

Teaching Topic: Theft

Introduction

Past cases showed that many youngsters might commit theft out of momentary greed, fun or peer influence and underestimate the consequences of such offence. This lesson plan aims at helping teachers to explain to students at class the crime elements of theft, the causes of youth theft and relevant legal consequences, so as to foster students' integrity and law-abiding awareness.

Part 1: Elements that amount to theft and the causes of youth theft	Key Message(s)
<p>Before class, teacher may first pose such questions as: Why would youngsters commit theft? What acts or elements do you think would constitute the crime of theft? Let students reply according to their knowledge or information collected.</p> <p>Teacher may quote the news of theft by a juvenile gang at claw machine shop and bring out the four key elements of theft:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Dishonestly”: for example, in a shop theft case, knowingly leave without payment is dishonest. ● “Appropriates”: acquiring/taking away anything in any manner and continue to keep such thing under one’s custody is regarded as “appropriation”. ● “Property belonging to another”: it means that the ownership of a certain thing belongs to another. ● “With the intention of permanently depriving the property of another”: with the intention to treat a thing as his own to dispose of regardless of the other’s rights. <p>To guide students to contemplate on the motives behind youth theft. (such as fall prey to material temptation, mentality of taking chances, self-esteem issue, peer influence or lack of self-control).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help students understand the elements that amount to theft and the causes of youth theft

Part 2: Real Crime Cases	Key Message(s)
<p>Play video which gives an account of the act of theft of three youngsters, including the act of shop theft and act of embezzlement as well as the penalty for theft.</p> <p>Then guide students to contemplate that if they were Ah Leung in the video and witnessed the act of embezzlement of Chris, what will you do?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guide students to contemplate from different angles on the impacts of act of theft on other people

Part 3: “Conscience Alley” Drama Activity	Key Message(s)
<p>Teacher divides students into groups to play the respective angel role and devil role within the mind of Ah Leung and then conduct discussion. Each group should, according to its stance (i.e. angel group or devil group), discuss its grounds for reporting Chris or not as well as the impact of such a decision on various parties (such as Chris, the shopkeeper, themselves or family members).</p> <p>Invite a student to act as Ah Leung and walk through the “Conscience Alley”. Students playing the role of angel and role of devil take turn to lobby Ah Leung based on their own stance. The student who acts as Ah Leung should weigh the pros and cons of their rationales and then make a rational decision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help students to develop a mindset of critical thinking

Part 4: Decoding the Crime (play video)	Key Message(s)
<p>Teacher may, based on the decision made by the student playing the role of Ah Leung, share the following results with students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ending 1 (making a report): Ah Leung called the shopkeeper and informed him of the incident. After checking the CCTV footage, the shopkeeper reported to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help students to understand the serious consequences of theft and thereby comprehend the importance of law-abiding

<p>Police that Chris had stolen money from the shop. Chris was eventually convicted of “Theft” and sentenced to imprisonment with a criminal record.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ending 2 (not making a report): Chris proposed to offer half of his proceeds from the theft to Ah Leung in exchange for not reporting his offence and Ah Leung agreed to it. Later, the shopkeeper discovered an obvious discrepancy between the shop’s actual revenue and the sales record, suspected that the two had stolen from the shop and therefore laid them off immediately and made a report to the Police for assistance. Chris and Ah Leung were eventually convicted of “Theft” and sentenced to imprisonment with a criminal record. 	
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Part 5: Decoding the Crime (to understand related crime situation and penalties)	Key Message(s)
<p>Citing Police’s crime figures and real precedents, teacher may share with students the crime trend of theft related cases, the rulings and sentences, reiterating the serious consequences of committing theft offence.</p> <p>Echoing the news of “Theft by juvenile gang at claw machine shop” in Part 1 in which the offenders concerned were sentenced to detention centres and imposed of a community service order with criminal record, teacher may guide students to rethink about what losses they may suffer in case they were subject to imprisonment terms with a criminal record.</p> <p>By way of Q&A session, explain to students that theft is by no means a trifle offence and that “being a minor” and “non-expensive items” are not the excuses for the offence, thereby fostering law-abiding awareness among students, helping them to establish proper values.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help students to understand the serious consequences of committing an offence and its impact on their prospect

Part 6: Conclusion

To conclude the key points of this lesson as follows:

- Four key elements of theft
- Legal consequences of theft
- Design a law-abiding maxim to foster positive energy among students

Part 1: Elements that amount to theft and the causes of youth theft

A youngster reached his hand inside a claw-machine and snatched a doll while his friend acted as a “lookout”.



Does it constitute to theft?

Is it guilty for just being a “lookout”?

Source: HK01 (2024-3-17)

Four key elements of theft	Motives for youth theft
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Dishonestly● Appropriates● Property belonging to another● With the intention of permanently depriving the property of another	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Fall prey to material temptation● Mentality of taking chances● Self-esteem issue● Peer influence● Lack of self-control

Part 2: Real Crime Cases

Question for reflection

If you were Ah Leung in the video, and you found that Chris hid 100 dollars out of the payment made by a customer under the cash register instead of putting all the payment in it, and then put the money in his trouser pocket when he went off duty, what will you do?

Part 3: “Conscience Alley” Drama Activity



Invite a student to act as Ah Leung who will walk through each alley slowly

Students acting as Angel or Devil take turn to lobby him when he walks through the alley

Ah Leung makes his final decision with explanation

Part 4: Decoding the Crime

For sharing – Ending 1

Ah Leung called the shopkeeper and informed him of the incident. Having checked the CCTV footage, the shopkeeper found that Chris stole money from the shop and therefore called the Police for assistance. Chris was eventually convicted of “Theft” and sentenced to imprisonment with criminal record.

For sharing – Ending 2

Chris proposed to offer half of his proceeds from the theft to Ah Leung and pleaded him not to make a report. Ah Leung agreed. Later, the shopkeeper discovered an obvious discrepancy between the shop’s actual revenue and sales record, suspected that the two had stolen from the shop and therefore laid them off immediately and made a report to the Police for assistance. Chris and Ah Leung were eventually convicted of “Theft” and sentenced to imprisonment with criminal record.

Part 5: Decoding the crime (youth committing theft)

Theft crime trends (miscellaneous + shop theft)	Number of youngsters (aged 10 to 20) arrested by the Police in respective years						
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 (Jan-Jun)
	728	530	603	427	312	411	285

In 2023, the Police arrested a total of 411 youngsters aged 10 to 20, representing an increase of 99 persons (31.7%) when compared with 2022.

News Report:

Youth theft cases frequently happened in claw machine shops A 13-year-old youngster was sentenced to detention centre to receive tough training

Four juvenile gangsters sneaked into a claw machine shop at night and snatched several dolls.

The shopkeeper released relevant CCTV footage and urged the offenders to surrender.

Source: Singtao (2024-3-15)

- Four males were arrested and all convicted
- Two 16-year-old youngsters were placed under a probation order of 12 months and a community service order of 120 hours respectively
- A 25-year-old male was placed under a community service order of 160 hours
- A 13-year-old youngster was sentenced to detention centre
- **All of them have a criminal record.**

Youth Crime Prevention Booklet

Q & A

Question:

I am a minor under 18. I may be cautioned under the “Police Superintendent’s Discretion Scheme” for theft but it’s not likely for the Police to lay a charge on me!

Answer:

No! The Police will decide to handle a youth crime case by way of Police Superintendent’s Discretion Scheme only if they, having considered **the nature of the case and relevant factors**, find it appropriate to do so.

Part 6: Conclusion

Key points of this lesson	Law-Abiding Maxim
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Four key elements of theft● Legal consequences of theft	Theft is disgraceful and law-abiding is the very first conduct rule!