



Yale-New Haven
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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2000 Volume II: Crime and Punishment

Democracy Speaks Through Criminal Law?

Guide for Curriculum Unit 00.02.03

by Joyce Bryant

This unit is about our criminal justice system and how it operates. The rights that people have and how they can make use of them through several amendments to the constitution.

Our justice system as well as society at large is designed to treat people equally and fairly which does not happen. The system produces winners and losers because of their cultural, religious, ethnic, and economic background. Our criminal justice system is where society and the criminal, lawbreakers, and non-lawbreakers meet as adversaries. In this unit one will find that if democracy is to speak within our justice system, then our system needs to be reformed. There is too much corruption in our system among the police, prosecutors, judges, and defense attorneys when there should not be any.

As this unit is taught, students will become aware of our justice system and the effect that it will have upon their lives as they grow socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

(Recommended for Reading and Social Studies, grade 8.)

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