

Courting Disaster I

The class can work in pairs or threes. One Penalty Code and one Case Study sheet per pair. Give yourself a Case Study Sheet for info.

If you have a class who may have difficulty in understanding some of the language used in the penalty code take time to explain the meanings of words such as obligatory and discretionary.

1. Let the young people feel that their decision with regard to an appropriate sentence is extremely valid.
2. Encourage each pair to tell the class at some point during Courting Disaster 1 what they, as the judge, would say to the court before passing sentence.
3. Feed back the court sentences to the students in any way that you choose.

- Lord A was fined £300 and disqualified from driving for one year.
- Mr B was sentenced to four months in prison and disqualified from driving for 5 years.
- Soldier, Mr C, was imprisoned for 4 years and disqualified from driving for 10 years.
- Mr D was ordered to do 300 hours of community service and was disqualified from driving for 10 years. He was also ordered to pay £2000 compensation to the boy. He was spared a prison sentence because of previous good behaviour.
- Mother Mrs E went to prison for 6 months and was disqualified from driving for 5 years.
- Walsall teenager Mr F was sent to a young offenders institution for 3 years and was disqualified from driving for 8 years.
- Footballer Mr G was disqualified from driving for 6 months, fined £2500, ordered to pay the court costs of £3000.
- Teenager Mr H, was disqualified from driving for 10 years and sentenced for 7 years in a young offenders institution.
- Lorry driver Mr J was imprisoned for 2 years and disqualified from driving for 4 years. He has been ordered to take an extended driving test before being allowed his licence back.
- Mr K was imprisoned for $9\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Debate and discussion will ensue as to the sentencing of the offenders. Encourage the class to think that the penalties may change over the next few years. What would they like to see in the changes?

The discussion points following the Courting Disaster 1 throw up some debates on citizenship and the law with regard to road safety. It is important to allow the class to question the role of Government in making laws and the role of the police in enforcing road safety.



Courting Disaster 2

It is key to the success of this exercise that the class think about the emotional trauma that these incidents cause to individuals and families both the driver's and victim's. How do families recover? How do these drivers live with themselves? What about the future? Much of the work done in prisons and young offender institutions is in rehabilitation but the mental scars of these car crashes will have life long implications. How do these incidents affect the lives of others?

Whole class discussion or group feedback.

Courting Disaster 3

Extension work looking at the law and the responsibility that we have as a society to effect a change in the behaviour of people who continue to reoffend.

New offences of causing death by careless driving are currently being proposed. Falling asleep at the wheel, using a hand-held mobile or eating whilst driving are a few. Allow the class to think of other things that drivers do that could also be potentially dangerous, and result in casualties, e.g. driving with illegal tyres.

For more information please consult the following websites with the class.

www.dft.gov.uk
www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk
www.roadsafetyscotland.org.uk
www.getinlane.com

Penalty Table

OFFENCE	IMPRISONMENT	FINE	DISQUALIFICATION	PENALTY POINTS
*Causing death by dangerous driving	10 years	Unlimited	¹ Obligatory– 2 years minimum	3-11 (if exceptionally not disqualified)
*Dangerous driving	2 years	Unlimited	Obligatory	3-11 (if exceptionally not disqualified)
Causing death by careless driving under the influence of drink or drugs	10 years	Unlimited	Obligatory– 2 years minimum	3-11 (if exceptionally not disqualified)
Careless or inconsiderate driving	-	£2,500	² Discretionary	3-9
Driving while unfit through drink or drugs with excess alcohol; or failing to provide a specimen for analysis	6 months	£5,000	Obligatory	3-11 (if exceptionally not disqualified)
Failing to stop after an accident or failing to report an accident	6 months	£5,000	Discretionary	5-10
Driving while disqualified	6 months (12 months in Scotland)	£5,000	Discretionary	6
Driving after refusal or revocation of licence on medical grounds	6 months	£5,000	Discretionary	3-6
Driving without insurance	-	£5,000	Discretionary	6-8
Driving otherwise than in accordance with a licence	-	£1,000	Discretionary	3-6
Speeding	-	£1,000 (£2,500 for motorway offences)	Discretionary	3-6 or 3 (fixed penalty)
Traffic light offences	-	£1,000	Discretionary	3
No MOT certificate	-	£1,000	-	-
Seatbelt offences	-	£500	-	-
Dangerous cycling	-	£2,500	-	-
Careless cycling	-	£1,000	-	-
Cycling on the pavement	-	£500	-	-
Failing to identify driver of a vehicle	-	£1,000	Discretionary	3

*** Where a court disqualifies a person on conviction for one of these offences, it must order an extended retest. The courts also have discretion to order a retest for any other offence which carries penalty points: an extended retest where disqualification is obligatory, and an ordinary test where disqualification is not obligatory.**

¹Obligatory – always required

²Discretionary – the court decides

Penalty table from the Highway Code 2004