**CIVICS 11**

**Position Paper on Whether to Reinstate Capital Punishment or Not**

**GOAL: To research arguments for and against the reinstatement of capital punishment a.k.a death penalty. Your task is to research both sides and write a position paper to support one side.**

**CONTEXT:** We have discussed in class how scientific evidence submitted in the form of DNA evidence have exonerated innocent people convicted of murders they did not commit, or convict those who have actually committed heinous crimes (Check CBC p. 142 and Counterpoints handout p. 278 ). We also talked about how science is subject to human error and is not always foolproof. This is one of several arguments used by those who oppose capital punishment. There are many arguments for reinstating the death penalty, some of which are discussed in Counterpoints p. 282-283. Close to 90 countries have the death penalty, but nowhere is it debated as often as in North America. Canada abolished capital punishment by a majority of only 6 votes. In the U.S., each state can formulate its own policy; 38 of the 50 allow the death penalty.

**PRELIMINARY RESEARCH: (Note: all of this information must be attached)**

1. Find out how many executions have been carried out in the U.S. in the last 5 years; in Canada prior to it being abolished.
2. How many were wrongfully convicted
3. List of arguments for/pros and against/cons the death penalty
4. What recent crimes you think “deserve” the death penalty
5. Assuming death penalty is not an option, what is an appropriate sentence for those convicted of first-degree murder

Here are some websites you might find helpful:

<http://www.ccadp.org/deathpenalty-canada.htm>

<http://www.derechos.org/dp/>

<http://www.prodeathpenalty.com/>

<http://www.infobasepublishing.com/search.aspx?q=death+penalty>

<http://www.amnesty.org>

<http://www.deathpenalty.org/>