PROPERTY AND POWER

This unit looks at different issues relating to property – having, not having, owning, taking, sharing etc. These issues are introduced by means of stories, which may be used as discussion starters, and through the use of short dilemmas and exercises for small group work.

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A Lucky Break

Key ideas

- stealing
- trust
- punishment
- fairness

This story addresses the issue of stealing in school and raises questions about the consequences of theft for the victims and for the whole community.

There are some reasons why stealing can be said to be wrong (and most children are quite clear that it *is* wrong – even those who do it). Here are a number of commonly offered reasons, ranging from selfish reasons through reasons affecting other people, to reasons which have a concern for the group or the community, eventually to reasons based on standards which can be applied universally.

- You can get into trouble.
- If you are a thief, no one will trust you.
- It is not good for a thief to think they can go through life stealing things.
- You should not do to other people what you would not like them to do to you.
- It hurts and upsets people.
- It sets a bad example for others.
- Theft costs the victims money. This is not fair.
- Stealing costs the community a great deal of money.
- Stealing undermines mutual trust in the community.
- Everyone has a right to own property (if they came by it honestly) and no one else has a right to take it away from them.
- People should have earned what they own, unless it has been given to them. No one should profit by wrongly taking property from others.

This checklist can be used in discussing the suggested topics below.

Below are some of the issues you could explore arising from this story. Remember to ask the children if they would like to raise any issues of their own for discussion.

Moral reasoning

- In pairs, make a list of all the people affected by the stealing that was going on in Class 8. In each case, say how the different people are affected. Feed your ideas into a class list.
- What would you say to Katrina Davenport to try to persuade her to stop stealing?
- What should happen to Katrina Davenport once she has been caught? What do you think the teacher should take into consideration in deciding how to punish her?
- Here is a conversation overheard one playtime between some friends. Read it through carefully, then answer the questions about it.
  - Pick out all the reasons you can find in it against stealing.
  - Which ones do you agree with most?
  - Which are the best reasons against stealing and which do you think are the worst?
  - Can you think of any more of your own?

  "It really gets me, all this nicking stuff from the cloakrooms," said Andy. "I've lost two pairs of trainers this year and I've lost count of the amount of food I've had stolen."

  "Yeah," said Praful, "the trouble is you can't trust anyone any more. You go round the whole time, suspecting all your friends as well as everyone else."

  "What bugs me," said Andy, "is the way some people think they can go through life taking stuff from other people. They should earn what they get, like everyone else."

  Katrina, a friend of Andy's, overheard what they were saying and came over.

  "Not everyone has a lot of money," she suggested, "so maybe they think it's okay to steal."

  "But if they steal from other people, they might encourage everyone else to start stealing. If they're not well off, they won't be able to afford to have their own stuff nicked," Andy said angrily.

"Anyway, I wouldn't steal because my parents would go ape at me," said Praful. "That would be even worse for me than getting into trouble with the law."

"Even if you can hide it from your parents, your friends will probably find out and no one really trusts a thief, do they?" Andy said.

"What would the school be like if everybody went round stealing from everyone else?" Katrina said. "It would be chaos. And what kind of example is it to the younger kids in the school? They should be taught something better."

"Besides," Praful said, "it isn't fair. When my mum had her car stolen, it cost her a load of money. The insurance didn't cover everything. It cost her hundreds of pounds. What had she done to deserve that? Nothing. It's not fair."

Thinking things through

- Some people say that there would be less stealing in society if everyone had the same amount of money, or at least if the difference between the rich people and the poor people was not as great as it is at the moment. Do you agree or disagree with this argument?
- Other people say that there would be less stealing if the law got tougher with people who steal, eg no cautions, higher fines, longer community service or prison sentences and worse conditions in prison. Do you agree or disagree with this?

Community building

- How do people in the class feel they are affected personally by theft? Share experiences.
- Often the poor and the elderly are victims of crime. What do you think it feels like for them?

Drama or story writing

Write a story or make up a play in which you try to show the possible effects of stealing on the victim. Think about the mental effects as well as the physical ones.

A Lucky Break

I knew *how* they did it – whoever was thieving from the lunchboxes. It was easy. You went through the cloakroom on your way to the toilets. Usually no one was there to see. All you had to do was choose the farthest rack, well hidden amongst the jumble of coats and shoes, and find an open bag. You lifted the lunchbox lid, felt about inside and helped yourself. A bar of chocolate or a packet of crisps. Then you either hid it in your pocket for later or sat in the toilet cubicle, crammed it in your mouth and flushed the wrapper down the loo. Simple. But rotten.

It was terrible when you opened your lunchbox at dinner time, half starving, just fancying a Mars bar. And it was gone. The teacher said "Are you *certain* your mum packed one this morning?" and you were *pretty* sure but . . ."Well, I think so," you said and the teacher shrugged his shoulders as if to say, "You're not CERTAIN are you?"

Only this time, I thought I knew *who* was doing it too. Mr Garfield didn't. He didn't have a clue.

"Right, Class 8," he said one morning, "there's no doubt, I'm afraid. It's happening too regularly to be carelessness. Sadly, we have a thief in the school."

Surprise, surprise! Every day for the past week and now he realises there's a thief.

"I'm really disappointed, Class 8. This means I can't trust *anyone* now. You're ALL under suspicion until we find the culprit. If you know anything, don't shield them. You're not helping them, you know. Much better for them that they're caught."

I couldn't see that. How could it be better to be found out?

"See me privately. No one need know. Any time. But I want him caught!"

Him! It wasn't a him. It was a her.

Every time something had gone missing she'd been out of the classroom earlier that morning. Ever since the first few times, I'd kept a watch. I looked across at her now while Mr Garfield was going on. And on. She was just staring across the room, all innocent. Our eyes met. And she knew I knew.

The thief was Katrina Davenport.

The next morning we'd only just started work after assembly when Mr Garfield said, "Right, stop work!" all of a sudden, like when there's a fire drill or something. His voice was firm.

"Line up at the door. Quietly! Not a sound. Make your way up to the cloakroom."

It was what they called a spot check. Mr Garfield had had a good idea at last. Katrina Davenport had been to the toilet only five minutes before. With a bit of luck she'd saved the loot for later. And he'd find it. In her pocket.

"Right everyone. Take your coats and bags from the pegs. Line up behind Adam Tansley."

He went through our things one by one. I wondered exactly what he was looking for.

Katrina Davenport hadn't got it. The teacher zipped up her bag, gave her coat back and said, "Next."

I was third from the end. The search had taken ages. What a waste of time! Boring! Maths was better than this. Long division even.

"Is this yours?"

I blinked hard. Mr Garfield was holding a Kit Kat in front of my face. It certainly wasn't mine. And he knew it.

"Carla, this was in your pocket. Is it yours?"

I tried to speak but no words came out. He turned to the rest of the class.

"Katrina. Can this be the Kit Kat you have lost?"

I looked at her in disbelief.

"Yes, Mr Garfield. I think so."

My eyes were stinging and my face burned. I felt like I was on fire.

"Go back to class everyone and get on with your work. Come with me, young lady. We're going to Mr Pycroft."

The Headmaster was gentle. He didn't shout. He didn't threaten. He didn't have to. It was all settled. What could I say?

"Well, well. What a surprise, Carla. I'd never have thought it of you. Your mum and dad are coming to see me this afternoon and you can explain it to them. I imagine they'll be surprised too. Off you go."

He didn't need to punish me. Everyone else would do that. I wanted to run. Anywhere but back to the classroom and all those faces. Where could I go? There was nowhere to hide. It would soon be playtime and then the whole school would know.

By this afternoon Mum and Dad would know too. I wanted to shout out loud, "It wasn't me. Honest!"

But who'd believe me? Only one thing kept me from crying. Katrina Davenport. I hated her. Hated with a capital H. When I sat down at my table everyone ignored me. But someone had scribbled on the cover of my Maths book, in big letters, "THIEF".

Miss Walker was on playground duty. We'd got her after break. For the first time I was actually glad to hear the whistle at the end of playtime. Everyone had treated me like I'd got a disease. But they pointed fingers. And whispered.

Back inside it was Art again – well, "Design", really. Miss Walker explained,

"Today we're going to get our ideas from packaging and food wrappers. Carla, fetch your Kit Kat from the cloakroom."

Suddenly the room was silent and still. Like when you "freeze frame" a video. Not Miss Walker too, I thought.

Surely she couldn't be so cruel.

I didn't move from my seat.

People began to mutter.

Miss Walker spoke again.

"The Kit Kat. It's in your coat pocket, Carla. I saw Katrina put it there just after assembly."

And that's when I started to cry.

All at Sea

Key ideas:

- the value of property
- ownership of property
- sharing and not sharing
- the difference between power and authority
- the difference between revenge and justice

This story follows the crew of a sailing ship which is shipwrecked on a desert island. The crew is faced with the challenge of organising their affairs under new circumstances. They have to decide how to share out the food they find and, later, they face a similar problem even more acutely when they discover some treasure. At the same time, the question arises as to how to punish their former captain for the way he had treated them.

Below are some of the issues you could explore arising from this story. Remember to ask the children if they would like to raise any issues of their own for discussion.

Chapter 1

Moral reasoning

- What is your opinion of Captain Blud? What evidence do you have to support your opinion?
- How would you describe the Captain's treatment of Amos the lookout? Why do you think the Captain behaves in this way? Why do you think the crew put up with being treated like this?
- Was it fair of Amos the lookout to complain that his job was boring? Are there some things which have to be done for the sake of the group as a whole?
- Being cruel to people you are in charge of seems to make them obedient. But is it a good way to achieve obedience? Give reasons for your answers.
- Do you think the Captain has any kind of duty to tell the crew the truth about where they are?

Thinking things through

- What makes a good leader? Which of the following qualities do you think a leader should have? Which would be the most important? Why?

kindness	tidiness
good at talking	good at listening
brave	strong
good looking	healthy
tall	clever
funny	

- The Captain demanded that the crew trust him. Did he deserve that? What is it that makes someone trustworthy? Why should trust be important to the crew of a sailing ship? Is trust important in a school? In what way?
- If a leader makes a mistake, would it be better to be honest and admit it, or not to admit it?
- The Captain said the crew did not need to know where they were. Do you agree? Why do we like to know things? Are there some things it is better for us not to know?
- What do we mean when we say we "know" something? How do we know things? Think about this in relation to the following statements. Is the word "know" used in different ways?

  I know there are 24 hours in a day.

  I know the sea is dangerous.

  I know it is good to have friends.

  I know London.

  I know it is wrong to be unkind to people.

  I know I can do it.

  I know that good will win over evil in the end.

Chapter 2

Moral reasoning

- Was the Captain right in thinking he should continue to be the leader now they were on the island? Give your reasons.
- The crew rebelled against the Captain's leadership. Were they right to do this? If you think so, what was it that made it right? Would it be right for children in a school to rebel against the teachers? Is this different from the situation of the crew? How is it different?
- Now that the Captain has been overthrown, what is the fairest way to treat him? Give your reasons. Discuss this first in pairs or small groups and then share your ideas. Here are some ideas to add to those of your own.

  The Captain should be tried and executed. This is all he deserves.

  The Captain should be executed without a trial. "Revenge is sweet."

  The Captain should be made to work for the crew to pay something back to the people he treated cruelly. This might make him a better person in the end.

  The Captain should be made an example of so that others will see that cruelty is wrong.
- What would the class vote to do if it were the crew?
- What could the Captain say to the crew to persuade them that he should not die?

Thinking things through

- How was it that the crew were able to rebel once they were on the island, when they hadn't been able to before?
- Some of the crew wanted to string the captain up in revenge. This is sometimes called "mob rule". Is revenge of this sort a good thing or a bad thing? What is the difference between revenge and justice?
- If the crew believe that Captain Blud should not have treated them cruelly, would it be wrong for *them* to treat *him* cruelly now?
- Why do we punish people generally? What makes a punishment fair?

- Who can tell us what to do? Sometimes people have a right to tell us what to do (we call this "authority"). Sometimes people tell us what to do by the use of power or fear. For each of the following people, say whether they would use authority or power to tell you what to do – or a mixture. In what ways does it happen? What can be done about it if the power or authority is used unfairly?

parent or carer	police officer
teacher	social worker
brother or sister	priest (of your religion, if you have one)
friend	politician
yourself	leader of a club or society you attend

Chapter 3

Moral reasoning

- After the Captain had been overthrown, there were no leaders for a while. Some of the crew just started to please themselves. Should everyone have helped, or was it all right for some of the crew to do nothing and leave it to the others? In other words, what kind of duty was there for everyone to help?
- When the food was found and brought back, do you think it was shared out fairly? If not, what went wrong? Suggest some ways in which it could have been done better, ie more fairly? Should everyone have got exactly the same? Or is there a case for some people getting more or less than the others? Which categories of people might be entitled to get more food than the others?
- When things started to go wrong, some of the crew suggested that some rules were needed. Do you agree? Why? What do rules do? Make a list of the benefits of having some rules in this situation. Are there any disadvantages of having rules? (Remember there were rules on board the *Merry Molly*.)
- How does the behaviour of Jonas, who used force to get the best food, relate to the discussion of power and authority you had earlier? What do you think is the reason for this kind of bullying behaviour? Is there anything the crew as a whole can do about it?

Thinking things through

- Who should make the rules? Some of the crew wanted to go back to having a leader to tell them what to do. Is this the best thing? Is there a better way to run things on the island now? Make a class list of different ways in which the crew could organise themselves. Think of the advantages and disadvantages of each, then vote on the best one.

Chapter 4

Moral reasoning

- Were some of the crew right to object that, because Nancy was a woman, she could not be a member of the Island Council?
- Why do you think the crew did not want to leave the Captain to the mercy of Jonas? Should they have left Jonas to do what he wanted with Blud? Why did it matter?
- The crew set off thinking they might save the Captain's life. In your opinion, did the Captain deserve this? Think of arguments which might suggest he deserved it and others which could be used to say he did not.
- What should happen to Blud and Jonas now that they have been discovered at the cave with all the treasure? Should they be believed?
- Jonas and Blud have been caught stealing treasure which has already been stolen. Does that make it all right? Who does it belong to?

Thinking things through

- Do you think the crew found the best method of making decisions? What is the difference between electing members to a council and having a system of full democracy (where everybody is involved in making all decisions)?
- Jonas wanted to pay the Captain back for what he had done to him. Was this right? What makes people want to "take the law into their own hands?" Should Jonas accept the decision of the whole crew? Why or why not?

Community building

- Think further about taking the law into your own hands. In what ways does this happen in school, or amongst people you know? Is it generally a good thing to do or not? How would you decide?

- Imagine a friend has just discovered that someone in the class has stolen a pound from him or her. What arguments could you use to persuade them not to take the law into their own hands? You could work on this in pairs.

Chapters 5 and 6

Note: since chapter 5 is very short, it is probably better to discuss it together with chapter 6.

Moral reasoning

- Discovering the treasure caused quite a lot of unrest and disagreement amongst the crew. Would it have been better for the crew if they had not discovered it?
- Nancy felt it wasn't right to take the treasure because it had already been stolen and no one thought Greybeard had been right to steal it in the first place. Do you agree with Nancy? Are the crew as bad as Greybeard? What arguments could you use to persuade Nancy it was all right to take the treasure? Are they good arguments?
- Now that the crew has discovered the stolen treasure, what would be the very best thing that could be done with it?
- Assuming the members of the crew go ahead and take the treasure for themselves, think of all the ways they could share out the treasure. Which would be the best way, do you think?
- Was it right for the crew to steal Greybeard's ship? What arguments can you think of for and against stealing it? You could work in pairs on this and then share your ideas.
- Does the story end fairly, in your opinion? Why do you think so? Would it be a fair punishment for Greybeard and his men to stay on the island for the rest of their lives? Could you think of a more appropriate punishment?
- Was it a bad thing that the crew of the *Merry Molly* didn't take away any of the treasure in the end?
- Now that the crew is at sea again, who should be the captain? What reasons might there be for having a single leader again or should the Council stay in charge?

Thinking things through

- The crew on the island might decide to share out their property equally. What would be the problems of trying to do the same in our society?
- Which is of more value to the crew, the food they found, or the treasure? What makes things valuable? What are the most valuable things in life?
- Why is it that Nancy seems to have more of a conscience than the other members of the crew? What do you think your conscience is and where does it come from? Can you teach your conscience or is it the other way round?
- Is our conscience the best guide to what is right and wrong?

Drama/role play

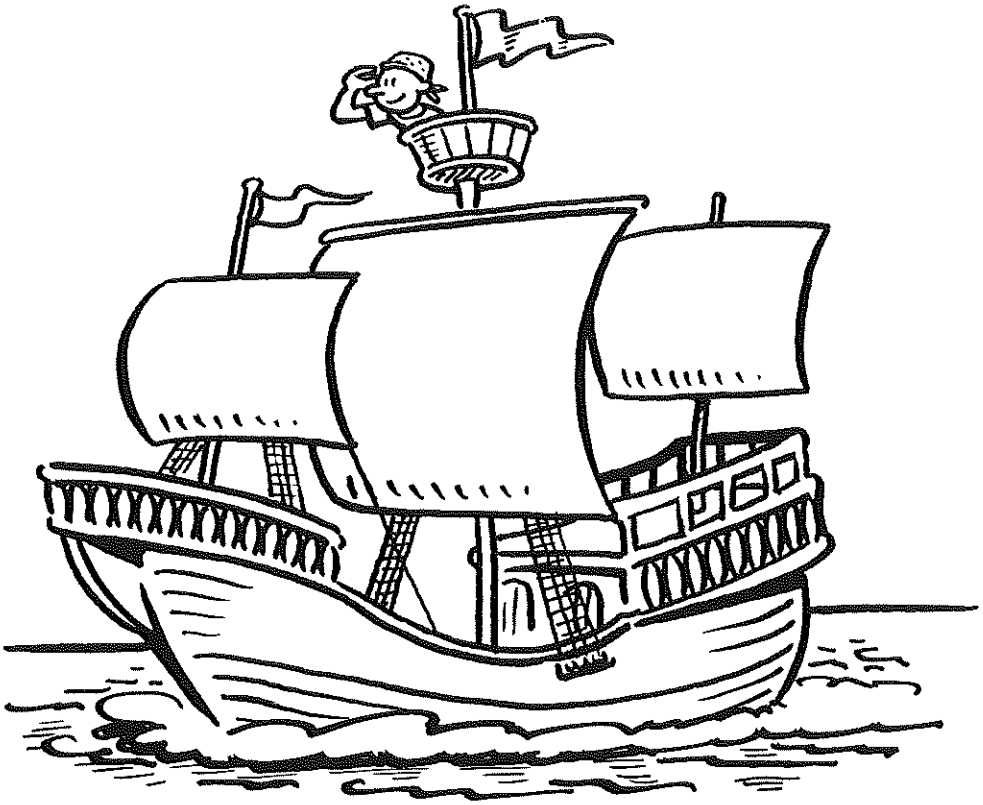
- Put Captain Blud on trial for being a cruel captain. The trial could be conducted as follows.

  Ask two pupils to prepare the case against the Captain. They ask the Captain to explain his behaviour (such as abandoning ship first). They call witnesses against him, using evidence from the story – they must not introduce any new evidence.

  Ask two pupils to prepare a defence for the Captain so that his side of the story is heard. The defence case would be to suggest that the Captain was strict but not cruel. The Captain is questioned so that he can explain and defend his actions. Witnesses can be called to speak for the Captain, if they can be found. Witnesses who spoke against the Captain can be questioned. This would be to suggest they were trying to get their own back on the Captain for some reason, or were lying, or could not remember the facts clearly.

  At the end of the trial both sides make a final speech to the jury, which is the rest of the class. The class could decide a) if the Captain is guilty of cruelty b) what the punishment should be.

Note: the suggested order above is not strictly how a trial is conducted in an English court. With the help of a local police officer or magistrate, it would be possible to run the Captain's trial more accurately.



All at Sea

Chapter 1

The sea was calm and a mist hung in the morning air. On board the *Merry Molly*, the crew were fed up. With only a very light wind, they had been travelling so slowly that they had not seen land for weeks.

Captain Blud came on deck and called to the crew to gather round.

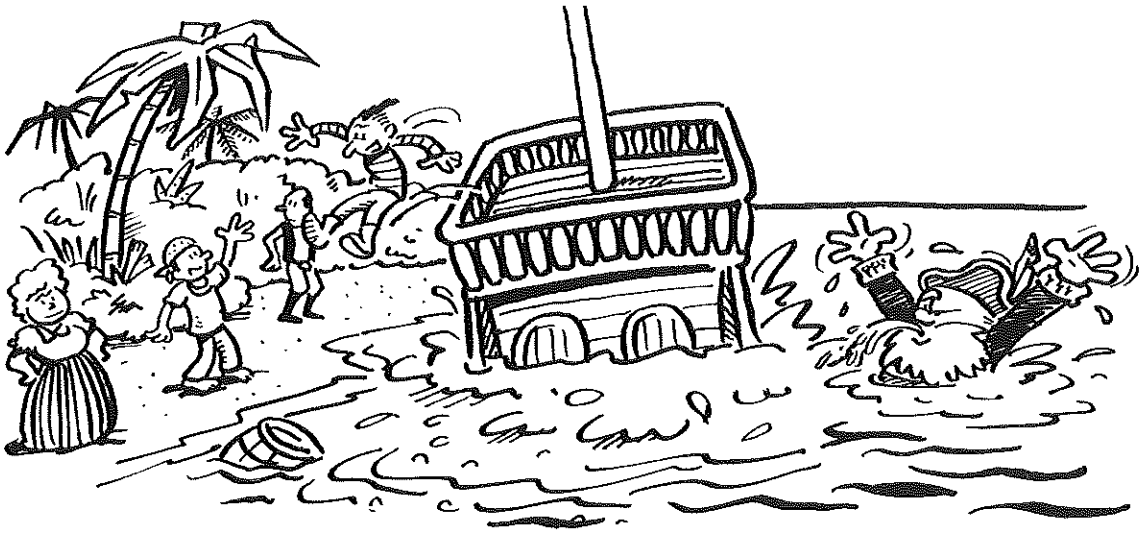
"Now listen, everyone," he said. "I know you're bored with this voyage, but I just wanted to say that I'm sure we shall be getting somewhere soon – I hope."

"Can I ask where we are, Captain?" said Jim, the first mate.

"No, you can't," replied Captain Blud, sternly. "We are at sea and that's all you need to know. When I think you need to know more than that I will tell you." A low murmur went round the crew. Then Nancy, the ship's cook, spoke up.

"Are we lost, sir?" she asked. Of all the crew, Nancy was the one most able to speak her mind in front of the Captain.

"Lost? Certainly not!" replied the Captain. "Why do you think we could be lost? Don't you trust me? Hmmm?" Nobody spoke. "WELL," bawled the Captain. "DO YOU TRUST ME, OR DON'T YOU?" His fat body quivered with anger.



Suddenly, there was a grinding noise and the ship lurched to one side throwing the crew into a heap against the rails.

"Land Ho!" called Amos, the ship's lookout, from under a pile of sailors.

"You fool", shouted the Captain, "why didn't you see the land coming? That's your job!"

"Because I was on deck, sir," whined the unhappy Amos. "You told everyone to gather on deck."

"Everyone except you, I meant!" roared the Captain.

"Then why didn't you say so?" Amos muttered. "How was I supposed to know? Nobody tells me anything on this ship. I've been stuck up on top of the mast in the crow's nest for three weeks, day and night. I've hardly spoken to anyone and there's nothing to look at except sea – when it's not misty, that is. I've had enough!"

Captain Blud's face grew purple and he seemed to pause as if making up his mind what horrible punishment to inflict on poor Amos. But before he managed to speak, there was a loud gurgling sound and the ship began to move ... downwards.

"We're sinking!" shouted Jim. "Abandon ship!"

"How dare you give the orders," shouted the captain at Jim. "Who's the captain around here? Come back you men, where do you think you're going? I haven't told anyone to abandon ship."

"But Captain," said Nancy calmly, "you can't swim and the water is up to your ankles."

"HELP!", cried the Captain. "ABANDON SHIP! CAPTAINS FIRST!"

He raced to the side of the ship and jumped overboard to where he thought the lifeboat would be. There was a huge splash as the captain hit the water and disappeared under the waves. The crew held their breath in fear, each one thinking about what the captain would do to them if he ever came up again. A few bubbles rose to the surface where he had hit the water and then suddenly, like a great whale, the Captain rose out of the water, blowing a tremendous fountain of water into the air.

As if they were one person, the crew turned round and ran to the other side of the ship. In no time at all they were

over the side. But instead of a series of splashes, all that could be heard was 'plop', 'plop', 'plop' as each one hit a bank of soft sand.

What luck! They had been shipwrecked on a desert island, in the middle of the ocean ... with the captain!

Chapter 2

When the mist eventually lifted, the crew of the *Merry Molly* looked around them. It was true, they were on a desert island. How large it was they could not see from the beach where they had landed. Their poor ship, with a huge hole in its side, was lying wrecked at one end of the beach, where a number of large rocks jutted out into the sea.

"Now, men, listen here all of you," called Captain Blud, standing on a chest which had been rescued from the ship. He still wore his hat, but its huge feather, of which he had been so proud, was broken and limp. Beside the feather a dead fish peeped out over the hat's rim. To make matters worse, the Captain's coat and trousers were lying over a bush to dry and he did not look quite so important standing there in his vest and pants.

"I said, gather round, you men, to receive your new orders!" he repeated. For a moment no one moved, then slowly they got up and moved towards the Captain. "Now, listen here," he went on, "we've struck a rock on this island and ... um ... we're stuck here – for a while."

"Only a while, Captain?" asked the first mate, Jim.

"Well, I'm sure we'll get off somehow ... fairly soon. Anyway the first thing to do is to build some shelters." The crew agreed. "The first one will be for me, a separate one for Nancy, and then you can build a great big one for you all to share." The crew felt that was not such a good idea, but no one was brave enough to say so. Just at that moment a bird flying overhead spotted the fish in the rim of the Captain's hat and flew down to steal it. This greatly alarmed the Captain who flapped his arms in panic and his hat slipped softly to the sands. The crew could see the Captain for what he was now – a small man with a bulging tummy, going

bald. A man frightened of a bird.

At that moment, Amos, the ship's lookout, spoke up. He was angry.

"Why should you have more than us?" he demanded. "Is this your island?"

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?" roared the captain, the way he always had on the ship. "I'M THE CAPTAIN HERE, AND YOU WILL OBEY ORDERS!" He was going red in the face. "Arrest that man, I'll have you flogged!"

But a change had come over Amos. "You blamed me for not spotting that rock, but it wasn't my fault. It was your fault we were lost. You didn't know where we were – that's why we hit this island. You can't blame me for this mess." There was silence except for the sound of the waves lapping on the shore and the sound of the crew's teeth rattling with fear.

"ARREST HIM!" roared Captain Blud, going as red as the sound of his name. But no one moved.

"There's the real villain," shouted Amos, pointing to the Captain. "He can't hide behind his big hat and his feather now. If he stays our leader, we'll never get away from here. I say, *he's* the man to arrest!"

"YEAH!" cheered the men, and in no time at all three or four of the crew had forced the Captain's hands behind his back and were tying him up with their neck scarves.

"What now?" said the men to the rest of the crew. "String him up!" shouted one. "Kill him!," cried someone else, "he deserves to die."

"Wait!" cried Jim above the noise. "Perhaps killing is too good for him. Why put him out of his misery? Let's make him suffer like he made us all suffer. Did he care about you, or me? He only ever cared about himself."

"There is another way of looking at it," said Nancy stepping up. "The captain can't hurt anyone now. Wouldn't it be better to give him the chance to make up for the past? What's the point of revenge? He could work for the rest of us. In fact, since he likes food so much, why not make him the cook?"

It was an idea no one could resist.

Chapter 3

Later that day, the same day of the wreck, the crew were beginning to feel hungry. Soon, it would be night. No one had found food and nothing had been done about where to sleep. A few of the crew had wandered off to look around, others were lying on the beach, just glad to be free from being forced to work all the time.

Jim, who now thought he should probably take charge, suggested that a few of the men should go to the wreck of the ship to see what they could rescue.

"We might even find something to eat," he said. One or two of the men brightened at this thought and agreed to go. As they were about to leave, Jim said to the rest of the crew: "While we're gone, why not see if you can make some sort of shelter for us to sleep in tonight – in case the weather turns bad."

"Aye, aye," said Amos, "I don't mind, but only if the rest of them give a hand. Look at them lying around." But the others were not very keen to help.

"You can't make us work," said one. "There's no Captain now, is there, Blud?" Everyone looked at the man who had been their captain. He was trying to build a fire, in case there was ever any chance of cooking something. Blud said nothing and kept working. He knew what those men might do to him if he stopped.

Nancy agreed to help Amos look for a place where they could shelter and they went off. After a while, Jim and his party arrived back from the wreck.

"Hey, you men," he called, "look what we've found. The ship is breaking up but we found the captain's private store of food." Greedily all the men on the beach leapt up and made a grab at what had been found. There was meat, fish, fruit, and all kinds of things that had not been seen since they had left port. A fight broke out between two of the men over a large piece of salt beef. Jim broke it up.

"Hold back, you two," he ordered. "You're trying to grab this food and you did nothing to help find it or bring it back." One of the men, whose name was Jonas and who had a reputation for being rough with people he didn't like, had hold of the meat.

"Don't tell me what to do, Mister mate," he growled nastily. "I'm hungry. I've got this here meat and I'm keeping it – unless anyone wants to take it off me." It seemed that no one was willing to try. Jonas sat down and deliberately started to eat the meat in front of the others, staring at them in defiance all the while.

When Nancy and Amos got back, they knew something had happened. Jonas and two of his mates were some way off with a pack of food, whilst the rest of the party had eaten the remains of what had been brought from the ship.

"We found somewhere which could easily make a good shelter for all of us," Amos announced. "It's a cave up on the high ground. It's a strange looking cave, with a mouth shaped like a heart."

"But there's not much food around up there," added Nancy, "except for some disgusting berries."

When Nancy heard that the men had not been able to share out the food properly and that nothing had been saved for her and Amos, she was furious.

"We can't go on like this," she stormed. "We've only been on this island for a few hours and things have started to go wrong. We'll never survive if we don't work out how to share out the work and the food – and anything else we might find. What we need are some rules." Jim knew Nancy was talking sense.

"That's all very well," he said, "but how are we going to decide the rules – and what happens if someone breaks them?"

"Perhaps it would be better if we had a leader – at least we would know what to do," said one of the crew.

"What?" said Jim, "we've only just got rid of one. Do we want another? What is to stop a leader being unfair?"

"But at least you don't get chaos," said the first man. "Perhaps chaos is worse."

Chapter 4

It was beginning to get dark and the crew of the *Merry Molly* were still arguing about how to organise themselves. It was clear there had to be some rules but who would make them? Someone suggested Jim, as first mate, should take charge. He was liked by most and was a fair man, although he had a fierce temper when roused. One of Jonas' friends, a man called Tom, said he thought the new leader should be the best fighter – that way you could make sure everyone obeyed the rules. Not many of the crew believed that Jonas would make the best leader, though no one wanted to say so. There was an awkward silence.

Then Nancy said: "Why not have a council, with three or four members? That would be fairer. That way, no one person could take over." Most of the men agreed and they had soon decided to vote for three people.

"Can we vote for anyone?" asked Amos, "even the Captain?" A great roar went up, "No! Never!"

"Well what about Nancy?" suggested Jim. "Nancy's a woman," objected Tom. "You can't have women leaders. It ain't right."

"What do you know about what's right, Tom?" Jim replied, "Nancy talks more sense in her sleep than you do wide awake." The men laughed and Tom snarled.

The darkness fell quickly. In the gloom no one noticed Blud creep away from the fire into the cover of the bushes. No one, that is, except Jonas, who saw a chance to get rid of the man

he hated most in the world. Jonas decided to follow and, bit by bit, edged away from the group after his prey.

When he reached the bushes at the top of the beach, he was surprised to find that Blud was nowhere to be seen. Under the trees it was much darker. Just then the crack of a stick up ahead told Jonas that Blud was heading in the direction of the rising ground. He ran forward as quietly as he could. After a few minutes, the trees began to clear and just ahead of him Jonas saw Blud at the mouth of a cave. He saw at once that the mouth of the cave was in the shape of a heart.

Jonas stayed hidden behind a tree and called out, "Blud!" Blud stopped dead in his tracks. There was a look of terror on his face, which was clear even in the half light. Blud looked all around but he could not tell where the voice had come from.

"Who is it?" he called. "What do you want?"

"I want you, Blud," came the voice through the trees. "Your time has come to pay for all those years you treated your crew like dirt."

"I didn't really mean it," croaked the ex-Captain. "We had to have discipline. We had to have law and order." The Captain was edging backwards into the cave as he spoke, his whole body shaking.

"You had me flogged for stealing a ship's biscuit," Jonas' voice went on, "and I wasn't the only one. I want revenge, Blud. They should have strung you up on the beach. Well, if they won't do it, I will." And Jonas slowly stepped out into the clearing.

"No, wait, Jonas," said the captain as Jonas grasped him by the throat, lifting him off the ground. "Listen to me. If you let me go, I can make you rich beyond your dreams."

"LIAR," shouted Jonas, thrusting Blud's head back against the cave wall.

Blud could barely speak and the veins stood out in his neck and temples as Jonas tightened his grip.

"It's true," he croaked. "Let me speak." Jonas relaxed his grip just enough.

Blud took a deep breath. "This cave," he said, "it's got a heart shaped mouth. This is the cave Nancy and Amos found earlier. I heard them talking about it."

"What of it?" snarled Jonas.

"I've heard of this cave," Blud went on. "There's a saying –

He who finds the cave with the heart,
From the treasure of Greybeard, no more will part.

We've accidentally found the island where Greybeard stores his treasure."

"So you thought you would sneak away to steal it, did you?" Jonas demanded.

"No," said Blud, "I thought that if I found the treasure for them, the crew would make me captain again. As it is, I suggest you and I share it out between us."

"But you said Nancy and Amos have already found this cave," snorted Jonas.

"But they don't know there's treasure hidden inside," said Blud, getting his voice back. "Wouldn't they have said something if they'd found it?"

"True," said Jonas, his eyes brightening, "that means you and me are the only ones who know ... so why don't I kill you now and take it all for myself?"

Blud swallowed hard and thought quickly, "Er ... because if they think this is a good place to shelter, they'll be here before long. We've got to find the treasure and move it somewhere else, fast. That means both of us." That was enough for Jonas. He dropped Blud like a stone and ran into the cave at full speed, tripping over an outcrop of rock in the darkness. Blud was kissing the ground and weeping, happy to be still alive. When he heard the crash, he found some dead grass and wood in the entrance to the cave and set fire to it, making a torch. This gave them the light they needed and what they saw beneath the dancing flame, made their hearts pound.

"We're truly rich, Jonas," Blud whispered, "and now there's not a second to lose."

Back on the beach, the crew had finally settled things. Sitting around the fire in the evening light, they felt pleased with themselves. Jim, Nancy and Amos had been elected as the council of leaders and the talk was now of what to do the following day to run things properly. The fire was beginning to die down.

Suddenly, someone noticed that Blud, who had been tending the fire, was not there. Different voices were saying "He's gone!" "Where is he?" "Let's get him".

But Jim said: "Well he can't get far, he can't get off the island. I suggest we leave it till the morning and search for him then."

Then Tom called out: "Jonas is gone as well. Maybe he went after him. If he catches Blud, he'll kill him."

They decided to split into two parties to search for Blud and Jonas and then to meet at the cave Nancy and Amos had found for the night which was on the rising ground towards the centre of the island.

Half an hour later, it was almost dark as Jim's party approached the cave. Moving quietly through the undergrowth they rose higher and higher. Up ahead, Nancy noticed a glimmer of light. Suddenly, it disappeared.

"It could be Blud," said Jim. "Let's surprise him." Making no noise at all, the party spread out and came to the edge of the small clearing, around the mouth of the cave. There was no sign of the light and no sound at all. Just as they thought they must be mistaken, the light flashed into view again as Blud and Jonas came from the back of the cave. They were arm in arm and draped everywhere with priceless jewellery.

"Well, well, well," said Jim, stepping into the clearing. "This is a sight I didn't think I'd see." Out from the bushes stepped ten more of the crew. There was a brief silence as Blud and Jonas stood there, discovered in the act.

"Shipmates," cried Jonas, "We've got good news for all of ye! We're all rich!"

Chapter 5

The following morning, the whole crew was arguing about what to do with the treasure which had been discovered the night before. They had emptied the contents of the cave and brought it down to the beach where they had landed the day before. They were wildly excited because no one suspected that some of the treasure had been hidden somewhere else by Blud and Jonas. By the time they were discovered at the cave, they had already removed thousands of pounds worth of gold and hidden it in a hole under a huge rock near the cave.

The crew couldn't decide what to do with Greybeard's money. How should they share it out? Should everyone get an equal share? Should those who found it get more? What about those who might need more money when they got back to England?

"What's the point of all this money, when there's nothing to spend it on?" said Amos gloomily. "I'd much rather have something to eat, at the moment." Nancy was uneasy about the whole thing.

She said: "I'm not sure it's right to take this gold, anyway. It's still stealing and that makes us no better than Greybeard himself." But no one else seemed to agree.

Blud and Jonas said nothing. Things were going well for them. The crew had believed Blud's story about recognising Greybeard's cave and checking for them. As things stood, they might get a share of what was on the beach, AND be able to pick up the hidden loot later.

Suddenly Amos called out: "Look there's a ship on the horizon." It was true. Coming into view was a ship in full sail. Some of the men began to wave and cheer, jumping up and down to try to attract the ship's attention, even though it was still very far off.

"I suggest we're careful until we know who's on that ship. I've got a feeling about it," said Jim. "Let's take cover until we know what it's doing."

As the ship grew nearer, Jim was more and more certain it was a pirate. There were guns bristling from the side and no flag was flying. Whilst it was still half a mile off, the ship appeared to be changing course so as to pass by the island. The men sighed with relief but Blud had a thought.

"That could be Greybeard's ship and he could be planning to anchor on the other side of the island, out of the wind." There was panic at the thought that Greybeard and his men would soon set foot on the island. For certain they would go to the cave, and discover the theft.

"Let's put it all back, quick," suggested Amos. No one waited to take a vote – it was the quickest decision they had made since landing. Everyone began scooping up armfuls of the treasure and running up the beach to get to the cave before Greybeard and his men. But would they be in time?

Chapter 6

It was a sorry sight seeing the crew of the *Merry Molly* crashing through the trees, tripping over creepers and each other in their desperation. Each time someone fell, some of the treasure fell from his hands or his pockets so that by the time they all arrived at the mouth of the cave there was very little left. Most of it was lying on the forest floor, stretching back along the way they had come. Some bracelets and necklaces were even dangling from bushes and glinting in the morning sun like the fruit of a mythical tree.

"This is disastrous," whined Blud, "we're finished, finished. We're as good as dead. No hope. Our lives are over." And he fell on his knees and clasped his hands together, as if in prayer.

"Oh do shut up," said Jim, "you never were any good in a crisis. Now listen everyone, I've had an idea, which might just save us. What will Greybeard and his men do when they find their treasure spread all over the wood?"

"Kill us all in the most horrible way imaginable!" wailed Blud. By now, the tears were streaming down his cheeks and collecting in the creases of fat under his chin.

"Be quiet," shouted Jim, "or I'll be tempted to kill you myself. Now where was I? Oh yes, what'll happen when Greybeard gets to the cave?"

"Well," said Nancy, "they'll see the treasure spread everywhere and start collecting it up, I suppose."

"Exactly," said Jim. Amos could see what was in Jim's mind.

"Then they'll think that the thieves made off in the direction of our beach," he said, "spilling the treasure as they ran. So they will follow the direction they think the thieves went."

"You're right," said Jim, "and when they do that we'll head in the other direction. Listen! If I'm not mistaken that could be them approaching now. Now follow me, all of you, and don't make a sound. Our lives depend on it."

Jim led the crew off into the undergrowth so that in a few minutes they were well hidden in a spot from which they could just see the mouth of the cave through the leaves.

They were only just in time. Through the trees, they heard voices approaching, laughing and singing pirate songs, just as fierce pirates are supposed to do. But when they reached the cave they soon stopped singing. A howl of rage went up from

their leader, Greybeard himself, which set all the crew of the *Merry Molly* quaking just to hear it. The pirates began to gather up the scattered booty. Then, just as Jim had predicted, they began to follow the trail of treasure away from the cave and their voices faded to nothing.

"Right," said Jim, "I suggest we follow their trail back to their ship. All in favour?"

"Aye, aye," they chorused (very quietly) and in just a few minutes they were at the edge of the trees and then were running across the open sand towards two rowing boats pulled up on the beach.

"What luck," shouted Amos, "there's no one guarding the boats." Neither was there any one guarding the ship because none of the pirates had wanted to be left on board whilst the others went off for the treasure.

As soon as the crew of the *Merry Molly* were on board, they knew exactly what to do, without being told. Some went to the anchor and began hauling it up whilst others went up the masts to unfurl the sails. As the sails dropped, they began to fill with wind and the ship moved slowly away towards the deeper water.

As the ship rounded the headland, the wreck of the *Merry Molly* came into view and the crew could see Greybeard look up in astonishment at the sight of his own ship sailing away. How they cheered as they watched Greybeard throw his hat to the sand and jump on it. Then he threw one of his men to the sand and jumped on him.

"He stole all that treasure, now he can enjoy it for the rest of his life," laughed Amos.

"I'm glad we've left the treasure behind us," said Nancy, serious for a moment.

Blud looked at the happy crew.

"So it all turned out well, after all," he said. "We can get back to normal now, can't we?"

"Yes, we can," said Nancy, "we certainly can."

"Right then," said Blud, who was still in his vest and pants and beginning to feel cold in the stiffening breeze. "I'll just go and find one of Greybeard's spare uniforms."

"Yes, and when you've done that," said Nancy, "you can start cooking the dinner."

A problem for Mr and Mrs Shah

Key ideas

- shoplifting as a crime
- victims of crime
- consequences of crime
- punishment

This story is about shoplifting and its consequences both for the shopkeeper and the people involved. Mr Shah runs a corner store near a school and becomes aware that some of the children are regularly stealing sweets from him. His problem is what to do about the problem. On the one hand, he would like the children to stop stealing. He has no wish to see them develop bad habits and besides, he is losing money regularly because of the thefts. On the other hand, he realises that children often do not think clearly about their actions and is fairly understanding, at least to the point of not wishing to get the children into serious trouble.

Stealing from shops is one of the commonest forms of crime involving children and young people. For whatever reason they do it, they often have too little regard for the consequences of their actions and this story is really designed to help them understand that on the receiving end even of minor shoplifting offences are real people who feel the effects.

Below are some of the issues you could explore arising from this story. Remember to ask the children if they would like to raise any issues of their own for discussion.

Moral reasoning

- Why is Mr Shah worried? Is he right to be worried, in your opinion?
- Do you agree with Mrs Shah that shoplifting in a small way can lead to bad habits? What does this mean and how might it happen?
- Most people agree that shoplifting is wrong but they might give different reasons for believing this. Work in pairs or small groups to think of as many reasons as you can why shoplifting is wrong. Share your ideas with the class and see how many reasons you can come up with in all. Pick out what you

think are the best reasons as to why shoplifting is wrong. Which reason does the class as a whole think is the best reason?

- Think of all the choices open to Mr Shah. What do you think would be the best thing for him to do?
- What would be the best thing that could happen to the children, in your opinion?
- Mr Shah is not keen to see the children punished. Mrs Shah believes they should be punished. Who do you agree with and why?
- Mr Shah has always been kind and friendly to all the children in the shop. Why do you think some of them are stealing from him? Are they being unkind or ungrateful to Mr Shah personally?
- Would it be fair if Mr Shah stopped selling sweets altogether? Who would it be unfair to? Can you think of other examples where crime (eg stealing cars) unfairly causes problems for innocent people?
- Does the local school have any kind of duty to do anything in this situation, in your opinion? Why? What can schools do in situations like this?
- What arguments might you use to persuade the boys in this story that what they were doing was wrong? Write them down and compare your arguments with those of others. Which do you think they might listen to?

Thinking things through

- There is an old saying "Spare the rod and spoil the child". What do you think this means and how much do you agree with it? Have a class debate on discipline – is it necessary and what is the best kind of discipline?
- Thinking about wrong-doing in general, draw up a list of things we should take into account when considering whether an action is wrong. In other words, how do we know if something is wrong? Make a list of the things we might look for.
- Do you think that children who "get away with" one kind of crime are more likely to commit other kinds of crime? Why do you think this?
- Why do you think stealing is so common? How serious a problem is it generally, in your opinion?
- If Jimmy Spicer claimed that he was stealing from the shop because he was hungry in the morning, would that be a reason or an excuse for his action?

What do you think is the difference between a reason and an excuse?

- Here is a list of statements: are they *reasons* or *excuses*?

  "I'm sorry I'm late, Miss, I couldn't find my homework."

  "I'm sorry I'm late, Miss, I've been to the dentist."

  "I admit I stole the pen from the shop. I didn't have anything to write with."

  "I admit I stole the pen from the shop. My friend told me to do it."

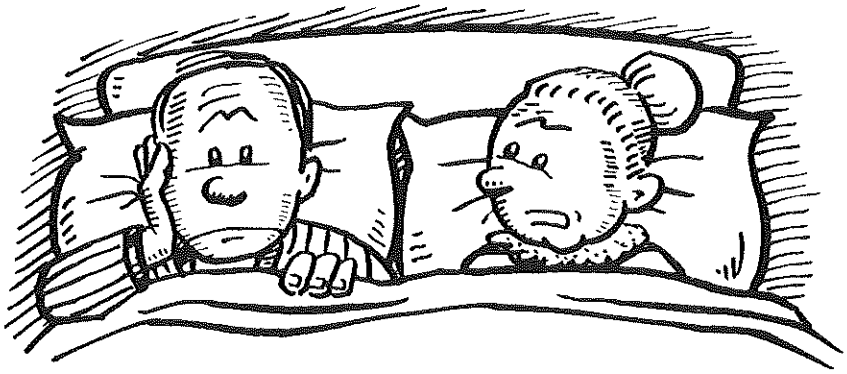
  "Yes, I was speeding, officer, my wife is having a baby and I have to get her to the hospital urgently."

  "Yes, I was speeding, officer, I was late for work."

  Try making up some of your own.

Community building

- Have you or your family ever been affected by theft? Share your experiences. How do you think it feels to be the innocent victim of a crime?
- Find out how much of a problem stealing is to the school as a whole. In what way is the life of the school affected by stealing?
- How do you think people in your local community are affected by stealing? Is it a lot or a little? You could invite a local police officer to talk to you about the extent of stealing in your area. In what ways are people affected by it?



A Problem for Mr and Mrs Shah

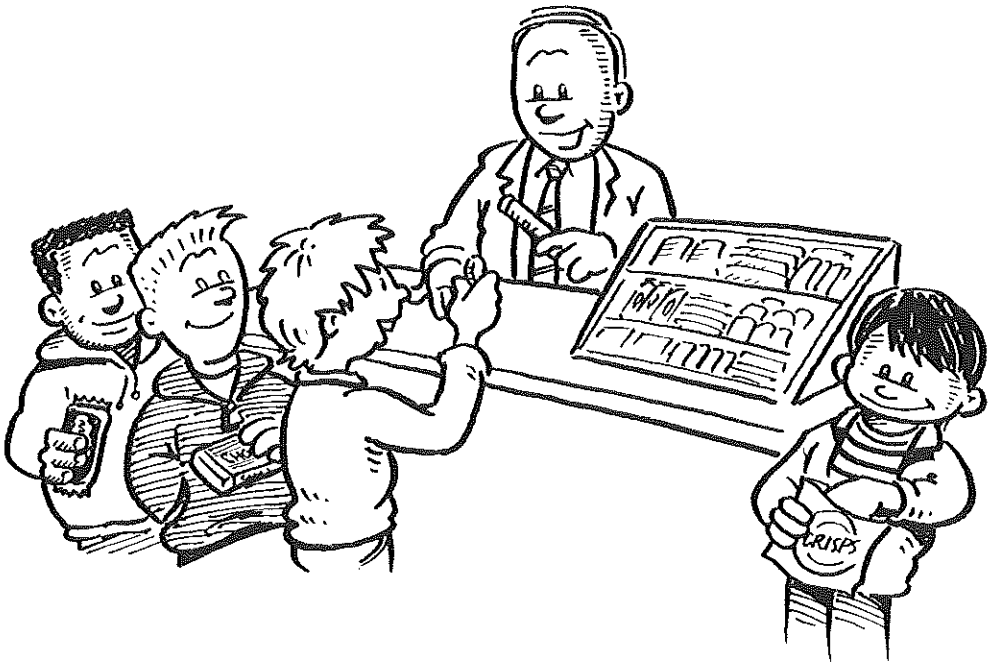
Mr Shah could not sleep. He was worried. His wife said he was always worrying about something. This was true but this time Mr Shah thought it was serious.

The trouble was that their shop was on the corner of Downham Road, right next to Downham Road Primary School and every day children came in to buy sweets, crisps, drinks and toys to take to school. Then, in the summer, they came in again on the way home for ice creams and more drinks.

"Where they get the money from, I don't know," he used to say to his wife, shaking his head. But Mr Shah was a good shopkeeper and he had a knack of knowing just what his children would like, so that year by year the amount the children spent went up and up.

At the wholesalers, he would stand and look at a new range of sweets and say: "Yes, my children will like those." He always called them 'his children'. And to this day he has never made a wrong choice.

So why was Mr Shah so worried? His worry had been growing for a long time. He had a problem in the shop and he did not know what to do about it. As he lay awake in bed, it



went over and over in his head. He tossed and turned and eventually woke his wife.

"What's the matter, dear?" she said.

"It's my children," he said.

"They're not your children," said Mrs Shah. "Let their parents worry about them. Go back to sleep."

"It's not as simple as that. Some of the children are stealing from the shop." Suddenly Mrs Shah was awake.

"What?" she said, sitting up and switching on the light. "How do you know?"

"I see them, that's how I know," Mr Shah said. "I watch them doing it."

"All of them?" said his wife. "You watch them?"

"It's not all of them, of course. Most of the children are perfectly honest. It's just a few."

"Well then, if you know who it is, you can tell the police, can't you?" Mrs Shah protested.

"That's just it," Mr Shah replied, his voice rising, "I don't want to involve the police. I don't want to get these children into that kind of trouble."

"But if they're stealing from us, they deserve to get into trouble. I'm going to call the police myself, right now."

"Calm down, my dear, it's four o'clock in the morning. The police

won't thank you if you call them now. Besides it's not such a lot of money."

"But it is to us," insisted Mrs Shah. "This is how we earn our living. How would they like it if people were stealing from *their* parents? That is money stolen from their family."

"One or two of them don't have any money," said Mr Shah thoughtfully. "I know young Jimmy Spicer gets no breakfast in the morning."

"But that still doesn't make it right to steal," Mrs Shah insisted. "I would rather *give* him a packet of crisps than have him steal them. He is going to get into bad habits."

Mr Shah was quiet for a moment. "I suppose we could stop selling the stuff the children come in for," he said. "At least then I wouldn't have to worry about the problem."

"And would you be happy then?" said his wife, looking at her husband's troubled face. He looked at her. She knew what his answer would be.

"I'd hate it," he said.

Making Choices

The theft laws are the ones most commonly broken. Crimes against property comprise about 95 per cent of all criminal activity.

The exercises below encourage pupils to consider more deeply some of the issues relating to owning and stealing property. They should not be used to promote a feeling that there are right and wrong answers, but to expand pupils' awareness of the choices they face in such situations and to understand better the possible consequences of their actions.

Give out the situation cards and ask the children to work in small groups to answer the questions for each situation. Encourage wide discussion before they come to a decision. (It might be useful to do the first one altogether.) When the groups have finished, bring the class together to discuss their findings. Encourage as careful thought as possible. Use cues such as: "Why do you think that?" "Is that fair on *X*?" "Does *A* have any kind of duty towards *B*?"

Decision-making exercises

1 Two or three friends are walking home from school one day and find a purse. It is old and battered. Inside is a £5 note and a few coins. There is no name but there is a photograph of a little girl.

What choices do they have? What should they do?

2 Kim has just been given £5 by a relation. She and her best friend Nadia decide to go to the shops and buy lots of sweets, crisps and drink to have a good time. Just as they come out of the shop they are met by Tajwinder, who has just joined their class. Kim feels she ought to invite her along but she would prefer to keep all the goodies to herself and Nadia.

What choices does Kim have? What should she do?

3 Out shopping one day in the supermarket, Clement noticed an old lady putting a tin of baked beans into her bag, not her trolley.

What choices does Clement have? What should he do?

4 Professor Smith is a famous archaeologist and is in Egypt looking for the treasure of Tootuncatman. Late one day, he and his assistant Karl find a tomb full of valuable remains. The professor decides to wait until the morning to begin unpacking it. In the night, Karl goes into the chamber. He knows that if

he were to take and sell any one of these pieces, he could be rich. The professor would never know. He could use the money to send to his parents who depend on him.

What are Karl's choices? What should he do?

5 Andy suspects his older brother Ken is stealing from the local shops, along with some of his friends. He doesn't want to get him into trouble but neither does he want Ken to be a thief. The longer it goes on, the worse things could become.

What are Andy's choices? What should he do?

6 Class 5R are going on a school trip to a stately home as part of their history project. The trip is for two days and it will cost £20 each. Miss Rose knows that some of the children are finding it hard to pay for the trip. Dipika's parents are not well off because her father is out of work. Miriam's parents could not pay for the trip but Miriam earnt the money by washing her neighbour's car for weeks. She saved up everything she earnt for two months to pay for the trip. The other children seemed to have no trouble in paying for the trip.

One week before the trip, after everyone had paid, Miss Rose received £50 towards the trip from a school governor. The governor says she can use it how she likes. There are 25 children in the class.

What choices does Miss Rose have? What should she do?

7 Mr Samuels catches Luther stealing scissors from a school stock cupboard. This is the first time Luther has been caught but there has been an increase in the amount of stuff stolen from school lately and Mr Samuels wants to stamp it out.

What choices does Mr Samuels have? What should he do?

What's it Worth?

Aims

- to encourage imaginative and empathetic thinking
- to encourage understanding that people may place great value on items of little monetary worth
- to stimulate discussion about values.

It is best if the game is played in groups of three. (It may also be played in groups of two, four or five players.)

Photocopy the cards and cut them out. Put 'person' cards and 'item' cards in separate envelopes. Give out one set of each per group. It might help if they are copied onto different colour card.

Before play begins, shuffle the two sets of cards and place them in two piles face down.

For groups of three

There should be two players and one judge.

Each player takes a card from the top of the **Person** set and looks at it. (It should be placed face up in front of the player.)

The judge takes ONE card from the **Item** set and turns it over so everyone can see the item.

The players take it in turns to give a reason why that item may be important (of value) to the person on his or her **Person** card. The players continue giving as many reasons, in turns, as they can think of. The player who can keep on thinking of reasons when it is their turn is awarded the **Item** card by the judge. It is the judge's task to decide if the reasons given are acceptable.

When one item has been awarded, the players take another card each from the **Person** set and the judge shows another **Item** card. Play continues until all the **Item** cards have been used up.

For groups of two, four or five players

In pairs do without judge – players have to discuss and agree with each other's reasons.

In fours – work as two pairs or have two judges.

In fives – work as two pairs and have one judge (this works very well).

After the game the teacher and pupils may talk about the nature of the items and the values people have given them. What might people feel if these things are lost or stolen? Share personal experiences of items which people value highly.

Person Cards
(Copy and cut out)

A 10-year-old boy	A police officer (female)
A 10-year-old girl	A farmer
A soldier	A vicar
A builder	A doctor (female)
Man of 35 in a wheelchair	An elderly person
A rich businesswoman	A teacher (female)

Item Cards
(Copy and cut out)

A bunch of flowers	A radio
A teddy bear	A box of chocolates
A pencil and paper	25p
A photograph of a child	A wedding ring
A penknife	A £5 note
A book	A car