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**PRISON** (*noun*)

1. a place for the confinement of people accused or convicted of a crime.



**CUSTODY** (*noun*)

1. the protective care of someone/something.

2. imprisonment.

So, the Judge in a court may issue what is called a **custodial sentence**. That means the offender is made to spend a period of time in a prison or some other closed institution. That might be a sort of hospital where they are treated for an illness or an educational establishment.

In any case, the offender is not able to leave – they have lost their freedom!

The UK Justice Secretary recently said that the purpose of prisons was:

**PROTECTION** The public are protected from the most dangerous and violent individuals.

**PUNISHMENT** Prison deprives offenders of their liberty and certain freedoms enjoyed by the rest of society and acts as a **deterrent**.

**REHABILITATION** Prison provides offenders with the opportunity to reflect on, and take responsibility for, their crimes and prepare them for a law-abiding life when they are released.

How important do you feel each of the above is? In which order of importance would you put them?

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In Northern Ireland, the **Youth Justice Agency** works with young people aged 10-17 years, who have offended or are at serious risk of offending.

If a young person is found guilty of an offence or remanded to custody they could be sent to a secure facility called **Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre** in Bangor.

You can find out more about this place by reading the **Woodlands JJC Guide** on our website, which is for young people arriving there.

Take a look at the information. What would you find most challenging if you were there?

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 Now, you can sit back and watch the **POST-SHOW FILM** on the Lyric website. It lasts 7:32.

This film was made at **Hydebank Wood College** in Belfast, which is where **18-21 year olds** serve a custodial sentence. There is also a female prison on the site at Hydebank – for women of **all** ages!

In general, men over 21 years will serve their sentence in one of two adult prisons in Northern Ireland.

What are the names of the adult male prisons?

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Describe some of the emotions the young man in the film experiences in his first few days in custody.

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Was there anything in the film that surprised you - eg things boys are allowed or not allowed to do?

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The facility at Hydebank used to be known as a **Young Offenders’ Centre** but is now a Secure **College**.

That’s because the emphasis is now on training and education.

**Prisoners** used to live in **cells**; now **students** live in **rooms**.

 On YouTube, have a look at these four 3600 film clips of Hydebank on the **Blackout** playlist on the **Lyric Theatre Belfast** channel. You can explore various parts of the College and imagine what it might be like to be locked in there.

-*Going into Hydebank -Hydebank Reception*

*-Common Room -Bedroom*

Many of the facilities are impressive and perhaps not quite what you might expect in a ‘prison’. Do you think that’s a good or bad thing? Defend your argument!

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People serving longer sentences sometimes serve a proportion of the sentence in custody and the remainder **on licence**: they are released but they must live under certain conditions eg reporting to a Probation Officer every week, wearing an **electronic tag** or having to observe a **curfew** or **alcohol ban**.

When people serving a custodial sentence are released, they face major problems returning to normal life. Many return to custody within a short time. What challenges to you think they experience?

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**TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE!**

