

Chapter 12

12.1 Critical Thinking: Which do you think is more beneficial to society: community corrections or prison? Why?

For serious and chronic criminals, prison is the preferred choice. For offenders whose offenses are less serious and who can be rehabilitated, community corrections may be the best alternative.

12.2 Critical Thinking

1. What do you think makes an offender an ideal candidate for probation?

Many people feel that many nonviolent offenders, especially first-time offenders, are suitable for probation. Whether any violent offenders should receive probation is debatable, although it can depend on the severity of the offense.

2. What are the benefits and drawbacks of probation versus traditional jail time?

The benefits are that the offender can continue to lead a normal life, prison overcrowding is relieved somewhat, and the costs to the system are minimal. Drawbacks can include the possible danger to the community and lowered supervision of the offender.

12.3 Critical Thinking

1. How much weight should be given to victim impact statements in the decision to grant parole?

The victim has long been neglected in the criminal justice system, and victim impact statements should be one of the factors that are used when considering parole.

2. Given what you have read, do you think there are ways to improve the parole process? If so, what can be done?

The process can be improved. You should be able to name many suggestions.

12.4 Critical Thinking

1. Do you think people should have the right to reject the placement of a halfway house in their neighborhood?

Residents should have this right. One question that may come up, though, is where a halfway house can go if several communities reject it.

2. What could be done to bring about good relations between a community and the halfway house located within the community?

Those that wish to establish a halfway house should actively cultivate community support and assistance, and show that halfway houses can contribute valuable resources to the community through community service projects.

12.5 Critical Thinking

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CRITICAL THINKING ANSWER KEY

1. Do you think offenders should be allowed to take college courses, at the taxpayers' expense, through study-release programs?

Answers vary widely because some feel that this type of rehabilitation is the surest way to prevent recidivism, but it also seems unfair to reward inmates with free resources that law-abiding citizens must pay for.

2. Do you think temporary-release programs help rehabilitate offenders? Why or why not?

These programs are highly controversial, but they can help certain types of offenders if managed carefully.