

18 The law

Crime, punishment

Crime

1.1 Put the following into order from least to most serious in your opinion. Which do you think are considered to be crimes?

arson burglary fraud vandalism kidnapping murder pickpocketing
smuggling swearing dumping toxic waste

1.2 Now read the text and decide whether statements 1–7 are true or false. Write the words from the text which mean the same as or the opposite of the words in *italics*.

Crime

Crime is defined by society and relative to the society defining it. Traditionally, crime is considered an offence, a violation of public rules or laws. Crime is defined within each society by specific criminal laws on a national, state and local level. Actions that are offensive to an individual or group of people but do not violate laws are not crimes. Punishment or other sanctions result from the violation of these laws, and the social system for monitoring and enforcing public rules or laws is put into action. The social system generally consists of an administrative authority that formally deals with crime and a force of representative officers to enforce the laws and act on behalf of society. Being guilty of a criminal act usually involves some form of conscious evil intent or recklessness. In unintentional cases, such as crimes committed by children or the insane, the criminal is not usually punished in the same manner as is intentional crime.

Theories of crime and criminal activity are numerous and varied, but the reasons behind crime remain elusive. Theories suggest many possible causes. One theory suggests that property crime depends on criminal motive and opportunities to perpetrate crime. It also contends that crime is influenced by the degree to which others guard over neighbourhoods and other people. This particular theory relates an increase in crime rate to an increase in crime opportunity and a decrease in protection. Research also shows that income inequality correlates to property crime.

- 1 Offence is another word for crime. *True - crime is considered an offence*
- 2 The word offensive is related to crime.
- 3 It is the duty of the police to *violate* the law.
- 4 Generally, people who are guilty of a crime are *aware* of what they are doing.
.....
- 5 The explanations for crime are *difficult to find*.
- 6 Crime can increase if people *protect* their property less.
- 7 Crime on property is *linked* to the different amounts of money people earn.
.....

1.3 WORD BUILDING Complete the table.

| Noun | Verb | Adjective |
|------------|----------------|-----------|
| crime | c..... a crime | |
| | deter | |
| | enforce | |
| | offend | |
| prevention | | |
| prison | | |
| punishment | | |

Error warning!

A convict is a person who is in prison. To convict someone is to find them guilty in a court of law. You commit a crime or convict a criminal, not convict a crime. We talk about criminal acts, NOT criminal actions.

1.4 Complete the sentences with a suitable word from the table in 1.3.

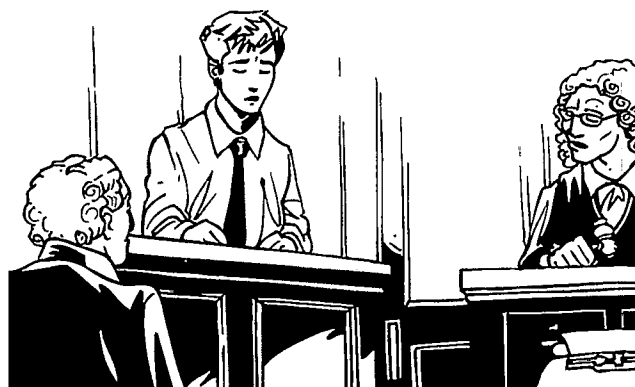
- All acts should be punished.
- Every society needs a strong system of law
- People who crimes are often victims themselves.
- I think dumping toxic waste should be made a offence. There is little to people from doing this at the moment.
- I think we could have this crime by fitting an extra lock on the door.

Punishment**2.1** Match the verbs in column A with the nouns in column B.**A**

accept
commit
convict
impose
pass

B

a crime
a law
a fine
the consequences
a criminal

**2.2** Match the people with the things they do.**List of people**

- The accused = C..
- The judge
- The jury
- The prosecutor
- The lawyer
- The victim

List of things they do

- ... tries to prove the accused is guilty.
- ... gives evidence against the accused.
- ... is the person who is on trial.
- ... decides whether the accused is innocent or guilty.
- ... tries to prove the accused is innocent.
- ... decides how a criminal should be punished.

2.3 COLLOCATION What words can you use with *crime* and *law*? Write in the boxes below.

| | Crime | Law |
|------------|---------|-----|
| Adjectives | serious | |
| Verbs | | |

2.4 18 Now listen and fill in any blanks you have in the table.

2.5 18 Complete the sentences with suitable words from the recording. You may need to change the grammatical form of the word. Listen and check your answers.

- I consider myself to be a law-a..... citizen. I've never broken the law in my life.
- The laws in this country are rather s..... – even chewing gum is banned.
- Arson is a crime a..... property, but sometimes people can get hurt as well.
- I was given a parking f..... again yesterday. It's costing me a fortune.
- It is the responsibility of the police and the government to c..... crime.
- More money should be spent on crime p..... than on building prisons.
- Sometimes the police feel that they are a..... the law and should not be punished for traffic offences.
- It used to be against the law to go fishing on Sundays, but thankfully that law was a..... years ago.



Vocabulary note

Prevent = to stop something from happening or someone from doing something: *I stayed away from the bully to **prevent** any trouble. This will **prevent** crimes from happening.* NOT ~~This will avoid crimes.~~

Avoid = to stay away from someone or something: *You should try to **avoid** dangerous situations.*

3.1 Improve the speaking test answers by replacing the underlined words. Then answer the questions yourself.

1 Do you think we should punish people who commit crimes?

'Yes. I think that, if people ¹do a crime, then they should be punished and made to accept the consequences of their ²acts. If they don't receive a ³punish then they're likely to do the same thing again.'

2 Should all types of crime receive the same punishment?

'No, in my opinion, for ⁴small crimes it's best to just ⁵find people. But, for more serious ⁶offends, then we need to ⁷prison them.'

3 What do you think we can we do to stop people committing crimes?

'Well, sometimes a crime is ⁸happened through need, for example, if someone is poor and hungry. So, first, we need to take care of everyone in society and not just worry about protecting our ⁹stuff. But we can also ¹⁰past new laws, and educate people about them, so that they act as a ¹¹block. That way, ¹²people who do crimes will think twice before they act.'

- | | | | |
|-----------------|---------|---------|----------|
| 1 <u>commit</u> | 4 | 7 | 10 |
| 2 | 5 | 8 | 11 |
| 3 | 6 | 9 | 12 |

Test practice

Test tip



Academic candidates can also practise with this task 2 question. Think carefully about all sides of the issue in the question, and plan your answer well before writing.

General Training Writing Task 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic.

Crime is increasing and the prisons are overcrowded; the only way to fix these problems is to build more prisons.

Do you agree or disagree?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

You should write at least 250 words.

Use the following questions to help you think about this issue, then make notes to help you plan your answer.

- 1 Is it true that crime is increasing and prisons are overcrowded? Why do you think this is happening?
- 2 Would building more prisons fix these problems? (Can you explain why or why not?)
- 3 Is this the **only way** to fix these problems? (If not, can you suggest any other ways?)
- 4 Think about the statement in the question, do you agree with it or not?

Use this space to plan your ideas:

| Building more prisons to reduce crime and make prisons less crowded | Other ways to reduce crime and overcrowded prisons |
|---|--|
| This would / might help to: | Some other ways to solve these problems are: |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| It wouldn't/might not help with: | Reasons this could / might work: |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |