



Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office
Public Affairs Division
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OVERVIEW OF LESSONS

Introductory Lesson

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to get to know Project LEAD facilitators and learn new terminology. First, facilitators will introduce themselves and briefly review what students will learn through Project LEAD. Then, facilitators will share an item that gives them a sense of pride. Next, students will participate in a "Going to Law School" activity in which some legal terms are introduced with the Project LEAD Law Book and an Animal Courtroom handout. Students also will create their own nameplates so that facilitators can learn their names. Finally, facilitators will provide some basic classroom rules for future Project LEAD visits.

Lesson 1: Order in the Court

This lesson provides an overview of the criminal justice system and the role attorneys play in criminal cases. First, students will review what they learned in the Introductory Lesson about various legal professionals and their job duties. Then, students will read a play about prosecutors, defense attorneys and judges in court. Next, students will discuss the basic steps in a criminal case and take the role of prosecutors to decide the charges in hypothetical cases.

Lesson 2: The Rule of Law

This lesson introduces students to the purpose of criminal statutes and the consequences of breaking them. First, students will brainstorm school rules. Then, they will discuss the purpose of each of the rules and the consequences for breaking them. Next, selected students will read a play to the class about students who decide to break the rules. Students will identify what laws were broken in the play, the purpose of each of these laws and the consequences.

Lesson 3: The Juvenile Justice System

This lesson provides students with an overview of the juvenile justice system. First, students will discuss whether juvenile and adult offenders should be treated the same in hypothetical situations. Next, students will read a play to the class that traces the steps in juvenile court proceedings. Finally, students will compare the adult and juvenile justice systems.

Lesson 4: Juvenile Corrections

In this lesson, students learn about sentencing options for juvenile offenders. First, a group of students will read a play to the class about the options juvenile court judges have in sentencing offenders. Next, students will participate in a PowerPoint-driven activity in which they determine appropriate sentences for hypothetical juvenile offenders. If using PowerPoint in the classroom is not an option for you, use Handouts 4B and 4C instead.

Lessons 5 & 6: The Payoff

This two-day lesson shows students the financial benefits of staying in school. First, students will discuss where they would like to be in 10 to 20 years in terms of jobs, housing, income and possessions. Next, students will examine and discuss a chart comparing the annual income of dropouts, high school graduates, college graduates and those with professional degrees. Then, students will create budgets based on the income of each of these education levels.

Lesson 7: Truant

This lesson focuses on the problem of truancy and its consequences. First, students will discuss why they should attend school. Next, a group of students will perform a play comparing two students – one who is truant and another who does well in school. For the activity, there are two options. One is to have students work in small groups to plan and perform skits about the consequences of truancy. The second option is to have students write letters advising a friend on the consequences of ditching school. Then, students will share and discuss the activity.

Lesson 8: School Bully

This lesson focuses on the problem of bullying and how it leads to other problems. First, students will share examples of bullying they have observed or experienced. Then, by taking a quiz, students will learn more about the problem of bullying and its effects. Finally, students will work to identify bullying situations and choose options for addressing them.



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Lesson 9: Down for the Neighborhood

This lesson focuses on the issue of joining gangs. First, students will discuss what they know about gangs. Next, a group of students will read a play on the consequences of one boy's decision to join a gang. Then, students will role-play persuading hypothetical students not to join gangs.

Lesson 10: Staying Cool With FINAL

This lesson focuses on teaching students about refusal skills for at-risk behaviors such as truancy, delinquency, smoking, bullying and drug and alcohol use. First, students will share experiences of friends trying to get them to do something that they knew was a bad idea. Next, five students will read a play about refusal skills. Finally, students will act out scenarios demonstrating the use of refusal skills.

Lesson 11: Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover

This lesson focuses on issues of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination. First, students will read and discuss scenarios that depict instances of prejudice and discrimination. Next, pairs of students will be given cards describing either a problem of discrimination or a law to address the problem. Students will find the matching law and problem and participate in a closing discussion.

Lesson 12: Conflict Resolution – One Story With Three Endings

In this lesson, students are introduced to conflict resolution. They will look at three typical ways people deal with conflict: denial, confrontation and problem-solving. Students will role-play endings to stories demonstrating denial or confrontation. Then, they will discover how the same scenarios play out using problem-solving skills.

Lesson 13: Pitfalls

This lesson focuses on two common youth crimes: theft and vandalism. First, students will learn about the elements of every crime. Next, selected students will present short plays to the class illustrating a specific situation in which one of these crimes has taken place. After each play, facilitators will lead a guided discussion to help students recognize and describe different consequences associated with each situation. In the next lesson, students will apply the FINAL steps to make anti-graffiti, theft or vandalism posters to be hung up at the school.

Lesson 14: FINAL Comic Strip Posters

This lesson provides students an opportunity to apply the FINAL steps from Lesson 10 as they create posters showing how to avoid getting involved in the crimes of shoplifting and vandalism. Students will use a comic strip format to illustrate a scenario and the FINAL steps.

Lesson 15: Alcohol, Drugs and Consequences

This lesson focuses on drug and alcohol use and reinforces the FINAL refusal skills as students think about different consequences of using drugs and alcohol. The lesson is driven by a PowerPoint presentation that embeds three plays that groups of students will perform, as well as an activity in which pairs of students will practice the FINAL skills. Also contained in the PowerPoint are examples of "Faces of Meth." An optional activity is included that asks students to list a variety of consequences related to drug and alcohol use.

Lessons 16 & 17: Preparing for the LEAD Mock Trial

This three-lesson sequence prepares students to present a scripted mock trial. Students will become jurors as they view and discuss a PowerPoint that familiarizes students with trial participants, trial procedures and the concept of reasonable doubt. After the PowerPoint, students will break into four groups: jurors, prosecutors, defense attorneys and court staff. Each group will receive a packet that provides instructions on how to prepare for the trial of *People v. Smith*, a hypothetical case involving a gun in the backpack of an 18-year-old. Students will present the case in Lesson 18.



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Lesson 18: Trial Presentation

This is the final lesson of the culminating three-lesson sequence. In this lesson, students conduct a scripted mock trial. First, students will review the trial procedures and will make the final preparations. Then, students will present the trial. Students may present the trial in the classroom, the school auditorium or a courtroom during a visit.

Optional Lessons

Optional Lesson 1: When Hate Becomes a Crime

This lesson focuses on hate crimes. First, students will discuss whether there should be sentence enhancements for hate crimes. Next, students will read definitions and identify examples of hate crimes. Then, students will decide whether hypothetical situations constitute hate crimes and, if so, whether the perpetrators should have additional time added to their sentence because they committed hate crimes.

Optional Lesson 2: Animal Cruelty

This lesson focuses on the problem of animal cruelty. First, students will discuss why it's important to protect animals. Next, students will match human and animal emotions. Then, students will work in small groups to read a scenario on animal cruelty and discuss how to help. Finally, students will share and discuss their scenarios.