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Criminal Responsibility

1. Explain in your own words what is meant by the term, 'mens rea'.

2. What is the age of responsibility for crimes in the UK?

3. Is the age the same in every country?

4. What term means too young to be capable of intending a crime?

Dilhan (9) and his cousin Sebastian (14) went to the cinema with Sebastian's new girlfriend, Abiola (15). They bought burgers and juice to enjoy while watching the film. Sebastian and Abiola wanted some privacy so, they asked Dilhan to sit somewhere else. Dilhan sat a few rows behind Sebastian and Abiola, but after the lights had gone down he crept gradually forward again, until he was sitting directly behind them. Dilhan waited until Sebastian and Abiola were concentrating on watching the movie, he then took the burger from

the bun and pushed it down the neck of Abiola's teeshirt. Abiola let out a scream as the heat from the burger burnt her unusually sensitive skin.

5. Do you think any crimes have been committed? If so what kind of crime?

6. Could Dilhan be criminally responsible?

7. Give arguments for and against children being criminally responsible for their actions?
