LESSON PLAN

Year Group: Year 8

Lesson topic: The Law and Knife Crime

Learning objective:

- To understand UK laws around carrying knives.
- To explore the legal and personal consequences of breaking these laws.
- To consider how laws protect individuals and communities.

Discussion Points:

- What happens if you're caught carrying a knife?
- How do the laws aim to protect people?

Starter: True or False

1. It is legal to carry a knife under 3 inches if it's for self-defence.
❌ False - It is illegal to carry any knife in public for self-defence. The law does not allow weapons to be carried for protection.
2. If you're caught carrying a knife, you could get a prison sentence—even if you don't use it.
✅ True - The maximum sentence for carrying a knife is 4 years in prison, even if you never use it.
3. Only gang members carry knives.
❌ False - Many young people who carry knives do so out of fear, not gang involvement. Some are pressured into carrying a weapon by others.
4. You can be arrested if you are caught with a knife that someone else gave you to hold.
✅ True - If a knife is in your possession, you are legally responsible, regardless of who it belongs to.
5. Police can stop and search you if they suspect you have a knife.
✅ True - Police have the power to stop and search anyone they believe is carrying a weapon.
6. If you are under 18 and caught with a knife, you won't get a serious punishment.
❌ False - Young offenders can face a criminal record, fines, exclusion from school, and even a custodial sentence.
7. Carrying a knife for protection makes you safer.
❌ False - People who carry knives are more likely to be injured or killed because the weapon can be used against them.
8. If you use a knife and someone dies, you could be charged with murder—even if you didn't intend to kill them.
✅ True - Under Joint Enterprise Law, if you take part in an attack where someone is killed, you can be charged with murder or manslaughter.
other countries.

Main Activity: Case study
Read and discuss real-life case studies of young people who have been convicted of knife possession.

Case Study Example: Jordan's Story
Jordan, 15, was pressured into holding a knife for a friend. He never intended to use it, but when police stopped and searched him, he was arrested and charged with possession of a weapon. Despite having no criminal history, he was given a 12-month detention order and now has a criminal record. He lost his place at college and struggles to find work.
Questions:

1. What mistakes did Jordan make?
2. What could he have done differently?
3. How will this affect his future?

Task Two: Understanding the Law
Split students into small groups and ask them to discuss:

1. What happens if you're caught carrying a knife?
    - Up to 4 years in prison (even if you don't use it).
    - An unlimited fine and criminal record (which affects jobs, travel, and education).
    - If someone is injured or killed, you could be charged with murder or manslaughter.
2. How do these laws aim to protect people?
    - Deterrence: Harsh consequences prevent people from carrying knives.
    - Prevention: Police have stop-and-search powers to catch people before harm happens.
    - Safety: Reducing the number of knives on the street protects individuals and communities.

Plenary: Social Media Campaign – "Know the Law, Stay Safe"

Students work in small groups to create a social media campaign to educate young people on UK knife laws. They can:

- Design Instagram posts with key facts.
- Create a TikTok script explaining what happens if you're caught.
- Write a short slogan to raise awareness (e.g., "One choice = four years. Drop the knife.")

Presentation: Each group presents their campaign idea to the class.