

Schwarzenegger allows execution (Thu 20 Jan)

WARM UPS

1. CHAT: Talk in pairs or groups about Arnold Schwarzenegger / Terminator (I, II, III ...) / the death penalty / lethal injection / drug-related crime / Death Row / ...
Change topic / partner frequently to energize the class.

2. DEATH PENALTY METHODS: Write the following methods of capital punishment on the board for students to discuss:
hanging, guillotine, firing squad, stoning, lethal injection, electrocution (electric chair), gas chamber, lethal injection ...

3. MY COUNTRY: Talk about laws and attitudes towards the death penalty in your own country.

4. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL: Discuss the following statement from Amnesty International (link below) about the Death Penalty in the USA:

“The death penalty is the ultimate, irreversible denial of human rights. By working towards the abolition of the death penalty worldwide, Amnesty International USA's Program to Abolish the Death Penalty looks to end the cycle of violence created by a system riddled with economic and racial bias and tainted by human error.”

5. 2-MINUTE DEBATES:

- (a) All killing is wrong. vs. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.
- (b) Saves taxpayers money – no prison bills. vs No price can be put on human life.
- (c) The Death Penalty is a deterrent. vs Murder is common with or without it.
- (d) The Death Penalty violates human rights. vs. So does multiple murder.
- (e) Mistakes are made. Innocent people die. vs. Hey, no system is perfect.
- (f) The Death Penalty gives society the message that killing is OK. vs. No way.
- (g) Executed ‘terrorists’ may become ‘martyrs’. vs. So be it.
- (h) It provides closure for victims’ families. vs. That’s a poor reason to kill someone.
- (i) Life in prison is better. vs. You mean life watching TV, reading and chatting.
- (j) Most of the public support the Death Penalty vs. Not true.
- (k) Other teacher / student created mini-debates – dependent on cultures of students.

PRE READING EXERCISES

WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries, or a search engine, to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'lethal' and 'injection'.

TRUE / FALSE: Predict from the headline whether these statements are true or false:

- (a) Arnold Schwarzenegger is to star in the movie Terminator 6. T / F
- (b) Arnold Schwarzenegger allowed the execution of a convicted killer. T / F
- (c) The killer was stoned to death. T / F
- (d) This is the fourteenth California State execution for Arnie. T / F
- (e) Arnie said the killer knew the difference between right and wrong. T / F
- (f) Beardslee's defence lawyers tried to get the death penalty overturned. T / F
- (g) California has always had the Death Penalty. T / F
- (h) California has the largest Death Row population in America. T / F

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| (a) allowed | clemency |
| (b) execution | sentence |
| (c) murderer | seriousness |
| (d) mercy | killer |
| (e) conviction | reversed |
| (f) gravity | permitted |
| (g) heinous | cancellation |
| (h) overturned | prisoners |
| (i) reprieve | killing |
| (j) inmates | despicable |

PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases based on the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| (a) multiple | lethal injection |
| (b) be put to | a vigil |
| (c) death by | overturned |
| (d) pleas for | sentence |
| (e) death | murderer |
| (f) get the death penalty | seven years in prison |
| (g) drugs | execution |
| (h) He had previously served | mercy |
| (i) protestors staged | deal |
| (j) awaiting | death |

GAP FILL

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bNE: Arnold Schwarzenegger _____ played real life Terminator earlier today as he allowed the execution of multiple murderer, Donald Beardslee, 61, to be _____ to death by lethal injection. This is the first California State execution for Arnie and the first in the state in three years. Arnie rejected the pleas for mercy, that _____ surround capital punishment in America, saying Beardslee was fully aware of how serious his crimes were. The Republican governor stated, "The federal courts have affirmed his conviction and death sentence, and nothing in his petition or the record of his case _____ me that he did not understand the gravity of his actions or that these heinous murders were wrong". Beardslee's defence lawyers, however, tried to get the death penalty _____ on the grounds that he was _____ from brain disorders when he killed two women over a drugs deal in 1981. He had _____ served seven years in prison for strangling a woman in 1969, and had been on Death Row since 1984. About 300 protestors staged a vigil outside the infamous San Quentin prison hoping for the last minute reprieve, which never came. California restored the Death Penalty in 1978 and now has the largest Death Row _____ in America, with 600 inmates awaiting execution.

*commonly
previously
suffering
finally
population
overturned
put
convinced*

DISCUSSION: Ask each other the following questions:

- (a) What do you think of Arnold Schwarzenegger?
- (b) Is the Death Penalty wrong?
- (c) Is the Death Penalty a violation of human rights?
- (d) Does your society have (want) the Death Penalty?
- (e) Do you think it's strange that the USA has, and enforces the Death Penalty?
- (f) What is the most 'humane' form of execution?
- (g) Which is better, life imprisonment or capital punishment?
- (h) What would be going through your head if you were to spend your last night on Death Row?
- (i) On the eve of their execution, inmates can request a final meal. What would you choose?
- (j) Is the Death Penalty deterrent?
- (k) Does the Death Penalty desensitize us to killing?
- (l) What must it be like to be the executioner?
- (m) Do you believe in 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth', or are you a 'turn the other cheek' person?
- (n) What does a government do when it discovers the person just executed was innocent?
- (o) What is the best alternative to the Death Penalty?
- (p) Teacher's / Students' additional questions

INTERNET / WEB LINKS:

Amnesty International and the Death Penalty:

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/abolish/index.do>

Methods of execution from the Death Penalty Information Centre

<http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/article.php?scid=8&did=245>

Everything you need to know – an encyclopedic look at the Death Penalty:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_penalty

Death Penalty information – a high school curriculum:

<http://deathpenaltyinfo.msu.edu/>

Pro-Death Penalty:

<http://www.prodeathpenalty.com/>

A look inside San Quentin prison's execution chamber and how lethal injection works

<http://people.howstuffworks.com/lethal-injection.htm>

The San Quentin Prison web site:

http://www.corr.ca.gov/InstitutionsDiv/INSTDIV/facilities/fac_prison_SQ.asp

Arnie's Governor web site:

http://www.governor.ca.gov/state/govsite/gov_homepage.jsp

HOMEWORK

POSTER: Create a poster arguing for or against capital punishment.

LETTER TO ARNIE: Write a letter to the California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger explaining what you think about his allowing the execution.

FULL TEXT

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