	3.9	Consider how best to rehabilitate prisoners so that they are prepared to fully reintegrate into the community upon release.
	3.10	Demonstrate an understanding of the human impact of imprisonment on children and families.

Action Project: Stand! Speak! Act!

Students learn about	Learning Outcomes Students should be enabled to...
Taking Action	▸ Identify and consider various avenues for action in the community by researching past activities undertaken. ▸ Research the work of relevant groups or organisations working in the locality. ▸ Organise for someone who has been affected by homelessness, addiction to drugs and/or alcohol, mental health problems or poverty to come as a guest speaker to the class
Choose an issue	▸ Evaluate the pros and cons of possible social justice activities ▸ Agree one or two specific issues to take action on.
Organisation and implementation	▸ Organise and implement an awareness raising activity in both the school and the wider community. ▸ Reflect on what he/she has learned and suggest ways in which the issues raised can be tackled locally and globally.
Evaluation	▸ Evaluate the effectiveness of their social justice activities on the issues. ▸ Reflect on what has been learned through experience of taking action and how this relates to their life and their faith.

ASSESSMENT

This module supports both formative and summative methods of assessment. All assessment decisions are left to the teacher's discretion and should be planned in collaboration with students to support their learning. The following tasks might be considered as contributing to the final mark.

Portfolio

The portfolio might include written assignments, reports, case studies, evidence of research undertaken and presentations.

Action Project

While students may undertake a group action project, they might be awarded marks both for their individual contribution to the project and their engagement in the group effort.

Reflection Journal

A reflection journal should be maintained by the students to help them reflect on their learning throughout the course. The journal can be in written, digital, audio or visual form or some combination.

At the end of each topic students should be encouraged to make entries into their reflection journal. See the following page for further suggestions on what should be included in the journal entries.

REFLECTION JOURNAL

A reflection journal is created by the students to help them reflect on their learning throughout the module. The journal will allow students identify what they have learned, what skills they have gained and how the module has impacted on their attitudes, beliefs and behaviour. The journal can be **in written, digital, audio or visual form.**

The journal should provide

▶ a summary of information students have learned

▶ reflection on what they have learned from this information or particular insights they have gained

▶ question(s) they are still left with

▶ what it means for their own lives now, for their faith or for the future.

It is recommended that students make entries to their journals at the end of each class or week using some prompts such as the following:

Topic of the class:

▶ A fact I learned...

▶ Something I found interesting...

▶ Something that surprised me...

▶ Something I found difficult or challenging...

▶ Something I learned about myself...

▶ A question I'm left with...

▶ How did I participate... (did I speak up in class, did I listen, did I take notes, did I work well as part of a group, what other skills did I use?)

▶ Reflecting on today's class what do you now think? How do you feel? How might this influence you?

▶ How does all this connect to your faith/ beliefs?

To avoid the journal entries becoming tiring or formulaic the teacher might wish to vary these prompts or offer the option of writing a paragraph, creating an image or talking to their partner (pair and share) about their reflections.

If this practice of reflection is developed as part of the ongoing learning then it will become easier for the students to engage in more detailed reflection at the end of each strand.

Although students are to be encouraged to make the journal their own they should be advised that a teacher will periodically check to see that journal entries are being made. The teacher may decide to award marks for the journals as part of the assessment of this module.
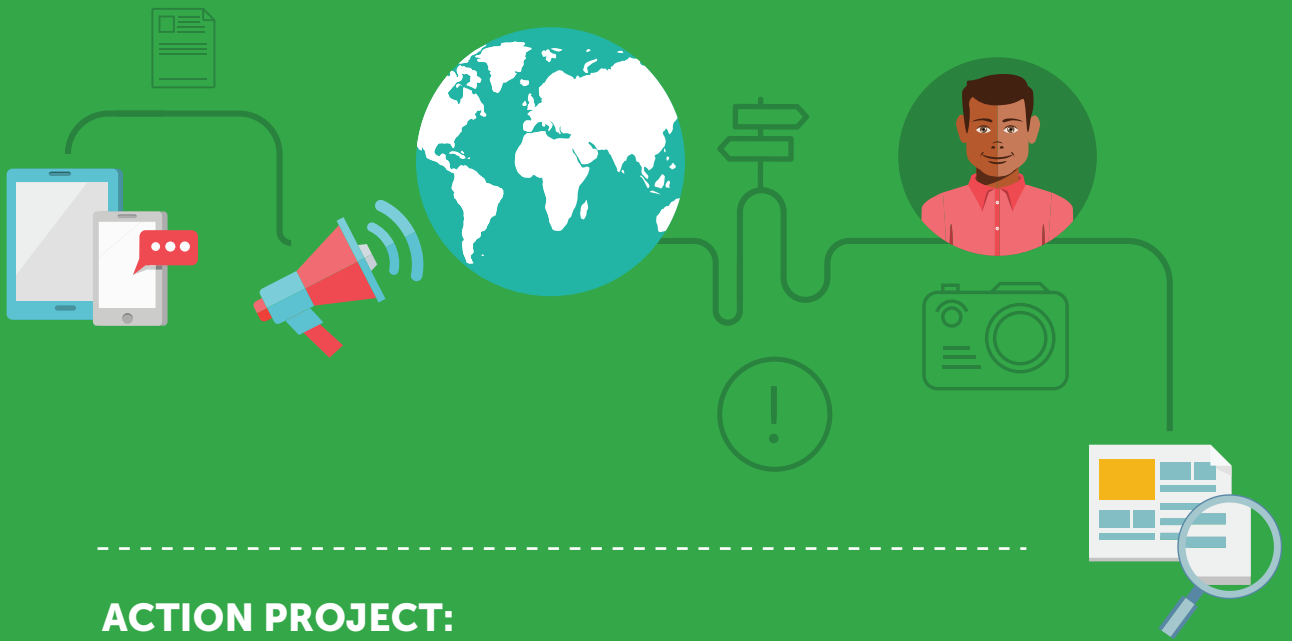
ACTION PROJECT:

STAND!
SPEAK!
ACT!
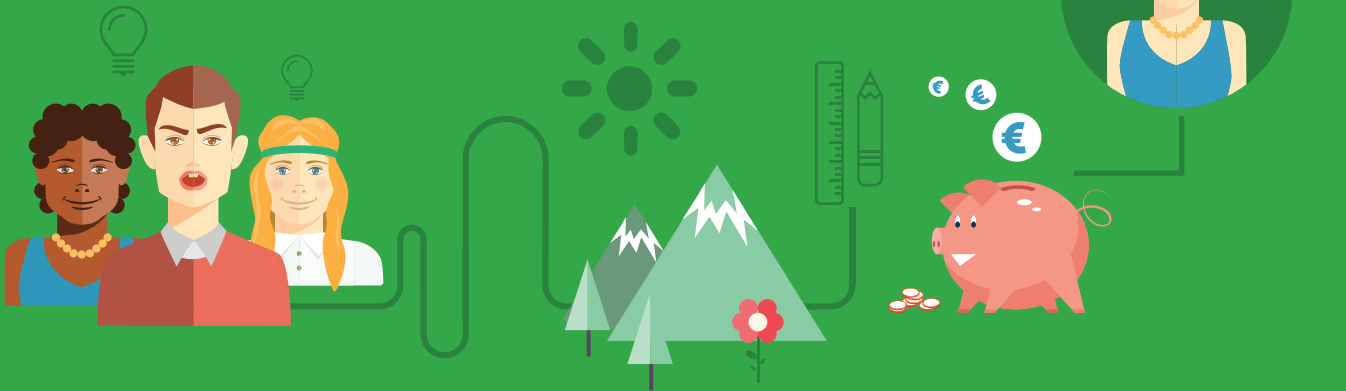
Welcome to the **Action Project** in this module.

This section assists teachers in choosing, researching and carrying out an action for social justice.

A key element of this module is that students complete a project on a particular social issue/phenomenon. They could do this individually or in groups.

You will have introduced this project to the students towards the end of **Strand 1** in order to get them thinking about what they might do as their action project.

The support material in this section provides tools and frameworks for students to explore social issues/ phenomena. Students should begin familiarising themselves with these tools as they start working on their action project, therefore it would be worthwhile to spend time on how to go about investigating a social problem.

It is important that the project involves conducting research and analysis as well as engaging in an appropriate action. As the students research their chosen issue they need to keep thinking about possible actions.

Choosing An Issue

Students should select an issue that they believe is of serious concern, ideally something that they care about. Lessons 9 and 10 in Strand 1 should have got them thinking.

Have the students find out (e.g. through media) what the current social issues in Ireland are today. What are the social issues that affect their neighbourhood? What are the issues affecting themselves or their peers? – this may be a homework task.

During the next stage, start by putting up the issues that students are coming up with on the board.

It can be difficult for students to pick that one issue; they may have a number of issues that concern them. 'Worksheet 1: Choosing an issue' will help them decide what issue they have the most interest in. Students can then be grouped based on their interest in a particular topic.

Researching the Issue

Decide on how many weeks you want students to spend on their project.

As part of their research the students should answer the following questions:

▸ Why does this issue interest you?
▸ Who is affected? What is the effect on the individual? On your community? On society?
▸ What action has been taken to affect the issue? Was it effective?
▸ What do local/national/international governments or bodies say about the issue?

Students should be reminded that their research should include opposing views and not just the information that they agree with, however, they should be encouraged to outline what they believe is the most convincing argument.

In relation to their topic they should identify

▸ Particularly interesting information
▸ Conflicts within the information
▸ Relevant facts and figures

'Worksheet 2: Research' should assist students in keeping a record of where they found information, what were the key points and what they learnt.

In order to figure out an appropriate action the students need to now clearly identify the issue, who is responsible and what needs to change. 'Worksheet 3: What, Why, Who, How?' will provide a template for students.

Deciding on an Action

The students will now be coming to the end of their research, they need to decide on an action. Possible action projects are outlined in Worksheets 4-6 (a student group picks one). To assist them in deciding what action might be the most achievable and will have a 'big impact' they can use the template 'Worksheet 7: Best approach'.

Good social analysis requires evaluation, which allows for self reflection. To assist students in evaluating the success of their action they can use 'Worksheet 8: How did it go?'

Optional extras

If they want to 'think big' as a class, they could do a whole class action project where different student have different roles in the one task. Worksheets 9-11 will assist them in dividing up duties and help them to work as a team.

CHOOSING AN ISSUE

5 = a lot
1 = not much

Issues	How much does it affect me?	How much does it affect other people?	How unfair is it?	How urgent is it to act now?	Are there practical actions we can take to change the situation?	How interested am I in taking action on this issue?	Total
	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5	=
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Our top choice is:

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....

RESEARCH

Source	Summary	What did I learn?
Websites, newspapers, books, family, friends	Key points/ keywords from the source	Main facts, opinion, information

WHAT, WHY, WHO, HOW?

What is your issue?
What is the problem and what needs to change?

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Why does this happen?

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Who can change it? Who is responsible?

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What action could you take?

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CREATE AWARENESS

Set up a website and blog or Facebook page. Start a discussion forum.

Put the most important information at the start of your article.

Remember when people read things online they focus most of their attention on the beginning of the article and headings, and often don't read anything else!

Why should you choose this action?

✓ If people don't know about the issue.

✓ If you need to change peoples' attitude on the issue.

✓ If people need to change their behaviour.

Write an article for your local newspaper or school magazine.

Tip!

Include a picture, with a creative location or stunt.

Keep the article short, simple and to the point.

Make it personal

Why does this issue matter to you/ your class?

Create Awareness

Organise an exhibition, event or display.

Tip!

Think about how you will get across information about the issue at your event.

Will someone speak?
Will you hand out leaflets?
Will there be a petition?

Run a workshop for students in your school.

Promote your event!

Posters, leaflets, flash mobs with signs, emails, letters, and school announcements. No one will come if they don't know it's happening! Be creative! Street theatre, alternative fashion shows, concerts.

Make sure people don't get bored!

Organise lots of activities and interesting ways for everyone to get involved and engaged with your topic.

LOBBY AND PERSUADE

✓ If you want to show those responsible that you want change.

✓ If you need to change the opinions of people responsible for decision making.
Teachers and School Council.
Community groups.
The Government, TDs and Senators.
Others with power.

Lobby and Persuade

Invite your local TD into your school for a Q and A session on your chosen issue.

Make sure to plan out the questions that you are going to ask.

Avoid questions with yes/no answers. If you don't feel that your question has been properly answered don't be afraid to say so, or to ask your question again.

Collect evidence (e.g. research, videos and interviews) and present it to those responsible.

Tip!

Video petition: Film people in your school, talking about the issue and what changes they want. You can then post this video on your local TDs Facebook page or send them a link. Make sure you ask them to respond!

Write a letter to the people who are responsible for this issue, saying how they can help.

Letter writing tips

Include your name, the name of your school and why you have chosen this issue.

Clearly state the issue that you are writing about at the start of the letter.

Be clear about the issue and what you want them to do.

Get as many people as possible to sign a petition supporting your aims.

Think location!

Where are there a lot of people? Make sure you can clearly and easily explain what the petition is about, otherwise no one will sign it.

WORKING WITH OTHERS

Research online what organisations work on your issue.

Many organisations run campaigns that you can get involved in. There may be a way that your class can join together with others working on the issue.

Lots of voices shouting are louder than one voice!

Working with other can amplify your message and strengthen your argument.

Could you collaborate with groups or organisations that are working on this issue?

Organise an event to fundraise for an organisation.

Make sure your event is not on the same day as another event – that way your event will get all the attention!

Think about your target audience, what kind of event would they attend? What time would suit them?

Remember, people are more likely to give you money if you give them a good reason! Make sure to have clear and understandable information available on what the organisation does, (make sure to give a specific example), and why you decided to raise funds for them.

Working with Others

Ideas for fundraisers.

Sponsored silence, walk or swim.
Costume/theme day.
Battle of the Bands.
No uniform day.
Art exhibition.
Film screening.
Mini Olympics.
Teachers v. pupils.
Juice bar.
Car wash.

BEST APPROACH

How easy is the action project?
How much impact will it have?
Who can we influence?

	Difficult	Average	Easy
Big impact	……………………………… ……………………………… ……………………………… ……………………………… ……………………………… ………………………………	……………………………… ……………………………… ……………………………… ……………………………… ……………………………… ………………………………	……………………………… ……………………………… ……………………………… ……………………………… ……………………………… ………………………………
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Originally developed by Amnesty International

HOW DID IT GO?

Name of your team

[   ]

Who was in your team?

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....

Describe one of the tasks you were involved in:

....

....

....

What did you like about working in a team?

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What did you find difficult about working in a team?

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....

What advice would you give to a friend if they were about to start an Action Project?

....

....

....

What would you do differently?

....

....

TEAM IDEAS
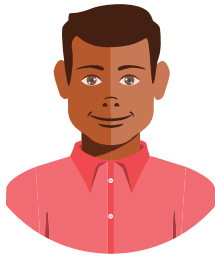
Creative Team

Responsible for:

Leaflets
Petitions
Costumes
Sets
Choosing music
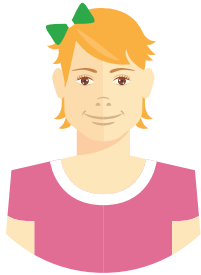
Communications Team

Responsible for:

Writing press releases
Newspaper articles
Blogs
Letters to organisations, politicians or key stakeholders
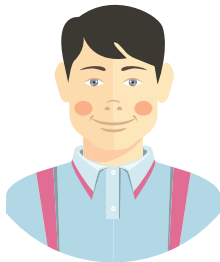
Events/Logistics Team

Responsible for:

Booking buses
Organising seating
Costumes or props
AV equipment
Microphones & sound system
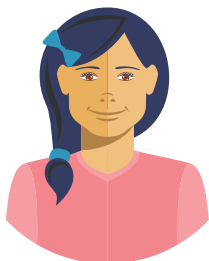
Finance Team

Responsible for:

All costs associated with the action project e.g. bus journeys, refreshments, stationery and materials.

If your action project involves fundraising this team could be responsible for counting the money raised and ensuring that it gets to the relevant organisation.

Publicity Team

Responsible for:

Advertising the event,
Circulating press releases/newspaper articles to local press.

Evaluation Team

Responsible for:

Drawing up a survey/ questionnaire,
Interviewing/getting feedback from those at the event,
Typing up the evaluation i.e. chart/graph feedback.

TEAM TASKS

Activity	Possible Tasks	Team Responsible	Date
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TEAM PLAN

Team name

Role

Key tasks

Name:

Name:

Strengths:

Strengths:

Responsibilities:

Responsibilities:

Significant Dates:

Significant Dates:

1 SOCIAL JUSTICE

Welcome to the first strand of **On the Margins**.

This strand explores the concept of Social Justice – what it means, why it is important, and how it can be promoted in everyday life, both here in Ireland and internationally.

Key words in this strand include:

SOCIAL JUSTICE

HUMAN RIGHTS

POVERTY

INEQUALITY

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

GLOBAL JUSTICE

Further information on the topics dealt with in this strand is available at the Teachers' Area of **www.whycare.ie**. Below are some of the topics you will find there. Links in **bold** are referenced within lessons in this strand.

Strand One: An Introduction to Social Justice

▸ **Link 1.1**: What is social justice?
▸ **Link 1.2**: Social injustice
▸ Link 1.3: Human rights
▸ Link 1.4: Social justice and religion
▸ Link 1.5: Gerry O'Hanlon SJ
▸ **Link 1.6**: Poverty and inequality - page 1
▸ **Link 1.7**: Poverty and inequality - page 2
▸ Link 1.8: Peter's projection map
▸ Link 1.9: Ireland and global justice
▸ Link 1.10: Social justice and me
▸ Link 1.11: Poverty and inequality - page 3
▸ Link 1.12: History of Jesuits in Ireland
▸ **Link 1.13**: People working for justice

Other important resources and websites that can be found in the Teachers' Area include:

National Youth Council of Ireland:	**One World Week '13: Human Rights.**
Combat Poverty Agency:	**Ireland – A Level Playing Pitch? A Transition Unit Resource.**
Jesuit Province and Trócaire:	**In Words and Deeds (Posters and Resource).**
CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit:	**Tackling Controversial Issues in the Citizenship Classroom: A Resource for Citizenship Education.**
International Labour Organization:	**The International Labour Organization and Social Justice.**
CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit:	**Changing Perspectives: Cultural Values, Diversity and Equality in Ireland and the Wider World.**
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:	**Catholic Social Teaching: Scripture Guide.**

Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, Why Care:	**www.whycare.ie**
Social Justice Ireland:	**www.socialjustice.ie**
St Vincent dePaul Social Justice:	**www.svp.ie/Social-Justice.aspx**
Justice Matters:	**www.justicematters.ie**
Amnesty International:	**www.amnesty.ie**

LESSON 1

So we all start out equal?

Learning goals

Students will be able to identify some of the barriers that make it difficult for people to achieve their full potential in life.

Key skills

Listening and expressing myself, discussing and debating, learning with others

You will need

A large space. Labels with names and countries of origin. A role card for each player – you may need to make multiple copies of some of the roles.

Learning Activity

Brainstorm on what are the rights we need in order to develop - i.e. the right to food; the right to education; the right to shelter, etc.

Photocopy the role cards and give each student one to read. Ask them to make a label showing their name and country of origin and to attach it to themselves. (Depending on the size of your group more than one person may have the same role.)

Ask them to think about who they are, where they live, how many are in their family, etc. Now ask them to stand in character at one end of the room. Ask the students to stand with their backs against the wall and use the full length of the room.

Explain that you are going to call out statements. After each statement is read they must take a giant step, a baby step, or stay where they are depending on what the statement means to them; Take a giant step if you can do it quite easily; Take a baby step if you can only do it with difficulty. Don't move if you can't do it at all.

Emphasise that the aim of the exercise is to try to put themselves in the place of their character - it is not about reaching the end first.

Now call out the first statement. Once everybody has responded, ask them to explain what they did and why. Choose more statements from the list, read them out, and allow participants to make their move. When all the statements have been read begin the debriefing.

Questions for discussion

Who got furthest along? Why?

How did you feel when you took a giant step/ couldn't move? Were you happy/angry? Why?

How did you feel when others were moving at a faster/slower pace than you?

What are the basic human rights/needs that we all share?

What are the main obstacles to development that people face in their lives?

Why do you think such differences exist in Ireland and in other countries?

Choose one character. Discuss what could be done so that s/he could fully enjoy his/her rights.

Do you agree or disagree that where you are born determines your chances in life?

STATEMENTS

I have been to Primary school.

I can speak out in school about rules which affect me.

I could go to university.

I can choose what subjects to study.

I can wear whatever clothes or jewellery I like.

I can play games or sports or rest every day.

I can live with my parents.

I can meet my friends.

I can criticise the government if I like.

I have enough to eat and drink.

I am paid the same wage as anyone else doing the same job.

I can practice my religion.

I can travel by bus.

I can learn to speak my own language at school.

I can speak out about things that affect me.

I can get information which I need.

When I am sick I can go to a doctor.

When I am old enough I can marry who ever I like.

When I am older I will get a good job.

I can join any group or organisation I like.

I can sleep safely.

I live in a clean environment.

ROLE CARDS

1
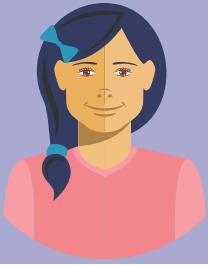
ZLATA

You are a refugee from Syria. Your parents have been killed and your uncle has brought you to Ireland with his family. You are all waiting to be told by the Irish Government whether you can stay. You are Muslim.
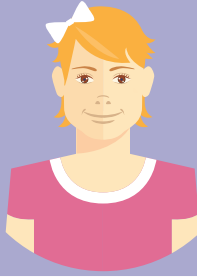
AINE

You live with your mother and sister. Your hobby is woodwork. You would like to do this for your Junior Certificate but the subject is not taught in the Girls Secondary School you attend.
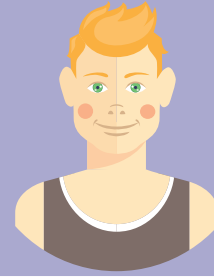
PATRICK

You live on a halting site with your family in a caravan. You have been to four primary schools, each in a different town. Now that you are twelve you don't go to school any more. Travellers have their own language called Cant/Gammon.
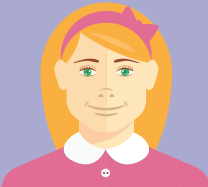
MAYA

You are a fifteen year old living in Dublin. Your Mother is a single parent who works as a cleaner but has to take social welfare to make ends meet. Your neighbourhood is pretty dangerous and you don't feel safe at night. You try to work hard at school but it is hard when the school is run-down and overcrowded.

ANGUS

You live on a farm with your family in Donegal. The weather is harsh and the farm work is difficult but you really like it. Your grandparents live with you and you enjoy listening to your grandfather's stories. Times are hard and your parents always seem to be worried about making ends meet, there is even talk of the family leaving the farm and moving to the city so your parents can find work.

SEAN

You are sixteen and have become homeless. Your mother died when you were a baby and your father has been put in prison for the third time. You left school last year when your Dad started having you help him with his 'work'. You have heard bad things about the emergency accommodation. You don't know where you will sleep tonight.

ROLE CARDS

PAUL

You are 10 years old and live in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Every day you work by selling peanuts on the street. You live in a small house with your family but sometimes because of rows at home you spend the night on the Cathedral steps.

CIAN

You live with your parents, your 2 brothers, and sister in Cork. Your house is big and you all have your own bedrooms which you think is great because you have lots of study to do for your exams. You are planning to go to university next year where you would like to study medicine.

KANDESHE

You live in Namibia and have just moved into a new modern house in the capital city Windhoek. Your father has been promoted and now has a good job with the government. He is even talking about sending you to a new school in South Africa where you will get a much better education.
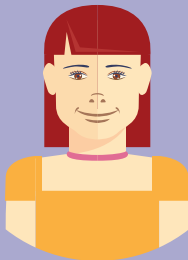
MARIA

You had polio as a baby and now need a wheelchair to get about. You like reading but the local library has steps so you cannot go in without help.

LIN

You live in Hong Kong where your mother has many business interests which she worries about. You know you are much better off than many people in Hong Kong and China.

LESSON 2

What are human rights?

Learning goals

Students will be able to identify and discuss the rights enshrined in the UNDHR.

Key skills

Learning creatively and co-operating

You will need

Copies of the worksheets for each group.

Learning Activity

Assign students into groups of three. Each group needs to appoint a leader/facilitator, a timekeeper and a reader. Later on any group member may be asked to report from the group so they should all be ready to do so if called upon.

Each group receives one copy of L2 Worksheet 1 and 2.

Explain the task as follows. The reader reads aloud the statements on Worksheet 1 and the group must discuss each statement and decide whether they 'Agree' or 'Disagree' with each one. Students may also choose 'Not sure'.

The next task is to use L2 Worksheet 2 (shortened version of UNDHR) to review each statement on Worksheet 1 and match the rights with each statement. The group must decide which right/s are relevant to each scenario. For example, students might write No 8 (right to legal help) beside 'People in prison should be told why they are being held'.

When the groups have completed this exercise lead a discussion. Invite students to share their views on the most contested statements and discuss which rights were more or less difficult to agree upon and why?

Explain that all human rights are universal and indivisible. (See explanation below)

Does this change their view on any previous position taken in their group discussion?

Universality

Human rights must be afforded to everyone, without exception. This principle is based on the belief that people are entitled to these rights simply by virtue of being human.

Indivisibility

Human rights are indivisible and interdependent, which means that in order to guarantee civil and political rights, a government must also ensure economic, social and cultural rights (and vice versa). The indivisibility principle recognises that if a government violates rights such as education, it necessarily affects people's ability to exercise other rights such the right to participate in civil and political life.

Differentiation

If a group is finished the task and needs a further challenge ask them to revisit the summary of rights and categorise the rights under two headings 'Freedom from' (for example, freedom from slavery) and 'Freedom to' (for example, freedom to be educated). 'Freedom from' is known as negative freedom and 'Freedom to' is known as positive freedom. Some statements from the UNDHR can be seen as both negative and positive freedoms.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

All people should have an opportunity to get an education. Parents have the right to choose the kind of education to be given to their children.

If people are homeless and have no money for food, the government shouldn't be expected to help them.

Private letters, emails and telephone calls should not be read by other people.

People who have been accused of serious crimes should be sent to prison and not allowed access legal advice.

All people have the right to medical help if they are ill.

If someone is experiencing persecution they should be allowed to go and live in another safe country to avoid violence and danger.

All people should be treated equally. It should not depend on such things as their gender, appearance, or the country they come from.

Prisoners should be deprived of food if they commit a serious crime.

Only people of the same religion should be allowed to marry.
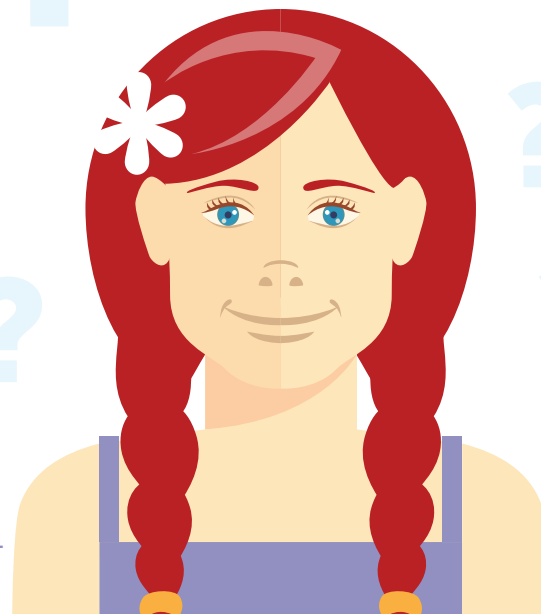
UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
(SHORTENED VERSION)

1. Everyone is born free and has dignity because they are human.

2. Everyone has equal rights regardless of differences between people such as gender, colour, religion, language, wealth or political opinion.

3. Everyone has the right to life and the right to live in freedom and safety.

4. No one shall be held in slavery.

5. Everyone has the right not to be hurt, tortured or treated cruelly.

6. Everyone has the right to be treated as a person under the law everywhere.

7. The law is the same for everyone and should protect everyone equally.

8. Everyone has the right to ask for legal help when their basic rights are not respected.

9. No one should be arrested, imprisoned or expelled from their country without good reason.

10. Everyone has the right to a fair trial, if accused of a crime.

11. Everyone has the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty, if accused of a crime.

12. Everyone has the right to privacy.

13. Everyone has the right to travel within and outside their own country.

14. Everyone has the right to seek asylum in another country, if they are being persecuted in their own country.

15. Everyone has the right to a nationality.

16. Everyone has the right to marry and have a family.

17. Everyone has the right to their own free thoughts, conscience and religion including the right to practise their religion privately or in public.

UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
(SHORTENED VERSION)

18. Everyone has the right to say what they think and to share information with others.

19. Everyone has the right to meet with others publicly and privately and to freely form and join peaceful associations.

20. Everyone has the right to vote in regular democratic elections and to take part in the government of their country.

21. Every country must do its best to ensure that everyone has enough to live a life of dignity.

22. Everyone has the right to work for a fair wage in a safe environment and also has the right to join a trade union.

23. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure time.

24. Everyone has the right to a home, enough food and health care.

25. Everyone has the right to education and to free primary education.

26. Everyone has the right to take part in the cultural life of their community and the right to benefit from scientific and artistic learning.

27. National and international laws and institutions must make possible the rights and freedoms set out in this declaration.

28. Everyone has the responsibility to respect and uphold the rights of others in their community and the wider world.

29. No one has the right to take away any of the rights in this declaration.
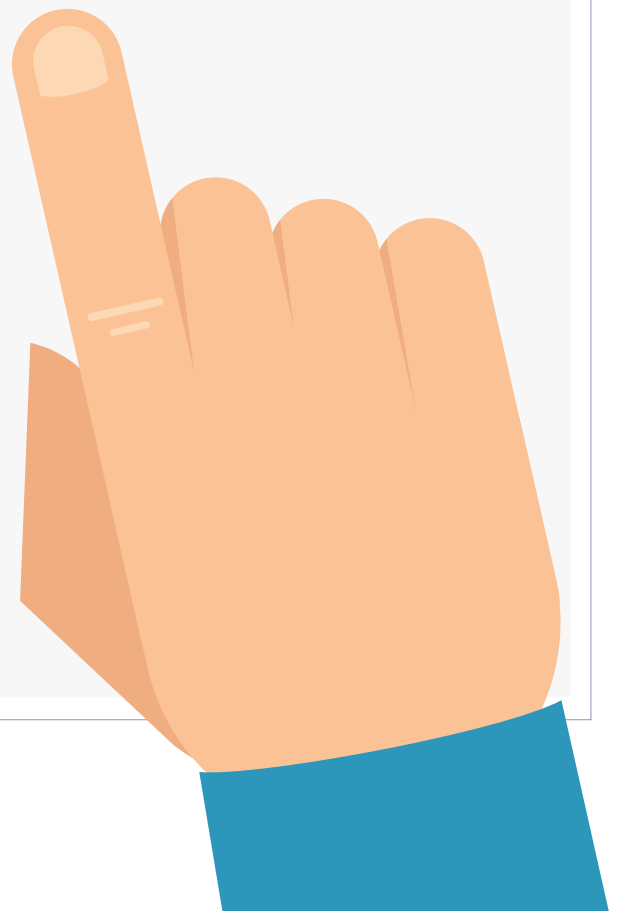
LESSON 3

Reasons for poverty

Learning goals

Discuss and rank reasons for poverty and develop a definition of poverty as a class.

Key skills

Discussing and debating, thinking creatively

- -

You will need

Copies of the worksheet for each student. Post-it notes.

- -

Learning Activity

Part 1

Distribute L3 Worksheet to each student.

Ask them to choose one statement that they agree with and one that they disagree with, and to write each of these on a separate post-it note.

The student should then explain their choices to the person sitting next to them.

Each student should place their post-it notes at the front of the classroom under the two headings agree or disagree.

As a class discuss the outcomes and try to rank the reasons why people are poor and experience poverty in order of importance. Discuss where our attitudes and opinions come from.

Try to emphasise that the way society is structured leads to poverty. By asking questions such as: 'who has the power to change the situation' and 'why are things this way?', students can begin to identify the structural causes of poverty.

Questions for discussion

What is the acceptable 'standard of living' in Ireland?

What activities are considered 'the norm' for people in Irish society?

POVERTY AND INEQUALITY
What do you think of the following statements?

People living in disadvantaged communities may experience poverty as access to services may be poor.

Poor people spend their money unwisely and are bad at planning for the future.

Poor people are lazy and expect charity from others.

Everyone should be taxed the same amount regardless of their income.

Rich people have worked hard and earned their good quality of living. If they can do it why can't others?

People on social welfare should only receive the minimum needed to live. If they cannot work, they should not get extra money for social activities like trips to the cinema.

People experiencing poverty may have left school early with few skills and find it difficult to find a stable job.

It is difficult to change your socio-economic status in Ireland e.g. it is difficult to become wealthy if you are born into poverty.

People experiencing poverty have less access to governmental and democratic processes than people with wealth.

A few people generally possess most of the wealth in a society. Wealth is not distributed fairly.

LESSON 4

People and poverty

Learning goals
Students will be able to describe how it feels to experience advantage or disadvantage and be able to explain the link between life choices and advantage/disadvantage.

Key skills
Making considered decisions, co-operating

You will need
Copies of the worksheet. Coloured card cut up for tokens. Access to the internet.

Learning Activity

Part 1
Divide the class into 6 groups but not all of equal size. Ensure that there are 2 groups with 2 members, 2 groups with 4-5 members and 2 larger groups with 6+ members.

Distribute tokens (pieces of coloured card cut up) as follows – the smallest groups get 80 tokens each to spend, the middle groups get 50 tokens and the largest groups get 30 tokens.

Distribute L4 Worksheet. Ask each group to imagine they are a family and must decide what they want (and need) from the list. They can only purchase items that they can afford.

Five minutes into the game, give more tokens to the affluent groups. Explain that the economy is booming and their shares and investments have yielded profits. Give a couple of extra tokens to the middle groups and nothing extra to the poorest groups.

After a further 5 minutes, check in with the groups to see if they have agreed on a family budget.

Part 2
Ask students to work with the student next to them to complete the sentence: "Poverty means..." As a class discuss their answers.

Through this discussion, develop a definition of poverty that the whole class agrees with.

Read page 1 of the 'Poverty and Inequality' section of the website, **Link 1.6.**

Share and discuss the definition of poverty below used by the Irish government since 1997.

Questions for discussion
How did it feel to be in each situation?

How does this activity mirror the way things operate in society?

What choices did each group make?

How did you decide your priorities for spending?

How were your choices affected by your place in society? Is this fair? Why/why not?

What changes are needed to make the world fairer for all?

Follow up learning activity
Use the information on the website **Link 1.7** 'Poverty and Inequality' to discuss the differences between relative poverty and absolute poverty.

Official definition of poverty
People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living which is regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities, which are considered the norm for other people in society.

COST OF ITEMS

ITEM	COST	ITEM	COST
Car	7	Waterproof coat	2
House	10	A holiday once a year	5
New clothes	3	Mobile phone	3
Health insurance	7	Dinner at a restaurant once a month	5
Shoes	1	Camera	3
Food	3	Money for phone credit	3
Money for Christmas presents	4	Holiday home	12
Household heating	3	Computer	7
Dishwasher	5	Broadband	5
A Wii Console	5	Washing machine	4
Television	3	iPod	3
Money for a night out once a week	4	New furniture	7
School books	4	Third level education fees	10

(Initially developed by Trocaire)
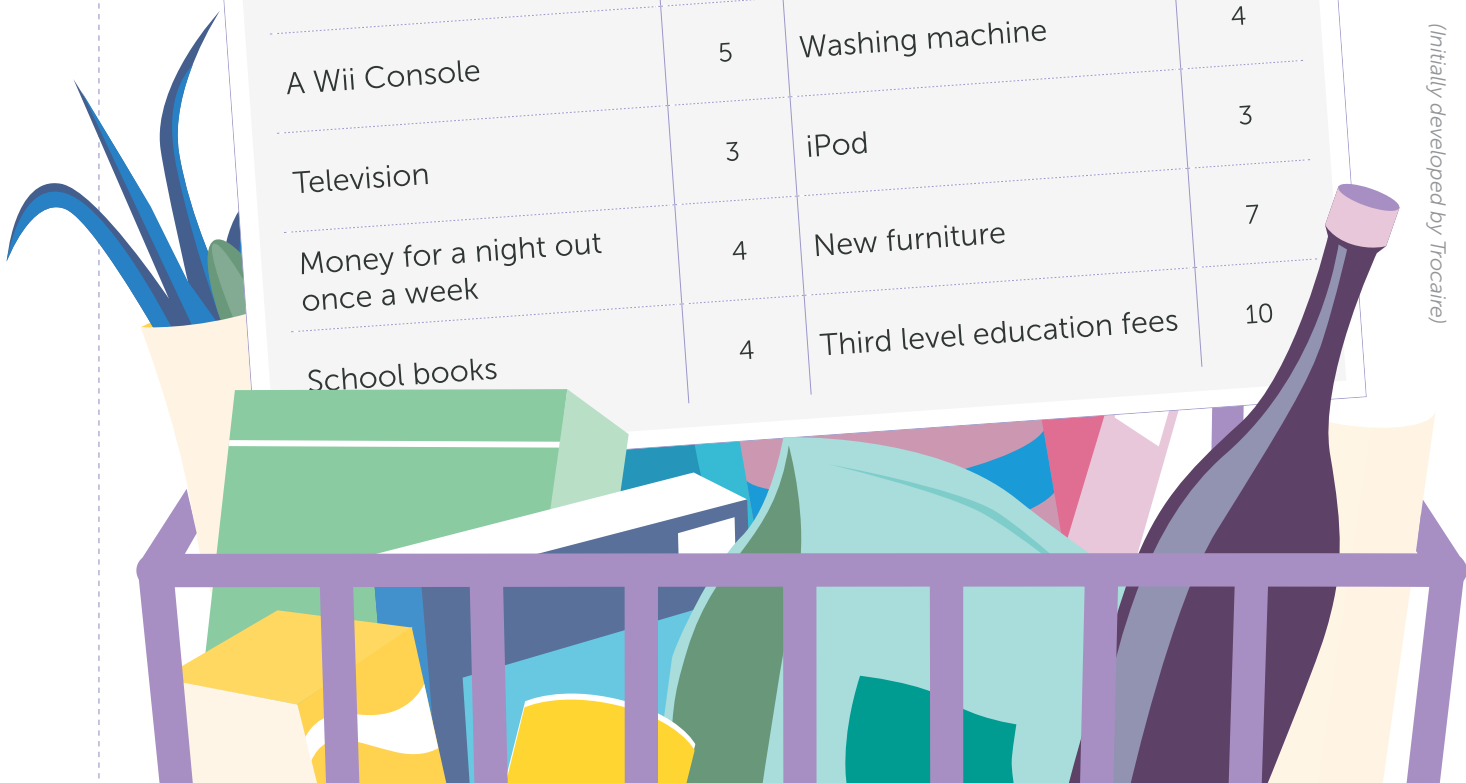
LESSON 5

How does it feel?

Learning goals

Students will be able to explain and discuss the impact of poverty on people's lives

Key skills

Discussing and debating, using language

You will need

Copies of the worksheet.

Learning Activity

Divide the class into pairs.

Distribute L5 Worksheet and ask them to read it together.

For each quote ask them to consider: Who is speaking? What is it in particular s/he is lacking? What effect is poverty having on their lives? What effect is it having on the people around them?

Then students move from pairs to squares (groups of four) and compare answers.

Questions for discussion

How would you feel in that situation? What facilities exist in your community for young people? Are these expensive?

If there were enough affordable activities for young people, do you think less of them would get into trouble?

Assignment

Ask each student to choose one quote and use it as a stimulus for a piece of creative writing.

Students can choose to write a short story, a newspaper report, a TV report, a short play or a poem.

⚠️ Draw particular attention to the quotes from young people, particularly the two quotes which speak about young people having nothing to do and getting into trouble.

Students should save this assignment for inclusion in their portfolio.

QUOTES FROM PEOPLE EXPERIENCING POVERTY

'I find it hard to cope. All the borrowing I have to do and then worrying about paying it back. It's a struggle all the time.' ○

'My future is getting dinner on the table. My future is making the money last the rest of the week. I just live day to day.' ○

'With some people whether they're your friends or not depends on what you wear. People don't like friends who don't have brand-name clothes.' ○

'I wouldn't ask anyone. I do without. You get used to having no money.' ○

'Sometimes the food goes pretty low. I won't let them go to school if they've had no breakfast.' ○

'You're terrified in your own home. That's the way it is up here. You don't know what's going to happen.' ○

'I remember one night, I picked up the baby. He was only a few weeks old. The child was freezing.' ○

'It always comes back to the finances. That determines what kind of lifestyle you have it can determine whether your marriage stays or goes.' ○

'I'm waiting six years for a by-pass. If I had a cheque book, they'd have me in straight away.' ○

'I feel kind of guilty when mammy and daddy leave themselves without anything and we get all the stuff.' ○

'The only way I know is from booklets on what I'm entitled to. But it's a different language. When I bring them home, I can't make head nor tail of them.' ○

'Well some days we don't have a meal to eat. We depend on the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The bits of grub I get from them helps me through the days.' ○

'The kids are walking around the street and there's nothing around for them. Then they ask why kids get into trouble. It's all money, money, money. If only there was something for the kids to do that didn't cost loads of money.' ○

LESSON 6

Becoming an expert

Learning goals

Students will work in groups to research sections of society who are at risk of poverty and share their learning with their peers.

Key skills

Using ICT to access, manage and share information. Performing and presenting.

You will need

Copies of the worksheet. Access to research material/internet.

Learning Activity

Explain to the class that they will be working in groups to become 'expert' on a topic and then they will be teaching that topic to others in their class. This is how it will work:

Split the class into 5 groups. Each group will be given one of the following topics to research: Older people, children, people with disabilities, Travellers, immigrants and asylum seekers. Explain that these are the groups that are most likely to experience poverty in Ireland.

Once each group has been assigned a topic to study then explain the task.

Their task is to find out why their group is at risk of poverty. What makes them vulnerable? What statistics, factual information or case studies can they find to illustrate how poverty affects their group? What can be done to change the situation?

Find below a list of relevant organisations for the various groups mentioned above. Encourage students to start their research on these websites, and follow each bodies' link page on their website to find out more.

Once each group has become expert on their topic then they must decide how they will present it to their classmates. They now need to think about how to make their topic interesting.

Rearrange the groups to ensure that there is one expert from each original group in each new group i.e. one expert on older people, one expert on children, one on people with disabilities, one on ethnic minorities, one on Travellers, and one on immigrants and asylum seekers.

They each take turns and have 2 minutes to 'teach' their topic within their new group.

List of Representative Bodies

Older people
Older and Bolder
www.olderandbolder.ie

Children
National Youth Council of Ireland
www.youth.ie

People with disabilities
National Disability Authority
www.nda.ie

Travellers
Pavee Point
www.paveepoint.ie

Immigrants and asylum seekers
Jesuit Refugee Service
www.jrs.ie

BECOMING AN EXPERT

Name of Group

Reasons why this group is at risk of poverty

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Sources of information:

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Some facts and/or statistics

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Sources of information:

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What can be done?

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Sources of information:

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How will I teach this to my classmates?

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Students should save this worksheet for inclusion in their portfolio.

LESSON 7

<div align="right">

Social justice
What does it look like?

</div>

Learning goals

Students will visually depict their understanding of social justice

Key skills

Learning creatively

You will need

Copies of the worksheet. Access to research material/internet (not essential).

Learning Activity

Divide students into groups of 3-4 and tell them they will be creating their own definition of social justice.

Write the following key words on the board: fairness, equality, justice, equity. Distribute a copy of L7 Worksheet to each group.

Further information on social justice can be found on **Link 1.1** and **Link 1.2** on the website.

Each group then develops their own definition (one sentence) of social justice and shares it with the class. This should take no more than 10 minutes.

Share the definition of social justice below and compare it with their responses.

Ask students to create a visual representation – such as an image, a poster, a piece of drama, sculpture, or a photo collage to depict either social justice or social injustice.

When these are complete provide a space for all the images to be presented.

Social justice could be defined as...

Social justice is based on equality of rights for all peoples and the possibility for all human beings without discrimination, to benefit from economic and social progress everywhere. Promoting social justice is about more than increasing income and creating jobs. It is also about rights, dignity and a voice for working women and men as well as economic, social and political empowerment.

Definition from: Somavia, J. (2003). Working out of Poverty: Report of the Director-General. International Labour Office: Geneva.

Students should save a copy of their creation for inclusion in their portfolio.

WHAT IS SOCIAL JUSTICE?

EQUALITY

EQUITY

FOR A FAIR SELECTION EVERYBODY HAS TO TAKE THE SAME EXAM: PLEASE CLIMB THAT TREE
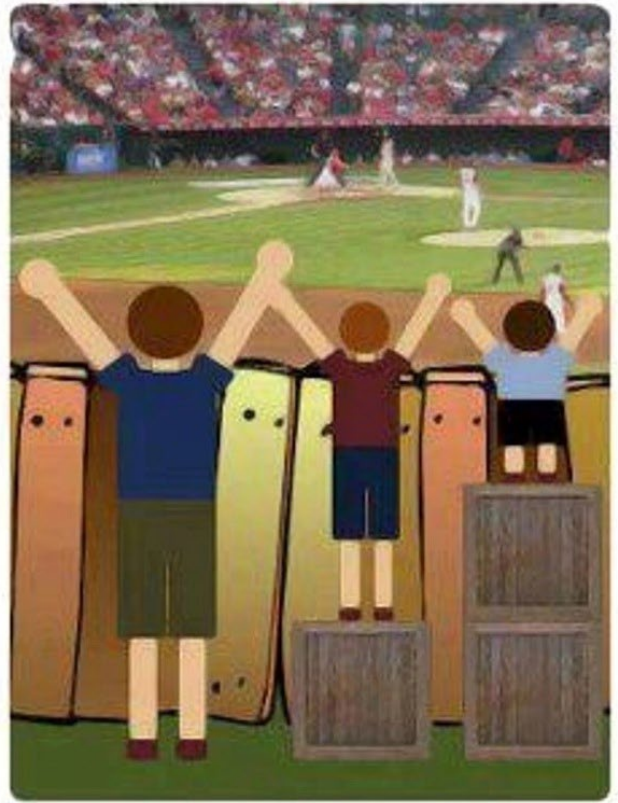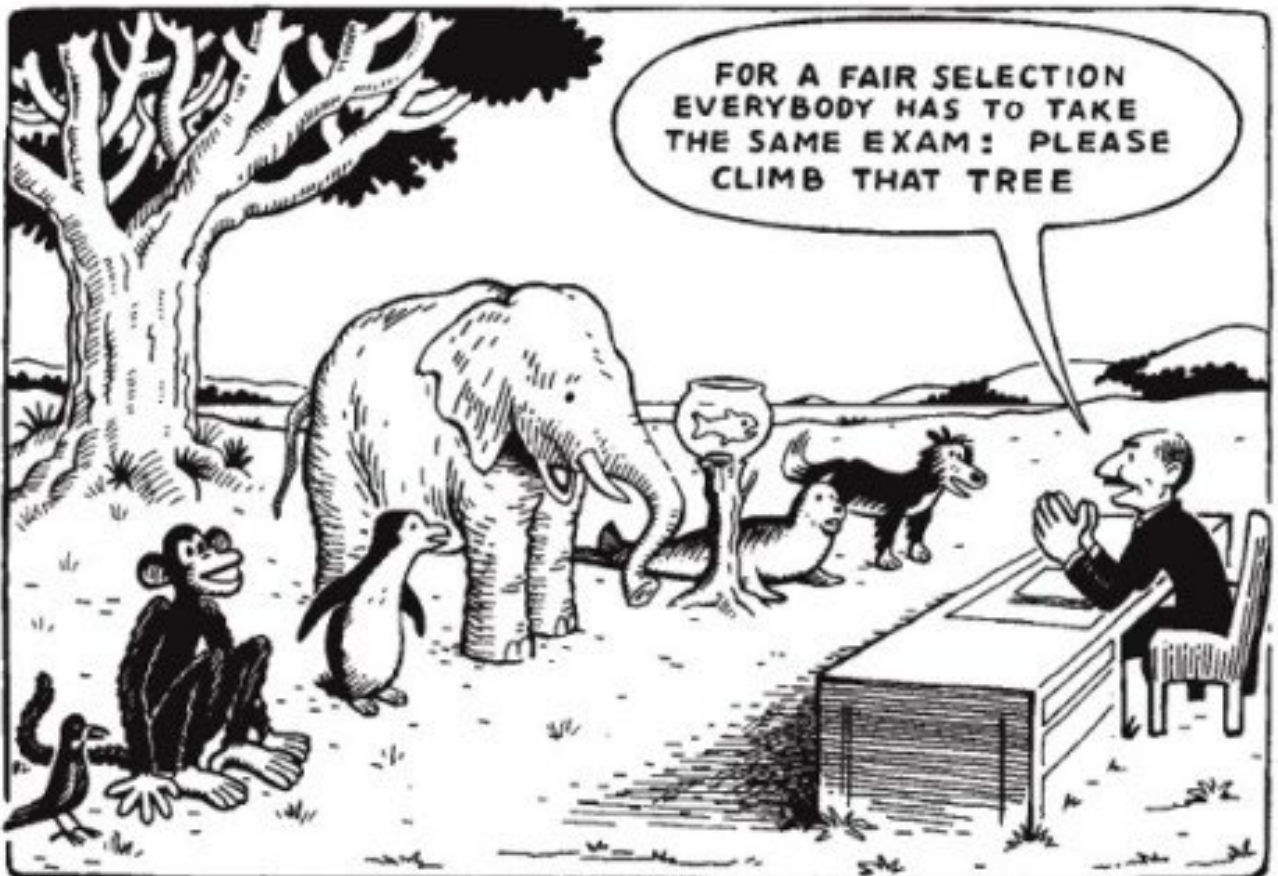
LESSON 8

Broken pieces

Learning goals

Students will trace the development of the Church's social teaching since 1891 and become familiar with the Catholic Church's major social teaching themes.

Key skills

Thinking creatively and critically, organising data, learning with others

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You will need

L8 Worksheet 1 (timeline of events) cut up into sections for each group and L8 Worksheet 2 (social teaching documents).

Learning Activity

Provide background information.

An encyclical is a letter from the Holy Father that is a "teaching document." Its audience is every Catholic and all people of good will. A "social encyclical" applies the consistent, traditional moral teachings of the Church to the social and economic challenges of the current day.

For example, the social encyclical, Caritas in Veritate, was written in 2009 to address the recent economic crisis and other issues facing the world today and deals with economic life, poverty, development, human rights, environmental issues and other moral and economic issues.

Break into small groups of 3-4 students.

Provide each group with a copy of the timeline cut up into pieces and batches of the cut-out rectangles with the Catholic Social Teaching document descriptions. (They may need sellotape).

Set the challenge.

Ask each group to read the events on the timelines and their challenge is to match the cut-out rectangles describing the documents with the date on the events timeline. They have only 15 minutes to arrange their timeline. If they need help, tell them to pay attention to:

▸ Events mentioned in the timeline that are also mentioned in the social documents descriptions.

▸ The names of the popes, since documents by the same popes will follow one another.

▸ References to anniversaries, since some documents were written to celebrate the anniversary of a previous document.

Checking answers

When all the groups are finished, the group leader can check answers using the Answer Key

Questions for discussion

What social teaching document did you find most interesting? Why? Which themes were most commonly addressed over the years?

If you were Pope, what would you want to say if you were writing a social encyclical today?

Catholic Social Teaching Timeline Activity
Answer Key

1891 On the Condition of Labor (Rerum Novarum), Pope Leo XIII

1931 On Reconstructing the Social Order (Quadragesimo Anno), Pope Pius XI

1961 On Christianity and Social Progress (Mater et Magistra), Pope John XXIII

1963 Peace on Earth (Pacem in Terris), Pope John XXIII

1965 The Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes), Second Vatican Council

1965 Declaration on Religious Freedom (Dignitatis Humanae), Second Vatican Council

1967 On the Development of Peoples (Populorum Progressio), Pope Paul VI

1971 A Call to Action (Octogesima Adveniens), Pope Paul VI

1971 Justice in the World

(Justitia in Mundo), Synod of Bishops

1981 On Human Work (Laborem Exercens), Pope John Paul II

1983 The Challenge of Peace, United States Catholic bishops

1987 On Social Concern (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis), Pope John Paul II

1991 On the Hundredth Year (Centesimus Annus), Pope John Paul II

1995 The Gospel of Life (Evangelium Vitae), Pope John Paul II

2004 God is Love (Deus Caritas Est), Pope Benedict XVI

2009 Charity in Truth (Caritas in Veritate), Pope Benedict XVI

2013 Light of Faith (Lumen Fidei), Pope Francis

(This activity has been adapted from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishop's website http://www.usccb.org/be-liefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/timeline-activity.cfm)

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1891

Developments of the Industrial Revolution such as steam power and machine tools have led to greater productivity but worsening working conditions for workers, including long hours, unsafe conditions and child labour.

1931

In 1929, the Stock Market crashed and led to the Great Depression. There is large scale unemployment. The rise of the Nazi party in Germany and the Fascist party in Italy is causing tension as these totalitarian regimes deny fundamental human rights and threaten the lives of the vulnerable.

1961

Developed countries are expanding production and increasing profits while poorer nations are not seeing much progress. The arms race is causing huge amounts of money to be spent on weapons while the gap between rich and poor nations grows. The Church is now more aware of the need for respect for different cultures.

1963

The arms race is now at an all-time high with both East and West producing nuclear war heads and weapons of mass destruction. There is a growing sense of fear that peace is endangered.

1965

This is a time of huge change both in society and in the Catholic Church. Civil rights movements and growing prosperity are a feature of many western countries while voices from the developing countries are beginning to speak out about underdevelopment. The ideas of an American theologian, John Countney Murray have begun to gain influence. He suggests that Catholics and non-Catholics should work together for justice and he also suggests that all people, regardless of their faith, should enjoy religious freedom.

Note – 2 important documents were written this year.

1967

The United Nations has declared the 1960s the 'Decade of Development'. There are different notions of development and the idea that development should incorporate all aspects of the person is now gaining popularity.

1971

Some important events that occurred in recent years – in 1968 the Latin American Bishops met in Medellin, Colombia and committed themselves to a preferential love of the poor. Around this time many countries passed legislation to prevent discrimination in the workplace based on gender. Growing urbanisation (the movement of large numbers of people into cities) is leading to discrimination towards immigrants and minorities.

Note – 2 important documents were written this year.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1

1981

In 1980, strikes and protests by workers in Poland lead to the creation of an independent trade union called Solidarity. In the US, UK and other countries, there is also labour unrest, with strikes frequently occurring. Growing urbanisation (the movement of large numbers of people into cities) is leading to discrimination towards immigrants and minorities.

Note – 2 important documents were written this year.

1983

Wars are raging in Afghanistan, El Salvador, Lebanon and between Iran and Iraq. The world has experienced a large arms build-up and anti-nuclear protests among the general population is growing.

1987

During the 1980's developing countries suffer from a severe debt crisis and a widening gap develops between rich and poor countries. Global trade is growing but the global trade system is stacked in favour of wealthy countries. A hole in the ozone layer is reported for the first time in 1985.

1991

Protests in Communist countries lead to the break up of the Soviet Union and communism collapses. The Berlin wall falls in 1989. At the same time questions about economic inequality within and between countries continue to be of concern.

1995

There is much debate about developments in embryo research and in vitro fertilisation. Abortion is practised in many countries and the use of death penalty remains legal in many more.

2004

There is some concern that constantly expanding technology, while beneficial, can also be dangerous when it replaces quality relationships and personal connection. The cheapening of love and sex is more and more common within pop culture.

2009

The world is in the midst of a severe economic crisis brought about by reckless lending and borrowing. There is increased evidence of the impact of climate change which is affecting all countries but poorest countries most of all.

2013

Western culture and particularly young people are increasingly questioning the role and relevance of religion and faith. This comes after a decade of controversy surrounding the Catholic Church as it has been accused of corruption, irrelevancy and illegitimacy.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING DOCUMENTS ACTIVITY

On Reconstructing the Social Order

(Quadragesimo Anno)

This encyclical, written to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of Rerum Novarum, reaffirms the Church's concern for workers and defends workers' rights, including just wages, and condemns the increasing disparities between the elite and suffering workers. Pope Pius XI notes the need for state intervention but also proposes reconstruction of society into new systems that would involve all groups within society working together for the good of all. Pius XI upholds the right to private property and says that goods also have a social purpose and must serve the whole human race.

Peace on Earth

(Pacem in Terris)

This was the first encyclical to be written to 'all men of good will', instead of just the world's Catholics.

In it, Pope John XXIII emphasises human rights and responsibilities, and calls for an end to the arms race based on trust and respect for human rights.

John XXIII notes that the arms race impedes the development of societies and that underdevelopment and injustice threaten peace.

On the Condition of Labour

(Rerum Novarum)

This is considered the first of the social encyclicals and it addresses the desperate working conditions endured by many workers at the end of the 19th century. Pope Leo XIII affirms workers' rights to just wages, rest, and fair treatment, to form unions, and to strike if necessary. He writes that while individuals have a right to own property the state too has a role in facilitating distributive justice so that workers can adequately support their families and someday own property of their own. Leo XIII criticizes both capitalism for its tendency toward greed, concentration of wealth, and mistreatment of workers, as well as socialism, for what he understood as a rejection of private property and an under emphasis of the dignity of each individual person.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING DOCUMENTS ACTIVITY

1

On Social Concern
(Sollicitudo Rei Socialis)

Pope John Paul II criticises the 'wars of proxy' fought as part of the Cold War by Eastern and Western powers in developing countries as they compete for influence.

This was commonly practised during the 1960s and 70s. He notes that besides the East-West divisions, there are now also North-South divisions, with the rich-poor gap continually widening. Building on the notion of development in On the Development of Peoples, written twenty years prior, John Paul II emphasises the need for authentic human development which values 'being' over 'having' and which emphasises the spiritual aspects of the person. He criticises super-development and consumerism as false forms of development. The Pope discusses the environment, noting the dignity of creation and humanity's misuse of it.

John Paul II notes the 'structures of sin' such as the desire for profit and thirst of power that help create the evil of poverty and threats to life. He calls for solidarity (the recognition that we are one human family) so that there can be true development and peace.

The Gospel of Life
(Evangelium Vitae)

By the mid 1990s scientific developments make it necessary for Pope John Paul II to affirm the gift of life and the need to protect it at all stages. He proclaims the good news of the value and dignity of each human life while decrying the culture of death and calling for a renewed culture of life. The encyclical addresses a wide range of old and new threats to life, especially abortion, euthanasia, experimentation on human embryos, and the death penalty. John Paul II argues that we must be people of life who stand 'for all life and for the life of everyone'.

The culture of death, he says, is caused by an overemphasis on individual freedoms and a lack of recognition of our responsibilities to others. This mentality, reflected in materialism's emphasis on 'having' over 'being', must be replaced by one of solidarity (recognition that we are all one family) and seeing life as a responsibility.

The Church in the Modern World
(Gaudium et Spes)

The Second Vatican Council began in 1963 and was attended by bishops from all corners of the world. This document focuses on responding to 'the joys and the hopes, the grief and the anguish of the people of our time', especially the poor. The Council explains why the Church and people of faith must be engaged in the world, noting how the Church must interpret the signs of the times, both positive (growing wealth, unity, and communication) and negative (hunger and disease, war, the wealth gap, etc.) in light of the Gospel.

The Council emphasises the Church's concern for human dignity, the solidarity of the human community, the important role of human work and activity in the world, and the engagement of the Church in society and the world.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING DOCUMENTS ACTIVITY

The Challenge of Peace

This pastoral letter from the Catholic bishops of the United States begins with a discussion from scripture and tradition about war and peace then offers two Christian responses to war: just war and nonviolence. The bishops describe numerous conditions that must be present in order for war to be considered just. The bishops condemn the use of nuclear weapons against civilian populations, the deliberate initiation of nuclear warfare and the arms race, and say that nuclear deterrence is only to be used as a step toward progressive disarmament. Finally, they say the Church must be involved in building peace.

A Call to Action

(Octogesima Adveniens)

Written on the eightieth anniversary of Rerum Novarum Pope Paul VI urges local churches to develop responses to the social and economic problems facing their communities. He reminds Christians of their duty to participate in working for social and political change to promote social justice.

Paul VI identifies new societal problems related to urbanisation, the situation of workers, women and youth, and attitudes towards immigrants from poor countries and notes that 'preferential love' should be given to the poor.

Paul VI urges changes in policies on issues affecting the poor such as trade, debt, and economic policy, and warns against basing progress on economic growth alone.

Charity in Truth

(Caritas in Veritate)

Pope Benedict XVI says love is the 'extraordinary force' that leads people to faith-inspired engagement in the world. He identifies justice as the 'primary way of charity' and says every Christian is obliged to 'take a stand for the common good' and work for institutional change. In the face of a global economic crisis, Pope Benedict XVI writes about the need for 'a new vision for the future' guided by love, truth, and solidarity. These values must inform all aspects of economic life such as finance, trade, and globalisation, which must be supported by the common good.

Benedict XVI emphasises the international community's duty toward solidarity which should be realised in many ways, such as attention to the needs of workers and immigrants and development assistance to poor countries. He also writes about the duty to care for creation, emphasising environmental concern more than in any past encyclical.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING DOCUMENTS ACTIVITY

On the Development of Peoples

(Populorum Progressio)

In response to the worsening situation of the poor around the world, Pope Paul VI criticises unjust economic structures that have led to inequality and underdevelopment, including the inequalities of the market system, the effects of colonialism, economic domination and exploitation of poor countries by rich ones, and the prioritisation of military spending

and the arms race over development. Paul VI challenges the nations of the world to focus on the 'integral human development' of the poorest nations. This type of development includes much more than economic growth, and recognises that development must bring about full human development.

On the Hundredth Year

(Centesimus Annus)

Pope John Paul II writes to mark the hundredth anniversary of Rerum Novarum, a landmark document about the dignity of human beings and the rights of workers that influenced many future documents. The Pope examines the fall of communism, brought about by inefficient economic systems that failed to protect human rights, private property, and economic freedom. At the same time, John Paul II points to the limitations of the free market, which sometimes does not adequately respond to human needs and can place profit before the dignity of the human person. He calls for a just society based on the rights of workers, economic initiative, and participation.

On Christianity and Social Progress

(Mater et Magistra)

Pope John XXIII comments on changes in recent decades such as communication advances, increases in workers' rights, and the decline of colonialism. He notes the world's global interdependence and expresses great concern about the arms race and growing inequalities between rich and poor nations, noting that gains in science and technology should not lead to economic inequality but should benefit all.

John XXIII also expresses concern about the plight of small farmers and rural areas and calls for greater participation of workers in industry and new forms of agricultural support, and notes that respect for different cultures must be emphasised in the Church's own missionary activities.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING DOCUMENTS ACTIVITY

God is love

(Deus Caritas Est)

Pope Benedict XVI writes that the human person's ability to love is rooted in the Father's love for humankind and the person's identity as created in the image of God. The call to love thy neighbour flows from God's love for humanity. Benedict XVI places love at the centre of Catholic life. He writes that the Church must educate and encourage the laity so that they can work for a more just society. Their political activity should be 'infused with the light of faith and love'.

Light in Faith

(Lumen Fidei)

Pope Francis follows up on Pope Benedict XVI's evangelisation by publishing an encyclical on faith. In it he explains that faith is actively trying to see with the eyes of Christ how God is working through human history and how God asks us to respond to God's love. Faith impels us to work for justice, order, and peace in the world. We do this not as isolated individuals but as fellow members of the Church and human society. The light of faith illumines not just individuals, not just the Church, but the whole world in the present time.

On Human Work

(Laborem Exercens)

Written on the ninetieth anniversary of the very first social encyclical, Rerum Novarum, Pope John Paul II presents work as a fundamental dimension of human existence through which the person achieves fulfilment as a human being. He emphasises the dignity of labour and says that through work, the human person can share in the activity of the Creator. John Paul II writes that the worker should be valued more than profit. Therefore, we must protect the rights of workers to employment, to just wages and to organise unions. The Holy Father also calls for 'new movements of solidarity of the workers and solidarity with the workers.'

Declaration on Religious Freedom

(Dignitatis Humanae)

This is one of the most radical documents to come from the Second Vatican Council.

It affirms that every human person has a right to religious freedom and should not be made to worship against their conscience. The freedom of worship is based in the dignity of the person, his or her right to seek the truth and act in accordance with his or her conscience. It was very shocking at the time for people to hear the Church affirm that true faith is only possible in freedom and freedom of religion should be enshrined in law by all governments.

LESSON 9

People working for justice

Learning goals

Investigate people who work for social justice, and present their research to the class.

Key skills

Gathering, organising and evaluating information, presenting and performing

You will need

Copies of the worksheet or projector. Access to the internet.

Learning Activity

Part 1

Ask the class if they can think of any famous people who have taken action for social justice.

Lead a class discussion based on their answers.

Display the quotes on L9 Worksheet and ask the students to pick one that they like or strongly agree with.

Students 'pair and share' with a partner, saying which one they picked and why.

Set students the challenge of finding other inspiring quotes which convey a strong social justice message.

Share and display these around the classroom and school.

Part 2

Divide the class into groups of five. Each group is assigned one person in the 'People Working for Justice' section of the website **Link 1.13**.

Each student reads the questionnaire found at the link of their assigned worker. Each group agrees six things which they feel their other classmates (who haven't read the questionnaire) should know about the person.

Their answers should include information from 'What does social justice mean to you?' and the organisations that the people work for.

Each group presents their work to the class.

Part 3

Each student fills in a questionnaire similar to the one from the 'People Working for Justice' section **Link 1.13**. This is a personal and reflective activity; the questionnaire is not for sharing with the rest of the class but for inclusion in the student's portfolio.

Possible examples

Gandhi, Malcolm X, Pope John Paul II, Mother Teresa, Father Pedro Arrupe, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Martin Luther King, Dalai Lama, past and current presidents of Ireland, Bob Geldof, Bono.

What work do/did these people do?

What causes are they involved in?

> ⚠ Point out that you don't have to be famous, well known or rich to make a difference in society. Most often it is ordinary people at a local level who act for social justice.

> 💡 Encourage the class to ask each group questions in order to find out more. Emphasise that these people are the same as them. They are ordinary people.

QUOTES FOR DISTRIBUTION

I have no right to more than I need when my brother has less than he needs.

Mahatma Ghandi

Freedom of trade is fair, only if it is subject to the demands of social justice.

Pope Paul VI

We may have different religions, different languages, different coloured skin, but we all belong to one human race.

Kofi Annan

Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on Earth.

Muhammad Ali

My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together.

Desmond Tutu

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere... Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.

Martin Luther King Jr.
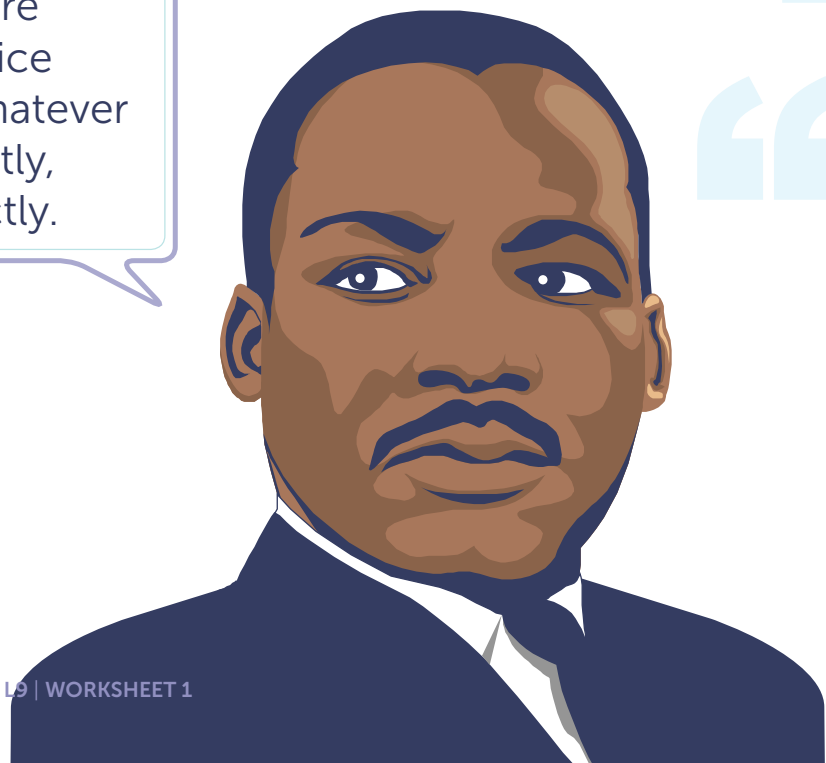
LESSON 10

Learning goals

Students can discuss ways that a commitment to social justice relates to the ethos of their school.

Key skills

Using digital technology to communicate, contributing to making the world a better place

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You will need

Copies of the worksheet.

Learning Activity

Begin the class by outlining the Action Project: Stand! Speak! Act! to the students.

Divide students into groups of 3-4.

Each group is to discuss if they have participated in social justice actions. e.g. Concern fast, sponsored football game, sleepout for homelessness. Each group should also discuss actions that their school organises, and how this relates to their school ethos. This should take 5-10 minutes.

Each group is to decide on one action discussed that they will explore in detail.

Questions for discussion

Why did you participate in a social justice action? Who organised the action? What was the purpose of the action?

Have you been involved in any activities for social justice organised by your school? Why does your school organise such actions?

What values does your school encourage? What other actions might your school take for social justice?

If a stranger walked into the school, what signs would they see that would tell them that this school is committed to social justice?

Distribute a copy of L10 Worksheet to each group.

Each group fills in the worksheet with information on their action(s).

Explain that the 'Why' is the most important question, and more time should be given to this answer than the others.

WHO, WHAT, HOW AND WHY

What social justice action have you chosen?

....

Who did the action benefit?

....

What was the action (be brief)?

....

....

....

How did the action help?

....

....

....

Why did you participate? **Why** was it organised?

....

....

....

....

....

....

Students should save this worksheet for inclusion in their portfolio.

LESSON 11

Debate
The role of religion in our world

Learning goals

Students can debate the role of religion in promoting social justice.

Key skills

Discussing and debating, managing my learning

You will need

Post-its.

Learning Activity

Organise a 'Speed Debate' as follows:

Read out statements to the class and ask students to reflect on each statement and write down on a post-it a number between 1 and 5 based on this scale:
1 = Agree strongly
2 = Agree
3 = Not sure
4 = Disagree
5 = Disagree strongly

After each statement is read and the students have had a chance to reflect and decide upon a number, then ask them to show their numbers to each other. They must now find someone with a different number (preferably as different as possible) and join that person in a pair. The pair have 2 minutes to discuss why they chose the number they did.

> If there is time, it is preferable for the class to come up with their own statements to debate with the teacher. The statements below are only suggestions.

Statements

The Catholic Church should keep its nose out of politics

Catholic teaching is out of touch with reality

Every Christian has a duty to show care not only to those around them but to people we might never meet

Overall the Catholic Church has had a positive influence in promoting human rights and justice.

The Church provides a credible voice for social justice

After this warm up the students are now ready to prepare a debate on the following motion:

'Christian values of solidarity, equality and care for the poor are not realistic or relevant in today's world which values competition over co-operation and profits over people.'

Split the class in half and tell half the students they will be arguing for the motion while the other half will be arguing against the motion. Give students 10 minutes in pairs to prepare their arguments.

Video the debate and replay it later so that students can assess themselves against agreed criteria.

Students write a reflective journal entry on what they have learned from the lesson and how their views have been changed or challenged.

2 UNDERSTANDING CRIME

Welcome to the second strand of **On the Margins**.

This strand explores the theme of crime – why people commit crime, and the various approaches that are used to prevent it. Students are also encouraged to relate this to their own perceptions of crime and prevention of crime.

Key words in this strand include:

HEADLINE CRIME

STATISTICAL INTERPRETATION

SOCIOLOGICAL CAUSES

PSYCHOLOGICAL CAUSES

DETERRENCE

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

2

Further information on the topics dealt with in this strand is available at the Teachers' Area of **www.whycare.ie.** Below are some of the topics you will find there. Links in **bold** are referenced within lessons in this strand.

Strand Two: Understanding Crime

Other important websites and resources that can be found in the Teachers' Area include:

Centre for Crime and Justice Studies: www.crimeandjustice.org.uk
Central Statistics Office: www.cso.ie/en/statistics/crimeandjustice
National Crime Council: www.crimecouncil.gov.ie/statistics_cri_crime.html
Why Me (Restorative Justice for Victims): www.why-me.org

LESSON 1

Perceptions of crime

Learning goals
Students examine their perceptions of crime, and discover if their perceptions match the reality of crime.

Key skills
Discussing and debating, thinking creatively and critically

You will need
Newspapers and/or access to the internet.

Learning Activity

Part 1

Divide the class into groups of four or five. Give each group five minutes to develop a definition of 'crime'.

After they have decided on a definition, distribute or project the photographs from L1 Worksheet.

Lead a discussion on the photographs and the questions below.

Students go back into their groups and decide if they are still happy with their definition of crime. If not, what changed?

Questions for discussion

Do these pictures portray a 'crime'? What different types of crimes are there? What types of crime do we hear most about? What types of crimes are committed by young people?

Are crime rates as high as we think? Why do people commit crime? What are prisons like? What kind of crimes are people sent to prison for?

What can be done to stop crime from happening? Do you think Ireland's crime rate is high?

What type of crime occurs most often? What areas of Ireland do you think are most affected by crime? Who is most likely to be a victim of crime?

Learning Activity

Part 2

The class will research how crime is reported in different newspapers (this can be done online or by bringing hard copies of a selection of newspapers to the class).

Divide the class into groups and assign each group to a newspaper (e.g. The Irish Times, The Irish Independent, The Irish Daily Mail, The Sun).

Each group is to note down the headlines of any article reporting crime.

When they are finished, each group is assigned to another newspaper and repeat the exercise, taking careful note on how different newspapers report the same crime.

Each group presents their findings, answering some of the questions below.

Questions for discussion

Why would different newspapers have such different headlines? Who are these newspapers aimed at? Were there similarities within newspapers? Across different newspapers? Do you think there is more or less crime now than fifteen years ago?

Assignment

Read through pages one and two of the Introduction of 'Understanding Crime' Link 2.1 keeping in mind the questions below.

Point out that the information we receive about crime usually comes from and is filtered by the media. Our perceptions of crime may be different from the reality.

Is there anything the students find surprising? Are the actual figures different to what they initially thought?

PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME

Photography by Alex Masi

Pardip from Pradesh in northern India is being attacked for no reason. He suffers from a neurological disorder that he developed from drinking contaminated water from the Hindon river.

Whose crime is worse: the man attacking Pardip, or the people responsible for the pollution of the river?

Photography by Davy Jones

This is the photographer's mother, May, who suffers from arthritis. She developed the condition from working long hours on her feet for little pay.

How long could you work on your feet day after day? How many hours before it becomes a crime?

Photography by Phil Bedford

This closed police station is the site of the fatal stabbing of Jack Large in Essex. Jack made racist comments to two boys who then stabbed him. Life support was turned off two days later.

LESSON 2

Survey on crime

Learning goals

Students design a survey on perceptions of crime and distribute it to other classes in the school.

Key skills

Thinking creatively and critically, using numbers and data

You will need

Copies of the worksheet or a projector. Access to the internet.

Learning Activity

Part 1

Read through page three of the Introduction page in the 'Understanding Crime' section of the website **Link 2.2.**

Questions for discussion

Is there anything about these statistics that you find surprising? What in particular?

Part 2

Tell the students that they are going to design a survey to determine what people's attitudes and perceptions are about crime and prison.

Divide students into groups of four. Ask each group to come up with ten questions.

Each group shares their suggestions. The class decides on ten questions to put in the survey based on the suggestions of the class. Try and design the survey in a multiple choice format so as to make it easier to collate the statistics later.

See L2 Worksheet for some suggested survey questions.

If possible, have the students' survey distributed to other classes and filled in. Make time to collect the survey and collate the statistical information with the class. Are the results surprising? Given what the students read in the 'Understanding Crime' section of **www.whycare.ie** is the perception of crime similar to the reality?

Each student should keep a copy of the survey and results for inclusion in their portfolio.

SAMPLE SURVEY

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being very low, 5 being very high), how would you describe the crime rate in Ireland?

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

What type of crime occurs most often (please tick one)?

( ) Burglary   ( ) Murder   ( ) Assault   ( ) Public Disorder

Why do people commit crime?

....

....

....

What crimes are people most frequently sent to prison for (please order from 1 to 7)?

1 ....   **2** ....   **3** ....

4 ....   **5** ....   **6** ....

7 ....

Murder   Assault   Burglary   Public disorder   Drugs offences   Traffic offences   Failure to pay fines

What age group is most likely to become a victim of crime (please tick one)?

( ) 18–24   ( ) 25 – 49   ( ) 45 – 64   ( ) 65+

LESSON 3

Reality of crime

Learning goals

Students consider how statistics can be slanted and used for different purposes.

Key skills

Discussing and debating, using language

You will need

Copies of the worksheets. Access to the internet.

Learning Activity

Ask students to read through the 'Headline Crime' section of the website and to pick out interesting or surprising facts and invite them to share these with the class.

Read L3 Worksheet 1, The Irish Times article together as a class, alerting students in advance to the questions at the end that they will be answering.

Students answer the questions either individually or with a partner.

Discuss the answers together as a class.

In light of what the students have just learned from the article, ask them to identify questions they should keep in mind when they next encounter crime statistics in the media.

For example, what statistics are shown? Why? What's missing? What's the author trying to prove? etc.

CRIME STATISTICS IN IRELAND

Excerpt from Conor Lally's report on Crime Statistics in Ireland, The Irish Times, 18 August 2012

The State's crime statistics are comprised of crimes reported by victims and those unearthed by gardaí themselves. Since the economic crisis took hold, the trends are substantially down. The most detailed crime data available suggests Irish streets are not as mean as they used to be.

In the year to the end of March, headline or serious crime had fallen in all but two of the 15 crime categories, burglaries and thefts from the person being the only categories to show an increase.

Interpreting crime statistics is a tricky business, as the CSO repeatedly warns. Published statistics only include crimes that 'become known or are reported to gardaí'.

The CSO says that whether a crime comes to the attention of gardaí depends on a number of factors including the 'perceived seriousness of the crime, the financial loss involved and beliefs around whether the gardaí are in a position to do anything about the crime'.

However, even when spikes in those areas are taken into account, overall crime has fallen by 13 per cent since its peak in 2008, after increasing consistently for a decade and a half.

Burglary has bucked the downward trend by increasing by 15%, and theft from the person is up 25 per cent. The cultivation of cannabis has doubled, as have prostitution offences.

However, even with those caveats in mind, a look at how crime trends have developed since recorded offences peaked in the 2007–2008 period suggests a clear pattern.

Cases of discharging a firearm have fallen by 49% since peaking at 326 cases. Recorded cases of possession of a firearm have dropped by 35 per cent, from 45 incidents in 2008 to 297 last year. Public-order crimes peaked in 2008 at 61,822 offences, but have since fallen by 21 per cent. Assaults are down by 12 per cent, criminal damage is down by 21 per cent.

By the end of last year, homicides had fallen by 52% from a peak of 138 cases in 2007. Drugs offences have dropped by 24 per cent since 2008, with the specific offence of possessing drugs for personal use down by 30 per cent.

It estimated in 2007 that 'about 30 per cent' of burglaries were unreported, as were nearly four in 10 incidents of theft with violence. Offences of a sexual nature and domestic violence are 'grossly under-recorded'.

2

CRIME STATISTICS IN IRELAND

Excerpt from Conor Lally's report on Crime Statistics in Ireland, Irish Times, 18 August 2012

Garda sources and criminologists paint a complex picture that factors in everything from lower disposable incomes, to mass emigration by young people and reduced Garda resources.

At UCD's Institute of Criminology, Prof Ian O'Donnell points to the repeated evidence thrown up by international research linking increased alcohol consumption to increased levels of public-order crime and other offences that people commit while drunk.

'You would expect crimes linked to alcohol consumption, public order and so on, to fall back when there is less money around for excessive drinking by people out socialising,' O'Donnell says. He also believes the recession has been instrumental in curbing that area of crime referred to by the media as 'gangland'.

Falling disposable income – brought on by unemployment, wage cuts and higher levies – has cut demand for drugs, particularly cocaine.

'When the financial rewards are lower it reduces the risks that drug dealers will be prepared to take, both in terms of getting caught and in terms of going up against other rival violent gangs,' he says.

With a smaller and more financially strapped user market to sell to, O'Donnell believes the intensity of inter-gang rivalry has diminished because the financial rewards are lower.

Dr. Paul O'Mahony, a leading criminologist who has recently retired as associate professor of psychology in the School of Medicine at Trinity College, believes the recession has influenced crime in many ways.

'We've had 70,000 young people in their late teens and twenties emigrating in recent years, and that age group is the one with criminal propensity and who are violence prone. So I think that has to be feeding into what's happening with the crime rates.'

Prof Dermot Walsh from the University of Limerick agrees that lower spending power linked to the recession is a major factor in the reductions in the official headline crime figures. However, he adds 'the reduction in the Garda overtime budget and in the numbers in the force means fewer gardaí on the beat catching criminals compared to just a few years ago.

Gardaí simply may not have the resources to go out and chase drug crime and other sorts of crime, and that may now be showing up in the reduction in those crimes; it could be a fall in detecting the crime rather than a real fall in the crime.'

QUESTIONS

Write your answers on a separate page, and save them for inclusion in your portfolio.

What types of crime, according to the journalist, have increased?

What types of crimes does he say have decreased? By how much?

What explanations were given for this increase?

Why, in his view, has the demand for drugs fallen? What impact has this had on the crime rate and 'gang land' activity?

Why does he say that the interpretation of crime statistics is a 'tricky business'?

He states that 30% of crimes are not reported to the gardaí. What explanation is given for this statistic?

What reasons were given to explain the reduction in the overall crime rate?

2

LESSON 4 Why do people commit crime?
London Riots (1)

Learning goals

Discuss causes of crime, and perceptions of youth crime in relation to the London riots.

Key skills

Discussing and debating, thinking creatively and critically

You will need

Copies of the worksheets. Access to the internet.

Learning Activity

Part 1

Explain to the students that they are about to watch a collection of news reports about the London riots in 2011.

Play the short video clips from **Link 2.5** and **Link 2.6**.

Lead a class discussion on the clips.

Questions for discussion

What is the short clip about? What is happening? Where? Why is it happening? When did it happen?

Can you imagine anything like that ever happening in Ireland?

What ages are the people in these films? Why would they behave like that? What do you think these young persons' lives are like?

Learning Activity

Part 2

Distribute L4 Worksheet 1 and L4 Worksheet 2 to the class.

Read both articles one after the other. Discuss each word that is underlined – what does it mean? What does it imply?

Questions for discussion

What opinions about the London Riots are expressed in these two articles? Are they similar?

What is the opinion of the Home Secretary and the Deputy Mayor? How are they trying to stop the riots?

Who are the police appealing to? Do you think these articles give a full picture of what happened in London?

⚠️ Explain to the students that there are many sides to an argument. The riots were very controversial and there are lots of different points of view on the issue.

'LONDON RIOTS SPIRAL OUT OF CONTROL'

This is how the riots were reported in the The Independent on 8 August 2011.

Rioters were rampaging across Britain's capital again tonight as politicians and police chiefs tried desperately to curb the 'sheer criminality'.

Home Secretary Theresa May condemned chaotic scenes while Scotland Yard beefed up its presence before looting and violence spiralled out of control for a third consecutive night.

As thousands of **yobs** took to the streets across the London districts including Hackney, Lewisham, Peckham, Scotland Yard's most senior officer called on parents to contact their children and urged the public to clear London's streets.

At least 214 people have been arrested and 25 charged following riots across London over the last two days.

Acting Scotland Yard Commissioner Tim Godwin appealed directly to families. 'I do urge now that parents start contacting their children and asking where their children are.'

Mrs May said: 'I think this is about sheer criminality. That is what we have seen on the streets. The violence we've seen, the looting we've seen, the thuggery we've seen – this is **sheer criminality**, and let's make no bones about it.

'That's why I say that these people will be brought to justice, they will be made to face the consequences of their actions and I call on all members of local communities to work with the police constructively to help the police to bring these criminals to justice.'

'LONDON RIOTS SPIRAL OUT OF CONTROL'

This is how the riots were reported in the The Independent on 8 August 2011.

2

Scenes of violence in Hackney, Lewisham and Peckham echoed those in other areas of the capital over the past two nights, with skirmishes between gangs of youths and police.

At one point in Hackney, several people broke into the back of a stationary lorry, pulling out its contents out on to the road, with some hurling it at police and others using it to smash windows of a bus.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Stephen Kavanagh said there would be a third more officers on the ground than there were last night, which was three times more than the previous night.

Opportunist rioters over the past two nights are believed to be aged from their mid-teens upwards, he added.

'Let me make it clear that people who are using current events as an excuse or cover to break the law, steal, attack police officers and cause fear will not be tolerated.'

Kit Malthouse, London's deputy mayor for policing, said the violence was perpetrated by a small group of people 'looking for stuff to nick'.

'SILLY ME, I DIDN'T REALISE THE RIOTERS WERE VICTIMS'

Extract from an account of the riots by Philip Johnston in The Telegraph on 5 December 2011.

Well, that didn't take long— just four months to turn the summer rioters from scum of the earth into <u>victims</u>.

Let's remember who the real victims of the riots were: the shopkeepers whose properties were ransacked; the old man beaten to death in a west London street; the foreign student mugged by youths he thought were helping him; the owners of the 150 year old family furniture store who watched it burn to the ground; and, despite all the criticism they have faced for letting the riots spread, the bruised and bloodied police officers who put their necks on the line to contain the trouble when it threatened to get completely out of control.

Yesterday's report (Reading the Riots) purported to have uncovered broader explanations for the behaviour of the riots. I will stick with my interpretation: that a bunch of criminally inclined <u>hoodlums</u> took the opportunity to loot, pillage and rob because they enjoyed doing it and they though they could get away with it.

2

LESSON 5 Why do people commit crime?
London Riots (2)

Learning goals

Create a profile of a 'typical' rioter by investigating the statistics on those involved in the riots.

Key skills

Using numbers and data, gathering, organising and evaluating information

You will need

Copies of the worksheets. Access to the internet.

Recap

What did we read about the London riots in the last lesson?
What opinions about the riots and the rioters were expressed?

Learning Activity

Part 1

Distribute L5 Worksheet to the class and read through the statistics.

Read 'UK riots: the demographics of magistrate cases and convictions' **Link 2.7.**

Lead a discussion comparing this article with the articles from the last lesson, and discussing the implications of the statistics given.

Questions for discussion

How does this article compare to the other two articles?

What do the statistics from the article point to?

How are the courts dealing with those arrested for the riots?

Did the state – the courts, police, government – take the appropriate action in your opinion?

What effect will the state reaction have?

Part 2

Split the class into groups of four.

Each group is to create a profile of a typical rioter according to the statistics given in the worksheet and the article.

The profile should include demographics (age, ethnicity, education, poverty levels), and the most likely outcome if they are charged.

Assignment

Each student compares one of the Rioter Profiles from the website **Links 2.9 - 2.14** with the 'typical rioter' profile created in the last lesson. Students can use any medium for this assignment.

Suggestions for inclusion

What information can you gather about the person? Age, ethnicity, gender, background, etc?

What was his/her personal explanation for joining in the riots? Did s/he regret it? Did s/he talk about consequences?

Were there alternative explanations given for the riots? Which explanation is the most plausible in your opinion?

Were there sociological factors that contributed to his/her involvement? Could anything have been done to prevent his/her involvement?

What will happen to him/her in the future? What should be done to prevent him/her from rioting in the future?

Students should keep a copy of the 'typical rioter' profile and the homework assignment for inclusion in their portfolio.

RIOTER STATISTICS

Statistics on the London riots of August 2011 issued by the Ministry of Justice (United Kingdom)

August riots in numbers

Key statistics

1,984 Before courts

13% Involved in gangs

26% Juveniles (age 10-17)

2,584 Businesses attacked

664 People robbed/injured

231 Homes targeted

Education
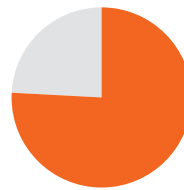
66%
10-17 year-olds charged have special education needs

21.3% is the average for pupils in state funded secondary schools in England and Wales

Poverty

42%
10-17 year-olds charged claim free school meals

16% is the average for pupils in state funded secondary schools in England and Wales

Ethnicity

The following information compares the ethnicity of those brought before the court and the ethnicity of the community in which they come from)

Salford
In court:

94% White   **Black/Mixed Black 6%***

Local population (aged under 40)

88% White   **Black/Mixed Black 2%**   **Other 10%**

Haringey
In court:

34% White   **Black/Mixed Black 55%**   **Other 11%**

Local population (aged under 40)

62% White   **Black/Mixed Black 17%**   **Other 21%**

Nottingham
In court:

32% White   **Black/Mixed Black 62%**   **Other 6%**

Local population (aged under 40)

71% White   **Black/Mixed Black 9%**   **Other 20%**

Birmingham
In court:

33% White   **Black 48%**   **Asian 15%**   **Other 4%**

Local population (aged under 40)

58% White   **Black 9%**   **Asian 30%**   **Other 3%**
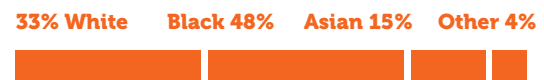
*'Mixed Black' represents those who self-identified as 'White and Black African' or 'White and Black Caribbean' in the Ministry of Justice (UK) statistics.

LESSON 6

Children and the courts

You will need
Copies of the worksheets and/or a projector. Access to the internet and/or dictionaries.

Learning Activity

Part 1

Divide students into groups of 3 or 4.

Print out all of the articles on page 5 in 'Who goes to prison' in the 'Understanding Crime' section of the website **Link 2.15**. Assign one article to each group.

Have each group read through the article and underline any term or sentence which they don't fully understand or they want to learn more about.

Each group takes turns outlining the court case described in their article, and the groups personal response to it.

Lead a class discussion based on their response.

Part 2

Each group conducts research (online, dictionaries, etc.) on the underlined words, and creates a glossary of terms with definitions for each term.

Encourage the students to think back on the course and include definitions of other terms that they have learned.

Distribute or project L6 Worksheet as a list of good resources.

Redistribute the class into groups of 4 or 5. Each group should be made up of students from different groups.

Students then take turns teaching their group the terms they researched in the original groups, and each group compiles the list into a more comprehensive glossary.

As a class, compile a final glossary including all of the terms researched.

Emphasise that it is important to choose the most reliable source. For example, Citizens Information has a great website.

Students should keep a copy of the glossary for inclusion in their portfolio.

RESOURCES FOR GLOSSARY OF TERMS

See below for a list of resources to get you started on your glossary of terms. Use other websites alongside those below. **Remember to make sure that your source is reliable!**

1. Children in Care: **Link 2.16**

2. Health Service Executive: **Link 2.17**

3. Youth Homelessness: **Link 2.18**

4. Department of Children and Youth Affairs out of hours services: **Link 2.19**

5. Bail and Surety: **Link 2.20**

6. Probation Service: **Link 2.2**

2

LESSON 7

Does prison prevent crime?

Learning goals

Students compare crime rates and prison population size from different countries around the world.

Key skills

Discussing and debating, using ICT to access and manage information.

You will need

Copies of the worksheet. Access to the internet.

Learning Activity

In class, go to the International Centre for Prison Studies website at **Link 2.22**. This webpage contains information on prison rates in countries from highest to lowest.

Assign each student with a different country from the top of the table.

Distribute **L7 Worksheet** which gives instructions for the assignment.

Students research their assigned country for homework.

Each student makes a list of eight facts about their assigned country.

Students share these facts with the other students in class the following day.

⚠️ The assignment description includes a resource list for students to use in their research. Ensure that they know how to use the website link page. Encourage them to find other resources to use.

💡 After they have completed their research (may take more than one lesson) provide a space for students to present their findings. Lead a discussion on their research using the questions below.

Questions for discussion

What information was most surprising? What were the most shocking facts?

What countries have the highest imprisonment rates and do you think these countries are safer as a result?

Why do you think prisons don't prevent crime? What other initiatives are being taken? What do you think is likely to be most successful?

PRISON RESEARCH PROJECT

You are to research your assigned country, and prepare a list of eight facts that relate to crime in that country.

Key Question

What countries have very high imprisonment rates and do you think these countries are safer as a result?

Questions and information for inclusion in the project:

Do you think the country is safer as a result of its imprisonment rate?

What is the population of the country?

What is the imprisonment rate?

Do crimes occur often in this country?

What kinds of crimes occur?

What other things are being done to reduce crimes in these countries?

Resource List:

Use the sites below to research your assigned country. Feel free to use other websites.

- **Link 2.23**: International Centre for Prison Studies
- **Link 2.24**: Gun homicides and gun ownership listed by country
- **Link 2.25**: Top murder rates in the world
- **Link 2.26**: Crime and violence facts and figures

Keep your list of facts for inclusion in your portfolio.

LESSON 8

Mock trial

Learning goals

Participate in a mock court case for a young person convicted of a crime.

Key skills

Gathering, organising and evaluating information, co-operating

You will need

Copies of the worksheets, reflection journal.

Learning Activity

Read Peter's story in the 'What are the causes?' section of the website **Link 2.27**.

Divide the class into 3 groups. One will represent the prosecution team, one will represent the defence and the final group will represent the jury.

Distribute L8 Worksheets 1–3 to the relevant groups for preparing their arguments. Encourage students to make use of the online unit, the linked websites, newspaper articles or other media in their research.

Stage the trial after the research is completed.

After the trial, lead a class discussion on each groups' arguments.

If necessary, spread this activity over two lessons.

End of topic reflection

Encourage the students to reflect on what they have learned, either individually or in pairs, using some of these prompts...

The main thing I learned...
Something I found interesting...
Something that surprised me...
Something I found difficult or challenging...
Something I learned about myself...
A question I'm left with...

Reflecting on recent classes, what do you now think? How do you feel? How might this influence you?

How does all this connect to your faith/ beliefs?

THE PROSECUTION TEAM

Your team must research a case IN FAVOUR of sending Peter to prison for his crime. You must be prepared to outline your reasons in a 'court case' for the rest of the class.

Some sample arguments:

Peter is simply undisciplined; prison is an appropriate way to instil discipline in Peter.

To prevent behaviour like Peter's, punishment should be severe to act as a deterrent to others.

Peter made a choice to steal some food, and perhaps he gets a 'buzz' by breaking the law. Society needs to protect itself from this type of behaviour.

Punishment must be strict, while being consistent. Prison is for punishment not rehabilitation.

What the consequences of not imprisoning Peter might be, and the positive effect imprisonment could have, for him and for society.

You will need to argue why prison is the best solution to Peter's crime. To make this case you will need to back up your arguments. Use information you have learned from this course, and other resources to back up your claim.

You can look at the crime rates, statistics and various other useful forms of information listed on the 'Why Care' website.

Are there any government policies that would support you?

What have politicians said recently about crime and prison?

Be aware of the arguments the defence team will make and the research the jury will have completed on the prison issue.

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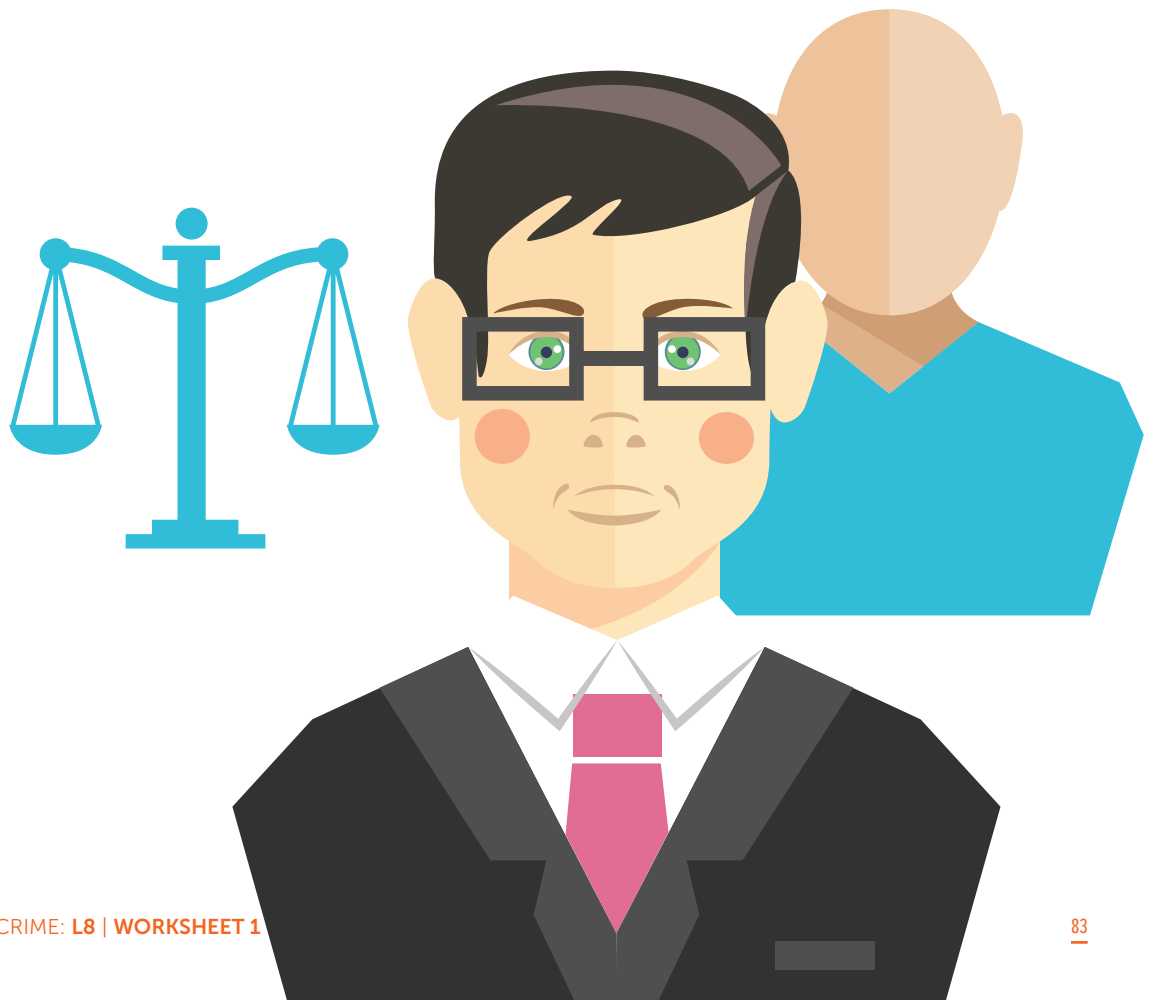
THE DEFENCE TEAM

Your team must research a case AGAINST sending Peter to prison for his crime. Prepare to outline your reasons in a 'court case' for the rest of the class.

Some sample arguments:

Peter has been in trouble from an early age and has been 'labelled' as deviant (trouble maker) by society. Peter has internalised this labelling (he himself believes that he is a trouble maker), and believes himself to be 'bad'. Putting Peter into prison is not the answer as it will re-enforce the notion that Peter is deviant.

What Peter needs is training in employable skills, and a 'leg up' into a job. Punishment is not what's needed, but education and training.

Prison will not have a positive effect for either Peter or for the wider society.

You will need to argue why prison is not the best solution for Peter's crime. To make this case, you will need to back up your arguments.

Use information you have learned from this course, and other resources to back up your claim. You can look at the crime rates, statistics and various other useful forms of information listed on the 'Why Care' website.

What alternatives are there to prison? Look to Irish or international examples for possible alternative solutions. You could discuss the failures of the prison system at stopping crime or reoffending.

Are there any government policies that would support you? What have politicians said recently about crime and prison?

Be aware of the arguments the prosecution team will make and the research the jury will have completed on the prisons.

THE JURY

Yours is a very important aspect of the case, as you will be evaluating the prison system itself.

Unlike the jury in a real case, you will be doing your own research into the issue to discover what the prison system is like and whether it is the right solution for a person like Peter.

2

You must look at what the effect of imprisoning Peter might be. You must present a picture of the Irish Prison System to the class. In the end you must agree to send him to prison or you must choose an alternative based on your research (this alternative can be something which doesn't exist in Ireland yet).

Use information you have learned from this course, and other resources to back up your claim. You can look at the crime rates, statistics and various other useful forms of information listed on the 'Why Care' website. Look for information about the conditions in prisons, such as overcrowding.

What might happen to Peter when he leaves prison after a sentence of a few months? What supports are there to help him not to commit another crime?

Look at how successful the prisons are as a way of preventing crime. Do people reoffend? Are we safer? Does it work?

What alternatives are there to prisons?
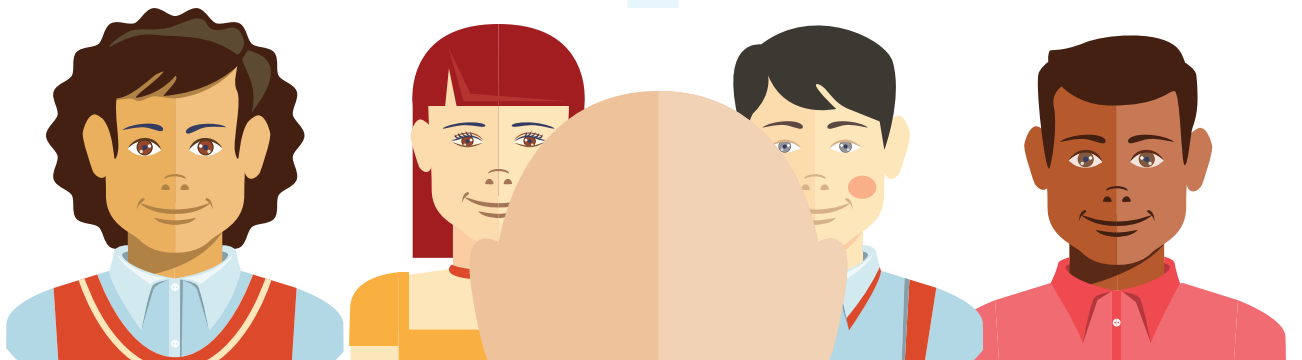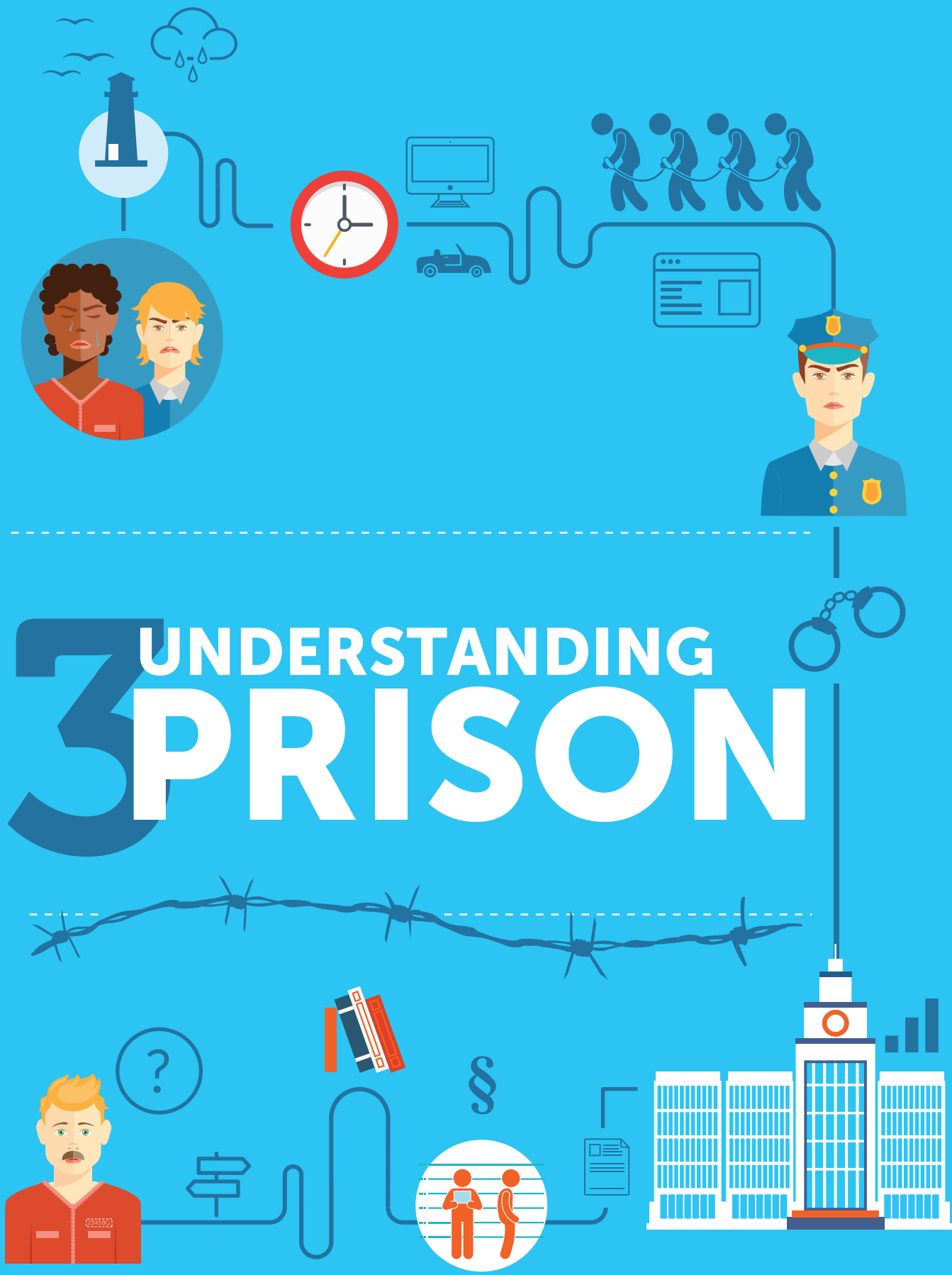
3 UNDERSTANDING PRISON

Welcome to the third strand of **On the Margins**.

This strand explores Prisons— why people go to prison, what life is like in prison, and how prisons relate to society.

Key words in this strand include:

PUNISHMENT

DETERRENCE

REHABILITATION

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

RECIDIVISM

REINTEGRATION

Further information on the topics dealt within this strand is available at the Teachers' Area of **www.whycare.ie**. Below are some of the topics you will find there. Links in **bold** are referenced within lessons in this strand.

3

Strand Three: *Understanding Prison*

▸ **Link 3.1**: Summary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

▸ **Link 3.2**: List of community sanctions available for young people convicted of a crime

▸ Link 3.3: Introduction

▸ Link 3.4: Homelessness

▸ Link 3.5: Homeless in Ireland in The Meaning is in the Shadows, Peter McVerry, 38-41.

▸ Link 3.6: European Prison Rules

▸ **Link 3.7**: Description of a typical day in prison

▸ Link 3.8: Committals to prison

▸ Link 3.9: Invisible children

Other important websites and resources that can be found in the 'Teachers' Area include:

Irish Penal Reform Trust: Picking up the Pieces: **The Rights and Needs of Children and Families affected by imprisonment.**
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime: **Handbook of basic principles and promising practices on Alternatives to Imprisonment.**

Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice: www.jcfj.ie/key-issues/penal-policy.html
Irish Penal Reform Trust: www.iprt.ie/key-issues
International Prison Studies: www.prisonstudies.org
Central Statistics Office: www.cso.ie/en/statistics/crimeandjustice
Prison Reform Trust (UK): www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk
The Howard League: www.howardleague.org/key-issues
Rethinking Crime and Punishment: www.rethinking.org.uk
Irish Prison Service: www.ips.ie
Irish Association for the Social Integration of Offenders: www.iasio.ie
Care After Prison: www.careafterprison.ie
PACE: www.paceorganisation.ie
Irish Human Rights Equality Commission: www.ihrc.ie
Irish Council for Civil Liberty: www.iccl.ie
Children's Rights Alliance and the UNCRC: www.childrensrights.ie/childrens-rights-ireland/un-convention-rights-child
Public Interest Law Alliance: www.pila.ie

LESSON 1

What is prison?

Learning goals

Create a poster that outlines the history of imprisonment in Ireland.

Key skills

Learning creatively, gathering, organising and evaluating information.

You will need

Copies of the worksheets L1 Worksheet 1 should be cut up into strips.

Learning Activity

Part 1

Ask the students to write down their own definition of prison.

Write the students' ideas on the board, and then share the definition of prison below.

Point out that prison, as we know it today, is in fact relatively new.

Definition of Prison

A building to which people are legally committed as a punishment for a crime or while awaiting trial.

Part 2

Cut up L1 Worksheet 1 into strips and give each group an envelope with a set of strips to arrange so that it makes sense.

Once this is done, ask the students to answer the questions on L1 Worksheet 2 together as a class.

Assignment

Divide students into groups of 2 and 3 and ask them to make a research topic to present to the class. The questions below are example topics for the poster.

Questions for discussion

What was life like in Mountjoy Prison for prisoners in the nineteenth and early twentieth century? Give an account of the history of Spike Island.

Give an account of the history of Kilmainham Gaol. What was life like for the convicts who were transported to Van Diemens Land?

Who was Ned Kelly? How did society deal with criminals in medieval times?

The students should keep their presentations for inclusion in their portfolio.

A HISTORY OF PRISONS IN IRELAND

The idea of prison as a place to hold or punish criminals after they've been tried and convicted is relatively modern. At the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, prisons were set up to hold people before and until their trial.

There wasn't a need for a cell after a guilty verdict because the sentence generally involved beating, whipping, execution or transportation.

As a place for pretrial detention, early prisons in Ireland ranged from the local bridewell, a small building made up of cells typically attached to a local police station or courthouse, to full blown gaols in large towns and cities. They had one thing in common: they were ghastly, usually little more than a rat infested black hole.

3

Mountjoy Prison in Dublin was opened on 27 March 1850 during Queen Victoria's reign. It was then known as 'Her Majesty's Model Prison'. Sixty-two prisoners under sentence of transportation were received on the first day.

Mountjoy was a purpose-built prison. Its role was to receive convicts under sentence of transportation. They served the early part of their sentence in Mountjoy prior to their removal to Spike Island (a small island off Cork Harbour). From there they were assessed and deported.

They were transported to Van Diemens Land (now Tasmania), the universal fate of the majority of convicts in the early 1850s. Others were sent to New South Wales and Western Australia.

Convicts usually served up to 18 months in the hope of earning, by good conduct, a ticket of leave, giving them freedom to make their own way in the new colony. More than 27,000 people were transported to Western Australia between 1837–1846, and just shy of 12,000 between 1847 and 1856.

A HISTORY OF PRISONS IN IRELAND

Mountjoy was built to provide a total of 500 cells for individual occupation, which was known as the separate system. It was here that convicts were to spend all of their time in solitude, except for church services and an hour daily in the circular exercise ring.

In 1853, the sentence of transportation to places like Australia was replaced with penal servitude and, for the first time, criminals started to serve long sentences in Irish prisons. This marked the beginning of what became renowned as the 'Crofton system'.

This approach involved the prisoner serving their sentences on a staged basis, spending the initial part of the sentence in Mountjoy using the separate system approach. For the first 9–12 months of sentence, a prisoner was held in solitary confinement and a focus was made on moral and religious education.

This was followed by stage two where the prisoner was sent to Spike Island, a public work prison. A privilege system operated with the ultimate aim of moving onto the final stage.

The final stage involved time spent in an intermediate prison such as Smithfield or Lusk in Dublin. Subject to satisfactory conduct, they were released on licence.

Prison has remained the primary method of dealing with criminals. In Ireland in 2013, there were 14 prisons and an average prison population of 4,000 people. This means that approximately 96 out of every 100,000 persons were in prison. This measure is used internationally and is called the rate of imprisonment.

QUIZ SHEET

Answer the questions below on a separate piece of paper, and save it for inclusion in your portfolio.

How were criminals dealt with in Ireland in the 1800s? How was the practice different than today?

What countries were criminals transported to?

Do you think prison has changed much since the 1850s? What do you think is different?

Why was Mountjoy Prison built?

What were prisons used for in the early 1800s?

What were the three stages of the Crofton system?

What was the 'separate system'?
In your opinion, what are the pros and cons of this approach?

3

LESSON 2

What is a Christian view on crime and punishment?

Learning goals

Students will discern what the main elements of a Christian view on crime and punishment are.

Key skills

Considering different perspectives and reaching agreement

You will need

Copies of the worksheets.

Learning Activity

Divide the students into groups of 3 or 4 and distribute a copy of L2 Worksheet 1 to each group.

Assign a reader, note taker, timekeeper and leader.

The task is as follows: the reader reads each biblical quote while the group listens carefully and then agrees how best to sum up the message in just a couple of words. They have 15 minutes to complete the task.

Then circulate a copy of L2 Worksheet 2 to each group.

Their task now is to agree four key ideas that are part of a Christian view of crime and punishment.

> Jesus' message and life was one of love (agape) and forgiveness. Jesus showed love and forgiveness even to those in his society who were most despised.

So a Christian perspective challenges us to consider that:

Everyone should be allowed a fresh start if they repent and are sorry.

Everyone should be treated with respect and dignity as human beings created by God.

Everyone is loved by God and we are called to show God's love and forgiveness, especially to those most in need.

No one is beyond redemption.

It is also important to point out:

In the Old Testament, God is presented both as a God of Justice, who gave his people a series of Laws and Commandments that they are expected to follow AND as a God of mercy who continually forgives and invites sinners to return.

When these laws are broken God as Judge and sometimes God as seeker of vengeance/retribution is found in the Old Testament. However, alongside the God who seeks 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth', we also find images of God as Shepherd, Mother, Protector of the weak, etc. in the Old Testament.

Catholic anthropology sees the human person as intrinsically good and although capable of choosing evil, it refuses to see human nature as depraved. The human person is always capable of reform (redemption). Because 'God is love' (1Jn:48) our human calling is to love and be loved.

QUOTES

''The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." John 8

In two or three words sum up the message:

....

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'Do not judge or you too will be judged. For in the same way as you judge others, you will be judged.' Matthew 7: 1-2

In two or three words sum up the message:

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"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' Matthew 25

In two or three words sum up the message:

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For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. Matthew 6:14-15

In two or three words sum up the message:

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QUOTES

'When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing' *Luke 23:24, 34*

In two or three words sum up the message:

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Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

 "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' So he got up and went to his father."But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

"The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate. *Luke 15*

In two or three words sum up the message:

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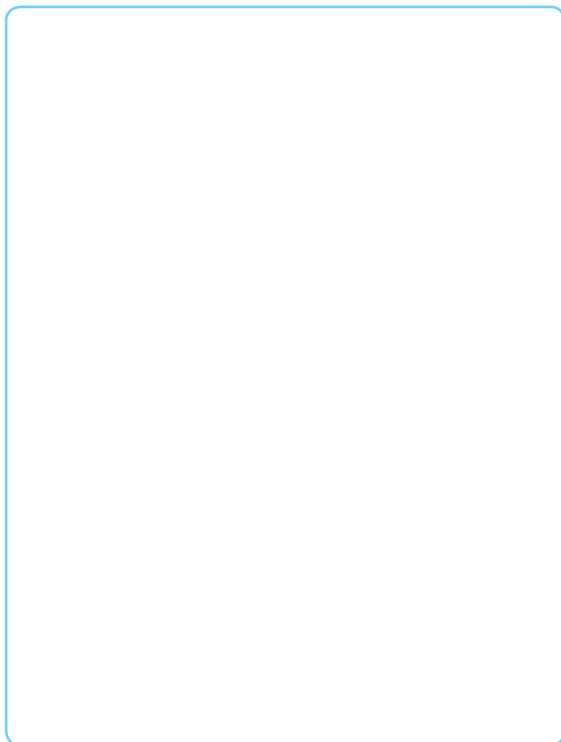...

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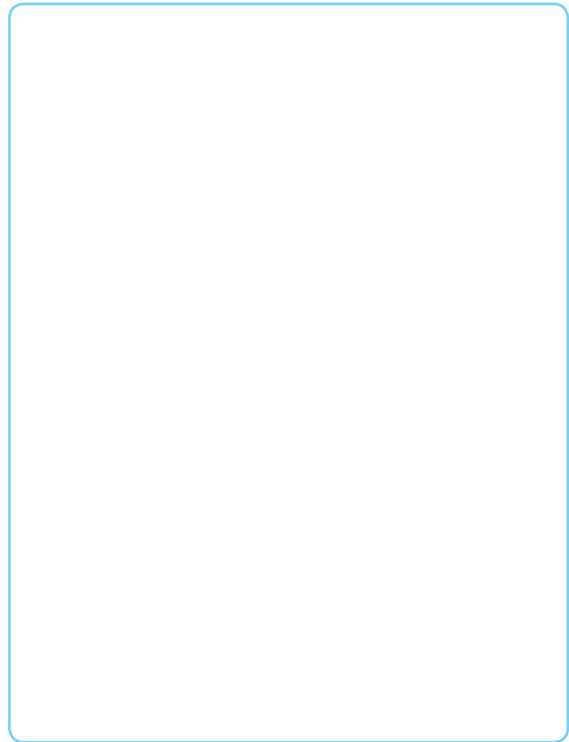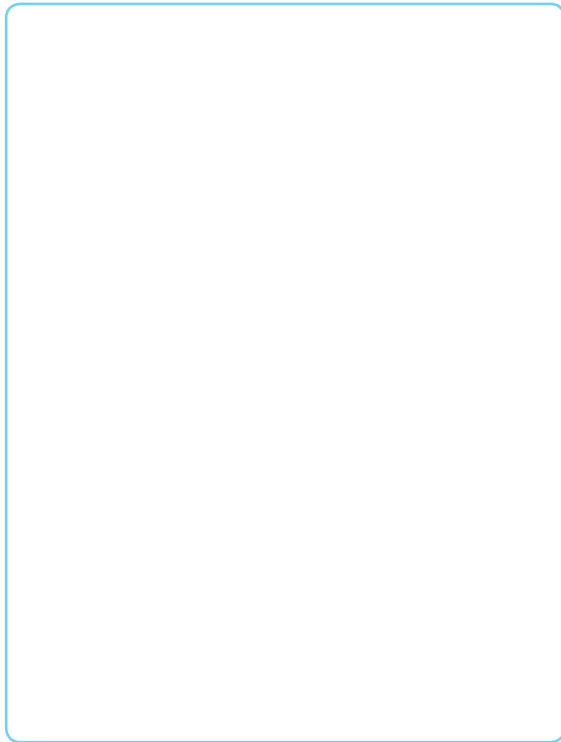
KEYWORDS

The Christian perspective on crime and punishment found in the New Testament can be summed up as…
(use key words and images)

3

LESSON 3 — The purpose of imprisonment

Learning goals

Students will discuss the different purposes that prisons can serve and agree what they think the purpose of prison is.

Key skills

Co-operating, discussing and debating, considering different perspectives

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You will need

One copy of each worksheet.

Learning Activity

Divide the class into 4 groups – each one will need to be seated around one big table.

Assign a writer (who can write clearly and neatly), a leader and a timekeeper to each group.

Explain that there are a range of reasons why people think prisons are a good idea. The main reasons are written on 4 flip chart pages – Deterrence, Reform, Punishment and Protection of society.

Today in class students are going to undertake a 'Carousel Brainstorm'. This is how it works. Each group will be given one of the flip chart pages and they must brainstorm arguments both for and against. In other words they must come up with pros and cons.

After 5 minutes the timekeeper tells them that time is up and they must pass their page to another group. Now each group has to read what the previous group has written and try to add further points both for and against.

After 5 minutes the pages pass around again until all 4 pages have been added to by each group.

Complete this activity with a plenary session

Ask the students if there was a lot of differences of opinion within their group. Why or why not? Did they find any one reason for prisons more compelling than the others? Thinking back on the Scripture activity (Strand 3 Lesson 2) what do you think a Christian perspective should be regarding the purpose of prison? What do you now think?

BACKGROUND READING FOR THE TEACHER.
THE PURPOSE OF IMPRISONMENT.

Prison is a very severe punishment and should be the sanction of last resort. A prison sentence has a huge and complex impact on a person. It affects many aspects of a person's life. For example, there can be an impact on a prisoner's material possessions, as they earn little or no income while incarcerated. They may also lose their job or livelihood and/or spend their life savings.

The stigma attached to a prison sentence will also have an effect on a person's chances of securing stable employment in the future. The prison environment may also have a negative impact on the wellbeing of an individual, making it difficult to adjust to life outside prison.

Why then, do we send people to prison?
According to the Law Reform Commission, prison can have four different, but sometimes connected, aims or purposes.

1. Punishment/Retribution

If one breaks the rules, then one must face the consequences. Retribution is a term which means balancing a wrong through punishment. Society has the right to punish a criminal. We put people in prison to express our disapproval of their actions. Punishment must be in proportion to the offence. This is a principle of criminal law.

Criticism

Retribution is really about revenge. According to this model, society has the right to inflict pain so that the perpetrator suffers at least as much as the victim. This approach does not include any strategy for changing the person's attitude or outlook, which could prevent them from reoffending.

2. Incapacitation

We put people in prison because their presence there prevents them from committing further crimes. Incapacitation prevents an individual from inflicting harm for at least as long as the individual is under control.

Criticism

Prisoners may continue to commit crimes in prison against other inmates or prison officers. Incapacitation also has a time limit – it only protects wider society for as long as the person is in prison.

3. Deterrence

This is probably the most commonly recognised function of prison. Here the purpose of imprisonment is to ensure that imprisoned individuals do not reoffend, either through fear of the prison or through undergoing a change of heart due to the prison experience.

It is also argued that the fear of being sent to prison deters other people from committing acts of crime.

Criticism

This approach has been proven to be ineffective. Research on this has shown that prison does not deter people from committing crime. A study of Irish prisoners in 1997 showed that 60% of inmates have been there at least once before. This suggests that prison does not dissuade prisoners from reoffending.

4. Rehabilitation

This liberal approach embraces rehabilitation and reform. The purpose of prison should be to change the individuals and prepare them for life outside prison. Rehabilitative programmes and reintegrative assistance will help the person to avoid imprisonment. Counselling, psycho-therapy, drug treatment, education and training are used in many prisons to rehabilitate and prepare prisoners for their eventual release from prison.

Criticism

It is not enough to provide prisoners with support like training and counselling in prison. This support must continue outside prison in the weeks and months post-release. Prisoners often leave prison without secure housing, employment or community support. There is a very high risk that this person will reoffend and end up in prison.

The Mission and Vision Statement of the Irish Prison Service.

Mission Statement: Providing safe and secure custody, dignity of care and rehabilitation for safer communities

Vision: A safer community through excellence in prison service built on respect for human dignity

What is the emphasis on? Punishment, incapacitation, deterrence or rehabilitation?

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DETERRENCE

Deterrent

To stop them reoffending and as a deterrence to others.

FOR 👍	AGAINST

REHABILITATION

Reform / Rehabilitation

FOR 👍	AGAINST 🚫

PUNISHMENT

Punishment /
Retribution

FOR 👍

AGAINST 🚫

Protection of Wider Society

FOR 👍	AGAINST 🚫

3

LESSON 4

Prison and the rights of the child

Learning goals

Students link what they learned about the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child to the treatment of children in prison.

Key skills

Reflect on my learning, thinking creatively and critically

- -

You will need

Copies of worksheets and/or access to the internet.

Recap

What are human rights? What is social justice? How are human rights and social justice linked? What is the UN Declaration of Human Rights? What does this declaration say?

Project or distribute 'L2 Worksheet 2' from Strand 1 (UNDHR). Are there any UN conventions which protect children? Why is it important to protect children in particular? Why are children vulnerable?

- -

Learning Activity

Divide the class into two groups (can be subdivided into smaller groups if desired).

The first group is to research the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). L4 Worksheet 1 and the summary of the UNCRC found at **Link 3.1** are good starting points.

The second group is to research St. Patrick's Institution, a prison in Ireland that was closed in 2013 which housed 16-21 year-olds. It was closed only after many years of national and international reports condemning the conditions and culture of the institution. L4 Worksheet 2 is a good place to start. Encourage students to look up Irish Prison Chaplain's reports and Inspector of Prison's reports on St. Patrick's.

When their research is complete, pair up students from each group (a student from group one with a student from group two). Each pair should teach each other what they have learned, and compare the UNCRC with the conditions found in St. Patrick's Institution.

Lead a discussion on their research and comparison. Background information can be found opposite.

BACKGROUND READING FOR THE TEACHER

Important articles in the UNCRC with reference to St. Patrick's Institution

Article 1
Definition of a child

A child is anyone under eighteen. The sixteen and seventeen year-olds that were detained in St. Patrick's Institution were children.

Article 2
Nondiscrimination

Children in prison or in children detention schools are entitled to the same rights as everybody else.

Article 6
Survival and Development

Every child has an inherent right to life. The state must ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child. The development of a child should not be infringed upon by detention or prison.

Article 9
Separation from parents

The child has the right to maintain contact with both parents if separated from one or both.

Article 19
Protection from abuse and neglect

Article 24
Health and health service

Children in prison have the right to the highest attainable standard of health and medical services.

Article 28 and 29
Education

Education and training must continue while a child is in detention.

Article 37
Torture and deprivation of liberty

No child shall be subject to torture, cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment.

No child can be sentenced to death.

No child can be given a life sentence.

A child who is deprived of liberty must be treated with humanity and respect and in a manner that is appropriate to his or her age.

Children must not be detained with adults. Children and adults must be separated.

Children in detention have a right to contact with family.

Children have a right to legal assistance.

Article 40
Administration of juvenile justice

States have an obligation to promote alternative procedures and measures so as to ensure that detention or prison can be avoided wherever possible and appropriate.

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UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
Fact Sheet

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international treaty or convention. It was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989.

When countries ratify an international treaty or convention, such as the UNCRC, they enter a binding agreement to meet its provision and obligations.

All countries with the exception of the United States of America and Somalia have ratified the treaty.

Ireland signed the UNCRC on 30 September 1990 and ratified it on 28 September 1992.

In the UNCRC, a child is defined as a person under 18.

The rights are all seen as necessary for the full and harmonious development of the child's personality and inherent to the dignity of the child.

The different rights are not ranked in order of importance, but special emphasis is given to four articles, known as 'general principles', because they are considered basic to the implementation of all of the other rights in the Convention.

The four general principles are:

1. That all the rights guaranteed by the Convention must be available to all children without discrimination of any kind (Article 2);
2. That the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children (Article 3);
3. That every child has the right to life, survival and development (Article 6);
4. That the child's views must be considered and taken into account in all matters affecting him or her (Article 12).

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HISTORY OF ST. PATRICK'S INSTITUTION

History

St. Patrick's Institution dates from Victorian times and was built next to Mountjoy prison. St. Patrick's held about 200 detainees at any one time. The building was used to detain sixteen to twenty-one year-old males. Detention of sixteen year-olds ceased in May 2012. Plans for the total closure of the building was announced in July 2013.

Design

St. Patrick's Institution had three wings – B, C, D. The Education Unit – a pre-fabricated building dating from the 1970s – stood just inside the main gate. More modern system-built accommodation, together with education and sports facilities, were installed next to B wing. They were built to provide facilities for sixteen and seventeen year-olds, most of whom had a separate regime than those over eighteen. Several older sections of the prison were refurbished to provide training workshops. Parts of C and D wings were used for prisoners 'on protection'. D wing was designated as drug free.

Culture

Rivalry between those from Dublin and those from elsewhere became so established in St Patrick's that the two groups had in effect separate regimes. In 2012-13, those in the D wing were almost entirely from outside Dublin, while young men from Dublin were generally assigned to the C wing. Parts of B wing were used for those on 'protection'.

This segregation had an impact on which activities and services could be offered. Workshop availability had to be shared between C and D wings and was further restricted in recent times by six vacancies in workshop instructor posts.

The education unit had approximately half of the population detained enrolled at any one time. The main group of sixteen- and seventeen year-olds have a fuller education programme. However, those on 22-hour lock up had only occasional contact with teachers. The incidence of cell sharing increased after 2007, and on 7 December 2011 almost half the young people detained in St. Patrick's were sharing a cell.

As in other prisons, illegal drugs remained widespread within St. Patrick's, despite scanning and sniffer dogs at the main entrance, screened visits which prohibit physical contact, regular urine testing, and a cover of netting over the exercise yard as a counter to drugs being thrown over the walls.

The Irish Prison Chaplains' report for 2010 describes the youngsters in St Patrick's and the response of the prison system to them:

St Patrick's' Institution accommodates some of the most difficult (and therefore the most damaged) children in our society. Many of them suffered abuse, violence or serious neglect in their earlier childhood, sometimes in other institutions, abuse that was never adequately addressed. Rather than helping them to identify and address these issues (which have often contributed to their offending and subsequent detention), St. Patrick's Institution is a 'warehouse' for young people, many of whom were broken by those childhood experiences. By entering into a harsh and punitive system, they are further broken down. It is a demoralising, destructive and dehumanising system, with few redeeming features, characterised by idleness and boredom for young people, who are full of energy, at a critical time in their development.

3

LESSON 5

Becoming an expert
Children and the criminal justice system

⚑ Learning goals

Students research and teach each other about various community based programmes.

✎ Key skills

Using language, thinking creatively and critically

🖶 You will need

Copies of the worksheet.

Learning Activity

Explain to the class that they will be working in groups to become an 'expert' on community programmes for young people in Ireland (alternatives to prison) and then they will teach the class about their programme. This is how it will work:

Split the class into groups of four. Each group will be given one of the following topics to research: anti-social behaviour orders, community sanctions, restorative justice, Garda youth diversion project.

Once each group has been assigned a topic to study then explain the task.

Their task is to find out what each programme entails. Who can be assigned to the alternative? What is it supposed to achieve? What are the pros and cons of the measure?

Students can start their research on the citizens information website or the Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS) website.

Once each group has become expert on their topic then they must decide how they will present it to their classmates. They now need to think about how to make their topic interesting.

Rearrange the groups to ensure that there is one expert from each original group in each new group i.e. one expert on anti-social behaviour measures, one expert on community sanctions, one on restorative justice, and one on the Garda diversion programme.

They each take turns and have 2 minutes to 'teach' their topic within their new group.

💡

Background information on the community programmes can be found overleaf. Questions for discussion are included on each community programme.

BACKGROUND READING FOR THE TEACHER.
COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMMES.

What sanctions exist for children in the criminal justice system?

The Children Act 2001 is based on the philosophy that children in conflict with the law should only be detained by the state as a last resort. There are many community based measures which must be explored and exhausted before detention can be considered.

The Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS) is within the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, and is the branch of the government that deals with children in the criminal justice system. The IYJS focuses on diversion and rehabilitation involving greater use of community-based interventions and the promotion of initiatives to deal with young people who commit a crime. Providing a safe and secure environment for detained children and supporting their early re-integration back into the community is also a key function.

A number of community programmes are in place including:

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders

An anti-social behaviour order or ASBO is issued by the Children's Court when a member of the Garda Siochána (not below the rank of Superintendent) applies to the court for an order which prohibits a young person of 12 years or above from doing anything specified in the order.

Parents are involved, particularly in the case of a good behaviour contract.

Questions for discussion:

What is in the 'good behaviour contract'? Why are parents important in this process? What is the intended outcome of this?

Community sanctions

A child who has been to court and convicted of a crime may receive a community sanction instead of detention. This allows the child to stay in the community.

Community sanctions have to address the consequences of the actions of the child. Sanctions include community service, intensive supervision, mentoring and restorative justice.

If a community sanction is being used, the child will be told why it is being used and what they have to do. The parents are expected to support and encourage the child to complete the sanctions and stay out of trouble in the future.

Questions for discussion:

Which sanction in particular do you think would be effective? Why? Why are parents important in this process?

Garda Youth Diversion Project

This programme provides that in certain circumstances a young person under 18 years of age who freely accepts responsibility for a criminal incident can be cautioned and supervised as an alternative to prosecution.

A child may also agree to a number of actions which he/she will do to address the hurt that they have caused. This can include an apology to the victim, a form of compensation, a curfew or to take part in a sporting or recreational activity.

Questions for discussion:

What are the pros and cons of this approach? Why is the child asked to address the hurt caused to the victim? What is the purpose of a curfew? Why would the child be asked to take part in a sport or recreational activity?

Restorative justice programmes

In a restorative justice conference, a victim can speak directly to a child about the hurt and harm that they have caused. In some cases, there is an agreement on a way that the child can compensate or do something positive for the community such as an apology to the victim, financial or other reparations to the victim or an initiative with the child's family and community that might help to prevent reoffending. Restorative justice is an approach that focuses on the needs of the victims, perpetrators, and wider community instead of focusing on abstract legal or punitive principles. For a list of community sanctions used by the courts visit **Link 3.2**.

Questions for discussion:

What are the pros and cons of this approach? Why would it be useful to have a victim of crime speak to the person who has committed the crime (caused harm)? How do these measures follow the definition of restorative justice given above?

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BECOMING AN EXPERT

Name of Programme

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What is involved in the programme?	Pros of the programme:	Cons of the programme:
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....	....	....
....	....	....
....	....	....
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....	....	....
Sources of information:	Sources of information:	Sources of information:
....	....	....
....	....	....
....	....	....
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How will I teach this to my classmates?

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Students should save this worksheet for inclusion in their portfolio.

LESSON 6   If I were Minister for Justice

Learning goals

Students devise their own proposals for preventing crime in Ireland.

Key skills

Exploring options and alternatives, discussing and debating

You will need

Reflection journal.

Learning Activity

Divide students into groups. If possible, assign students to the same groups they were in at the end of the last lesson so there is an 'expert' on each of the community based programmes.

Tell them that they are to imagine that they are Minister for Justice with responsibility for crime prevention.

Their task is to discuss different ways of preventing crime and then agree 2-3 strategies that they would adopt as Minister and be able to explain why.

Encourage students to research other countries and alternatives to prison that are not in Ireland.

Students should then present their suggestions to the class.

Lead a discussion based on their suggestions.

The students should keep a copy of their presentation notes for inclusion in their portfolio.

3

LESSON 7

A day in prison

Learning goals

Students create a daily schedule for how they think a prison should be run.

Key skills

Imagining, using language

You will need

Copies of the worksheets and/or access to the internet.

Recap

Go back through the purpose of imprisonment covered in Lesson 3. Emphasise the importance of rehabilitation in prison. Remember that most people in prison will be released back into society. What can be done to prevent them from reoffending? What kind of people do we want in our society?

Learning Activity

Divide students into pairs and distribute L7 Worksheet 1.

Each pair should complete a daily schedule for a prisoner.

> The schedule should be designed in such a way so as to address a prisoner's needs and reduce the likelihood that the prisoner will reoffend upon release from prison. Students should think about food, activities and leisure time. What services should be provided? What about facilities? Students can add in extra time and activities if they wish.

After each pair are happy with their schedule, distribute L7 Worksheet 2. If possible, go to **Link 3.7** and listen to the description of a day in prison.

Lead a discussion on the difference between each pair's schedule versus a typical day in an Irish prison.

> Students should keep a copy of their schedule for inclusion in their portfolio.
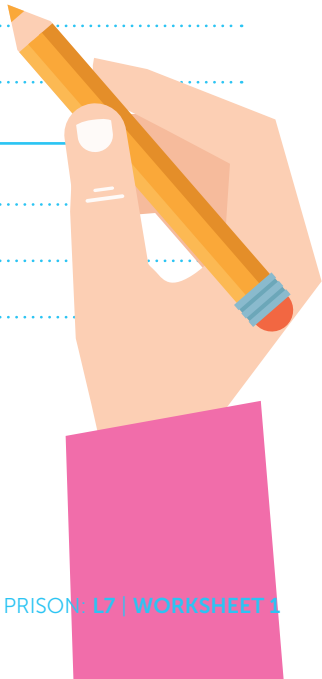
YOUR PRISON SCHEDULE

7:00

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8:00

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9:00

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10:00

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11:00

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12:00

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13:00

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3

YOUR PRISON SCHEDULE

3

14:00

15:00

16:00

17:00

18:00

19:00

20:00

TYPICAL PRISON SCHEDULE

8:00	Cells are unlocked. Prisoners 'slop out' or wash nearby.
8:30	Breakfast is collected and eaten in their cell. Cells are locked during breakfast.
9:30	Cells are unlocked only if education or work is available. In many Irish prisons there is not the staff or facilities to provide this.
12:30	Dinner is collected and eaten in their cell. Cells are locked during dinner.
14:15	Cells are unlocked only if education or work is available.
16:00	Evening meal is collected and eaten in their cell. Cells are locked during the evening meal.
17:15	Cells are unlocked, prisoners are let out for recreation time.
19:15	Cells are locked for the night – this means prisoners are locked up for over 12 hours overnight.

⚠️ **Note** that on average prisoners in Ireland are locked in their cell for 16 1/2 hours per day, and allowed out of their cell for a maximum of 7 1/2 hours. No food is served after 16:00pm.

3

LESSON 8   Impact of prison on the family

Learning goals

Students empathise with families of people in prison, and understand the effect imprisonment can have on family means and relationships.

Key skills

Co-operating, making considered decisions

You will need

Copies of the worksheets.

Learning Activity

Part 1

Divide students into groups of four and ask each group to brainstorm who else could be affected by imprisonment other than the prisoner, and how they are affected. This should take a maximum of five minutes.

> Although the learning goal is to discuss the families of prisoners, students should be encouraged to come up with other answers, and to use those answers in the rest of the activity if they choose.

Each group calls out who they think is affected, which should then be written on the board.

Each group spends another five minutes on how they are affected. Each group should have more than one 'how' for each answer written on the board.

After the five minutes, the teacher should write down the words 'material' and 'social' on another part of the board. As each group gives their answer, they need to decide whether it is a social or material effect.

Display or distribute quotes from the worksheets as they come up with reasons similar to 'stigmatisation', 'loss of income' or other effects discussed.

Let the students answers guide a class discussion using the questions below.

Questions for discussion

Impact of separation

What kinds of relationships do you think these children have with their parents? Is it fair on them? What does the UNCRC say about children, family and separation? Is it fair that they are suffering as well as their parents? What could be done to make this easier for children?

Visits to Prison

What do you think of 'non-contact' visits? Why are they in place? How do you think parents and children feel? What could be done to make prison visits more comfortable or 'normal' for children?

Stigmatisation

How would you feel if your parents, siblings or cousins were in prison? Do you think other people would treat you differently? Do you think this is fair? What could be done to address this? How should we view families of prisoners?

Mental health

What supports should be put in place to help children with parents in prison?

IMPACT OF PRISON ON FAMILIES

In an article on how families are affected by imprisonment, Jessica Breen wrote in Working Notes (57, 2008):

Families and children are often ignored throughout the criminal justice system due to the focus on the offender.

Imprisonment of a family member can have detrimental consequences for the family. Irish research has found that prisoners often claim that their families serve a sentence 'as bad or worse' than their own.

The families from which prisoners come are very often the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in society and the imprisonment of a family member serves to further entrench their disadvantage.

Research has found that imprisonment has a negative economic impact on families. A study published in 1965 found that following the imprisonment of their husbands, slightly more than 60 percent of prisoners' wives experienced a worsening of their financial situation.

A study in England, published in 2007, revealed that families were often forced to depend upon welfare benefits due to the loss of their partner's income upon imprisonment.

Research has found that it is women living in poverty who bear the heaviest burdens of prison. The spouses/partners of prisoners face high levels of stress and financial burden. Spouses/partners are faced with the stress of making all the family decisions by themselves.
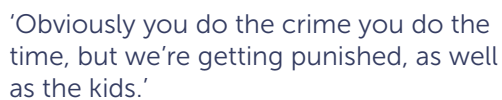
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PICKING UP THE PIECES

There are a variety of ways in which children and families can be affected by imprisonment including: disruption to childcare arrangements, relationship breakdowns, financial loss and stigmatisation.

In the EU, there are approximately 800,000 children affected by parental imprisonment on any given day. The Irish Prison Service estimates that 80,000 visits by children occur per year across the prisons.

Below are some quotes from partners and children of people in prison from **Picking up the Pieces:** The Rights and Needs of Children and Families affected by imprisonment, Irish Penal Reform Trust, 2012.

Stigmatisation of families and children

There is a huge stigma associated with having a parent or family member in prison.

'Obviously you do the crime you do the time, but we're getting punished, as well as the kids.'

(Partner)

'Some of the evidence was very personal but the impact on the family, all the evidence was being read out in a public court, his poor family, the cries out of them. I didn't want to be listening.'
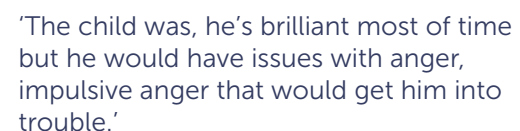
(Mother)

'The thing I feel about the whole imprisonment thing is shame and embarrassment. I haven't even told me family. I used to go down to that court hoping I wouldn't meet anyone I know and explain why I'm here– but the dogs on the street know what's going on.'

(Mother)

Children's mental health

Children with a parent in prison are twice as likely to have mental health problems over the course of their lives as their peers. Most families reported a change in their children's behaviour due to their parent or family member's imprisonment

'The child was, he's brilliant most of time but he would have issues with anger, impulsive anger that would get him into trouble.'

(Grandparent)

PICKING UP THE PIECES

Impact of Separation

'He [the child] thought he did something wrong. He'd be a real worrier. I know he felt he had done something.'

(Mother about her 11-year-old son)

I don't want a special visit 'cause I have nothing to say ...'cause you're on the phone before and then you're like what's left to say.'

(11-year-old boy)

'He didn't know my birthday, he didn't know my favourite colour.'

(11-year-old boy)

'So he wasn't there for the older children. When he got out, he has a connection with [the younger child]... And a bond with him. The older kids will tell ya "I hate Da". He doesn't know what way to be around them 'cause he was never there ... he knows how to be with the youngest one as he's been there since the beginning.'

Partner

Visits to Prison

'I didn't like that people kept chatting so we couldn't really hear what Da was saying. I just kept saying yeah.'

(8-year-old girl)

'You see small kids and they get all excited to see their dad and they try and lean over then, and do you know, the father is leaning back then 'cause he's not allowed to touch him.'

(Sister)

'The one thing I hate about it is that you don't really get to hug them. You have to like lean over but like they say "GET on your chair" and you have to lean in.'

(7-year-old girl)

"And it's too much effort to go on a visit when we don't have a car or when you're late by a minute they won't let you in. And then you have to sit on the bus back. It's an hour away and an hour back."

(12-year old boy)

"They can't even see over it, they won't let them climb on the counters, they won't let them kneel on the benches, they have to sit down on the benches. You can't even see the child. In a way you're speaking to the child in a bleeding Perspex screen you know... I'd say prisoners who weren't on drugs would be happy to give urine samples if it meant getting proper visits with their kids."

(Former prisoner)

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LESSON 9

Learning goals

Students reflect on their learning from this topic.

Key skills

Reflecting on my learning

You will need

Reflection journal.

Learning Activity

Part 1

Write the following quotes on the board, and lead a reflective discussion using the questions below.

'Denouncing evil is a far cry from doing good'

Philip Gourevitch

'Justice cannot be for one side alone, but must be for both'

Eleanor Roosevelt

Questions for discussion

What do these quotes mean? What do they suggest? Do you agree?

Why is it important to take action for social justice? Why is it important for people outside prison to advocate for the rights of prisoners? Why is it important to help prisoners after they leave prison?

What organisations focus on prisoners? What could we do to help people in our communities?

> Emphasise that working for social justice can be done by ordinary people in their local communities. One action, one person can make a huge difference. Many people working together on the same issue can have an even stronger impact.