

LITERACY LIFELINE - GCSE - CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

TOP TIPS

Use **capital letters** and **full stops** in your sentences.

Use **paragraphs** to organise longer pieces of writing.

Take care with all **spelling** and **punctuation**.

ALWAYS write God with a capital letter!

Word/phrase	Meaning
Capital Punishment	The death penalty for some crimes.
Community service order	The criminal has to do a set number of hours of work in the community as a punishment for their crime.
Conscience	An inner sense of right and wrong. Usually the guilty voice in our head.
Corporal punishment	Physically hurting someone as a punishment.
Crime	An act that breaks the law. Can be against a person (e.g. assault), against property (e.g. vandalism) or against the state (e.g. terrorism).
Deterrence	The aim of punishment is to put the criminal or others off committing the same crime.
Duty	Something we think we have to do or are bound to do.
Evil	Someone or something seen as morally wrong or wicked. Often linked to the idea of the devil.
Forgiveness	Letting go of anger towards someone for the wrong they have done us.
Hate crime	A crime committed because of prejudice - e.g. a racist or homophobic offence.
Imprisonment	Locking someone up because they have committed a crime.
Justice	Fairness - making things right or fair.
Law	The rules that govern a country and tell us what we can and can't do.
Order	The enforcement of the laws, e.g. by the Police.
Parole	Releasing a criminal from prison on condition they do not reoffend.
Probation order	A punishment which involves your behaviour being monitored.
Protection	The aim of punishment to keep people safe
Reformation	The aim of punishment to change the criminal or help them to avoid reoffending.
Reparation	The aim of punishment to make up for what you have done, or compensate for it.
Retribution	The aim of punishment to pay back the criminal for what they have done
Victim	The person a crime is committed against. Someone who suffers as a result of a crime.
Vindication	The aim of punishment to uphold the law and show it matters.
Young Offender	Someone who commits a crime before they are 18. There are special prisons for young offenders.



Key terms

Laws are the rules which help to keep us safe and keep society running smoothly.

Crimes are actions which break the law.

Punishment is the ways we act against people who break the law.

Evil is wickedness or acts which cause suffering.

Forgiveness is letting go of bad feeling towards someone who has done something wrong.

Justice is fairness, or making things right or fair.

Christians believe it is important to follow the law.

In the Bible it says *Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities*

But they also think that if the law contradicts Christian teachings, you should not follow it.

In the Bible, the disciples said *We must obey God rather than human beings.*

Forgiveness is important to Christians and Muslims.

Jesus said we must keep on forgiving *seventy times seven.*

Muslims believe that Allah will forgive those who have forgiven others.

Justice is important to Christians and Muslims.

In the Bible it says *For I, the Lord, love justice.*

One of the 99 names of Allah is 'The Just'.

Punishing criminals is fair, so Christians and Muslims both agree that it is right to punish criminals but it must be done fairly.

Laws are important because

- They keep us safe
- They protect our property
- They set limits on what governments can do
- They encourage good behaviour and help us to live well together.



Some people think that we can break the law if

- It is a bad law
- It means we are helping someone in great need
- It contradicts a religious law

Sins are things which break God's laws.

Sometimes they are the same as crimes - e.g. stealing. Sometimes they are not - e.g. committing adultery (cheating on your husband/wife). Religious people think God's laws are more important.



Parliamentary laws apply to the whole country. Breaking them gets you a criminal record. E.g. laws against stealing.

Bye laws apply locally. You can be fined if you break them, but you don't get a criminal record. E.g. dropping litter.

Should the law be based on religion?

Yes because	No because
We already follow many religious laws, such as do not murder/steal If everyone followed religious laws like 'love your neighbour' the world would be a better place.	Not everyone is religious, so why should they have to follow religious laws? There is no proof that God exists, so how do we know they are right?

Three important categories of crime are

- Crimes against the person, e.g. assault
- Crimes against property, e.g. vandalism
- Crimes against the state, e.g. terrorism.

Three important types of crime are

- Murder - killing someone
- Theft - stealing property
- Hate crime - crimes based on bad feeling towards a person or group, e.g. racist offences.

WHICH DO YOU THINK ARE THE WORST? CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHY?



Christians think murder is wrong because they believe that life is a gift from God and only he can end it. One of the Ten Commandments is 'do not kill'.

They think theft is wrong because one of the Ten Commandments is 'Do not steal'.

They think hate crime is wrong because they believe the teaching 'love your neighbour as yourself' includes people you don't like or know. God made us all so we all deserve respect.

Causes of crime include

Upbringing - if you don't learn right and wrong at home, how do you know how to behave?

Poverty - committing a crime might be the only way to get by.

Greed/hate - strong emotions can lead to crime.

Mental illness - you may not be able to understand that what you are doing is wrong, or you may be unable to control your actions.

Addiction - you may commit a crime to feed your addiction to drugs or alcohol.

Following Christian teachings can help to remove the causes of crime.

Christians are taught to 'love your neighbour' - if we all cared more for each other, there would not be so much poverty, addicts would be helped and the mentally ill would get the care they need. Knowing and following Christian teachings like 'do not steal' can help people to learn right from wrong. One of the Ten Commandments is 'Do not be jealous of what others have' - following this would help people to be less greedy.



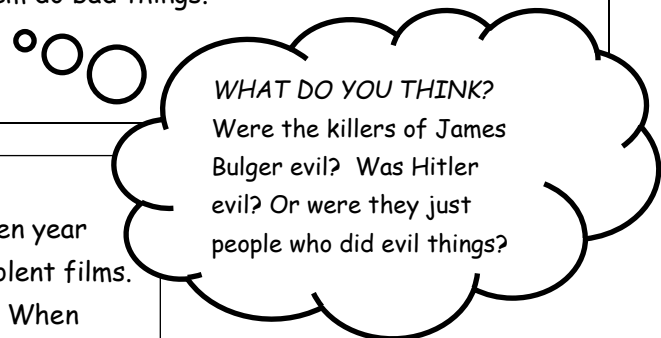
Evil - does it exist? Where does it come from? Are people evil?

Christian beliefs

Evil exists. It is the wrong use of free will - we make bad choices. The existence of evil helps us to understand goodness. The Devil is a source of evil. Christians believe that people are not evil, but their actions can be. In the Bible it says '*Hate the sin, not the sinner.*' They believe that everyone can be forgiven by God if they are truly sorry (repent) for what they have done.

Other ideas

Some people think that we all have the ability to do evil. We can become evil due to our upbringing or experiences. E.g. watching violent films can make us think that cruelty to others is OK. People can be evil, because their mind makes them do bad things.



CASE STUDY - THE MURDER OF JAMES BULGER

James was only two when he was brutally killed by two ten year old boys. The boys had a bad upbringing and watched violent films. They were sentenced to a minimum of 8 years in prison. When they were released, they were given a new identity.

Which do you think is the most important aim? Can you explain why?

Aims of punishment include

Deterrence - putting people off committing crimes.

Retribution - paying the criminal back for what they did, a bit like revenge.

Reformation - changing the criminal so they will not want or need to reoffend.

Protection - keeping society safe from the criminal.


Vindication - upholding the law, showing it is important.

Reparation - making good what you have done, compensating for it.



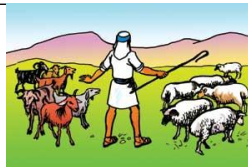
Christians like the idea of reformation, because it fits with their beliefs about forgiveness and second chances. Reformation is about changing the criminal for the better, so it is a loving thing to do. **But some Christians also think** retribution is acceptable because in the Bible it says punishment should be 'an eye for an eye' and it is just (fair) to punish in this way.

Forms of punishment include

Punishment	Description	Fits these aims
Prison 	Locking up the offender. Whilst they are in prison, they can access education and training and help to overcome addictions.	Protection, deterrence, reformation, retribution, vindication
Young Offenders institutions	Special prisons for young people. The emphasis is on helping children to avoid crime in future	Protection, deterrence, reformation, retribution, vindication
High security mental health institutions	For people with psychological disorders who threaten themselves and others.	Protection, deterrence, reformation, retribution, vindication
Fines	Offenders must pay money	Deterrence, retribution, vindication, reparation
ASBOs	Anti Social Behaviour Orders restrict offenders e.g. by setting a curfew or restricting where they can go	Deterrence, protection, retribution, vindication
Community Service	Offenders must work in the community for a set number of hours. Their work is often linked to their offence.	Deterrence, retribution, vindication, reparation.

Life in prison is hard.

- Offenders' lives are very restricted.
- They miss their families.
- There is a lot of violence in prison.
- They often find it difficult to get back to normal life when they are released.
- They might lose their home or job because they are in prison.



The Parable of the Sheep and Goats tells Christians they must show compassion to those in prison. They believe that by helping prisoners, they are helping God and he will reward them. Elizabeth Fry was a Christian who campaigned for better living conditions in prisons.

Should we feel sorry for prisoners?

"The punishment should fit the crime"

Yes because	No because
It is fair if the offender gets the same treatment they have given out. It makes victims feel better if the punishment fits the crime - the offender is being paid back. In the Bible it says 'an eye for an eye', meaning we should do the same to others as they do to us.	It is better to reform the criminal so they do not reoffend, as this reduces future crime. A harsh punishment is not a loving thing to give out, and Jesus said we should love our neighbours as ourselves. Some criminals need help more than punishment - e.g. an addict needs help to overcome their addiction, then they won't reoffend.

How does crime cause suffering?

- Victims suffer physical, mental and emotional harm.
- Victims' families also suffer, e.g. when a loved one has been murdered.
- It creates fear in the community.
- It creates bad feeling towards people who belong to groups who are identified as criminals - e.g. many Muslims suffer prejudice because of terror attacks committed by other Muslims.
- When criminals go to prison, their families suffer

Victim support helps victims of crime by

- Giving emotional and practical support - e.g. comforting victims or helping them put new locks on their doors
- Informing them of their rights.
- Finding interpreters for foreign language speakers
- Giving them advice on what to expect, e.g. if they have to go to court.

Christians can help victims of crime because

Jesus said 'Love your neighbour as yourself' and it is a loving thing to do. They can teach forgiveness, which takes away the bad feeling they might have towards the criminal and makes them feel better.



Following Christian teachings can help reduce suffering caused by crime because Christians teachings such as the Ten Commandments tell us not to do things which cause suffering (e.g. do not steal/kill/be jealous) and they encourage us to be good to others (e.g. the Golden Rule). If everyone treated others as they want to be treated, there would be far less crime in the first place!



Do you think everyone deserves forgiveness? Is it always easy to forgive?

Christians believe they should forgive because	Muslims believe they should forgive because
<p>The Golden Rule says treat others how you want to be treated - we would want people to forgive us.</p> <p>In the Lord's Prayer, they ask God to forgive them as they have forgiven others.</p> <p>In the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, Jesus said we must keep on forgiving as many as seventy times seven times.</p>	<p>One of the 99 names of Allah is <i>The Compassionate, The Merciful</i></p> <p>They believe that on the Day of Judgement, Allah will reward those who forgive others.</p> <p>Muhammad said <i>Give justice to the person who was unfair and unjust to you.</i></p> <p>But some things are unforgivable such as insulting Allah or Muhammad.</p>

Gee and Dominique Walker forgave the men who killed their son and brother Anthony because, as Christians, they believed they must. It has helped them to cope with losing Anthony by getting rid of bad feelings.

CASE STUDIES



Sally Dowler could not forgive the man who killed her daughter, Millie. She still feels very bitter about it.

"We should always be willing to forgive"	
Yes, because	No, because
<p>Religious teachings tell us we should. God is forgiving and will forgive us if we forgive others. It makes us feel better as we get rid of bad feelings and anger.</p> <p>Everyone deserves a second chance if they are truly sorry for what they did.</p>	<p>It lets the wrongdoer off too lightly. It makes people think they can get away with things if only they say they are sorry afterwards. How do you know someone is truly sorry?</p> <p>Some things are too awful to forgive because of the suffering they cause, e.g. the Holocaust.</p>

Corporal punishment means inflicting physical pain on someone to punish them for what they did. It is illegal in the UK, although until fairly recently it was allowed in schools, but happens in some countries. It is a feature of Muslim Shari'ah law, so it happens in some Muslim countries. It includes whipping and amputation of limbs.

Is it right to use corporal punishment?

Yes because	No because
<p>It is backed by religious teachings, so there must be some good in it.</p> <p>It is over quickly - better than a long prison sentence.</p> <p>It is a strong deterrent, so it puts people off committing crime very effectively.</p>	<p>It is cruel. Cruel punishment and torture go against human rights.</p> <p>If the law uses violence to punish people, it is no better than the criminals.</p> <p>It doesn't help criminals change for the better.</p>

The Bible says...

Blows that wound cleanse away evil which means that hurting someone takes their badness away. **BUT** Jesus said we must turn the other cheek and not hit back when someone does wrong to us.



The Qur'an says that thieves should have their hands amputated **BUT** in Shari'ah law (Muslim religious law) victims are encouraged to be merciful and accept compensation instead, so the harsh punishment is not given.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT is the death penalty. It is not allowed in the UK. Worldwide, more than 50 countries still have the death penalty. The countries that use it the most include China, the USA and Iran. Criminals are executed using methods such as firing squad, hanging and lethal injection.

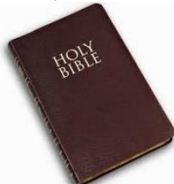


"The death penalty should be abolished everywhere"

Yes because...	No because...
<p>It takes away the basic human right to life.</p> <p>It is hypocritical of governments to kill people for the reason that they have killed people - two wrongs don't make a right.</p> <p>It takes away any chance of the criminal repenting and being forgiven.</p> <p>Religious people believe we should forgive and show mercy.</p>	<p>It is a strong deterrent - it puts people off committing terrible crimes.</p> <p>It protects us from evil people. If they are dead, they can't hurt anyone else.</p> <p>It makes victims and their families feel better.</p> <p>It is fair to kill someone who has killed someone.</p> <p>It is allowed in the Bible and Qur'an.</p>

The Bible says...

The death penalty is given for some offences such as murder, so it must be allowed. **BUT** one of the Ten Commandments is and the government is breaking it and executes people.



In the Quran it says, 'Take not life, which God has made sacred, except by way of justice and law'. so executing criminals is allowed to uphold the law. **BUT** the Prophet Muhammad said that 'whoever suffers an injury and forgives, God will raise his status to a higher one'. victims and their families can ask the court to be merciful and give a lesser punishment.



CASE STUDY



Cameron Todd Willingham was executed in Texas in 2004 for starting a fire that killed his family. Evidence later showed the fire started accidentally.

WHY MIGHT THIS MEAN MANY PEOPLE THINK CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS WRONG?