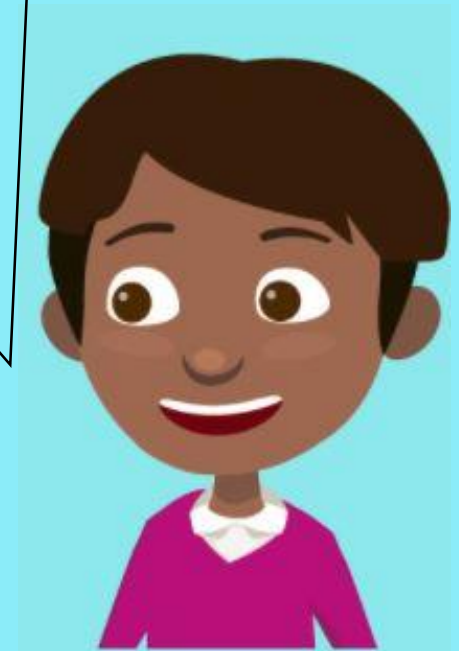


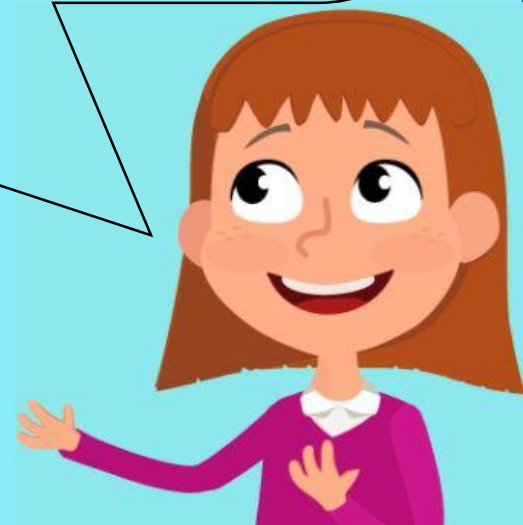
Crime And Punishment In Modern Britain



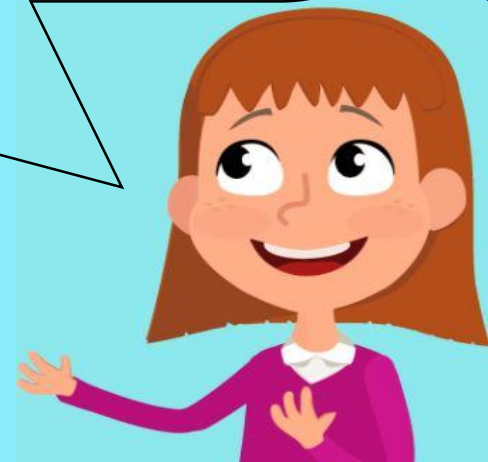
What do we mean by Modern Britain?



Modern Britain covers the period from 1900 up to present day. During the 20th century, many of the industries from the industrial age were in decline. This culminated in the great depression of the 1930s. Poverty was once again an issue. 1 in 5 people were unemployed across the country but in some industrial parts of the country the figure was much higher. This led to some people moving to the countryside to look for work.



For a privileged few, this was not the case and their quality of life actually improved. The gap between rich and poor became bigger. As in previous years, poverty often led to crime going up. However, the government took on new roles in caring for the poor and unlike in previous times, although life could be very hard, there was little chance of dying of starvation or dying in total poverty.

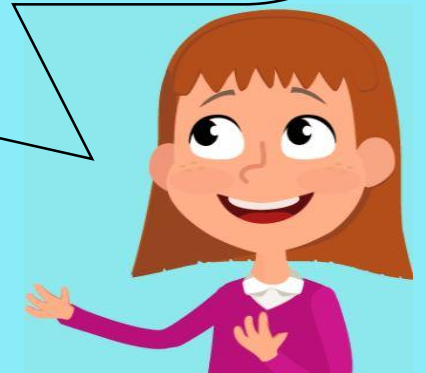


This was a time of new inventions and these had an impact on crime. Car theft went up as the motor car became more popular, while the invention of the airplane made smuggling easier. The invention of the computer led to new kinds of crime taking place.



There were two world wars in the twentieth century which had a huge impact on society. Britain was losing its grip on the control and influence it had on other countries. Despite this, there were positive social changes. Such changes including better rights for all UK citizens regardless of race, age or religious beliefs.

The church used to have a very strong influence on law and order. However, as the century progressed this Influence diminished.



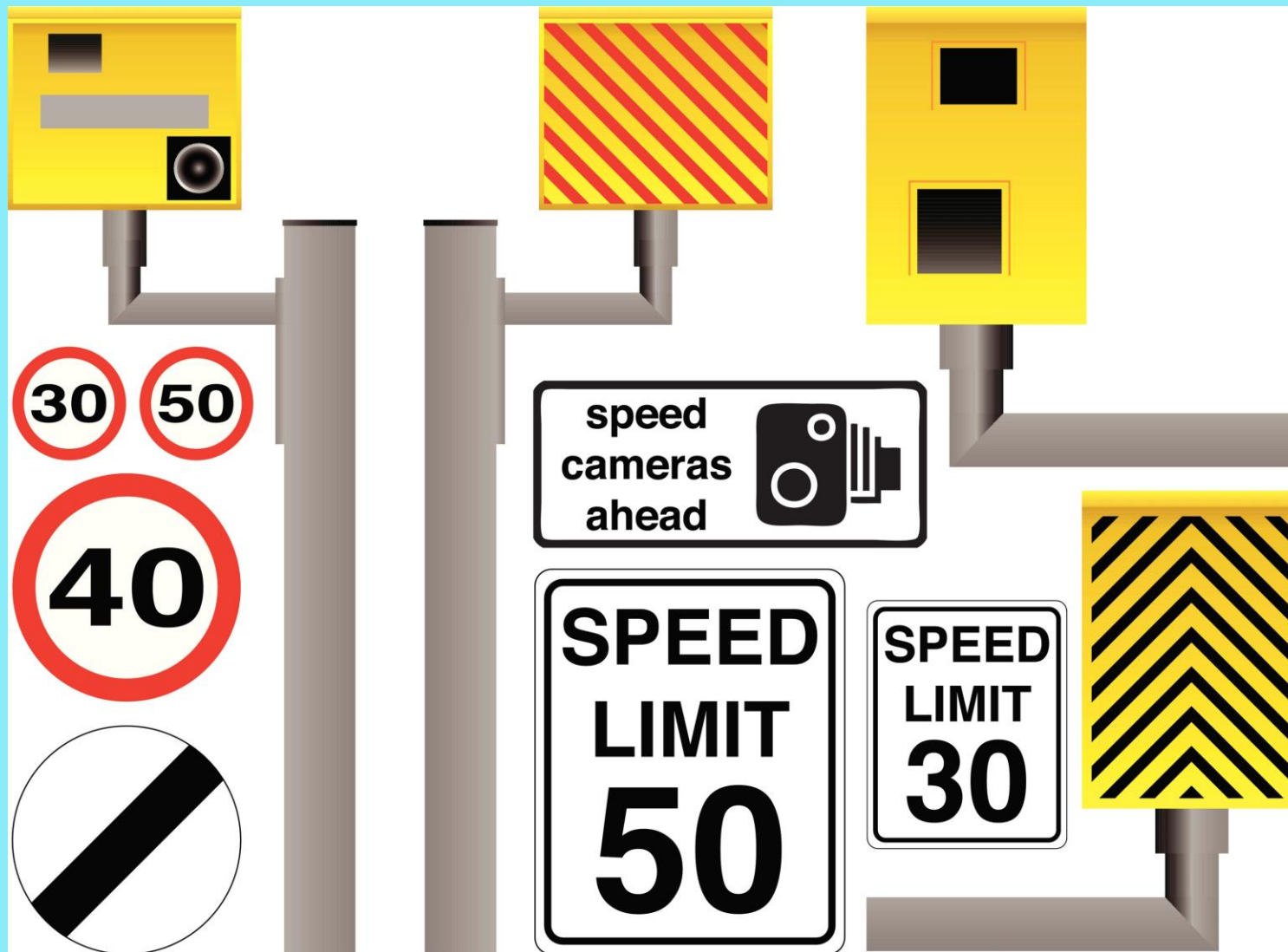
What types of crime are typical in Modern Britain?



Car Crime

The first car appeared on the roads in 1894 and by 1930 there were one million of them. By the end of the century the number of cars on Britain's roads had risen to 25 million. The rise of the car led to new rules being introduced. Drivers had to follow strict rules or they would get a criminal record e.g. driving when under the influence of alcohol. By 1969, nearly 60% of all crimes were car crimes of one kind or another. Still to this day they make up half the cases of the courts today.





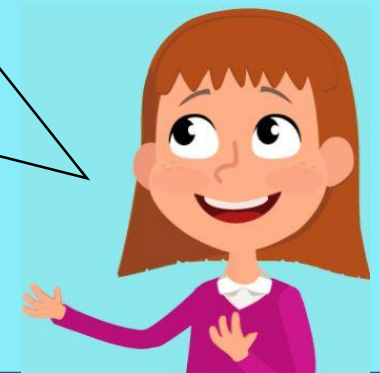
Smuggling

The twentieth century made it easier for people and goods to travel from one country to another. People used this opportunity to smuggle goods into the country; illegal items, alcohol and even people.



Young People

The number of young people committing crimes increased as the century progressed. Today two thirds of all crimes are committed by males under the age of 20. Of all ages, boys aged 15-16 are most likely to commit crime. Despite better health and education, the issue of young men committing crimes remains an issue.



Conscientious Objection

People who refused to fight when they were called up were given prison sentences of up to 2 years.

Race crime

The Race Relations Act (1968) made it illegal to refuse housing and employment to a person on the grounds of race. Before this, racist motivation of crimes would not have been considered seriously.



What changes occurred to police in modern Britain?

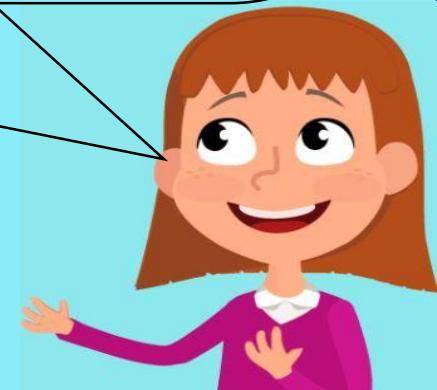


There were 181 police forces at the start of the century, many of them very small with less than 50 officers. Over the years, a lot of forces ended up merging together. Police numbers have more than doubled over the past 100 years or so. In the 1900s there were 60,000 police, there are now approximately 125,000.



Over the past 100 years, police officers moved from mainly patrolling on foot to patrolling in cars. However, there have been recent moves to try and get more police officers back walking the beat.

Training has improved and rather than learn 'on the job' there is a National Police College. Police officers uniform, especially the hats, look very similar to how they looked at the turn of the century.



However, the rise in violent crime has seen a rise in specialist firearms officers. There are now specific police officers for different types of crime e.g. dog handlers, traffic policemen and laboratory officers.



New technology changed the way police officers carry out their jobs.

1901 – Fingerprinting

1909 – Police travelled using bicycles

1910 – Police radios

1919 – First police car

1986 – DNA Testing

1995 – The National computer allows police to compare all fingerprints.

2002 – Start of PCSOs



During the 1960's, crime was lower than it had been for 60 years, however this soon began to change.

- In 1960, most people did not expect to break the law. Although, with the rise of the car a steadily increasing number of drivers became criminals which brought them into conflict with the police.
- The rise in crime after 1960 was blamed on the police for not doing their job properly.
- The reputation of the force was affected by some well know miscarriages of justice (people being convicted of crimes when they were innocent largely due to evidence being faked).

What is punishment like in modern Britain?



Young people

By the end of the industrial age, most people agreed there should be a separate system of trial and punishment for young people. This saw many changes...



Young people

- 1902 – First Borstal opened in Kent. This was run like a boarding school with lots of sport and competitions. Sentences were between 6 months and two years.
- 1908 – Separate juvenile courts established.
- 1932 – Approved schools set up for offenders up to the age of 15.
- 1982 – Borstals were closed and replaced with Youth Detention Centres. These were based around a short, sharp shock. However offending rates remain as high as from borstals.



Prisons

During the industrial age, prisons were based around punishment, there was little done to help prisoners become better people. In the modern age, prisons began to change and as a result were seen as places where prisoners could be reformed.

Some of the changes included:

- Providing ordinary clothes and haircuts.
- Abolishing flogging in 1948.
- Allowing more visits from family members.
- Ability for prisoners to work and earn money.
- Teaching prisoners new skills to use in a job when they leave prison.

Abolition of capital punishment

During the 20th century, there were debates about whether to abolish the death penalty.



Those in favour of the death penalty argued:

- It deterred people from killing others.
- Criminals would be more likely to carry guns if there was no danger of them being hung for killing.
- Life imprisonment was worse.
- It was a way of showing society's disgust at this crime.



Those against the death penalty argued:

- Other countries had abolished capital punishment without a noticeable increase in crime.
- Mistakes were sometimes made, and the wrong person executed.
- Most murders happen impulsively, so capital punishment is not a deterrent.
- Execution is barbaric.



Votes on abolition of the death penalty were held in Parliament on numerous occasions. Finally, in 1957 hanging was abolished except for murdering a police officer, killing by shooting or while resisting arrest. In 1965 it was abolished altogether.

