

Play by the Rules

Chapter 3: Criminal Offenses

Objectives: The student will be able to

- Define crime and identify the classifications of crime;
- Identify the two basic categories of crimes;
- Describe and give examples of crimes against persons and crimes against property;
- Give an example of respecting authority; and
- Define bullying and explain how it can lead to crime.

Alabama Course of Study, Seventh Grade Civics: Objective 5

Character Education: Citizenship, compassion, cooperation, diligence, patience, respect for others, self-respect and tolerance

Materials: *Play by the Rules* book, **Worksheets 3-1, 3-2, 3-3** and **3-4** and continuum signs

Method(s): Brainstorming, directed reading, continuum and cooperative activity

Activities: It is recommended that you invite a school resource officer or a police officer to participate in this lesson.

Review: Review **Worksheet 2-2** and ask students to share their answers. Discuss.

What is Crime? Ask the students to define “crime.” Ask for a few answers and then have students read the definition on p. 15.

Is it a Crime? (Continuum Activity)

Using **Worksheet 3-1**, follow the instructions below.

1. Explain to the students that they will be asked to take a position on each of the scenarios listed on the worksheet.
2. Post four signs across the front of the room: “most serious,” “serious,” “least serious” and “not a crime.”
3. For each scenario, ask one row (or four to five students) to stand up. Read the scenario to the class and tell the panelists to stand under the continuum heading that they feel best describes their position on the issue. The student panel is not allowed to say anything as they take their positions and move about the continuum.
4. The remainder of the class will take turns making persuasive statements to encourage the panelists to move to another position on the continuum.
5. Once everyone is located under his or her final position, ask the panelists to give their reasons and discuss as a class.

6. Continue this process for each scenario until everyone has had a turn.
7. After this activity, discuss with the students why some crimes are felonies and others are misdemeanors.

Directed Reading:

1. Look at the chart on p. 15.
 - a. What do you notice about the severity of the fines and sentences? *Solicit answers. As the crime becomes more serious, the sentence and fine become more severe.*
 - b. What are the three classifications of crime? *Felonies, misdemeanors and violations.*
 - c. Which of these three is the most serious? *Felony* Least serious? *Violation*
2. Read pp. 16-21.
 - a. What are the two basic types of crime? *Crimes against property and crimes against persons. (p. 16)*
 - b. What are some of the crimes against persons? *Elicit as many as possible including: homicide, capital murder, manslaughter, criminally negligent homicide, assault, harassment, harassing communication, menacing, burning a cross to frighten someone, bullying, street gang membership and any sexual crimes. (pp. 16-18) Discuss these crimes as desired by the students. You may want to ask: Why are kids hesitant to report bullying? What are the risks and/or the rewards in reporting any crime?*
 - c. What are some crimes against property? *Elicit as many as possible including: criminal mischief, arson, theft, shoplifting, employee theft, robbery, accepting stolen property, car theft, credit card theft, U.S. mail crimes, identity theft, criminal trespass, burglary, throwing a rock or object into an occupied car, littering and disorderly conduct. (pp. 19-21) Discuss these crimes as desired by the students.*
 - d. Do you have to obey a police officer? *Review "Respect for Authority" on pp. 21-22.*
 - e. What are some crimes related to Respect for Authority? *Elicit answers including refusing to leave, resisting arrest, delaying, obstructing or assaulting police, refusing to help police, refusing to disperse, and giving police false information.*
3. Read p. 22.
 - a. Does anyone know about the U.S. Department of Homeland Security? *Review "Order and Safety" on p. 22.*
 - b. What is the purpose of this department? *It is responsible for detection, prevention, preparation for and response to any terrorist activity. Discuss crimes related to terrorism as desired by the students.*

Bullying:

1. Distribute **Worksheet 3-2**. Tell the students to read along and listen carefully.
2. Read aloud “Part 1” of the case study to the students and then ask them the following questions:
 - a. What is bullying? Give examples.
Bullying usually involves one or more people engaging in repeated negative actions that cause intentional harm to the victim. There are many types of bullying including, but not limited to, physical aggression, social aggression, verbal aggression, intimidation, written aggression and sexual harassment. (p. 17)
 - b. Can bullying ever be a crime?
Bullying can include such crimes as assault, harassment, robbery and theft. Bullying can also lead to more serious crimes such as rape, kidnapping, attempted murder, murder and suicide. (p. 17)
3. Read aloud “Part 2” of the case study to the students and then ask them the following questions:
 - a. What actions were the result of the bullying?
Bullying led to 13 murders, 21 wounded and two suicides. Pipe bombs destroyed much of the building and left over 1,900 people in shock and fear.
 - b. Who was affected by this incident? Discuss how each group was affected.
Students, parents, teachers, school officials, police and the community were directly affected.
 - c. Who could have prevented this tragedy?
Allow the students to discuss who might have prevented this incident. Possible answers might include parents, teachers, counselors, other students and the community.
 - d. Were there any warning signs?
Accept reasonable responses. Possible answers include withdrawing from school activities, no longer participating in class as usual, etc.

Note: Tell the students that this case study is a true story. This is a condensed version of the tragedy at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999, in Littleton, Colorado.
4. Distribute **Worksheet 3-3**.
5. Ask the students to draft a bullying policy that includes prevention for the school. (If your school currently has a bullying policy, make copies and allow the students to read it and revise it if necessary.)
6. Ask the students to list three things that students can do to prevent bullying and school violence.
7. Have each group report on their bullying and prevention policy and how students can help prevent bullying and school violence.

- An optional activity includes having each group create an anti-bullying poster and with an administrator's permission, place the posters throughout the school.

Evaluation: Observation, feedback/questioning, accuracy of activities and Scoreboard (for Scoreboard directions see "Assessment.")

Outside Resource Person (ORP): The following ORPs might be utilized: law enforcement officer or school resource officer (SRO).

Taking Home the Law: Distribute **Worksheet 3-4**. Have students complete with parents and bring completed worksheet to class the following day.

Extra Innings: TG p. 134



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