

# Juvenile Justice

*Developed by Roberta J. Ching*

## MODULE: STUDENT VERSION

### Reading Selections for This Module:

Garinger, Gail. “Juveniles Don’t Deserve Life Sentences.” *New York Times* 15 Mar. 2012, New York ed.: A35. Print.

Jenkins, Jennifer Bishop. “On Punishment and Teen Killers.” *Juvenile Justice Information Exchange*. 2 Aug. 2011. Web. 11 June 2012. <<http://jjie.org/jennifer-bishop-jenkins-on-punishment-teen-killers/19184>>.

Lundstrom, Marjie. “Kids Are Kids—Until They Commit Crimes.” *Sacramento Bee* 1 Mar. 2001: A3. Print.

Thompson, Paul. “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains.” *Sacramento Bee* 25 May 2001: B7. Print.

### Additional Reading Selection:

Anderson, Scott. “Greg Ousley Is Sorry for Killing His Parents. Is That Enough?” *New York Times Magazine*. 19 July 2012. Web. 11 June 2012. <[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/22/magazine/greg-ousley-is-sorry-for-killing-his-parents-is-that-enough.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/22/magazine/greg-ousley-is-sorry-for-killing-his-parents-is-that-enough.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)>.

## Reading Rhetorically

### Prereading

#### Activity 1

#### Getting Ready to Read

**Quickwrite** (5 minutes). If you committed a serious crime, do you think it would be fair for you to be punished the same way an adult who committed the same crime would be?

#### Activity 2

#### Exploring Key Concepts

1. Who is a juvenile? What are some synonyms for “juvenile”?
2. What are the differences between an adult and a juvenile? Brainstorm a list of qualities that characterize a juvenile but not an adult.

## Activity 3

### Exploring Key Definitions

Definitions of some legal terms for killing someone are provided below. Study them, and explain the differences in your own words.

#### Definitions of Legal Terms

Homicide is the killing of one person by another, either intentionally or unintentionally. Homicide includes accidents and murder.

Murder is killing someone with malice of forethought. It could be done while committing another crime. Murder is always illegal.

First-degree murder is killing a person with malice of forethought; the killing was planned. It was done deliberately.

Second-degree murder is a killing done during a crime deemed dangerous to a human life. The crime was most likely not committed with the intention of killing.

Voluntary manslaughter is killing someone intentionally but without malice of forethought. For example, if the killing was a crime of passion (killing a spouse or lover because of jealousy), the intention was to kill. However, there was no malice of forethought because it was not planned.

Involuntary manslaughter is killing someone unlawfully but without malice of forethought. It was committed without intent to kill and without a conscious disregard for human life.

#### Matching Activity

Now read the following scenarios and fill in the boxes.

Actual situation	Crime or conviction	Punishment or sentencing
A troubled 17-year-old girl has slowly poisoned her parents each night at dinner. After three months, she came home to find them dead on the kitchen floor. The coroner's report indicated that cyanide poisoning caused their deaths.	First-degree murder	Sentenced to life in prison without parole
Three 16-year-olds were hanging out at the park drinking whiskey. One boy started shoving his friend. Soon the shoving escalated into punching. One boy tripped, and his head hit a sharp-edged rock. The boy died before help arrived.		

<p>Suspicious that his girlfriend was cheating, a 16-year-old boy went to her house and found her in bed with his brother. Impulsively, he grabbed the nearest lamp and hit his brother on the head. His brother died two days later.</p>		
<p>A 13-year-old boy broke into an auto parts business to steal hubcaps. The 17-year-old security guard picked up his boss's gun and fired two warning shots at the thief. The second shot hit the 13-year-old and killed him on the spot.</p>		

## Texts—

**“Kids are Kids—Until They Commit Crimes”**

**“Startling Finds on Teenage Brains”**

### Activity 4

#### Surveying the Text

Discuss the following questions as a class:

- What do the titles “Kids Are Kids—Until They Commit Crimes” and “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains” tell you about the topics of these articles?
- “Kids Are Kids” was published in the *Sacramento Bee* in 2001. “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains” was published in the same paper also in 2001. What can you predict about the articles? How do you think the articles will be the same? How do you think they will be different?

### Activity 5

#### Making Predictions and Asking Questions

Listen as your teacher reads the first three paragraphs of “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains,” and then discuss the following questions:

- Now that you’ve listened to the first three paragraphs of “Startling Finds,” what do you think it is going to be about?
- What do you think is the purpose of this text?
- Who do you think is the intended audience for this piece? How do you know this?
- Turn the title into a question to answer as you read the essay.

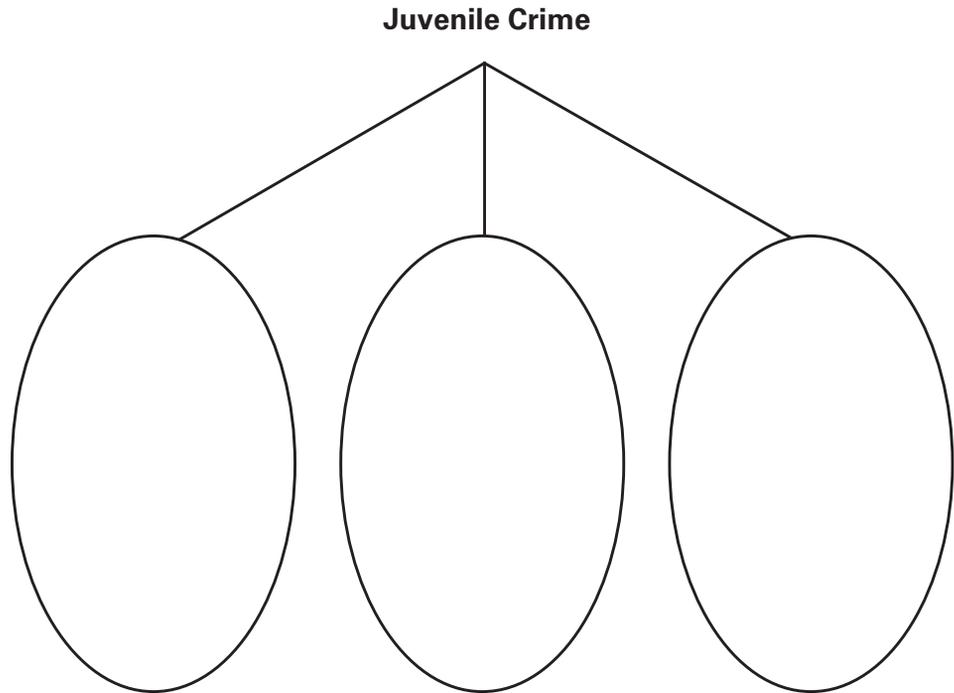
Now read the first six paragraphs of “Kids Are Kids” silently.

- What is Lundstrom’s opinion on the topic of juvenile crime?
- Turn the title into a question to answer as you read the essay.

### Activity 6

#### Understanding Key Vocabulary

Create semantic maps for the words “juvenile crime” and “justice system.” Begin by brainstorming a list of words that relate to “juvenile crime”; sort these words into categories, and label each one using the graphic below. Do the same for “legal system.”



### Activity 7

#### Vocabulary Self-Assessment Chart

The words in the self-assessment chart are from the texts you will read. Indicate how well you know the word, and define it if you can. Fill in missing definitions when you discuss the words with your class.

### Vocabulary Self-Assessment Chart

Word	Definition	Know It Well	Have Heard of It	Don't Know It
<b>Vocabulary from Thompson, "Startling Finds on Teenage Brains"</b>				
verdicts (2)	<i>decisions in a trial</i>			
cognitive development (3)				
impulsive (4)				
erratic (4)				
purged (7)				
inhibit (7)				
diminished (9)				
accountability (11)				
homicidal (11)				
<b>Vocabulary from Lundstrom's "Kids Are Kids"</b>				
inconsistency (6)				
quandary (7)				
heinous (14)				
coddling (14)				
perpetuated (20)				

**Quickwrite** (5 minutes): Now that you have discussed these words, what do you predict the articles you are going to read will be about? Use some of the words on your chart in your prediction.

# Reading

## Activity 8

### Reading for Understanding

The first reading of an essay is intended to help you understand the text and confirm your predictions. This step is sometimes called reading “with the grain” or “playing the believing game.” As you read, think about the following questions:

- Which of your predictions turned out to be true?
- What surprised you?
- If your predictions turned out to be wrong, what in the text misled you?
- Can you answer the question you created from the title?
- What, if anything, is still confusing to you?

As you read “Startling Findings on Teenage Brains” and “Kids Are Kids,” you will find that the two articles discuss four recent cases in which teenagers were tried for murder. Fill out the following graphic organizer based on those cases:

#### Recent Cases of Juvenile Crime

Defendant	Age	Crime	Sentence

## Activity 9

### Considering the Structure of the Text

Create a descriptive outline of “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains” by describing the content and purpose of each section. The first section has been done as an example.

**Startling Finds on Teenage Brains**  
**by Paul Thompson**  
***The Sacramento Bee, Friday, May 25, 2001***

- 1 Emotions ran high at the trial of Nathaniel Brazill in West Palm Beach, Fla., two weeks ago. Friends of slain teacher Barry Grunow called for the death penalty, while a growing crowd of demonstrators outside the courthouse wielded hastily written

placards reading, “A child is not a man.” Jurors returned with their verdict May 16: Fourteen-year-old Brazill, charged in last May’s shooting of middle- school teacher Grunow, was found guilty of second-degree murder.

- 2 A Florida grand jury had previously ruled that Brazill, who frequently looked dazed during the trial, would be tried as an adult, and if he had been convicted of first-degree murder he would have faced life in prison without parole. But Brazill’s immaturity was evident throughout this incident—from the act itself of Brazill’s shooting a teacher he considered one of his favorites, to his subsequent inability to give a reason for doing so, to the various quizzical looks that came across his face as the verdicts were read.
- 3 In terms of cognitive development, as research on the human brain has shown, Brazill—and any other young teen—is far from adulthood.

**Content and Purpose:** Nathaniel Brazill, a fourteen-year-old, was tried as an adult and found guilty of second-degree murder in the killing of his teacher. But research on the brain has shown that young teens are not adults in terms of development. The purpose is to raise the question of whether teenagers should be tried as adults.

- 4 Over the last several years, as school shootings have seemed to occur with disturbing frequency, startling discoveries have emerged about the teenage brain. The White House held a televised conference on adolescent development in May of last year, and a flurry of papers on the teen brain has appeared in top science journals. Reporters and teen advocates ask: Do the studies help explain the impulsive, erratic behavior of teens? The biggest surprise in recent teen-brain research is the finding that a massive loss of brain tissue occurs in the teen years.

**Content and Purpose:**

- 5 Specifically, my own research group at the University of California, Los Angeles, and our colleagues at the National Institutes of Health have developed technology to map the patterns of brain growth in individual children and teenagers. With repeated brain scans of kids from three to twenty [years old], we pieced together “movies” showing how brains grow and change.
- 6 Some changes make perfect sense: Language systems grow furiously until age twelve and then stop, coinciding with the time

when children learn foreign languages fastest. Mathematical brain systems grow little until puberty, corresponding with the observation that kids have difficulty with abstract concepts before then. Basically, the brain is like a puzzle, and growth is fastest in the exact parts the kids need to learn skills at different times. So far, all well and good.

- 7 But what really caught our eye was a massive loss of brain tissue that occurs in the teenage years. The loss was like a wildfire, and you could see it in every teenager. Gray matter, which brain researchers believe supports all our thinking and emotions, is purged at a rate of 1 percent to 2 percent a year during this period. Stranger still, brain cells and connections are only being lost in the areas controlling impulses, risk-taking, and self-control. These frontal lobes, which inhibit our violent passions, rash actions, and regulate our emotions, are vastly immature throughout the teenage years.

**Content and Purpose:**

- 8 The implications are tantalizing. Brazill was only thirteen when he committed his crime. He said he made a “stupid mistake,” but prosecutors argued that by bringing a gun to school he planned the crime.
- 9 Does “planning” mean the same thing for a thirteen-year-old, with his diminished capacity for controlling erratic behavior, as it means for an adult? The verdict, in this case, seems to line up with the research. The jurors, by returning a verdict of second-degree murder instead of first, indicated that they believe Brazill’s actions, while not accidental, were not fully thought-out, either.

**Content and Purpose:**

- 10 Linking this maelstrom of normal brain change with legal or moral accountability is tough: Even though normal teens are experiencing a wildfire of tissue loss in their brains, that does not remove their accountability. What is clear from the research is that the parts of the frontal lobes that inhibit reckless actions restructure themselves with startling speed in the teen years. Given this delicate—and drastic—reshaping of the brain, teens

need all the help they can get to steer their development onto the right path.

- 11 While research on brain-tissue loss can help us to understand teens better, it cannot be used to excuse their violent or homicidal behavior. But it can be used as evidence that teenagers are not yet adults, and the legal system shouldn't treat them as such.

**Content and Purpose:**

*Paul Thompson is an Assistant Professor of Neurology at the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Medicine.*

Now that you have completed the descriptive outline, discuss the following questions with your class:

- What does each section say? What is its content?
- How does each section affect the reader? What is the writer trying to accomplish?
- Which section is the most developed?
- Which section is the least developed?
- On the basis of your descriptive outline of the text, what do you think is the main argument? Is that argument explicit or implicit?

Now consider the following questions about the structure of this text:

- How are the author's arguments ordered? (Which arguments come first, in the middle, last?) What is the effect of this on the reader?
- How has the structure of the text helped make the argument clear, convincing, and engaging?

Activity 10

**Noticing Language—Focused Questions**

The following questions are based on the articles by Thompson, "Startling Finds," and Lundstrom, "Kids Are Kids." Answer them in writing and then share your answers with your class:

1. Do you think a jury should take the age of a criminal defendant into consideration? Use "jurors" and "juveniles" in your answer.

2. Should juveniles be treated the same way as adults if they commit the same crimes? Use “tried as an adult” in your answer.
3. Do you agree that teenagers often act on impulse? Use the word “impulsive.”
4. How is technology helping us understand the teenage brain?
5. What factors do you think juries should take into account when they sentence juveniles?
6. Do you agree with Lundstrom that it is inconsistent to deny privileges like voting and drinking to teenagers but then to sentence them as adults? Why?
7. Do you think juveniles should be sentenced to life in prison if they commit especially bad crimes? Use the word “heinous” in your answer.
8. Do you agree with Lundstrom that the media perpetuates the stereotype of violent youths? Use “perpetuate” in your answer.

## Texts—

### “On Punishment and Teen Killers”

### “Juveniles Don’t Deserve Life Sentences”

#### Activity 11

#### Preparing to Read

Using strategies you have employed with previous reading selections, quickly survey these two new texts, making predictions about the content of the texts. Then read the texts independently, and identify five key words or phrases in each text. If you are unsure what they mean, try to guess their meanings from the context or look them up.

#### Activity 12

#### Reading for Understanding

After reading the two texts independently, answer the following questions:

- Which of your predictions turned out to be true?
- What surprised you?
- If your prediction was inaccurate, what in the text misled you?
- Can you answer the question you created from the title?
- What, if anything, is confusing to you?

## Activity 13

### Annotating and Questioning the Text

Annotating a text enables readers to explore more deeply how a text works to inform or persuade its readers. During the initial reading, you read “with the grain” and “played the believing game.” In rereading, it is helpful to read “against the grain,” or “play the doubting game.” This is where the conversation shifts and you begin to question the text and the author.

In the initial reading, you read “with the grain,” playing the “believing game.” In the second reading, you should read “against the grain,” playing the “doubting game.” This is where the conversation about juvenile justice shifts, and you should begin to question the texts and their authors. As you reread “On Punishment and Teen Killers” and “Juveniles Don’t Deserve Life Sentences,” make marginal notations.

1. In the left-hand margin, label what the author is saying as follows:
  - The introduction
  - The issue or problem the author is writing about
  - The author’s main arguments
  - The author’s examples
  - The author’s conclusion
2. In the right margin, write your reactions to what the author is saying. You can ask questions, express surprise, disagree, elaborate, and note any moments of confusion.
3. As a class, discuss the annotations you and your classmates made on the first article. Now repeat this process for the second article. When you finish, exchange your copy with a partner. Read your partner’s annotations, and then talk about what you chose to mark and how you reacted to the text. Did you agree on what the main idea was? Did you mark the same arguments and examples? Did you agree on the conclusion?

## Activity 14

### Analyzing Stylistic Choices

The choices writers make when they choose words create certain effects for their readers. Think about these words from Jenkins’s “On Punishment and Teen Killers.” Put a plus (+) next to the words and phrases that have a positive connotation and a minus (–) next to the words and phrases that have a negative connotation. If you aren’t certain of the meaning of a word, look it up and write a brief definition or synonym next to the word in the list.

culpability	<i>deserving blame; guilt</i>	-
lovingly		+
violence-loving culture		
alarming		
intelligent		
bragging		
traumatic		
justice		
enlightened		
victim		
repeat violent offenders		
propaganda		
nobility		
misleading		

Now discuss with your class the effect that the writer's choice of language has on you as a reader. Is she completely fair and objective, or is she trying to appeal to your emotions?

## Postreading

### Activity 15

#### Summarizing and Responding

Use Garinger's article with your annotations to help you write the summary and response.

1. Write a summary of the article (one paragraph). A summary is a shorter version of the text which contains all of the most essential information—and nothing extra. Identify the title, the author, the source, and the date of publication in your summary, and write the entire summary in your own words; do not quote.
2. Write a response to the article (one paragraph). A response is your personal reaction to the text. For example, what personal experiences have you had that cause you to agree and/or disagree? Why? Does the author make a particularly strong or weak argument? Explain.

**Summarizing and Responding—Peer Response Rubric**

Exchange your Summary/Response with a classmate. Carefully read it and respond to the following questions.

1. Does the writer include the author’s name in the first sentence of the summary? Yes \_\_\_

*Writer: Include the author’s name.* No \_\_\_

2. Does the writer include the title of the essay in the first sentence of the summary? Yes \_\_\_

*Writer: Include the title of the essay.* No \_\_\_

3. Is the title in quotation marks? Yes \_\_\_

*Writer: Punctuate the title using quotation marks.* No \_\_\_

4. Does the first sentence clearly state the main idea of the article? Yes \_\_\_

*Writer: State the main idea in the first sentence.* No \_\_\_

You can improve your first sentence by

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Writer: Make sure it is clear and accurate.*

5. Does the writer include all of the important ideas or supporting points from the essay? Yes \_\_\_

*Writer: You left out an important point.* No \_\_\_

Specify which. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Does the writer use his/her own words? Yes \_\_\_

*Writer: You used the author’s words instead of your own.* No \_\_\_

Give paragraph or line number. \_\_\_\_\_

7. Does the writer keep his/her own opinions out of the summary? Yes \_\_\_

*Writer: You used the author’s words instead of your own.* No \_\_\_

Give paragraph or line number. \_\_\_\_\_

*Writer: Remember to save your opinion for your response!*

**Thinking Critically**

In your group, answer the following questions about the traditional rhetorical appeals that Garinger makes in “Juveniles Don’t Deserve Life Sentences.” Write down your group’s answers so you can share them with your classmates.

**Group 1****Questions about Logic (Logos)**

1. What are Garinger’s major claims and assertions? Do you agree with her claims?
2. What evidence does she use to support her claims? How relevant and valid do you think the evidence is? How sound is the reasoning? Is there any claim that appears to be weak or unsupported? Which one, and why do you think so?
3. Can you think of counterarguments that Garinger does not consider?
4. Do you think Garinger has left something out on purpose? Why?

**Questions about the Writer (Ethos)**

5. What can you infer about Garinger from the text? Does she have the appropriate background to speak with authority on the subject? Is she knowledgeable?
6. What does the Garinger’s style and language tell you about her? Can you trust her?

**Questions about Emotions (Pathos)**

7. Does “Juveniles Don’t Deserve Life Sentences” affect you emotionally? What parts?
8. Do you think Garinger is trying to manipulate your emotions? In what ways? At what point?

**Group 2**

In your group, answer the following questions about the traditional rhetorical appeals that Jenkins makes in “On Punishment and Teen Killers.”

**Questions about Logic (Logos)**

1. What are the writer’s major claims and assertions? Do you agree with her claims?
2. What evidence does she use to support her claims? How relevant and valid do you think the evidence is? How sound is the reasoning. Is there any claim that appears to be weak or unsupported? Which one, and why do you think so?

3. Can you think of counterarguments that Jenkins does not consider?
4. Do you think Jenkins has left something out on purpose? Why?

#### **Questions about the Writer (Ethos)**

5. What can you infer about the Jenkins from the text? Does she have the appropriate background to speak with authority on the subject? Is she knowledgeable?
6. What does the writer's style and language tell you about her? Can you trust her?

#### **Questions about Emotions (Pathos)**

7. Does "On Punishment and Teen Killers" affect you emotionally? What parts?
8. Do you think Jenkins is trying to manipulate your emotions? In what ways? At what points?

### Activity 18

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#### **Thinking Critically—Student-led Discussion**

Using your annotated copy of "Greg Ousley is Sorry for Killing His Parents," write three questions that you would like to discuss with other students in your class. These questions should be about significant issues that the article raises and should not have a right or wrong answer. An example is the question below:

**Example:** Can our knowledge about the development of the teenage brain help us understand why Greg Ousley killed his parents and why he behaved the way he did afterwards?

In your group, select two discussion leaders. Their responsibility is to call on people to talk and to make sure that everyone in your group participates in the discussion. They are not responsible for knowing the right answer. Your teacher will give your group questions from the ones that the students in your class have developed.

After the discussion, your teacher will give you feedback on how well your group used academic language and collaborated on answering the questions.

### Activity 19

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#### **Reflecting on Your Reading Process**

You have now read four texts that are part of the conversation that has taken place over the last decade about how juveniles who commit serious crimes, including murder, should be treated in the justice system.

- What have you learned from joining this conversation?

- What do you want to learn next?
- What reading strategies did you use to read the texts? Which strategies will you use in reading other texts? How will these strategies apply in other classes?
- In what ways has your ability to read and discuss texts like this one improved?

## Connecting Reading to Writing

### Discovering What You Think

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#### Activity 20

#### Taking a Stance—Trying on Words, Perspectives, and Ideas

Imagine that the four authors of the texts you have read are in a room together. Pretend you are one author, and respond to the following statements made by another author. As you compose the response, refer to the readings and make sure you can support your answer from the author’s text, but paraphrase the author’s position in your own words. Do not quote the author’s exact words.

1. “The actual science (about teenage brain development) does not ... in any way negate criminal culpability.” Jennifer Bishop Jenkins

What would Thompson say to Jenkins?

2. “Young people ... cannot be held to the same standards when they commit terrible wrongs.” Gail Garinger

What would Lundstrom say to Garinger?

3. “Do the studies [on brain development] help explain the impulsive, erratic behavior of teens?” Paul Thompson

How would Jenkins answer Thompson’s question?

4. “Teens are being tried and sentenced to prison for murder at alarming rates in the United States.” Jennifer Bishop Jenkins

How would Garinger respond to Jenkins’s assertion?

5. “But the zeal to corral wildly troubled, ever-younger kids and ram them through the adult system belies everything that the juvenile justice system is all about: that kids are different.” Marjie Lundstrom

What would Jenkins say to Lundstrom?

Now look at the quickwrite that you wrote at the beginning of this module.

**Quickwrite** (five minutes). If you committed a serious crime, do you think it would be fair for you to be punished the same way as an adult who committed the same crime?

On the same page, respond to the following questions:

How have your views changed or developed? What is your position now?

## Activity 21

### On-Demand Writing Assignment

On June 25, 2012, the Supreme Court ruled that juveniles who committed murder could not be sentenced to life in prison because it violated the Eighth Amendment's ban on cruel and unusual punishment. Justice Elena Kagan, writing for the majority, stated that "Mandatory life without parole for a juvenile precludes consideration of his chronological age and its hallmark features—among them, immaturity, impetuosity, and failure to appreciate risks and consequences. It prevents taking into account the family and home environment that surrounds him—and from which he cannot usually extricate himself—no matter how brutal or dysfunctional."

However, four justices strongly disagreed, arguing that mandatory sentences reflected the will of American society that heinous crimes committed by juveniles should always be punished with a sentence to life in prison. Justice Alito noted that otherwise, "Even a 17 ½-year-old who sets off a bomb in a crowded mall or guns down a dozen students and teachers is a 'child' and must be given a chance to persuade a judge to permit his release into society..."

Write an essay analyzing the issues raised by these arguments. Be sure to indicate which side you most strongly agree with. Support your position, providing reasons and examples from your own experience and observations, discussions you have participated in, and texts you have read for this module. Your essay should be as clearly focused, well organized, and carefully written as you can make it.

Questions such as the ones below will help you plan what you want say before you begin to draft your essay.

- Do you agree with the majority of Supreme Court justices who argued to abolish mandatory life in prison for juveniles who commit murder or with the minority who argued to retain it?
- Which author or authors that we have read support your position? What evidence do they provide?
- Which author or authors support those who disagree with you? What evidence do they provide?

- Sketch out a plan for the arguments and evidence you will use in your essay.
- Write a working thesis. After you have finished your essay, reread your thesis statement and revise it if necessary.

## Writing Rhetorically

### Entering the Conversation

#### Activity 22

#### Considering Structure—Evaluating Thesis Statements

Using the guidelines for developing effective thesis statements, evaluate Thompson’s thesis statement. Then evaluate the thesis statements taken from student essays below. Label them “very effective,” “OK,” or “not effective,” and briefly explain each of your decisions.

#### Guidelines for Developing Thesis Statements

- A thesis reflects the writer’s position on a question that has more than one side. After reading the thesis, the reader should be able to explain what the issue is and what side of the argument the writer is on.
- Develop a thesis statement that makes the topic and your opinion or position on the topic clear to your reader.
- Choose one side of the issue if your topic requires it, but you may qualify your position.
- If the topic asks “to what extent” you agree or disagree with a statement, be sure to explain how strongly you agree or disagree. You may include a “because” statement, but you do not need to list all the reasons for your position.
- Neither a factual statement nor a question make an effective thesis because they do not reflect the writer’s position on the issue.

#### Thompson’s Thesis

In terms of cognitive development, as research on the human brain has shown, Brazill—and any other young teen—is far from adulthood.

#### Student Thesis Statements

1. Juvenile offenders are young people under the age of 18 who commit crimes.
2. Sentencing juveniles to mandatory life in prison is necessary because it keeps them from committing more crimes. Also, it’s what the families of victims want, and it holds the teen murderers accountable for what they did.

3. Juveniles must be held accountable for their crimes, but they must be treated differently than adults.
4. Sentencing juveniles to life in prison is both good and bad.
5. Children's crimes should not be brushed off, but it is not right to throw children who don't even understand the enormity of the crime that they have committed into the slammer for life.
6. With a growing number of young adults being tried and sentenced as adults for violent crimes, the question arises, "Why did they commit these crimes?"

Now copy the thesis from the first draft of your essay. How would you judge its effectiveness based on the criteria above. If you do not think it is a very effective thesis, revise it so it is improved.

**My thesis:**

**My revised thesis:**

## Activity 23

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### Using the Words of Others

One of the most important features of academic writing is the use of the words and ideas from written sources to support the writer's own points. Presented here are five ways to incorporate words and ideas from sources:

1. **Direct quotation.** According to Paul Thompson, brain researchers have discovered to their surprise that "a massive loss of brain tissue occurs in the teen years."
2. **Paraphrase.** In "Startling Finds on Teenage Brains," Thompson notes that young people actually lose a large amount of brain tissue during their teen years.
3. **Summary.** In "Startling Finds on Teenage Brains," Thompson summarizes recent research that shows teenagers actually lose a large amount of brain tissue, a finding that may explain their impulsive and violent behavior. Such changes in the brain do not mean that teens are not responsible for their violent behavior, but Thompson believes they should not be treated as adults in the criminal justice system.
4. **Source within another text.** Garinger cites the Supreme Court ruling in 2005 which asserted that juvenile offenders "are less mature, more vulnerable to peer pressure, cannot escape

from dangerous environments, and their characters are still in formation.”

5. **Explaining the significance.** Concurring with Thompson, Garinger observes that brain research shows that “the regions of the adolescent brain responsible for controlling thoughts, action and emotions are not fully developed.” It is clear that they should have a chance as adults to make the case that they have matured and become law-abiding citizens who deserve to be released from prison.

An important strategy for developing your ideas is to incorporate material from the articles you have read into your essay and explain to your readers how it contributes to your argument. Read the first draft of your essay, and think about the following questions.

1. Where can I strengthen my argument by referring to one of the texts? Should I quote directly from the text, paraphrase a short piece of the text, or summarize the entire text?
2. Where can I improve my writing by taking a passage I quoted and paraphrasing it or shortening the length of the quotation to a few key words?
3. In each case where I have referred to a text, have I explained how it contributes to my argument?
4. Have I accurately identified the source of the material that I have quoted, paraphrased, or summarized? Be careful where an author has quoted another source (a source within a source) to identify the actual source.

Mark the places in your essay where you can improve your use of sources.

## Revising and Editing

### Activity 24

#### Revising Rhetorically

Write answers to the following questions to help you think about your audience, your purpose, your image as a writer, and your arguments, including the evidence that supports them.

1. Who will read your essay? What do your readers probably think or believe about sentencing juveniles as adults? How much background information will they need?
2. What is your purpose in writing? What questions are you trying to answer? What are you trying to accomplish?
3. What sort of image, or ethos, as Aristotle would say, do you want to project to your readers? How will you achieve it? What words or type of language might you want to use to help construct your ethos?

4. Are there any emotional appeals (pathos) you want to use?
5. If readers disagree with your thesis or the validity of your support, what would they say? How would you answer them?

Use what you have discovered in analyzing how you used the words of others and how well you addressed your audience, purpose, and image. Revise your essay to clarify and strengthen each area.

## Activity 25

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### Editing the Draft

You now need to work with the grammar and mechanics of your draft to make sure your use of language is effective and conforms to the guidelines of standard written English.

#### Individual Work

Edit your draft based on the information you have received from your instructor or a tutor. Use the editing checklist provided by your teacher. The suggestions below will also help you edit your own work.

#### Editing Guidelines for Individual Work

- If possible, set your essay aside for 24 hours before rereading to find errors.
- If possible, read your essay out loud so you can hear your errors.
- Focus on individual words and sentences rather than overall meaning. Take a sheet of paper and cover everything except the line you are reading. Then touch your pencil to each word as you read.
- With the help of your teacher, figure out your own pattern of errors—the most serious and frequent errors you make. For example, you might decide that subject-verb agreement, punctuation of quotations, and sentence fragments are patterns that you need to edit for consistently.
- Only look for one type of error at a time. Then go back and look for a second type, and if necessary, a third.
- Use the dictionary to check spelling and confirm that you've chosen the right word for the context.

#### Editing Focus

Select three patterns of error that you tend to make when you write. List them, and then one at a time, look for them in your essay and make corrections.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Activity 26

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### Reflecting on Your Writing Process

When you have completed your own essay, answer these questions.

1. What was most difficult about this assignment?
2. What was easiest?
3. What did you learn about arguing by completing this assignment?
4. What do you think are the strengths of your argument? Place a wavy line by the parts of your essay that you feel are very good.
5. What are the weaknesses, if any, of your paper? Place an X by the parts of your essay you would like help with. Write any questions you have in the margin.
6. What did you learn from this assignment about your own writing process—about preparing to write, writing the first draft, revising, and editing?