

**SOURCE A**

***This is an extract from a letter Oscar Wilde wrote to 'The Daily Chronicle' newspaper after his own release in 1897 from Reading prison. The letter, entitled: "The Case of Warder Martin: Some Cruelties of Prison Life", shows his concern over the treatment of children in prisons.***

To The Editor, The Daily Chronicle, Friday 28th May 1897.

Dear Sir, the present treatment of children is terrible, primarily from people not understanding the psychology of a child's nature. A child cannot understand a punishment inflicted by society.

The child consequently, being taken away from its parents by people whom it has never seen before, and of whom it knows nothing, and finding itself in a lonely and unfamiliar cell, waited on by strange faces, and ordered about and punished by representatives of a prison system that it cannot understand, becomes an immediate prey to the first and most prominent emotion produced by modern prisons - the emotion of terror. 5

The terror of a child in prison is quite limitless. I remember once, in Reading prison, as I was going out to exercise, seeing in the dimly-lit cell right opposite my own, a small boy. Two warders — not unkindly men — were talking sternly to him, or perhaps giving him some useful advice about his behaviour. One was in the cell with him, the other was standing outside. The child's face was like a white wedge of sheer terror. There was in his eyes the terror of a hunted animal. 10 15

The next morning I heard him at breakfast time crying and begging to be let out. His cry was for his parents. From time to time I could hear the deep voice of the warder on duty telling him to keep quiet. Yet he was not even convicted of whatever little offence he had been charged with. He was simply on remand. This I knew by his wearing of his own clothes, which seemed neat enough. He was, however, wearing prison socks and shoes. This showed that he was a very poor boy, whose own shoes, if he had any, were in a bad state. Justices and magistrates, an entirely ignorant class as a rule, often remand children for a week. They call this "not sending a child to prison". It is, of course, a stupid view on their part. To a little child whether he is in prison on remand, or after conviction, is no different. To him, the horrible thing is to be there at all. In the eyes of humanity it should be a horrible thing for him to be there at all. 20 25

**Q1: Read Source A, lines 9 – 25.**

**Choose four statements below which are TRUE.**

- **Wilde believes that prison is a good punishment for children**
- **Wilde claims that prison is a terrifying experience for children**
- **Wilde witnessed a child begging to be released from prison**
- **Wilde believes sending children to prison is a stupid idea**
- **The boy had lost his own shoes and socks**
- **The boy was so poor he did not have his own shoes and socks**
- **The boy cried because he missed his friends**

***Land where killers are free to go hunting***

**The traditional Inuit belief that criminals should not be imprisoned lives on in Greenland.**

"During the reindeer season we take the convicts out hunting - even the murderers," said Torben Thruue, head of the correctional institution in Nuuk. "Obviously, we don't take the mentally unstable," he said. "They get to go fishing."

The centre's 54 convicted criminals, whose offences include sex crimes, murder and drug-dealing, also hold down jobs, often attending to business on mobile telephones from their prison cells. The self-governing Danish colony of Greenland has no closed prisons. 5

Convicted rapists, murderers and paedophiles are free to walk Nuuk's streets, visit friends and family - even go to a bar! They can even buy clothes, television sets, hi-fis and coffee machines for their cells. Surprisingly, only those considered "a danger to society" are sent to the Herstedvester closed prison in Denmark. 10

Imprisonment has never been used in Greenland, the world's largest island with a population of 56,076, of which 80% are Inuit. Traditionally, villains were rarely pushed out of the community. Living in one of the world's harshest habitats, the Inuit hunters needed everyone, including criminals, to survive. The Danes retained the essence of this system when they made Greenland their largest county in 1954. They established lay courts, a police force and three correctional institutions. 15

"We don't believe in punishment," said Mille Pederson, a lay magistrate at the high court in Nuuk. "We achieve more by trying to re-socialise people. Locking someone up for 10 years isn't going to make them a better person."

But convicts at the Nuuk correctional institution said they were more restricted than those in closed prisons. They are locked in their cells between 9.30pm and 6am. They have to pay the centre 735 Danish krone (£63) a week for their board, and send money to their families. Counselling is compulsory. 20

"It's very hard to be here," said Abel Lennect, a multiple murderer. "They write reports on me all the time. I have to ask permission to do things." Hans Jensen, a drug-smuggler, doubts the system works. Caught with 30kg of drugs in his boat off the coast of Greenland, he said he would be prepared to smuggle again. But fewer than 1% of criminals in Greenland re-offend. Very few try to escape, as there are no roads connecting towns. 25

"Closed prisons are simply factories for new criminals. This system makes it possible for people to change their lives and return to society," said Yoan Meyer, the chief constable of Greenland. 30

**Q2: Refer to Source A and Source B. Write a summary of the differences between the two writers' attitudes to prison.**

**Q3: Re-read this extract, taken from Source B.**

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**How does the writer use language to convey her sense of surprise to the reader?**