

# Law and the Legal System

## Lesson Objectives

- To understand what the role of law is in society
- To distinguish criminal and civil legal systems
- To examine alternative means of resolving disputes



# Why do we need laws?

Think of as many reasons as you can why most societies have laws and a legal system.

- To prevent anti-social and unacceptable behaviour
- To regulate commercial and business transactions
- To identify who should rightfully own property
- To regulate family and personal relationships
- To provide means for citizens to resolve disputes with other citizens

*These are some of the most important but you may have thought of others*

# What is the law concerned with

**Which of the following does the law concern itself with?**

- Going to school
- Helping your parents around the house
- Catching a bus
- Doing a part time job
- Babysitting your younger brother or sister
- Buying goods from a shop
- Surfing the internet

# The distinctions between Civil Law and Criminal Law



**There are basically two types of law:**

Civil law &  
Criminal law

# Civil Law

Civil law is concerned with the rights and duties of citizens in dealings with other citizens

Civil law therefore covers activities such as:

- **Lending and borrowing money**
- **Entering into contracts**
- **Disputes with neighbours**
- **Getting married**
- **Inheritances and wills**



# Criminal Law

Criminal offences are regarded as offences against society

It deals with such matters such as:

## Crimes against the person

- eg murder, assault & rape

## Property crimes

- eg theft, burglary, fraud and vandalism



# Compensation or punishment?

- In **civil law** the courts award **compensation** where someone can prove the other party is in the wrong.
- In **criminal courts** the aim is **to punish** wrongdoers and impose a sentence which prevents them from reoffending



# Conclusion

- Existence of law is very important for all us, because it control life, relationships between countries, companies and people in the legal borders.
- If we not have law, our world rules by anarchy. It is the main reason, which I respect law, although it has many defects.