

Live Lesson Notes

Crime

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Here is some essential vocabulary you can start using to talk about this topic of crime.

crime (n.) *countable and uncountable*

To commit a crime

The crime rate = *how much crime there is*

There are many types of crime, here are some of the most common types with examples.

Violent crimes

- rape
- murder
- kidnapping
- car-jacking
- arson
- genocide
- mugging

Petty crimes

- shoplifting = *stealing from a shop*
- trespassing = *going on private property*
- pick-pocketing = *stealing from someone's bag or pocket*

Property crimes

- vandalism = *damaging public/private property*
- burglary = *stealing from a house*
- robbery
- car theft

smuggling = *(e.g. drugs - take illegally across a border)*

Cyber crimes

- identity fraud = *pretending to be someone else*
- theft (*especially credit card information*)
- ransomware = *software that blocks your computer until you pay money*

White collar crimes

- fraud
- embezzlement = *stealing money from a company you work for*

Here is some more vocabulary about people who commit crimes and the punishment they can get

a **criminal** (n.) (person)

- a wrongdoer
- a lawbreaker

criminal (adj)

To commit a **criminal act**

To have a **criminal record**

Punishments

To go to jail / to prison

To serve a **prison sentence** (period of time)

He served a 10 year sentence

She will serve a life sentence (in prison).

To serve time

To do community service

A **deterrent** against crime = *a discouragement*

IELTS Speaking Part 3 Tips

The key to doing well in IELTS Speaking Part 3 is to develop your answers. Simple as that. The more you develop, the more chances the examiner has to evaluate your real level.

However, don't be surprised if the examiners interrupt you, that is normal. A good way to develop your answer is to give reasons, opinions, explanations and examples.

Debates and Discussions:

Should young criminals be sent to prison for committing crimes?

When talking about young criminals, we can also use these phrases to describe a young person who doesn't follow the rules, obey the law

- A juvenile delinquent
- A young offender
- A minor (=young person)

These phrases may be helpful when discussing this issue

They may commit a crime **by accident**

Prison won't **act as a deterrent**

Community service **will deter** juvenile delinquents

Yes, because we need to **ensure the safety of** our citizens

They should be given an alternative sentence, such as community service

They need some punishment, so they realise that they have **slipped up** (=made a mistake), but maybe not prison, because that might turn them into a **hardened criminal**.

No, because they would **suffer huge mental stress**, and the chances are they will **reoffend** (=commit a crime again)

No, they will just learn how to be a better criminal in prison

To put someone on probation = to release from prison early (to try and lead a normal life)

Well it depends on the intention of the **minor**, because sometimes young ones are **not really aware of** what they are actually doing and they may have been **led astray** (=misled) by someone.

How technology can help tackle crime

The police can use technology to get **digital fingerprints**, and analyse them in a database, and so this helps them **identify criminals**

By using CCTV cameras we can **deter** people **from committing** crimes because they know they will be seen and probably caught

Police use **face recognition**, and **motion and sensor technology** to tackle certain crimes

Algorithms on social media can be used to **tackle cyber bullying**

Technology can help tackle crime by **assisting the authorities** to collect information about criminals effectively and efficiently to support their investigation of a crime

I read an article about that some police forces are using **AI technologies** to assess the **potential threat** of an arrested suspect to society and if they should be **kept in custody** (=kept in prison before their trial) or **released on bail** (released from prison before their trial happens by payment of a sum of money).

The crime rate nowadays is lower than in the past

This is a difficult debate, so here are some phrases to express this idea

- It's not black and white
- It's not easy to say
- It's hard to say
- It depends who you listen to
- I'm in two minds on this matter

Some crimes have been reduced but others, like **cybercrime** have **popped up** (=suddenly appeared) in recent years

It depends which crimes we are talking about. If we are talking about **violent crimes**, there doesn't seem to have been much change, but many **property crimes**, like **burglary** have certainly decreased because **home security** is much better than before.

Crime rates have fallen in many cities due to **increased CCTV coverage**, and because there are more policemen **patrolling the streets**.

Well, if you listen to the politicians, then yes, the **crime rate** appears to be lower, but I am not sure we can always believe what we hear.

I'd say the crime rate has increased in many places due to **widespread use of the Internet** which makes it easier for criminals to **reach their victims**. For instance, **child predators** can **stalk minors** via the Internet, and also some people may **commit identity fraud** without leaving any trace.

Idioms to talk about Crime

The following expressions can be used to talk about crime

To **turn to a career of crime** = *to start a life of crime*

He **fell in** (=make friends in a negative way) **with** some bad boys, and **turned to a career of crime**

To **be caught red handed** = *to be caught in the act*

He was **caught red handed** stealing money from the cash till

To **do time** = *spend time in prison*

He's **doing time** after he was caught for drunk diving

To **go straight** = *obey the law*

After 2 years behind bars, he has decided to **go straight**

To **keep your nose clean** = *obey the law*

After 2 years behind bars, he has decided to **keep his nose clean**

To **blow the whistle on** someone = *to tell the police that someone is committing a crime*

She **blew the whistle on** her boss who was committing fraud