

The
Economist

EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION

KNIFE CRIME

A GROWING PROBLEM

2 X 20 MINUTE ACTIVITIES

Introduction

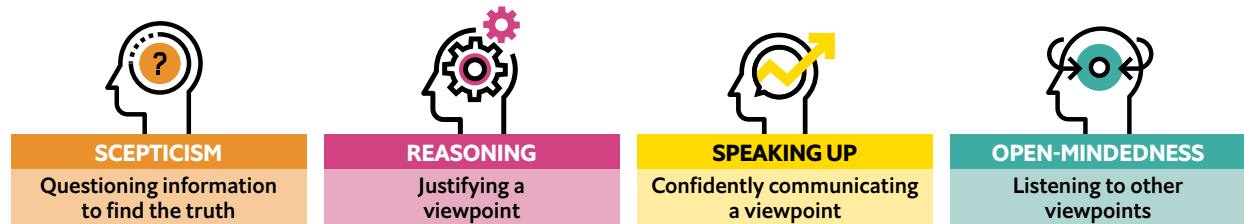
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The resources for this workshop were produced by The Economist Educational Foundation, an independent charity that was set up by The Economist magazine. We combine *The Economist's* journalistic know-how with teaching expertise, and we specialise in supporting teachers to facilitate high-quality classroom discussions about the news.

About this workshop

This workshop opens up the discussion about knife crime, the statistics and some possible solutions. It's suitable for 11- to 16-year-olds and teachers are encouraged to adapt it as necessary. There are two activities which total 40 minutes but these can be run separately.

The competencies that this workshop will develop:




Sensitive issue

This is a sensitive but important topic to cover because it increasingly affects the lives of young people. In collaboration with Camden Youth Council, we've put together the following recommendations to support the teaching of this topic.

- Follow your school's safeguarding policy. Make sure students know who they can go to in school if they are affected by any of the discussions.
- Ensure you look through all content prior to delivery. The content is age-appropriate, but we recognise that some young people may have personal experience of the issues covered. If there is anything included that you feel might affect particular students, you may wish to give warnings about the content or choose not to include parts of it.
- Give students the option to opt out of certain activities or discussions.
- Students might not feel comfortable sharing experiences and this is fine. We suggest giving the students an option to write things down anonymously if they wish.



Let us know about any interesting discussions you have...

 **@Econ_Foundation**
#newsthinking #econfoundation

BEFORE THE SESSION YOU NEED TO HAVE:

- Access to computers
- The *Knife crime video* ready to play: bit.ly/workshop-crime
- The *Thinking questions*, printed and stuck around the room
- The *Suggested solutions cards*, enough for one between two

20 MINUTE ACTIVITY

Exploring the statistics

Resources

The *Knife crime video* (bit.ly/workshop-crime) and the *Thinking questions*

Activity instructions

Go through the sensitive issue guidance with your students and explain that they'll be looking at knife crime in this activity. Ask if any students have anything they wish to share before you begin. Tell students they are going to watch a short video which focuses on violent crime statistics.

Ask students to listen out for answers to the following questions:

- Has crime in general risen or fallen?
- Are young people more likely to be arrested now?
- Is violent crime increasing?

Play the *Knife crime video* until 1.08 and get feedback from students. Ask if they were surprised by any of the information.

Play the rest of the video and ask students to write down any facts that prove or disprove:

- Knife crime is a growing issue
- Knife crime only affects certain places, ages, races etc.

Point out that the data used in the film is from before 2019. Ask if students have any knowledge from 2019. For example, out of the first 100 killings in 2019, 41 were stabbings.

Split up students between the *Thinking questions* around the room. Tell students they have three minutes to discuss their responses to the question before moving on. They should note down anything they feel is important or any further questions they have on the question sheet. Move to the next question until all three have been answered. Ask students to feedback everything written down on the question they finished with.

THINKING QUESTION

Why might a young person carry a knife?

THINKING QUESTION

**Why might someone
join a gang?**

THINKING QUESTION

**What don't statistics
tell us?**

THINKING QUESTION

**How does the media
represent knife crime?**

20 MINUTE ACTIVITY

Suggested solutions

Resources

The *Suggested solutions cards*

Activity instructions

Ask your students why they think knife crime has increased.

Write these suggestions on the board:

1. There are fewer police officers on the streets
2. There aren't as many opportunities for young people
3. Criminal gangs are fighting for control of areas
4. The government isn't tough enough on knife crime



Ask your students:

- What does each reason mean?
- Can you order the reasons from strongest to weakest in your opinion?
- What questions do you need answered about these reasons?
- If these are the reasons, what are the solutions?

Ask students to work with a partner and give them a *Suggested solutions card*. Give students time to complete the research and then ask pairs to feedback.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

Here are some suggestions for things that might help reduce violent crime. Choose one or two of them to research or find your own alternative.

FIND OUT

- What the suggested solution is
- Which reason for increased knife crime it addresses the most
- Any examples where this has been tried
- The benefits and risks of trialling this suggestion
- Who the winners and losers would be

SUGGESTIONS:

- More police on the street
- 'Stop and search' more people
- Open new community or youth centres
- Give better support to the poorest people in society
- Teach school sessions about the impact of knife crime
- Give young people more opportunities like jobs and apprenticeships
- Help to improve the relationship between police and public
- Give harsher sentences to anyone caught carrying a knife



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