

Unit 4: What is Justice?

Active Citizenship



Lesson 1: The concept of justice

This lesson requires pupils to explore the idea of justice in relation to the law and to paramilitary groups. They also look at the representation of Lady Justice.

Planning

Prior Learning	<p>Pupils should have gained prior knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • democracy and the rule of law; • human rights and children’s rights; and • inclusion and equality.
Learning Outcomes	<p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss the meaning of justice; • explore the concepts of justice and legal justice; • explain why democratic societies have a judicial system; • demonstrate understanding of the problems associated with paramilitary-style justice; and • describe, analyse and interpret images.
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Focus	<p>Pupils will have opportunities to develop the following:</p> <p>Working with Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen actively and share ideas and opinions • Give and respond positively to feedback <p>Thinking Skills, Problem Solving and Decision Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justify opinions.
Attitudes and Dispositions	<p>Pupils will be encouraged to develop the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity – moral courage.
Resources	<p>Animation: <i>What Is Justice?</i></p> <p>Unit 4: Lesson 1 Resource – Discuss the images</p> <p>Post-it notes</p>

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Suggested teaching and learning strategies

Launch

Lead a class discussion, using prompt questions and effective questioning techniques:

1. **What does justice mean?**
2. **What does justice mean in Northern Ireland?**
3. **Who decides what justice is? Do they have the authority or power to do so?**
4. **Why is justice important in a democratic society?**
5. **How is justice related to citizenship?**

You may now wish to show the animation *What Is Justice?*

Possible answers and discussion points:

1. *Justice is when the courts decide on your punishment if you have done something wrong.
Justice is seeing someone who has broken the law sentenced by a judge.*
2. *Justice means getting sentenced in court when you have committed a crime.
Justice is sometimes used to describe people taking the law into their own hands e.g. through paramilitary style attacks.*
3. *The key bodies within the judicial system (judges and the magistrate) have the power to make decisions about what justice is.
In some cases, paramilitaries claim they can decide what justice is even though they don't have the proper power to do so.*
4. *Justice is important because it means that when someone has done something wrong, they are properly punished in a fair way.*
5. *Citizenship covers human rights and, as part of our human rights, we are all entitled to a fair trial. Justice also means that our rights are protected under the law.*

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Activities

Activity 1: Post-it display

- Pupils discuss the following questions in groups:
 1. What is justice?
 2. What are the problems with paramilitary-style justice?

Possible answers and discussion points:

1. *Justice is when someone is punished for doing something wrong.
Justice is when the courts decide your punishment if you have done something wrong.
Justice is seeing someone who has broken the law sentenced by a judge.*
2. *Paramilitary-style justice is when people take the law into their own hands.
When paramilitaries carry out their own form of 'justice' they are acting outside the law,
and so they are also breaking the law.
The people they target may be seriously hurt and not have anyone around to help them.*

- In pairs, invite the pupils to write down their ideas about justice on Post-its and place them on a wall display.
- Ask the pupils to review the display. Use effective questioning techniques to facilitate discussion.

Activity 2: Lady Justice

- Ask the pupils to form groups of four or five.
- Give each group a copy of the **Resource**, Image 1. Ask them to describe the image and explain what they think it means.
- You may wish to use prompt questions:
 1. What does the image represent? Why is the symbol of a woman?
 2. What does the blindfold represent?
 3. What do the scales represent?
 4. Why does she have a sword?

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Possible answers and discussion points:

1. She's a lady because she's *Justitia* (Lady Justice), the Roman goddess who was the equivalent of the Greek goddess *Themis*, the personification of 'divine order, law, natural law and custom'.
2. The blindfold symbolises that justice is 'blind' – in other words, justice is supposed to be objective, without bias: never favouring the strong nor the weak, the rich nor the poor, the righteous nor the wicked.
3. The scales symbolise that justice takes into account both sides of the story, from the accuser and the accused, or from two parties that make opposing claims. They also symbolise objectivity, as the verdict that Justice hands out is the result of the 'weight' of the evidence presented for or against a claim.
4. The sword symbolises the power of Reason instead of any real physical power. This power manifests in the real world as law and, subsequently, the people who enforce the law. The sword is double-edged, meaning that Reason can be used for or against anyone as it is impartial and objective.

Activity 3: A different perspective

- Give each group of pupils a copy of Image 2. Ask them to describe what they think the image represents, comparing and contrasting it with Image 1.

Possible answers and discussion points:

- In Image 1 the blindfold is firmly on, but in Image 2 the woman is lifting her blindfold to peer out, almost as if she is cheating.
- Image 1 represents a strong woman who seems to have a lot of control. She is wearing a blindfold so that she is blind to the people standing in front of her – she cannot see race, gender or age – and so she has to listen more so her judgements will be fairer. In Image 2, the woman almost seems to be breaking the rules by peering out from behind her blindfold. This could represent not all 'justice' being fair, as sometimes people don't always get the sentences they deserve for the crimes they have committed.
- In Image 2 the woman has no sword; this could mean that she doesn't have as much power as the woman in Image 1.



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Debrief

Discuss the following:

1. **What is justice?**
2. **Why do people have different ideas about justice?**
3. **What influences people's ideas about justice?**
4. **Why do democratic societies have a justice system?**



Possible answers and discussion points:

1. *Justice is when the courts decide your punishment if you have done something wrong.
Justice is seeing someone who has broken the law sentenced by a judge.*
2. *People might have different ideas about justice because not everyone sees things the same way.
Someone might think that a punishment given for a crime is too harsh, while someone else might think it is too lenient.*
3. *If someone has gone through the justice system before, it may change the way they see things.
If you are the victim of a crime, you may want someone to receive a harsher sentence than someone who wasn't a victim.*
4. *Democratic societies have a justice system because it makes things fair.
It means that everyone is treated equally and everyone has a voice.*

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Unit 4: Lesson 1 Resource

Discuss the images

Image 1



Unit 4: What is Justice?



Unit 4: Lesson 1 Resource

Discuss the images

Image 2

