

Capital Punishment

SPEAKING

LEVEL
Advanced

NUMBER
C1_2048S_EN

LANGUAGE
English



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Goals

- Can read, listen to and understand a technical text on capital punishment.
- Can present a detailed opinion on the subject of capital punishment and human rights.





The use of the death penalty is a controversial topic. Some people are **vehemently** opposed to capital punishment whilst others believe it is morally right and entirely **justifiable**. However, one thing is for sure, this **divisive** subject always sparks heated debate.



Criminal justice

What is the criminal justice system like in your home country? Imagine your teacher knows nothing about the system and try to explain it to them. Think about the prosecution process as well as the punishment and rehabilitation of criminals.





Criminal justice systems of the past and present

Our social and political systems have changed a lot through the centuries. Look at the cards below. What do you know about the things on each card? Tell your teacher.



witch burnings



duels



the divine right of
kings



martial law



Capital punishment

Is capital punishment used in your home country? Whether or not it is still allowed, what is the public consensus on the death penalty? Do some people want to ban it, or bring it back?



Big question

**Some people are
vehemently opposed to
the death penalty.
Is there anything to
which you are
vehemently opposed?
Have you fought for
these beliefs?**



Capital punishment

The death penalty has been in use across the globe since ancient times but of the 196 countries in the world, only 58 still use capital punishment today. Prior to the 19th century, before the development of adequate prison systems, capital punishment was frequently **deemed** necessary as a method of **detering** serious crime. However nowadays, the question of whether death by execution is morally permissible is an extremely **divisive** issue which gives rise to fierce emotions on either side.

International human rights organisations such as Amnesty International argue that capital punishment **breaches** human rights, namely the right to life and the right to live free from torture. However, those in favour of the death penalty argue that the **severity** of the punishment acts as a strong deterrent to would-be criminals, and that in murder cases, by taking the life of the victim, the murderer has already shown their contempt for the sanctity of human life.



Capital punishment

Across Europe the use of capital punishment is outlawed by the European Convention on Human Rights, and in 2012 Latvia became the last EU member state to ban capital punishment in wartime. However, in other parts of the world the threat of the death penalty still looms. China, Saudi Arabia, Iran and the USA currently top the **leadership boards** for the highest number of executions carried out in recent years.



Vocabulary review – check these words with your teacher

divisive

to deem

to deter

to breach

severity

leadership board



Cultural differences

There are nearly 200 countries in the world. Which ones have you already visited?

What are some cultural differences you remarked on compared with your home country?





For and against



Reread the text. Why do many human rights organisations oppose the death penalty? What do those in support of capital punishment think? Can you think of any other arguments for and against the death penalty?



For and against

Imagine you are speaking on behalf of Amnesty International at an international conference on capital punishment. Think of the arguments in support of the death penalty and try to address them, use convincing language and try to persuade your audience round to your point of view.





Get ready to listen

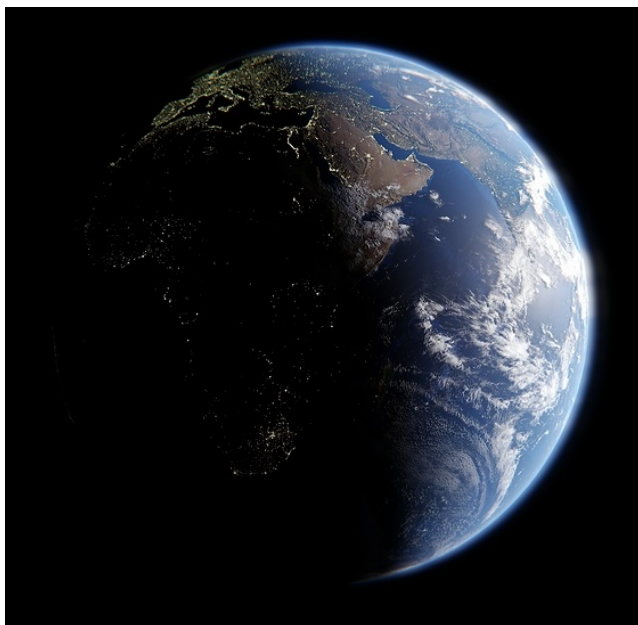


The next few slides will focus on
training your listening comprehension



Test your understanding

Listen carefully for the reasons why monitoring capital punishment statistics around the world can be difficult.



1

Give your teacher a brief summary of what you heard.

2

Think about the future. What do activists hope might happen in the years to come?

3

Which two countries are mentioned in particular? Can you remember any figures or dates about them?



Vocabulary review: check these phrases and words with your teacher. Can you think of a synonym for each?

to be willing to

closely guarded

not too distant future

resolution

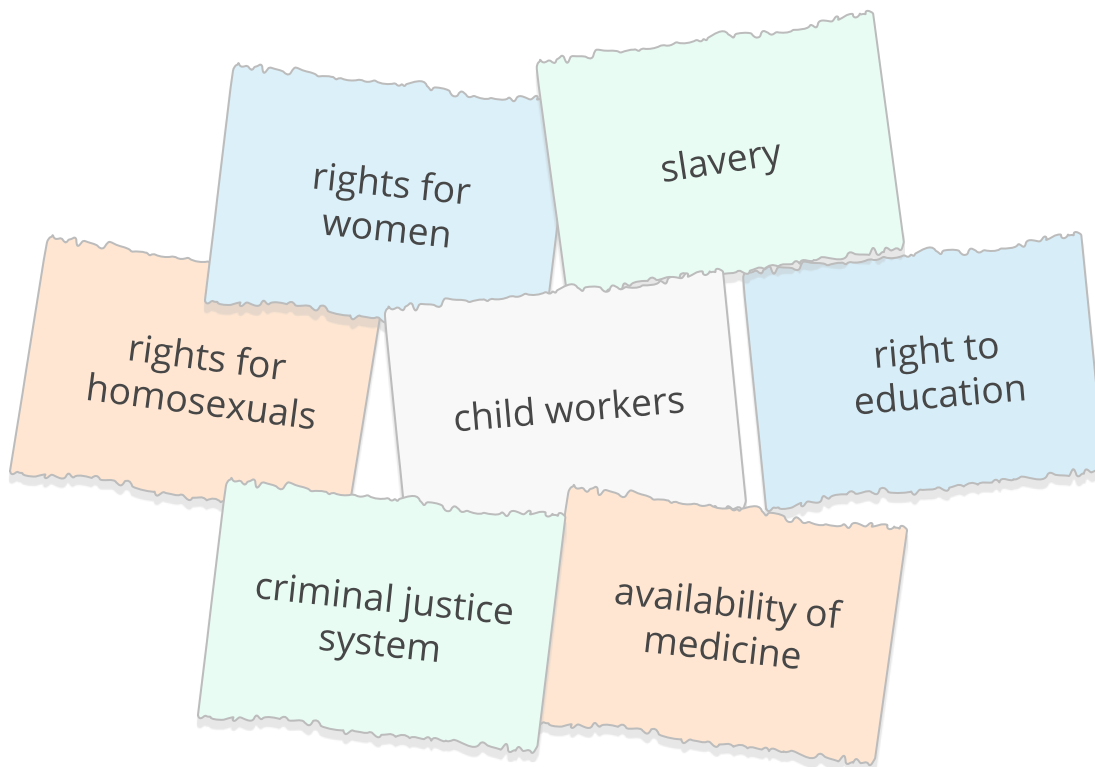
to crusade

slow but steady



Changes over time

Over time many things in our society have changed. Look at the cards below, talk with your teacher about how things have changed over time in each example. Talk about how things have changed in your country and contrast this with other countries in the world





And in the future?

Choose three cards from the previous slide. Now think about the future, how do you hope things might change further in the next 50 years, in your country and worldwide?



progression

justice

equality

opportunity



Take to the streets!

Imagine you have been asked to speak at a peaceful protest on behalf of a human rights organisation.

- Make your speech about any human rights issue, including the death penalty
- Do your best to inspire and motivate the crowd
- Persuade them that this is the most important issue that society needs to fight for.



Ladies and gentlemen...

An important man once said "I have a dream..."

Let me ask you to imagine a world where...



Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





Answer key

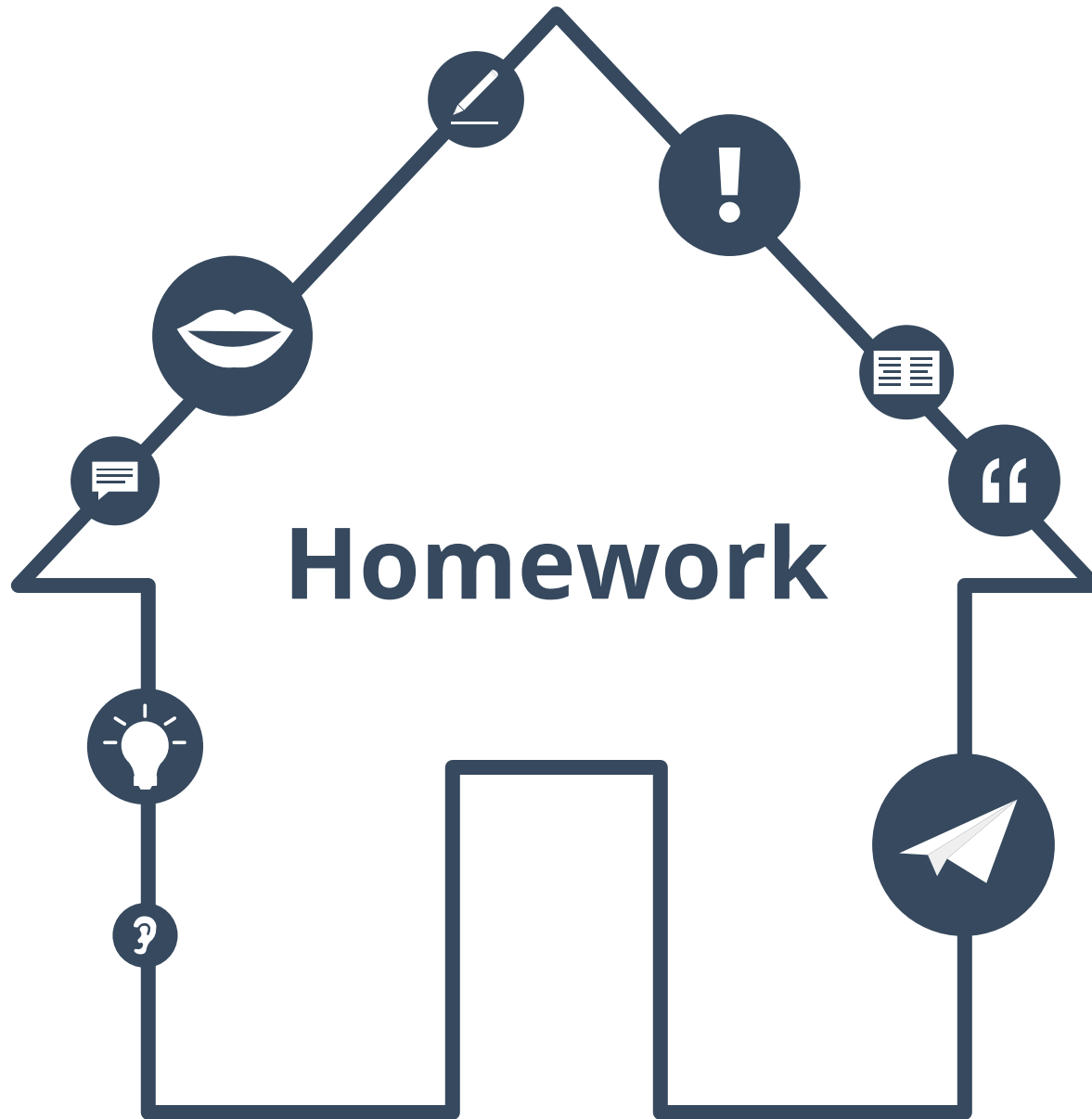
Activity p. 16 – synonyms:
Amenable
Under wraps
Near future
Settlement
To campaign
Constant but slow



Transcription

One of the major difficulties that researchers, journalists and activists face when trying to gain access to information about capital punishment around the world is that many countries that practice this form of punishment are not **willing to** publish statistics, or share information about their use of the practice. One example of the secrecy that surrounds the death penalty is that of China, where execution numbers are a **closely guarded** secret.

However, there is a chance that despite its long history, capital punishment may disappear altogether in the **not too distant future**. In 2012, over half the world's countries voted in favour of a United Nations **resolution** that would declare an end to executions worldwide. While it still remains to be seen whether the countries that did not vote in favour can be convinced to change their opinions, campaigners such as Amnesty International are hopeful that with time, things will change. It does look possible; progress is **slow but steady**. In 2016, devoted campaigning resulted in Guinea removing the death penalty, while in 2017, Mongolia's new criminal code likewise abolished the death penalty after a significant 21 years of tireless **crusading** by campaigners from Amnesty International.





Homework writing activity

Imagine you work for an international human rights organisation that is opposed to capital punishment. You are writing a letter campaigning to a government where the death penalty is legal. Outline your views and try to persuade them to change the law and ban capital punishment.

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Homework evaluation activity

How did you find this lesson? Which parts did you find most challenging? Which parts were easiest? Give your feedback here.

A vertical rectangular form with a light gray background and a white border. On the left side, there is a vertical column of ten small circles, resembling a spiral binding. The main area of the form is white and contains ten horizontal lines for writing feedback.



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