



# T I M E

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

LEARNING IN ACTION



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# E-CARCERATION VS INCARCERATION

THE DEBATE OVER DIGITAL PRISONS



TIME 3

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## BACKGROUND BRIEF:

The use of electronic ankle monitors to track offender's movements has been in place since the 1980's. These electronic devices can be used upon an individual's release from prison, used for those awaiting trial, or used as a means to simulate a restrictive, prison-type setting at home for non-violent offenders. Arguments exist as to whether this type of confinement has more of a positive or a negative impact on society and the individual it has been tasked to serve.



## INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING CONNECTIONS:

- » **PSYCHOLOGY:** Investigate the psychological impact of e-carceration. Is this impact better or worse than standard incarceration? What safety measures are needed to avoid/minimize psychological damage?
- » **SOCIOLOGY:** Assess the societal impact of digital prison. Does e-carceration benefit or harm society? How does e-carceration impact social relationships and interactions?
- » **LAW:** Examine the law in regards to digital prison. What rights do e-carcerated individuals have? How is this process regulated? What mandates are already in place? How were they determined and are they sufficient? What are the consequences of e-carceration violations?
- » **ECONOMICS:** Determine the financial consequences of digital prison. What is the financial impact on individuals? On prisons? On the private companies that monitor these digital inmates?
- » **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:** Compile evidence to support your stance on digital prison. Formulate and express this evidence in a way that communicates and elevates your opinion regarding e-carceration.

THE USE OF ELECTRONIC  
ANKLE MONITORS TO  
TRACK OFFENDER'S  
MOVEMENTS HAS BEEN IN  
PLACE SINCE THE 1980'S.



## INVESTIGATE THE PROBLEM:

Read the two articles below using the following question as a lens:  
Does e-carceration in its current state benefit digital inmates, their families and society as a whole?

- [The Dangers of America's Expanding 'Digital Prison.'](#)
- [How Digital Technology Can Reduce Prison Incarceration Rates.](#)





## PERFORM A PROBLEM-SOLVING ACTION:

Engage in a debate expressing your or your group's informed viewpoint on digital prison.

- » Based on your readings of the two articles choose a viewpoint that aligns with one article and that most accurately reflects your opinion on digital prison. Research and analyze both the strengths and the potential problems that exists within your chosen argument. Document your findings. Develop at least 3 potential solutions to address the problem.
- » Submit your/the group's side of the debate as a recorded video, an in-person presentation or a virtual talk delivered via an online group video chat.
- » Remember to address both the strengths of your/the group's position as well as the weaknesses.
- » Give and receive peer feedback.



## NEXT STEPS IN OUR LEARNING:

- » Listen carefully to the opposition's argument and craft a response.
- » After being provided a response to your argument, craft a rebuttal.
- » After hearing both sides of the debate develop an improvement plan for e-carceration that includes components from both sides.
- » Conduct a direct action campaign by writing a persuasive letter to your elected officials communicating top points from the debate and/or improvement plan.



ELECTRONIC DEVICES CAN BE USED UPON AN INDIVIDUAL'S RELEASE FROM PRISON, USED FOR THOSE AWAITING TRIAL, OR USED AS A MEANS TO SIMULATE A RESTRICTIVE, PRISON-TYPE SETTING AT HOME FOR NON-VIOLENT OFFENDERS.



## REFLECT ON IMPACT & LEARNING:

Reflect by answering the following questions: What was your/the group's viewpoint on and the approach to improving e-carceration? Was your/the group's approach effective? Why or why not? What could you/the group have done differently? What viewpoint/approach did the opposition use? Did their approach cause you or the group to think differently? If so, in what ways? What did you learn overall about e-carceration?

# PRISONS FOR PROFITS

QUESTIONING THE BUSINESS  
OF PUNISHMENT





## BACKGROUND BRIEF:

“A provision of the 13th Amendment legalized the enslavement of prisoners and as a result, the U.S. has the largest prison system with over 2.3 million incarcerated individuals that account for 25% of the global prison population. While the power and decision-making structure of judges, attorneys and government were influenced by British predecessors, the expansion and adoption of mass incarceration is inherent to American capitalism. The converging interest between government and private industries that rely on mass incarceration for goods, labor and profit is what is known as the Prison Industrial Complex” (*A Time to Act Toolkit*, pp. 11 -12).



## INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING CONNECTIONS:

- » **POLITICAL SCIENCE:** Investigate the relationship between private prisons and politics. Should for profit prisons be able to secure exclusive government contracts? Do privatized prisons promote policies that lead to higher rates of incarceration? How widespread is the use of campaign contributions and lobbying by these private prison companies?
- » **SOCIOLOGY:** Assess the societal impact of privatized prisons. Do private prisons benefit society? What are the benefits or drawbacks of incarcerated individuals housed in a private prison versus one that is government run?
- » **ECONOMICS:** Determine the financial impact of private prison. How do private prisons make money? How much profit do private prisons bring in yearly? Is there a profit motive in increasing incarceration rates? How do private prisons and the policy of [bed mandates](#) impact taxpayers?
- » **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:** Formulate questions as you research private prisons. Discuss and explore relevant facts and statistics. Write a response to a key question that develops during your research.

A PROVISION OF THE 13TH  
AMENDMENT LEGALIZED THE  
ENSLAVEMENT OF PRISONERS AND  
AS A RESULT, THE U.S. HAS THE  
LARGEST PRISON SYSTEM.



## INVESTIGATE THE PROBLEM:

Read Chapter 5 – The Prison Industrial Complex (pp. 84-104) from the book [Are Prisons Obsolete?](#) by professor, activist and former prisoner Angela Y. Davis. Document any questions that arise as you are reading through the text.



## PERFORM A PROBLEM-SOLVING ACTION:

Engage in a quescussion (question + discussion).

- » A quescussion is a discussion through questions only.
- » Guiding questions: Should prisons tasked with the care and rehabilitation of prisoners also be concerned with turning a profit? Do prisons being profit-oriented have any negative effects?
- » Respond to the question in the form of more questions. Generate at least 5 questions in response to the guiding question. Document questions.
- » Focus on one of the key questions generated and explore it more in-depth. Formulate a response to the question. Complete this activity in small breakout groups if possible. Deliver your response.
- » Give and receive peer feedback to at least 2 other individual or group responses.



## NEXT STEPS IN OUR LEARNING:

- » Create a pro-con grid as you listen to and/or review the quescussion responses.
- » Working individually or in a small group come up with at least 3 points for each side of the grid.
- » The pros/cons for and against privatization can be bullet points or full sentences.
- » Share out your completed pro-con grid digitally, virtually or as an in-class activity.
- » Create, share or retweet a social media post to raise awareness of facts surrounding privatization.



THE U.S. HAS OVER 2.3  
MILLION INCARCERATED  
INDIVIDUALS THAT ACCOUNT  
FOR 25% OF THE GLOBAL  
PRISON POPULATION.



## REFLECT ON IMPACT & LEARNING:

Reflect by answering the following questions: What questions did you/the group have regarding the business of private prisons? Which key question was chosen to explore more in-depth? Why did you/the group choose that question? What was the group's formulated response to that key question? What fact, statistic or pro/con had the most impact on how you regard private prisons? What impact did it have and what is your informed opinion regarding prisons for profit? What did you learn overall about the privatization of prisons?



# RETURNING CITIZENS

VISUALIZING THE REALITY  
OF REINTEGRATION





## BACKGROUND BRIEF:

“The sentence does not end after the physical shackles are released. Outside of visible suffering that leads to recidivism, the wounds of incarceration are felt long after release. On the federal and state level, those formerly incarcerated lose physical, financial and civil liberties including the right to vote, and the state can decide to remove their parental rights. Without a voice in their community, and separated from their children, formerly incarcerated people can start to feel like they don’t matter... Also, people recently released from prison often come home with Post-Incarceration Syndrome, a unique mental condition caused by the prison environment.” (*A Time to Act Toolkit*, pp. 30-37).



## INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING CONNECTIONS:

- » **PSYCHOLOGY:** Investigate the psychological issues that result from the prison environment. What is Post-Incarceration Syndrome? How does Post-Incarceration Syndrome impact a former inmate’s ability to integrate back into society? What other mental health issues are common for former inmates?
- » **SOCIOLOGY:** Assess the societal impact of reentry on former inmates. What social stigmas do formerly incarcerated people face? What societal circumstances can lead to recidivism? Do former inmates lose civil liberties such as the right to vote? How does each state reintegrate these citizens back into society?
- » **ECONOMICS:** Determine how economics can create a barrier for former inmates trying to readjust to life outside of prison. What employment opportunities exist for former prisoners? What is the unemployment rate and average yearly wage for individuals returning home from prison?
- » **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:** Research facts/statistics related to the reintegration of former inmates. Investigate a variety of topics including regaining voting rights, finding work, continuing their education, housing rules and health issues. Write impactful statements to create awareness.
- » **GRAPHIC DESIGN:** Design a visual to help others understand the facts/statistics surrounding reintegration.

OUTSIDE OF VISIBLE SUFFERING  
THAT LEADS TO RECIDIVISM,  
THE WOUNDS OF INCARCERATION  
ARE FELT LONG AFTER RELEASE.



## INVESTIGATE THE PROBLEM:

- » Read [Post-Incarceration Syndrome: Adjusting to Reality After Spending 15 Years in Prison](#) by John Broman.
- » Listen to the *Big Brains* podcast episode [Why Life After Incarceration Is Just Another Prison, with Reuben Jonathan Miller](#) (Ep. 65).



## PERFORM A PROBLEM-SOLVING ACTION:

Create an infographic to communicate the reality of reintegration for former inmates.

- » Read the story and listen to the podcast episode above to gain a deeper understanding of the issues involved with life after incarceration. Note facts and/or issues you would like to explore further.
- » Research facts and statistics surrounding reintegration. Document your findings.
- » Create an [infographic](#). Use any creative platform or tool you like.
- » Be sure to include the facts and statistics you documented. Make sure to write impactful statements to create awareness. The infographic should present this information in a simple, creative and visual way.
- » Share and/or present your infographic.
- » Give peer feedback on at least 2 other infographics.



## NEXT STEPS IN OUR LEARNING:

- » Share your infographic on social media to create awareness.
- » Print your infographic and post on campus and/or community bulletin boards.
- » Raise your voice by joining a virtual discussion or Twitter chat on a platform such as [@prisonfellowshp](#).
- » Use relevant hashtags like [#secondchances](#) to raise awareness and advocate for reentry programs.



PEOPLE RECENTLY RELEASED FROM PRISON OFTEN COME HOME WITH POST- INCARCERATION SYNDROME, A UNIQUE MENTAL CONDITION CAUSED BY THE PRISON ENVIRONMENT.



## REFLECT ON IMPACT & LEARNING:

Reflect by answering the following questions: What questions do you have regarding reintegration? What was the intended message of your infographic? What facts and/or statistics did you choose to focus on and are they relevant to the message you were wanting to convey? What fact and/or statistic had the most impact on how you feel about the reentry process? Does your infographic allow the viewer to reach the conclusion you intended? Is your design visually appealing and easy to read? What did you learn about the issues/barriers surrounding reintegration?



# PARENTING FROM PRISON


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DESIGNING A SOLUTION  
TO CONNECT FAMILIES



TIME 12

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## BACKGROUND BRIEF:

“Black Americans are five times more likely to be incarcerated than White Americans. With Black Americans accounting for a large part of the federal and state prison population, there is an adverse effect on Black families and communities. Families experience emotional and physical separation, loss of income and the ability to meet basic needs. There are approximately 2.7 million children in the U.S. with at least one parent in jail or prison. Children of incarcerated parents are six times as likely to become involved in criminal activity, and less likely to finish high school or graduate college.” (*A Time to Act Toolkit*, pp. 24-29).



## INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING CONNECTIONS:

- » **PSYCHOLOGY:** Investigate the psychological issues that result from parental incarceration. What is the impact on inmates being separated from their children and having limited ability to parent? What is the impact on children who grow up with the negative stigma of having a parent in prison? And how are these children impacted by the limited access to their parent?
- » **SOCIOLOGY:** Assess the societal impact of having a parent in prison on children. Are children of incarcerated parents more likely to engage in criminal activities themselves? Are these children less likely to complete school? How can schools/teachers educate themselves and support these children?
- » **ECONOMICS:** Determine how economics plays a part in creating a cycle of parental incarceration. How does poverty, discrimination, underfunded schools and lack of decent housing result in a higher likelihood of incarceration among certain populations?
- » **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:** Define the problem and formulate questions as you research parenting from prison. Design a plan to address the problem. Prototype and explain your solution to the problem.

**BLACK AMERICANS ARE FIVE  
TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE  
INCARCERATED THAN WHITE  
AMERICANS.**



## INVESTIGATE THE PROBLEM:

- » Read [\*My Dad Went to Prison When I was 5, Now I Write About Families Like Mine\*](#) by Sylvia A. Harvey.
- » Listen to the keynote [\*Parents in Prison: Collateral Consequences\*](#) by Dr. Rebecca Shlafer.
- » Watch the Hero video and breakout videos from the toolkit
- » Watch the video *Supporting Youth with Incarcerated Parents: For Social Workers*.



## PERFORM A PROBLEM-SOLVING ACTION:

Engage in design thinking to create a solution to connect families dealing with incarceration.

- » Set aside any assumptions you may have to gain insight into those affected. Read the story and watch the videos above to gain a deeper understanding of the issues involved with parental incarceration.
- » Based on your observations from the story/videos, define a core problem facing incarcerated parents and their children. Ask questions that will help you and/or your group develop solutions to the problem.
- » Brainstorm to generate ideas for solutions. Use ideation techniques to generate as many ideas as possible. Do not limit yourself, be sure to include innovative and/or unusual ideas.
- » Decide on the best solution and create a prototype or a plan. The prototype can be an actual inexpensive recreation of a proposed object, a drawing or storyboard and/or a detailed, written plan.
- » Present your solution, plan and/or prototype.
- » Give and receive peer feedback to/from at least 2 other individual or group solutions.



## NEXT STEPS IN OUR LEARNING:

- » Create a YouTube video pitching your solution. Share the link with friends, family, political representatives and other relevant individuals in the community.
- » Volunteer with and/or donate to an organization or community group advocating for inmates who are parents and their children.



THERE ARE  
APPROXIMATELY 2.7  
MILLION CHILDREN IN THE  
U.S. WITH AT LEAST ONE  
PARENT IN JAIL OR PRISON.



## REFLECT ON IMPACT & LEARNING:

Reflect by answering the following questions: What questions did you/the group have regarding parenting from prison? What problem did you/the group choose to focus on? How does your/the group's prototype solve the problem? What are the most important features of the prototype and/or plan? What makes your/the group's solution unique? Is there anything you/the group would do differently? How might the people impacted by the problem feel about your solution? Are there any advantages and/or disadvantages to using design thinking to solve these issues/challenges?



# THE MASS INCARCERATION OF COLOR

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MAPPING OUT THE FACTORS



TIME 15

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## BACKGROUND BRIEF:

“Racial disparities are real and prevalent in the prison system. Mandatory minimum sentencing, pre-trial detention, probation sentencing and mass incarceration has harmed and historically oppressed Black people. Black Americans account for the majority of mandatory minimum sentencing at 45%. Black Americans are [also] incarcerated at almost six times the rate of White Americans [and] are disproportionately serving life sentences, life without parole, or virtual life sentences.” (*A Time to Act Toolkit*, pp. 18-19).



## INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING CONNECTIONS:

- » **PSYCHOLOGY:** What are mental health issues faced by people of color (POC) who are incarcerated? Are POC less likely to receive treatment for mental health issues while incarcerated?
- » **SOCIOLOGY:** What is the effect of mass incarceration on communities of color? How does school-to-prison pipeline, drug policies, recidivism and unequal representation in court add to mass incarceration of Black males? Why are approximately 500,000 people locked up who have not been convicted or sentenced?
- » **HISTORY:** How has America historically profited from forced Black labor? What is the link between POC's mass incarceration and [Black Codes](#)? Are POC's high rates of incarceration a form of modern day slavery? Why does America continually have the highest incarceration rate of any developed nation?

BLACK AMERICANS ACCOUNT  
FOR THE MAJORITY OF  
MANDATORY MINIMUM  
SENTENCING AT 45%.



## INVESTIGATE THE PROBLEM:

- » Read the report [The Color of Justice: Racial and Ethnic Disparity in State Prisons](#).
- » Read the article [The Effects of Mass Incarceration on Communities of Color](#).
- » Watch the expert panelist in [Confronting Systemic Racism: Policing, Mass Incarceration, and Black Lives Matter](#).
- » Watch the video [Slavery to Mass Incarceration](#).



## PERFORM A PROBLEM-SOLVING ACTION:

[Concept Mapping](#) helps to analyze and organize information based on meaningful connections. Use a Concept Map to create a graphical representation of the knowledge you have gained and the connections you have made regarding the disproportionate sentencing and mass incarceration of POC.

- » *Optional* - Watch the video [How to Create a Concept Map](#). Your concept map will be showing the relationship between a main idea and the supporting details.
- » The main idea for your concept map will be: Disproportionate Sentencing & Mass Incarceration of POC.
- » Using prior knowledge, research, lecture notes and the resources above, identify the factors that contribute to the main topic issue. These factors are your supporting details.
- » Identify the relationship between the contributing factors by drawing lines, arrows, symbols and/or assigning colors to related topics.
- » Analyze your concept map. Add additional information, reorganize information and add relevant charts, diagrams or symbols.
- » Compare and contrast your map with those of your peers. Explain your selection of concepts and the relationships you have identified.



## NEXT STEPS IN OUR LEARNING:

- » Peer review at least 2 other concept maps giving feedback and making suggestions. Use the feedback you receive from your peers to make modifications to your concept map.
- » Focus on one of the supporting details. Use that detail as the main topic and create a second map.
- » Get involved in criminal justice reform at [The Sentencing Project](#).
- » Explore, support and/or join the conversation about racial justice at [Equal Justice Initiative](#).



**MANDATORY MINIMUM  
SENTENCING, PRE-TRIAL  
DETENTION, PROBATION  
SENTENCING AND MASS  
INCARCERATION HAS HARMED  
AND HISTORICALLY OPPRESSED  
BLACK PEOPLE.**



## REFLECT ON IMPACT & LEARNING:

Reflect by answering the following questions: What questions do you still have regarding the disproportionate sentencing and mass incarceration of POC? What facts and/or statistics did you choose to focus on for your supporting details? What do you think is the most important connections you have made? What feedback did you receive regarding your concept map that was useful? What actions will you take based on what you learned?



# CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF INMATES


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EXAMINING LANDMARK  
COURT CASES



TIME 18

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## BACKGROUND BRIEF:

“Federal and State laws govern the establishment and administration of prisons as well as the rights of inmates. Although prisoners do not have full constitutional rights, they are protected by the Eighth Amendment’s prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment. This protection also requires that prisoners be afforded a minimum standard of living... Additionally, the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment applies to prison inmates protecting them against unequal treatment on the basis of race, sex, and creed, and the Model Sentencing and Corrections Act, created by the Uniform Law Commission in 1978, provides that a confined person has a protected interest in freedom from discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, or sex. Prisoners also have rights to speech and religion, to the extent these rights do not interfere with their status as inmates.” ([Prisoners’ Rights](#), Cornell Law School).



## INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING CONNECTIONS:

- » **PSYCHOLOGY:** Does solitary confinement violate a prisoner’s right to protection against cruel and unusual punishment? What rights do inmates have in asking for and receiving treatment for their mental health issues?
- » **SOCIOLOGY:** What are the basic human rights prisoners should have? Why should society care about inmate’s rights? How can we as a society protect inmate rights? How do activists work alongside lawyers to protect inmate rights?
- » **LAW:** What are the constitutional rights of inmates? How can an inmate protect their constitutional rights and what can they do if their rights are violated? What landmark court cases have impacted prisoner rights?
- » **HISTORY:** When and why did the prisoners’ rights movement begin? How are the fights for civil rights and prisoner’s rights connected? What connections can be made between the sociology, the laws, and the history of prisoner rights?

ALTHOUGH PRISONERS DO NOT HAVE FULL CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS, THEY ARE PROTECTED BY THE EIGHTH AMENDMENT’S PROHIBITION AGAINST CRUEL AND UNUSUAL PUNISHMENT.



## INVESTIGATE THE PROBLEM:

- » Watch [What Rights Do Prisoners Have? – Part 1](#) and [What Rights Do Prisoners Have? – Part 2](#).
- » Read the article [A Primer on Prisoners’ Constitutional Rights](#).



## PERFORM A PROBLEM-SOLVING ACTION:

Advise a fictional inmate on their constitutional rights based on your readings and research.

- » Use pages 17 – 66 of [The Jailhouse Lawyer's Handbook](#). Note prisoner's rights that are of interest to you or that you would like to explore further.
- » Pick one of the prisoner rights to focus on. Be sure to choose one that has an associated court case listed as a reference.
- » Research the court case associated with your specific constitutional right. What is the case about? What constitutional right was in question? What was the outcome of the case? Document your findings.
- » Create a document advising a fictional inmate on this particular constitutional right based on your readings, research and the court case outcome.
- » Share and/or present your advisement document and what you have learned about the court case.
- » Give peer feedback on at least 2 other advisement documents.



## NEXT STEPS IN OUR LEARNING:

- » Explore [Prison Diaries: Life Sentences & Other Paragraphs from Prison](#) to gain perspective on one inmate's life behind bars and her struggle for free speech.
- » Use hashtags like #justicereform and #prisonreform to raise awareness and advocate for prisoner rights.
- » Use the [Prison Activist Resource Center](#) to connect with and/or support prisoners' rights organizations.



**PRISONERS ALSO HAVE RIGHTS  
TO SPEECH AND RELIGION, TO  
THE EXTENT THESE RIGHTS DO  
NOT INTERFERE WITH THEIR  
STATUS AS INMATES.**



## REFLECT ON IMPACT & LEARNING:

Reflect by answering the following questions: What did you learn about the constitutional rights of prisoners? What questions do you still have regarding prisoner rights? Which prisoner right did you choose to focus on and why did you choose that right? How did the court case you examined have an impact on prisoner's rights? What are your personal thoughts regarding prisoner rights? Do you believe prisoners should have more or less rights?





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