

**Key Terms:**

- **Corporal punishment** means physical punishment.
- **Capital punishment** is the death penalty.

**Key words to support learning:**

violation, abolition, convicting, acquitted, prosecutor, execute, controversial, amendment, discriminate, posthumous, guillotine, homophobic, penalise, condemn, post-mortem.

Use a dictionary to find out their meanings.

**Which countries still use the death penalty?**

Yes	No
United States	United Kingdom
Egypt	Rwanda
Nigeria	France
Iran	South Korea
Uganda	Ghana

**DEATH PENALTY TIMELINE:**

In 1900 death penalty available for 4 crimes.  
 1908 / 1933 hanging of under 16s/18s ended.  
 1922 Infanticide Act  
 Miscarriages of justice / controversial executions: 1950 Timothy Evans; 1953 Derek Bentley; 1956 Ruth Ellis.  
 1957 Homicide Act restrictions  
 1965 Murder Act + 1969 Amendment ends use of death penalty;  
 1998 final abolition.

**Things to think about:**

It violates human rights  
 It doesn't deter crime  
 It discriminates (mostly poor, minority group people)

**Discovery Year 9 / Literacy**  
**Autumn 2**  
**Knowledge Organiser The Death Penalty**

**Finding Out:** When was the death penalty abolished? Which states of America still use capital punishment?

**Arguments in favour of the death penalty**

- 1) If someone murders someone else**, they have given up their human rights – including one to stay alive themselves. They get what they deserve (retribution). For example, Saddam Hussein was put on trial and executed in 2006. Hussein was man who is said to be responsible for the death of thousands of Iraqi civilians as well as other civilians across the Middle East.
- 2) Giving the killer a death sentence** will stop them – and others doing it again. Having such a harsh punishment in place will deter (stop) others from committing this crime.
- 3) The punishment should 'fit the crime'** – if you have killed someone, you should be killed too. Religious teaching: 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth'. (Exodus 21:24)
- 4) How can a society/government allow such 'monsters to live'?** Many whom commit murder cannot be trusted to be released back in to society. They don't deserve to live in prison. For example, many argue that Behring Breivik who killed 69 people in a mass shooting in Norway is a threat to humanity.
- 5) The very small chance of executing the wrong person** is balanced by the benefits to society by putting off other murderers from killing. They will not want to lose their own lives, and so will not commit murder.

**Arguments against the death penalty**

- 1) Many believe the idea of retribution** – giving someone what they deserve is wrong. Vengeance (the concept of getting someone 'back') is not justice and it is not fair. The law should not sink to the level of criminals. 'We cannot teach that killing is wrong by killing' U.S. Catholic Conference.
- 2) The death penalty goes against our most basic human right** – the right to life. Everyone has a right to human life, even those who commit murder. Sentencing a person to death and execute them violates that right.
- 3) If mistakes are sometimes made in the law – what if someone who is innocent is actually killed?** Witnesses, prosecutors and members of the jury can all make mistakes too. For example: 1950 – Timothy Evans was tired and executed in the UK for the murder of his baby daughter Geraldine. An enquiry conducted 16 years later showed that his fellow tenant, John Christie (a serial killer) was responsible for the murder. Evans was innocent.
- 4) Being killed by a lethal injection or being electrocuted is not always smooth and painless;** sometimes it causes a painful death. Some argue that this is not a civilised act and is like going back 100 years in time.
- 5) Capital Punishment is actually more expensive in a lot of countries than life imprisonment.** Court costs in the US are massive when trailing someone for the death penalty. For example – the cost of convicting and executing Timothy McVeigh for the Oklahoma City Bombings was over \$13 million.