

VALUE LINE CRIME - SENTENCE CONTINUUM

- **Objective:** This value line is intended to demonstrate different perspectives on crime and to help students become better advocates.

- **Instructions:** Prepare a value line with two extremes: on one end pin a card up that says “**Lenient**”; and, on the opposite end, pin a card up that says “**Severe**”. Also, prepare two sets of cards that list the various crimes you will discuss. Divide the class into two groups and give each group a list of the crimes they are to consider. Have the groups spend a few minutes reading the crimes and then, on the back of the card, mark where on the line the crime should go.

Crime List 1

1. **Drunk Driving.** Joey, a big family man who supported three kids and his mother-in-law, was convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol. Joey had never been charged for any other crime. In addition to working at a local factory during the day, Joey drove a cab at night to earn extra money so his kids would be able to go to college. On the night Joey was arrested, he had been out celebrating his 25th wedding anniversary. Although he and his wife seldom drank, they had a tradition of drinking the same kind of champagne every year on their anniversary. Accordingly, he and his wife shared a bottle that night. While driving home, Joey was pulled over because one of his tail-lights was out (unbeknownst to him some hoodlums had kicked it out). The police officer smelled alcohol on Joey's breath. Joey was arrested for driving with a blood alcohol level of .10%, two-one-hundredths above the legal limit.
2. **Drug Possession.** Thelma, an eighteen-year-old dropout, was arrested for possession of twenty-grams of cocaine. Thelma, the oldest child from a wealthy family with three children, had been a rebel her whole life. Even though her family had tried thousands of dollars of therapy and given her everything she wanted, she got into trouble at a very young age and eventually ran away from home. She had previously been in juvenile detention fifteen times for drug related offenses. In order to support her habit, she sold drugs. She found that it was easiest to start at grade schools where she would give young kids, usually seven to ten years old, free drugs to get them hooked and then force them to buy from her or be hurt. She was arrested in her car at a junior high school where she was waiting to sell to some of her recruited clientele.
3. **Rape.** Jack was the star basketball player and a student-body officer at Clarence Thomas High School. Sarah attended the same school and had a "reputation" for being especially physical. Sarah was the first girl to ask Jack to the annual Girl's choice dance. Although Jack was also asked by another girl he really liked, he said he would go with Sarah because she asked him first. Jack had never had sex and believed that he should wait until he was married or at least close to it. After the dance, Sarah took Jack to a favorite "parking" spot and proceeded to make advances toward Jack. Soon they were engaged in heavy kissing, and one thing soon led to another. In the heat of passion, Sarah suddenly yelled stop and that she didn't want to go any further. Jack, however, claimed he was too caught up in the passion and proceeded to go further despite some resistance from Sarah. The next day Jack felt terrible and sent Sarah a dozen roses and a note apologizing for his behavior. Soon after he ordered the roses, however, the police came to his door and arrested him for first degree rape.

Crime List 2

1. **Drunk Driving.** Joey, a long-time alcoholic who had recently had his driver's license revoked for drunk driving, was arrested for driving under the influence. After a day-long sojourn at a favorite bar, Joey got in his car to drive home. Throughout the drive home, Joey ignored all traffic lights and speed signs. Six blocks away from his home, Joey sharply turned a corner and failed to see Johnny, a young 14-year-old boy pushing his 3-year-old little sister, Cindy, across the street in a stroller. The two children were in the cross walk and the light was in their direction. Joey's car slammed into both Johnny and Cindy throwing Cindy over the car and immediately killing Johnny. Joey was unaware of what happened and thought he had just hit a tree branch. Accordingly, he put the car into reverse and ran back over Cindy, killing her. Joey was arrested and found to have a blood-alcohol level of .10%, two-one-hundredths over the legal limit.
2. **Drug Possession.** Thelma, a 16-year-old junior at John Stockton High School, was convicted of possession of twenty-grams of cocaine. Thelma was the oldest child in a family of twelve children. She desperately wanted to go to college but knew her family could not afford to send her, and although her grades were good, they weren't good enough to get her a scholarship. So, when one of her friends told her about an easy way to make some good money, she was immediately interested. All she had to do was keep some taped shut tupperware containers in her locker for some friends of her friend, and they would pay her \$100 a week. While she knew there were probably drugs in the containers, the offer was too good to pass. Through an anonymous tip, the school police officer searched Thelma's locker and found the drugs. Thelma was arrested and convicted of drug possession.
3. **Rape.** Jack, a convicted sexual offender has just left, without permission, a sexual abuser's treatment center. Within a few days, Jack seeks out a new victim. While in the past he has raped mature women at random, he believes that if he satisfies his violent urges with a child, he will be less likely to be caught. So, he abducts a young nine-year-old girl who comes to his door to sell Girl Scout Cookies. He proceeds to keep her locked up for several days while he repeatedly rapes her. After a few weeks, the girl escapes out a bathroom window and runs home. Her parents immediately take her to the hospital where it is determined that she has contracted Chlamydia, a sexually transmitted disease, and that her uterus has been damaged so that she is unable to have children. Jack is arrested and charged with first degree rape.

VALUE LINE EXERCISE

Question: Should a 17-year-old first-time offender charged with negligent homicide be tried as an adult?

What sentence should the individual receive?

Juvenile
Sanctions

Probation

0-5 years

5-10 years

Death
Sentence

1. Allen, Barbara, and Carlos are seventeen-year-old high school students. The three kids have been friends since they were in elementary school. One day, in an attempt to impress his friends, Allen stole his grandfather's revolver from the locked cabinet at his house and took it to Barbara's house where the three friends met that afternoon. All three of the kids handled the revolver and pretended to shoot one another. Unfortunately, and unknown to the three friends, the gun held one bullet in the cartridge. When Allen pointed the gun at Barbara and Carlos and pulled the trigger, the gun went off, killing Barbara instantly and severely injuring Carlos.
2. Allen, Barbara, and Carlos are seventeen-year-old high school students. The three friends belong to a gang called the Knights. One day, in an attempt to impress the other members of the Knights, Allen stole his grandfather's revolver from the locked cabinet in his house and filled the cartridge with bullets. Allen took the gun with him into his car and down to the 7-11 store where the gang members met. He told the other Knights that "he was going to get one of those dang Lions," one of the members of a rival gang. Allen intended to scare the Lions and to impress his gang friends. Allen drove by a house where a Lion member supposedly lived and shot the full round of bullets into the front window. Unfortunately, the house belonged to a friend of Barbara's and Carlos', and the two kids were sitting in the front room at the time Allen drove by and shot the gun. Barbara was killed instantly and Carlos was severely injured.