

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT – EXERCISES

1

Answer the following questions in your own words.

1. Which crimes does the death penalty apply to in the U.S. today? _____

2. Name a few countries in which the death penalty is a legal form of punishment. Refer to the map. _____

3. How were criminals executed in revolutionary France? _____

4. Name some reasons in favor of capital punishment: _____

5. Name some reasons against the death penalty: _____

6. When did the Supreme Court overturned its original ruling on capital punishment? _____

7. Which state has carried out the most executions since then? _____

8. Why have some states decided not to continue with executions? _____

9. Which is the main method of execution in the United States today? _____

10. Why are doctors not allowed to take part in executions? _____

11. What was the problem with the gas chamber? _____

12. How were women executed by the Roman Catholic church in the Middle Ages? _____

13. What kind of instrument is the guillotine? When and where was it used? _____

14. What is crucifixion? _____

15. Where is stoning still carried out today? _____

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2

Match the words on the left with the definitions on the right.

A	abolish			prisoner
B	persecute			the act of choking to death
C	inmate			cells of a prison in which inmates await their execution
D	court			permission to leave prison if you have behaved well
E	solution			person who has seen something happen
F	appropriate			change your decision, decide differently
G	anesthetic			you cannot move or use parts of your body
H	gurney			to get rid of, do away with
I	treason			gentle, soft, more civilized
J	parole			set of laws and rules by which a country is organized
K	suffocation			guard of a prison
L	paralyze			right, correct
M	blindfold			liquid into which a gas or chemical has been mixed
N	death row			the act of giving back something or paying for damages
O	restitution			long, narrow table on wheels, which is used in hospitals to move people around
P	innocent			sentence, to put someone into prison
Q	convict			crime against the government, in which you help its enemies
R	constitution			medicine that stops you from feeling pain
S	overturn			death on the cross
T	humane			to put a cloth or band across your eyes
U	eyewitness			bully, punish, discriminate against
V	crucifixion			not guilty
W	warden			place where a trial is held

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT – EXERCISES

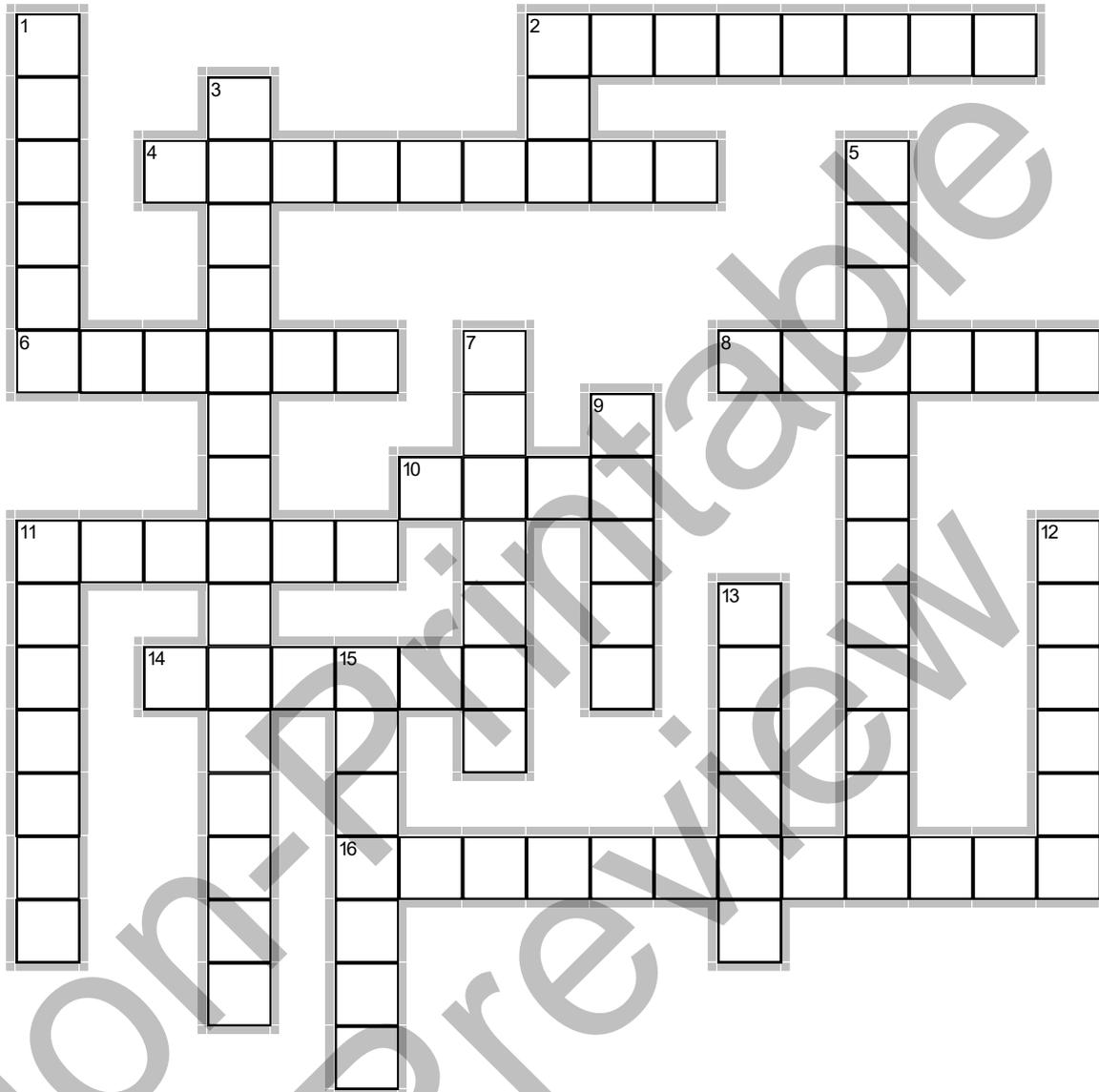
3

Find 11 words in the grid and mark them .

T	N	E	R	R	E	T	E	D	A
T	B	I	T	L	I	P	Q	A	B
S	U	E	G	I	N	A	A	C	E
T	R	X	X	G	M	B	V	R	H
O	U	E	Q	U	A	O	K	I	E
N	J	C	H	R	T	L	R	M	A
I	K	U	V	N	E	I	K	I	D
N	T	T	R	E	A	S	O	N	I
G	S	E	Z	Y	V	H	V	A	N
D	E	A	T	H	R	O	W	L	G

4

Crossword



Across

- 2. block of cells in which prisoners wait for their execution
- 4. person who is charged with a crime
- 6. first state to use the gas chamber
- 8. long, narrow table on wheels, which is used to move patients around in hospitals
- 10. force someone to have sex with you
- 11. soft material full of holes that can suck up liquid
- 14. to cut off someone's head as a form of punishment
- 16. set of rules and laws that a country is organized by

Down

- 1. prison guard
- 2. material that carries the genetic information of the cells in your body
- 3. most common form of execution in the US today
- 5. highest court in the United States (2 words)
- 7. gas that is used for killing people
- 9. American state with the most executions
- 11. common form of killing in some Middle East countries
- 12. colorless gas which we need to breathe
- 13. prisoner
- 15. to kill officially by the government

5

Multiple choice – Fill in the correct word

Capital punishment – often **(1)** _____ to as the death penalty - is among the most discussed topics in **(2)** _____. Although abolished in most countries it is still a common form of **(3)** _____ in the United States, the Middle East, China and other states.

Almost all ancient civilizations have executed people for **(4)** _____ crimes. Jesus Christ, for example, was crucified by the Romans. In the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic church killed non-believers and burned women as witches at the **(5)** _____. Beheading was widespread during the French Revolution.

In the last 200 years many countries have **(6)** _____ capital punishment. In the United States discussion about the death penalty has been going on for decades. Even the Supreme Court, the highest court in the country, once reversed its **(7)** _____ on capital punishment.

Those in favour of the death penalty say that it is an **(8)** _____ deterrent for potential criminals and may stop them from **(9)** _____ awful crimes. They also maintain that humans who kill others do not have the right to live themselves. On the either side, there are many arguments against capital punishment. One of the most heard is that the **(10)** _____ system is flawed and wrongful executions cannot be reversed. **(11)** _____, life imprisonment without **(12)** _____ would be a more effective way of punishing a criminal.

In the past governments have been seeking more **(13)** _____ ways of carrying out death sentences. Hanging and death in front of a firing squad were common methods used up to the 20th century. Most **(14)** _____ in the early part of the last century were killed on the electric chair. This was a painful death that **(15)** _____ in severe burns if it went wrong. Oklahoma was the first state to use lethal injections in 1977. Defendants are put on a gurney and a needle is stuck into their blood stream. Three **(16)** _____ put them to sleep, stop breathing and the heart from beating within a few minutes. Executions are carried out by **(17)** _____ because doctors have sworn to save lives instead of taking them.

1	discussed	stated	referred	mentioned
2	society	humanity	groups	neighborhood
3	maltreatment	abuse	punishment	penalty
4	dangerous	stern	wrong	serious
5	stake	pole	stick	rod
6	excluded	removed	established	abolished
7	choice	decision	resolution	result
8	effective	affective	current	operative
9	pledging	making	doing	committing
10	legislative	executive	trial	judicial
11	As well	In addition	Although	Nevertheless
12	parole	bail	condition	release
13	inhumane	humanity	humane	human
14	villains	prosecutors	patients	inmates
15	grew	resulted	caused	developed
16	extractions	liquids	juices	gases
17	guardians	keepers	stewards	wardens

6

The Case of Troy Davis – Fill in the blanks with the words from the box. There are TWO words you will not need.

Troy Davis was an African American who was **(1)** _____ and executed for the murder of a police officer in the car park of a restaurant in Savannah, Georgia. The killing occurred in August 1989, when a **(2)** _____ guard tried to stop Davis from attacking a man. Seven **(3)** _____ said that they had seen Davis actually shoot the officer, while two others **(4)** _____ that Davis had **(5)** _____ the murder to them. Although the murder weapon was never found and there was no physical **(6)** _____ that Davis had been at the crime scene, he was sentenced to death in 1991.

In the 20 years between the first **(7)** _____ and his execution in 2011, Troy Davis repeatedly said that he had not **(8)** _____ the crime. Famous people, including former president Jimmy Carter and Pope Benedict XVI, as well as human **(9)** _____ organizations, tried to help Davis. Even people in favor of the death penalty **(10)** _____ Davis and stated that a possibly innocent person should not be executed.

In 2009 the United States Supreme Court decided that the case should be **(11)** _____ again. Some of the witnesses who had seen the shooting said that they were not sure anymore if Davis had been the killer. In 2010 the court **(12)** _____ the sentence and set an **(13)** _____ date. After a number of **(14)** _____ had failed, Davis was finally executed through lethal injection on September 21, 2011. Even a **(15)** _____, signed by a million people, could not stop the execution.

The Troy Davis case triggered angry reactions and **(16)** _____ across the world. Top level officials in the European Union, which is extremely **(17)** _____ of capital punishment, said that a person should not be punished if there are serious doubts about his **(18)** _____.

- appeal
- committed
- confessed
- confirmed
- convicted
- critical
- evidence
- examined
- execution
- guilt
- injection
- outrage
- petition
- punishment
- rights
- security
- supported
- testified
- trial
- witnesses

8

Facts about the death penalty

Take a look at the fact sheet provided by the *Death Penalty Information Center*. Find information to answer the following questions.

Source : <https://dpic-cdn.org/production/documents/pdf/FactSheet.pdf>

1. How has the number of executions developed in the past 50 years? _____

2. Compare the race of defendants executed with the race of victims in capital punishment cases. What differences can you see? _____

3. How many death penalty states are there in the U.S.? _____
4. How many death row inmates have been exonerated in the past 50 years? Which states have carried out the most cases? _____

5. Look up the percentage of the Black population in the U.S. compare it with the proportion of Blacks on death row. _____

6. Which state has the most death row inmates? _____
7. Which state has carried out the most executions since 1976? _____
8. What has the Supreme Court decided in regard to mental disabilities of death row inmates? _____
9. Why do death penalty trials cost more than others? _____

10. How has America's support for the death penalty developed over the decades? What is the situation today? _____

