

**Aims of Punishment.**

Society faces a problem with some of its members who want to break the rules. The aims of punishment are to find a way to deal with criminals and at the same time protect society and the individual. Studies suggest that harsh punishments do not always get the best results. Offenders build up resentment against the ‘system’, and when released try to seek revenge on society. This situation can easily spiral and become a vicious circle.



Traditionally punishment has six aims (although for the purposes of the exam we will focus on the four below). Most sentences handed out to offenders are a mixture of these.

**Deterrence.**

It is hoped that the punishment will deter the person from repeating the crime. It is also hoped that the fear of the punishment will stop other individuals from committing crimes.

**Reparation.**

If someone breaks the law they must be prepared to make amends, in other words, pay back something to the victim or to society.

**Retribution.**

Based on the idea of an eye for an eye. If someone has done something wrong they should be given a punishment that fits the crime.

**Reform.**

Punishment should not only stop people from continuing to commit crimes, but should help them become responsible members of society.

Prisons have a ‘revolving door’.

We will look at the issue of prisons in more detail in a later lesson. However we need to begin to consider why criminals return to prison time after time and think about if prison meets the aims of punishment it is supposed to. The aim of a prison is to protect us from dangerous criminals and repeat offenders.

Crime



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Imprisonment

???

Released from prison

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Things to do.

1. What are the main ‘Aims’ of sending people to prison? Explain with examples.
2. Draw the ‘vicious circle’ diagram above and explain how it might work adding examples of what problems an ex-offender might come across on release from prison that could lead him to reoffend.
3. Suggest ways in which this ‘vicious circle’ could be reduced.

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*Look at the Christian teachings below. Write them down and then match them up with to five aims of punishment.*

But if there is serious injury you are to take a life for a life, eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth.

 Exodus 21:23-5

Do not withhold discipline from a child; Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death.

 Proverbs 23:13.

‘…be transformed by the renewing of your mind’.

 Romans 12:2.

If a man steals an ox and slaughters it or sells it, he must pay back five head of cattle for the ox.

 Exodus 22:1.

Rescue me from evil men; protect me from men of violence. Keep me from the hands of the wicked; protect me from men of violence.

 Psalm 140:1,4.

Evaluate...

**‘The most effective aim of punishment is deterrence’.**

Evaluate this statement. In your answer, you:

* Should give reasoned arguments in support of this statement
* Should give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
* Should refer to religious arguments
* May refer non-religious arguments
* Should reach a justified conclusion. (12 marks)

*Advice;*

Make sure you include the most effective religious teachings. Use examples to prove your points (e.g. examples of punishments that might deter someone from committing crime etc). This question is trying to get you to show your knowledge and understanding of the aims of punishment. Make sure you refer to other aims of punishment, suggesting why one/some of them might be more effective than deterrence. Make sure you explain enough points to get 12 marks.

**‘The worst crime is murder’.**

If you get the first evaluation question finished have a go at evaluating the statement above.



