

UNIT 16 REVIEW TEST LISTENING SCRIPT

- Edgar:** So Nadia, who are voting for in the next election?
- Nadia:** Well, I'm definitely not voting for Thomas Jenkins. The guy is out of control. He supports capital punishment and wants to abolish our national healthcare system.
- Edgar:** What's wrong with capital punishment? Surely, it prevents people from committing serious crimes like murder and—
- Nadia:** It certainly does *not* prevent any such crimes. Not only that, but in states that have topped using capital punishment, violent crime against both civilians and police officers is significantly lower. The vast majority of criminology research supports this point. Separately, there are numerous instances where innocent people are put to death, and only years later are they cleared of their crime. Abolishing capital punishment would put an end to these grave injustices. Overall, the death penalty is one of the most ineffective state policies in the world today.
- Edgar:** I see what you are saying, but every system is going to make mistakes. Not being absolutely certain on the results of every case is an unavoidable consequence of the institutional of law. So, we shouldn't abolish the death penalty because it is not 100% accurate. We don't ban cars because of a few fatal car accidents that are the result of a driver's mistake, do we?
- Nadia:** Never have I heard such an outrageous claim, Edgar. The sanctioned execution of criminals by the state is certainly much different from car crashes. Human mistakes can cause unfortunate car crashes, yes, but human mistakes, in the case of capital punishment, are not *causing* executions. Rather, the executions are the will of the state, and human error allows legally violent acts to happen to the wrong people. We obviously use capital punishment to punish criminals *intentionally*. We do not drive cars with the *intention* to cause car crashes.
- Edgar:** Yea, good point. But what about the families of the victims? Shouldn't they be able to rest peacefully knowing that the criminal who killed their loved one no longer presents a serious threat to society? It's a sort of closure for them.

Nadia: So, basically what you are saying is that killing a criminal helps people feel better about themselves?

Edgar: Yes, that's what I'm saying. Sure.

Nadia: And this is OK if the state is the one killing, but not if it's, say... the mother or father of the person who was killed?

Edgar: Essentially, yes.

Nadia: Why's it OK for the state to put people to death but not OK for the mother or father of the victim to do it?

Edgar: Because the state only does it in a humane way *after* a trial that proves the criminal's guilt.

Nadia: *Humanely* killing someone that doesn't want to die!? HA!

Edgar: Many people would agree with me.

Nadia: Only in this country would such backwards logic be accepted. Clearly, there's no such thing as humane killing. It's like saying there is a happy depression or a working vacation. Also, according to your logic, it would be OK for the mother or father of a victim to execute a criminal if it were done humanely. The state making people into murderers! What a lovely thought!

Edgar: Obviously, that's not what I'm advocating for.

Nadia: Then what do you support, Edgar?

Edgar: I support the death penalty for the reasons I've mentioned and...