

МИНИСТЕРСТВО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И НАУКИ РФ
ФЕДЕРАЛЬНОЕ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЕ
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УНИВЕРСИТЕТ»

LAW AND SOCIETY

Учебно-методическое пособие для вузов

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UNIT 1

WHY DO WE NEED LAWS?

Warming-up activity

- What for have people created laws?
- Do you agree that laws haven't changed since primeval times?
- What is the role of a law?
- Can we do without a system of laws?

While speaking, use the following word combinations:

- 1) rules imposed by morality and custom – правила, предписанные моралью и обычаем
- 2) rules made by the state or the courts – нормы, создаваемые государством и судами
- 3) to control or alter our behavior – управлять и вносить изменения в наше поведение
- 4) to safeguard our personal property and our lives – охранять нашу личную собственность и наши жизни
- 5) a well-ordered society- высокоорганизованное общество
- 6) to ensure a safe and peaceful society –обеспечивать безопасное и мирное существование
- 7) to punish people without a trial – наказывать людей без суда и следствия
- 8) to respect individual rights –уважать права человека
- 9) to give effect to social policies –оказывать влияние на социальную политику
- 10) to protect liberty and equality – защищать свободу и равенство

Task 1. Read the text and find more reasons for the creation of laws.

Why do we Need Laws?

Almost everything we do is governed by some set of rules. There are rules for games, for social clubs, for sports and for adults in the workplace. There are also rules imposed by morality and custom that play an important role in telling us what we should and should not do. However, some rules – those made by the state or the courts – are called “laws”. Laws are designed to control or alter our behavior. But unlike rules of morality, laws are enforced by the courts; if you break a law - whether you like that law or not – you may be forced to pay a fine, pay damages, or go to prison.

Why are some rules so special that they are made into laws? Why do we need rules that everyone must obey? What is the purpose of law?

If we did not live in a society with other people, laws would not be necessary. We would simply do as we please, with little regard for others. But ever since individuals began to associate with other people – to live in society – laws have been the glue that has kept society together. For example, the law in our country states that we must drive our cars on the right-hand side of a two-way street. If people were allowed to choose at random which side of the street to drive on, driving would be dangerous and chaotic. Laws regulating our business affairs help to ensure that people keep their promises. Laws against criminal conduct help to safeguard our personal property and our lives.

Even in a well-ordered society, people have disagreements and conflicts arise. The law must provide a way to resolve these disputes peacefully. If two people claim to own the same piece of property, we do not want the matter settled by a duel: we turn to the law and to institutions like the courts to decide who the real owner is and to make sure that the real owner’s rights are respected.

We need law, then, to ensure a safe and peaceful society in which individuals’ rights are respected. But we expect even more from our law. Some totalitar-

ian governments have cruel and arbitrary laws, enforced by police forces free to arrest and punish people without trial. Strong-arm tactics may provide a great deal of order, but we reject this form of control. The legal system should respect individual rights while, at the same time, ensuring that society operates in an orderly manner. And society should believe in the Rule of Law, which means that the law applies to every person, including members of the police and other public officials, who must carry out their public duties in accordance with the law.

In our society laws are not only designed to govern our conduct: they are also intended to give effect to social policies. For example, some laws provide for benefits when workers are injured on the job, for health care, as well as for loans to students who otherwise might not be able to go to university.

Another goal of the law is fairness. This means that the law should recognize and protect certain basic individual rights and freedoms, such as liberty and equality. The law also serves to ensure that strong groups and individuals do not use their powerful positions in society to take unfair advantage of weaker individuals.

However, despite the best intentions, laws are sometimes created so that people later recognize as being unjust or unfair. In a democratic society, laws are not carved in stone, but must reflect the changing needs of society. In a democracy, anyone who feels that a particular law is flawed has the right to speak out publicly and to change the law by lawful means.

Task 2. Match the English word combinations to their Russian equivalents.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) the purpose of law, | a) уважать права отдельного человека |
| 2) to live in society | b) отражать изменяющиеся потребности общества |
| 3) to choose at random | c) иметь разногласия и конфликты |
| 4) to safeguard our personal property and our lives | d) верить в верховенство закона |