

Milford Public Schools Curriculum



Department: Social Studies

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Grade 11,12

(0.5 Credits)

Levels: 2-602310, 3-603310

Students will examine the history of American crime and violence and its nature and causes. Questions regarding the criminal justice system will be discussed. This course aims to cause students to re-examine their present attitudes about themselves and society and the degree to which violence permeates American life. Topics studied include gun control, organized crime and rape as well as capital and other punishments.

UNIT 1

Unit Title: Criminal Justice System

Overview: In this unit students will learn about the criminal justice system focusing on:

- The Court System
- Civil and Criminal Law
- Rights and Responsibilities of Police and Citizens

LEARNING GOALS

Enduring Understanding(s):

The United States criminal justice system is unique in the world.

Essential Question(s):

1. How does our criminal justice system provide protection for both the victim and the accused?
2. What are the differences between civil and criminal law?

Content and Skills:

Encompasses chapters 13 and 14 of Street Law 6th edition.

Standards Addressed:

1.9: The rights and responsibilities of citizens.

2.1: Interpret information from a variety of primary and secondary sources, including electronic media (maps, charts, graphs, images, artifacts, recordings, and texts).

UNIT 2

Unit Title: Trends in Crime

Unit Overview: In this unit students will learn about the causes of crime focusing on:

- Current Trends in Crime
 - Strategies to Reduce Crime
- Relationship Between Crime and Quality of Life

LEARNING GOALS

<p>Enduring Understanding(s): Crime rates are impacted by a number of variables.</p>	<p>Essential Question(s): 1. Why are some cities more prone to crime than others? Why are some people more apt to commit crime?</p>
<p>Content and Skills: Encompasses chapter 7 of Street Law 6th edition.</p>	
<p>Standards Addressed: 2.1: Interpret information from a variety of primary and secondary sources, including electronic media (maps, charts, graphs, images, artifacts, recordings, and texts).</p>	

<p>UNIT 3</p>	
<p>Unit Title: Nature v. Nurture Unit Overview: In this unit students will learn about the causes of crime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature vs Nurture 	
<p>LEARNING GOALS</p>	
<p>Enduring Understanding(s): Nature and nurture are both important variables in predicting criminal behavior.</p>	<p>Essential Question(s): What role does nurture and nature play in the creation of a criminal? Why are some people more apt to commit crime?</p>
<p>Content and Skills: Teacher and student debates and research.</p>	
<p>Standards Addressed: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3 Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p>	

<p>UNIT 4</p>

Unit Title: Death Penalty

Unit Overview: In this unit students will learn about the historical aspects of the death penalty and the recent debate over its legality.

- Methods of Execution (Historical and Current)
- Legal Arguments For and Against Capital Punishment

LEARNING GOALS**Enduring Understanding(s):**

Society struggles with whether the death penalty is humane and is a deterrent to crime.

Essential Question(s):

1. Should a government have the right to put its citizens to death?
2. What are the roots of capital punishment in the United States?

What is the future of capital punishment in the United States?

Content and Skills:

CQ Researcher, Deathpenaltyinfo.org, Chapter 15 of *Street Law* 6th Edition.

Standards Addressed:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3

Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

UNIT 5**Unit Title: Gun in American Society**

Unit Overview: In this unit students will learn about the historical aspects of the Second Amendment and its recent controversy.

- The Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution
 - Debates/Arguments For and Against Gun Control
- Militia Groups

LEARNING GOALS**Enduring Understanding(s):**

1. Gun ownership has been a part of American society since colonial times, how will gun ownership evolve.

Essential Question(s):

1. What role do militia groups play in our society and for its members?

Why is the 2nd Amendment one of the most debated freedoms?

Content and Skills:

Standards Addressed:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6

Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

UNIT 6

Unit Title: U.S. Prison System

Unit Overview: In this unit students will learn about how criminals are punished and rehabilitated.

- Jail vs Prison
 - Alternative Forms of Incarceration
- Recidivism

LEARNING GOALS

Enduring Understanding(s):

1. There is a wide range of debate over the effectiveness of punishing criminals. Society struggles to balance public safety with the rights of prisoners.

Essential Question(s):

1. What is the role of punishment in society?
 2. Why is prison considered a revolving door within our prison system?
- What constitutes cruel and unusual punishment?

Content and Skills:

CQ Researcher, Chapter 15, *Street Law 6th Edition* , Prison Power Point Presentation on Backstreets.

Standards Addressed:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

UNIT 7

Unit Title: Organized Crime

Unit Overview: In this unit students will learn about historical and current organized crime groups.

- Gangs
- Organized Crime Families

LEARNING GOALS

Enduring Understanding(s):

At various times organized crime has proliferated in society and its culture.

Essential Question(s):

1. How is organized crime structured?
What are the methods utilized by organized crime to make money?

Content and Skills:

Possible suggestions include:

1. Pileggi, Nicholas. *Wiseguy: Life in a Mafia Family*. New York: Pocket, 1987. Print.
Crime Inc. *The True Story of the Mafia*, 2006 on DVD.

Standards Addressed:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.10

By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.