

Crime and punishment vocabulary and speaking Worksheet 1 – Crime discussion questions

Choose interesting questions from below to ask each other, comment on what the other person says, discuss more of if you like, then do the same with other questions.

What crimes are increasing in your country? What are the main reasons for that?

How does crime in this city compare to that in other cities and countries? Are there any areas of the city which are much better or worse?

Are there any places (in this city, this country or the world) which you would avoid due to fear of crime?

Are there any kinds of crimes which are more prevalent in your country than in other places? Why do you think that is so?

Do you think the media or politicians unnecessarily increase the fear of crime? What are their reasons for doing so?

What precautions have you taken/ do you take against crime? What is usual in your country?

How do people generally feel about the police? Are there any groups that feel differently? What are the reasons for those various people's feelings?

Should the police carry guns?

Talk to your partner about a crime story that was in the news recently. What do you think about how the media deal with such cases?

If minority groups turn to crime, is that generally the fault of discrimination or their own cultures?

Do you think this country is generally too hard on crime or too soft on crime? Why do you feel that way? Are there any crimes which that is particularly true for?

Are there any things which are crimes in this country but shouldn't be?

Worksheet 2 – Not worthy of punishment?

Choose one of the things below which you think should not be punishable by law and explain why. Your partner will then give their opinion on what you said. Don't worry about any words which you don't know at this stage.

- Adultery
- Advocating violence
- Assisting in someone's suicide
- Attempted suicide
- Begging
- Being a conscientious objector
- Belonging to an organisation that advocates terrorism
- Blasphemy/ Offending a religious group
- Bribery abroad
- Browsing a terrorist organisation's site
- Building or farming on long-unoccupied land
- Bullying/ Cyber-bullying
- Crimes by diplomatic staff (= Diplomatic immunity)
- Crimes by leaders of the country or MPs
- Crimes by your children
- Crimes committed on someone else's orders
- Crimes that happened more than a certain amount of time ago (= The statute of limitations)
- Crimes under a certain age
- Disrespecting the national flag/ national anthem
- Driving near but not within the speed limit (e.g. at a speed that many people do)
- Driving without a seatbelt
- Drunk and disorderly
- Educational use of copyrighted materials
- Excessive force in sports, e.g. fouls that cause major injuries
- Failed attempt to immigrate illegally
- Failed request for political asylum
- Hacking that causes no damage
- Holocaust denial
- Illegal actions by a subordinate that you knew nothing about but should have done
- Illegal busking/ street performance
- Indecency in artistic works
- Jaywalking
- Keeping the confidentiality of a journalistic source, person confessing to a priest or patient who has committed a crime
- Leaking of government secrets that is in the public interest
- Lese majesty (insulting the head of state, e.g. monarch)
- Libellous comment by another person on your blog or website
- Linking to sites with illegal content
- Not stopping other people committing crimes, e.g. seeing a mugging and just walking past

- Offering file-sharing software
- Persistent noise violations
- Polygamy
- Possession of small amounts of soft drugs for personal use
- Prostitution
- Public nudity
- Publishing something about a celebrity that is true but has no public interest
- Racist language/ Race hate/ Stirring up race hate
- Refusing to give evidence against a friend, relative or colleague
- Refusing to speak when questioned by police
- Refusing to uncover your face for religious reasons
- Shouting at, swearing at or insulting police officers
- Slander or offensive content in an anonymous comment online
- Something that is illegal in your country but legal in the country where you do it
- Squatting in totally unused derelict buildings
- Stalking a celebrity
- Swearing on TV
- Taking stuff from bins
- Trespass
- Unauthorised protest/ demonstration
- Underage sex
- Unlicensed selling on the street/ selling from street stalls
- Vagrancy
- Violence against people or property in order to save animals from suffering

Check any you don't understand and discuss them as a class.

Try to agree on punishments for some of the others.

Worksheet 3 – Punishments

Match some of these possible punishments to the crimes that need punishments that you just discussed:

- “An eye for an eye”
- Apologising to the victim
- Banishment/ Loss of citizenship
- Banning publication
- Being banned from contacting certain people/ approaching certain people (= A restraining order)
- Being banned from holding public office/ certain jobs
- Being banned from using the internet
- Being forced to resign
- Blocking access to bank account(s)
- Capital punishment (= The death penalty)
- Community service
- Compensation or other reparations to the victim(s)
- Compulsory counselling/ drug therapy/ psychiatric treatment/ anger management classes
- Corporal punishment (= Physical punishment)
- Curfew/ Electronic tagging
- Fine
- Hard labour
- Having your name on a publically available list of offenders
- Informal warning
- Life sentence
- Loss of welfare benefits/ public housing
- Official warning
- One night in a police station cell
- Permanent criminal record
- Prison sentence
- Prison tour
- Public apology
- Public naming and shaming
- Punishment of the parents/ guardians
- Reform school/ Borstal (= Young offenders’ institution)/ Military school
- Restriction of movements, e.g. curfew and/ or electronic tagging
- Stripping someone of a qualification, licence (e.g. teaching licence) or honour (e.g. a knighthood or honorary MA)
- Suspended sentence
- Suspension from job or education

Try to think of at least one crime for each of the punishments above.

Discuss as a class any which you can’t think of any suitable crimes for.

Worksheet 4 – Crimes

What should the (range of) punishments be for these crimes?

accepting bribes
arson
assault
attempted murder
blackmail
bomb hoax
burglary
buying drugs
digital piracy
drug trafficking
false advertising
forgery
fraud
fund raising for terrorism
hacking
handling stolen goods
hijacking
human trafficking
incitement of terrorism
insider trading
kidnapping
manslaughter
money laundering
mugging
offering bribes
perjury
pimping (= living off the proceeds of prostitution)
Ponzi schemes
rape
resisting arrest
slander
tax dodging/ false accounting

Rank the crimes above from the most to the least serious.

Worksheet 5 – Justifications

Are there any justifications or mitigating circumstances for these crimes? Choose one and try to think of as many justifications for it as you can, then move onto another:

Accepting a bribe	Breaking the speed limit
Carrying a concealed weapon (knife, gun, etc)	Hacking
Illegal demonstrations	Illegal downloads
Leaking secret government documents	Murder
Possession of illegal drugs	Vandalism
Resisting arrest	Rioting
Shop lifting	Swearing at police
Publishing photos of people without their permission	

Were there any which you couldn't think of any justification for?

What crimes would you be justified in committing in these situations?

- A long period of peaceful demonstrations has no effect
- The last election was "stolen" due to not following democratic procedures
- The minority you belong to is discriminated against
- You and your family have no other way of getting enough to eat
- You are homeless
- You have been unfairly dismissed
- You know someone has committed a crime but they have never even been questioned by police
- You know that the government is doing something illegal
- You live in a non-democratic country
- Your country is invaded by another
- You are a minor
- Your country is the only or one of the few in which that thing is a crime (e.g. chewing gum in Singapore)

Were there any situations which you didn't think justified any crimes?

What do you think of the following ways of tackling crime?

- Baseball bat near the front door
- Body searches when entering clubs
- Car alarms that go off whenever the car is touched
- Dangerous dogs
- Filming everyone who approaches your house
- Gated communities with security guards
- GPS tracking of your children
- ID checks whenever you buy alcohol
- Keeping DNA profiles of all people tested by the police on file
- Local residents patrolling the streets (armed or unarmed)
- Pepper spray
- Personal security alarms
- Tazers (= Stun guns)
- Teaching children to shout "stranger" when they are approached by unknown adults

Worksheet 6 – Tricky crime and punishment vocabulary

What are the similarities between these words and expressions connected to crime?

- attorney/ district attorney (= DA)
- capital punishment/ corporal punishment
- civil case/ criminal case
- crime/ misdemeanor
- drug trafficking/ drug dealing
- graffiti/ vandalism/ arson
- judge/ magistrate
- libel/ slander
- mugging/ assault
- murder/ manslaughter
- pick pocketing/ bag snatching/ mugging
- piracy/ forgery
- reckless driving/ drunk driving/ joy riding
- shoplifting/ burglary
- smuggling/ drug trafficking
- solicitor/ barrister

What are the differences between them?