

Crime, Guilt, Justice Answer Key

Sample Evidence

Arguments that Punishment Was Just:

- He committed murder, so exile and hard labor in Siberia matched the seriousness of his crime.
- Punishment allowed for the possibility of redemption and moral rebirth, not just retribution.

Arguments that Punishment Was Not Just:

- His years of psychological torment before trial served as a punishment already.
- Dostoevsky suggests true punishment came from conscience, not the legal system, so exile may seem unnecessary or redundant.

Position (Sample)

- A strong essay might argue the punishment was just because Raskolnikov had to face both societal and inner consequences. Others might argue it was not just because his conscience punished him more deeply than the state ever could. Both positions are defensible if supported with evidence.

Key Insights

1. Exile seems lighter compared to murder, but Dostoevsky frames it as an opportunity for transformation rather than mere revenge.
2. His internal suffering shows that conscience can be harsher than law, raising the question of whether legal punishment adds anything.
3. Sonia provides the moral and spiritual framework, showing punishment is meaningful only if it leads to redemption.

Overall Teaching Note:

- The best student answers will recognize Dostoevsky's complexity: justice in *Crime and Punishment* is not only about legal sentencing, but also about moral suffering, spiritual renewal, and whether redemption is truly possible.