



Lesson Plan: Trespass and vandalism

PSHE and Citizenship Key stages 3 and 4 11 – 16 years

Overview

Trespass and vandalism on the railway puts lives at risk and costs the rail industry millions of pounds each year.

This teaching package looks at some of the most common types of vandalism and their consequences.

You can cover the whole package in your class or choose to just focus on one type of vandalism, for instance if there's been a related incident in your local area.

Learning objectives

By the end of the lesson, pupils should understand the following points:

- Trespass, throwing stones at trains and vandalising railway property are criminal acts.
- Vandalism on the railway endangers safety and costs the railway industry millions of pounds.
- The penalties for railway crime range from a fine to life imprisonment.
- Having a criminal record will affect your future life and limit many of your choices.



A bit of fun?

A bit of fun? features a typical act of vandalism that children and teenagers often engage in: throwing stones and other missiles at trains.

Many young people think that it is a bit of fun and something exciting – but the consequences could be serious injuries to the driver, other members of staff, or the passengers.

Train driver Peter Flett tells about his experience, and also about a colleague who, as a result of a stone coming through his windscreen, lost his colour sight. Train drivers are required to have normal colour sight so the injury cost this driver his job.

Discussion:

Why do young people throw stones at trains?

- Many children and teenagers think it is exciting, and few are aware of how serious the consequences could be.
- Some people are simply curious to see what will happen.



Vandalising property

This module on the DVD uses photographs and sound effects to encourage the pupils to think about how various types of vandalism on the railway affect their own and other people's travel experience.

- A vandalised environment makes many people fear for their personal safety.
- Some types of vandalism, like arson on trains, cause serious safety risks.
- Vandalising or breaking railway fences can lead to children playing on the track.
- Vandalism causes delays on the railway and costs the industry millions of pounds that could be invested in improving services.

In short: vandalism costs lives, money and time.



Trespass

Most people believe trespass to be a minor misdemeanour, and outside of the railway environment it is indeed largely a civil offence. However, within the railway environment it is a criminal offence.

Trespassers expose themselves, rail staff and passengers to serious danger. Up to 60 people die each year trespassing on the railway.

The vast majority of people who trespass are adults; for example, people taking a short cut or walking their dogs along the line. They are either oblivious to the extremely dangerous position in which they place themselves, or they choose to ignore it. They set a potentially life threatening example to young children.

The maximum fine for trespass on the railway is £1,000.

If children under ten are caught trespassing, their parents or guardians may have to pay the fine.



Criminal Record – What would it mean to you?

Vandalism and trespass on the railway are criminal acts that carry serious penalties. They will also result in a criminal record for the perpetrator. For many teenagers this will sound like a minor issue, but having a criminal record can in fact have a serious impact on your future life.

Start by asking the class what they think a criminal record would mean to them. Then use the DVD to explore and discuss the potential consequences.