



Eighth Amendment: Worksheet

Read each of the scenarios below. For each question, discuss and decide the punishment you think is just for the defendants. Your punishments can range from fines to the death penalty. Then determine what you think the average punishment for each defendant would be if they were found guilty within the United States.

1. Defendant A was convicted of armed robbery after video evidence showed them robbing a bank with a firearm. This is not Defendant A's first offense. They were previously found guilty of attempted burglary.
2. Defendant B is a first-time drunk driver. No one was harmed in the incident but they hit a mailbox and caused minor property damage.
3. Defendant C was convicted of first-degree murder. They confessed to intentionally setting a building fire that killed one individual. This is Defendant C's first violent crime, but they have a history of restraining orders.
4. Defendant D was found guilty of domestic violence. The case involved abuse of both a former partner and a child. This is the first offense for Defendant D.



Eighth Amendment: Answer Key

1. The average prison sentence for armed bank robbery with a prior history is 15-25 years. The fines would be around \$20,000.
2. A first-time DUI has a maximum sentence of 6 months in jail with fines around \$1,500. This is excluding the cost of the property damage.
3. First degree murder typically carries a sentence of 25 years to life in prison and possibly the death penalty depending on the state. *You could look up your state's law on capital punishment to get a more accurate sentence.*
4. The average sentence for felony domestic violence is 2-4 years in jail with a fine of \$6,000 or more.